

European Community

News Release

AFGHANISTAN / EAST-WEST RELATIONS / THE MIDDLE EAST

Statements of 13 July, 1987,
of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs
of the Twelve Member States of the European Community

Afghanistan

«The Twelve have examined the situation in Afghanistan. They noted that the latest round of proximity talks in Geneva between Afghanistan and Pakistan had produced no result.

They reaffirmed their belief that the rapid withdrawal of Soviet troops according to an irrevocable timetable remains the essential precondition if this long conflict is to be brought to an end. For the Twelve, Afghanistan represents a concrete test of Soviet goodwill.

A political solution must guarantee the Afghan people's right to self-determination, allow the return of the refugees and re-establish Afghanistan's status as a genuinely independent and non-aligned country.

The Twelve reaffirm their support for the efforts of the UN Secretary-General and his special representative. They continue to support the moderate and reasonable position of Pakistan.»

East-West Relations

«The Ministers reviewed the state of East-West relations. They noted with satisfaction that the dialogue between the United States and the Soviet Union on arms control has been intensified and that there are more favourable perspectives as regards an agreement on Soviet and United States INF. They reaffirm their commitment to the total elimination of chemical weapons. They favour a stable and verifiable conventional balance at a lower level of forces in the whole of Europe. They will contribute, as far as they can, to the attainment of these goals.

The Twelve strongly wish the CSCE follow-up meeting in Vienna to achieve concrete results. They insist on the need for significant and lasting progress to be achieved in all fields and in particular as regards respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. In this context they recall the importance which they attach to their proposal on the human dimension. Such progress is indispensable if relations between East and West are to develop in a climate of confidence.

The Twelve are open to the new possibilities presented by recent developments in Soviet policy. They underline the need for the new words used by the Soviet Union to be transformed into concrete deeds.»

The Middle East

1. The Arab-Israeli conflict

«The Twelve noted the positive welcome given to their Declaration of 23 February in favour of an international peace conference on the Middle East. As a suitable framework for the necessary negotiations between the parties directly concerned, such a conference seemed to them at present the only formula which would allow the peace process in the region to move forward. They expressed the hope that conditions allowing an international peace conference to be held can be established rapidly upon the basis of an agreement between the parties to it.

For their part, the Twelve have followed developments in the area closely and have decided to pursue, both via the Presidency and bilaterally, their contacts at all levels with all the interested parties in order to contribute to the search for a just, global and lasting settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict, including the Palestinian problem, in accordance with the 1980 Venice Declaration.

The Twelve recalled their commitment to the respect of human rights in the occupied territories. They agreed that the deterioration of the economic and social situation in these territories, as well as in the region as a whole, threatens to complicate the search for peace. For this reason, the Twelve will continue to contribute to economic and social development, although this cannot be a substitute for a political solution.»

2. The Iraq-Iran war and the situation in the Gulf

«The Twelve remain deeply concerned by the conflict between Iraq and Iran. They note the Venice Summit Declaration on the war and freedom of navigation in the Gulf.

They recall their previous declarations on the conflict in which they expressed their support for the efforts of the UN Secretary General

and their frequent appeals to the parties to respect Security Council Resolutions 582 and 588. They once more wish to emphasize the necessity to end this cruel war and they welcome new international efforts, in particular in the Security Council, to ensure that both parties will respect a ceasefire and put an end to the war on the basis of a comprehensive, just and honourable settlement.

The Twelve re-emphasize once more their previous positions, notably concerning respect for the laws governing armed conflict, in particular attacks on towns and the use of chemical weapons, on the risk of the conflict spreading to neighbouring states, on the threat to the freedom of navigation in the Gulf, and on the threat to regional and international peace and security.»

3. Lebanon

«The Twelve expressed their profound concern about the continuation of violence in Lebanon, recently highlighted once again by the assassination of the Lebanese prime minister, by further hostage-taking and by the escalation of killings in South Lebanon.

They expressed once again the hope that all interested parties would show moderation in order to allow the political dialogue to recommence with a view to national reconciliation based on respect for the sovereignty, unity, independence and territorial integrity of Lebanon.

The Twelve reaffirmed their support for UNIFIL and urged that it be allowed to fulfill its mandate, in the best possible security conditions for its members.

Finally, the Twelve expressed their condemnation of the continuing detention of hostages and victims of kidnapping in Lebanon.»

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