

POLITICAL DECLARATION July 16, 1991

Strengthening the International Order

1. We, the leaders of our seven countries and the representatives of the European Community, renew our firm commitment to the ideal of a peaceful, just, democratic and prosperous world. The international community faces enormous challenges. But there is also reason for hope. We must reinforce the multilateral approach to the solution of common problems and work to strengthen the international system of which the United Nations, based on its Charter, remains so central a part. We call on the leaders of other nations to join us in that cause.

2. It is a matter of hope and encouragement that the United Nations Security Council, with the backing of the international community, showed during the Gulf crisis that it could fulfil its role of acting to restore international peace and security and to resolve conflict. With the East-West confrontation of the last four decades behind us, the international community must now build on this new spirit of cooperation not only in the Middle East but wherever danger and conflict threaten or other challenges must be met.

3. We believe the conditions now exist for the United Nations to fulfil completely the promise and the vision of its founders. A revitalised United Nations will have a central role in strengthening the international order. We commit ourselves to making the UN stronger, more efficient and more effective in order to protect human rights, to maintain peace and security for all and to deter aggression. We will make preventive diplomacy a top priority to help avert future conflicts by making clear to potential aggressors the consequences of their actions. The UN's role in peacekeeping should be reinforced and we are prepared to support this strongly.

4. We note that the urgent and overwhelming nature of the humanitarian problem in Iraq caused by violent oppression by the Government required exceptional action by the international community, following UNSCR 688. We urge the UN and its affiliated agencies to be ready to consider similar action in the future if the circumstances require it. The international community cannot stand idly by

in cases where widespread human suffering from famine, war and oppression, refugee flows, disease or flood reaches urgent and overwhelming proportions.

5. The recent tragedies in Bangladesh, Iraq and the Horn of Africa demonstrate the need to reinforce UN relief in coping with emergencies. We call on all Member States to respond to the Secretary General's appeal for voluntary contributions. We would like to see moves to strengthen the coordination, and to accelerate the effective delivery, of all UN relief for major disasters. Such initiatives, as part of an overall effort to make the UN more effective could include:

- (a) the designation of a high level official, answerable only to the United Nations Secretary-General, who would be responsible for directing a prompt and well-integrated international response to emergencies, and for coordinating the relevant UN appeals; and
- (b) improvement in the arrangements whereby resources from within the UN system and support from donor countries and NGOs can be mobilised to meet urgent humanitarian needs in time of crisis.

The United Nations would then be able to take the early action that has sometimes been missing in the past. The United Nations should also make full use of its early warning capacity to alert the international community to coming crises and to work on the preparation of contingency plans, to include the question of prior earmarking of resources and material that would be available to meet these contingencies.

6. Since we last met the world has witnessed the invasion, occupation and subsequent liberation of Kuwait. The overwhelming response of the international community in reversing the forcible annexation of one small nation was evidence of the widespread preference for

- taking collective measures against threats to the peace and to suppress aggression
- settling disputes peacefully
- upholding the rule of law and