

VENICE SUMMIT

STATEMENT ON REFUGEES

The Heads of State and Government are deeply concerned at the plight of the ever-increasing number of refugees throughout the world. Hundred of thousands have already left the Indochinese peninsula and Cuba, many of them taking the risk of fleeing across the open seas. Pakistan and Iran have received almost one million refugees from Afghanistan. In Africa refugees number several millions.

The heads of State and Government note with great regret that the refugee population continues to grow and that, despite major international relief efforts, their suffering continues. They pay tribute to the generosity and forbearance with which countries in the regions affected have received refugees. For their part, the countries represented at this Summit have already responded substantially to appeals for assistance to and resettlement of refugees. They will continue to do so, but their resources are not unlimited. They appeal to others to join with them in helping to relieve this suffering.

But, however great the effort of the international community, it will be difficult to sustain it indefinitely. The problem of refugees has to be attacked at its root.

The Heads of State and Government therefore make a vigorous appeal to the Governments responsible for it to remove the causes of this widespread human tragedy and not to pursue policies which drive large numbers of their people from their own countries.