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## POLITICAL ISSUES

Economic summits have always had an important political aspect. East-West relations have often constituted the main element in the political discussions. For example, at the 1982 Versailles Summit and the 1984 London Summit, the leaders agreed on a general approach to East-West economic relations. At the 1983 Williamsburg Summit, Japan joined in a declaration on the indivisibility of the security of Summit countries. At the Bonn Summit of 1985, the Political Declaration on the 40th Anniversary of the End of the Second World War enumerated the democratic values held in common by the Summit countries, as did the Tokyo Declaration of 1986, "Looking Forward to a Better Future."

In 1988, the participants in the Toronto Summit indicated that they would adopt a positive attitude toward the current change in relations between the Western countries and the Soviet Union. The seven heads of state and government also voiced their approval of the Soviet troop withdrawal from Afghanistan and of the INF Treaty, and expressed their desire to achieve a global prohibition of chemical weapons. Again in Toronto, the leaders encouraged the U.S.S.R. to continue seeking progress in the area of human rights.

The leaders will often discuss crises that arise at the time of the summits. Freedom of shipping in the Persian Gulf has been a subject in the past three summits, and the political stocktaking in Paris is expected to include the recent events in China, among other things.

Terrorism has also been on the Summit agendas since 1978. The Bonn Declaration of that year was an important step in the fight against air piracy. In Toronto in 1988, the leaders emphatically reaffirmed their condemnation of terrorism and their continued adherence to previous Summit declarations on terrorism. The leaders also expressed renewed support for the International Civil Aviation Organization's work against terrorism.

The foreign ministers involved in the Summits exchange their views on a large number of political questions. In addition to East-West and North-South issues, they generally discuss regional conflicts such as those in the Middle East, Southern Africa, Central America, Afghanistan, Cambodia and Iran-Iraq. They report to the leaders, and help them to finalize their political declarations.

In the political declaration of the Toronto Summit, three paragraphs were devoted to the problem of narcotics. Reference was made to the urgent need to improve international cooperation, in every suitable forum, in dealing with the problem of illicit drugs, a question which may resurface in Paris.

In Paris, the leaders will discuss East-West relations, especially on the economic level, as they have in the past. The groundwork for these discussions was laid at the NATO Summit at the end of May and during Mr. Gorbachev's visits to Bonn in June and to Paris in July. The question of human rights will be the subject of special interest in this bicentenary year of France's 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen.