

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:21 p.m. outside the Hyatt Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to

Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; President Boris Yeltsin of Russia; and Minister of Foreign Affairs Gohar Ayub Khan and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif of Pakistan.

Birmingham Group of Eight Summit Statement *May 17, 1998*

Northern Ireland

We warmly welcome the Belfast Agreement reached on 10 April. We commend all those involved in achieving an outcome which reflects the fundamental aspirations of both parts of the community in Northern Ireland and secures their rights. We recognise that the Agreement must win the support of the people in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. While acknowledging that it presents challenges to all parties, we hope it will achieve the widest possible support, not only as a basis for political stability and peace but also as an opportunity for economic development and prosperity for all Northern Ireland's people. We pledge our countries' support for this process.

Indonesia

We are deeply concerned at the situation in Indonesia, especially the recent upsurge of violence and the loss of life. We deplore the killings and urge the authorities to show maximum restraint, to refrain from the use of lethal force and to respect individual rights. We call on the public to express their views peacefully. It is essential to avoid an escalation of violence.

We recognise the hardship the economic crisis has caused. We believe the economic reform programme agreed with and supported by the international financial institutions is the only way to restore confidence and growth, and fully support the government in implementing it. But successful economic reform and international support for it will require sufficient political and social stability. We will continue to work, together with the international financial institutions, to support reform and alleviate hardship.

The current social unrest indicates that, to resolve the crisis, political as well as economic reform is necessary. The need for political reform is widely acknowledged in Indonesia. We encourage the authorities to respond rapidly, by

opening a dialogue which addresses the aspirations of the Indonesian people and by introducing the necessary reforms.

FRY/Kosovo

The continuing violence in Kosovo has revived fears of a new Balkans war. The region has already seen too much bloodshed. A political solution to the problem of Kosovo is vital for the peace and well-being of all the people of the region. We consider the meeting on 15 May between President Milosevic and Dr Rugova to be a positive first step. It is particularly important that President Milosevic has assumed personal responsibility in the search for a resolution of the problems of Kosovo, including its future status. We urge both sides to ensure that the dialogue now begun leads rapidly to the adoption of concrete measures to lower tensions and stop violence. Resolving the issue of Kosovo's status will be difficult but is essential for the good of all those living in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

Peace and stability in Europe rest on the principles that borders are inviolable and that political change must come about through peaceful means. We reject terrorism and violence from any side to achieve political goals or to stifle dissent. The states of the region should themselves contribute to a non-violent solution to the crisis. All states should cooperate in addressing the problem of refugees and displaced persons.

We underline the importance of cooperation with the Gonzalez mission. We stand ready to promote a clear and achievable path towards the FRY's full integration into the international community. But if Belgrade fails to build on recent progress and a genuine political process does not get underway, its isolation will deepen.

The elections in Montenegro on 31 May must be free, fair and in keeping with democratic

standards and their results must be respected by all.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

We welcome the progress that has recently been made on peace implementation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and support the High Representative's active role in promoting the peace process. This is a critical year for consolidating peace in Bosnia, especially for refugee returns and democratic development, with nationwide elections scheduled for September. While the people of Bosnia have accomplished a great deal under very difficult circumstances, we look to Bosnia's leaders to work harder to create a stable and prosperous future for all the country's citizens.

Middle East Peace Process

We are deeply concerned at the continuing stalemate in the peace process, with concluded agreements not yet being implemented. We encourage all efforts to help revive the peace process. We strongly support the efforts to gain the agreement of the parties to a package of constructive and realistic ideas which have already been presented by the United States, including a second Israeli redeployment. We welcome Palestinian agreement in principle to these ideas which, if accepted by all sides, would lead to the resumption of final status talks. We call on Israeli and Palestinian leaders to refrain from unilateral acts which pre-determine the final status negotiations and undermine confidence. We remain determined to work with all the parties—Israel, the Palestinians, Syria, Lebanon—for a comprehensive peace. A resumption of Israeli-Palestinian negotiations would build confidence in the region and help to restore momentum to the peace process as a whole. A continuing blockage on the other hand could have grave consequences for security throughout the region.

Indian Nuclear Tests

We condemn the nuclear tests which were carried out by India on 11 and 13 May. Such action runs counter to the will expressed by 149 signatories to the CTBT to cease nuclear testing, to efforts to strengthen the global non-proliferation regime and to steps to enhance regional and international peace and security. It has been met by immediate international concern and opposition, from governments and more widely. We underline our full commitment to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty as the cornerstones of the global non-proliferation regime and the essential foundations for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament. We express our grave concern about the increased risk of nuclear and missile proliferation in South Asia and elsewhere. We urge India and other states in the region to refrain from further tests and the deployment of nuclear weapons or ballistic missiles. We call upon India to rejoin the mainstream of international opinion, to adhere unconditionally to the NPT and the CTBT and to enter into negotiations on a global treaty to stop the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons. India's relationship with each of us has been affected by these developments. We are making this clear in our own direct exchanges and dealings with the Indian Government and we call upon other states similarly to address their concerns to India. We call upon and encourage Pakistan to exercise maximum restraint in the face of these tests and to adhere to international non-proliferation norms.

NOTE: This statement was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 17 but was not issued as a White House press release. An original was not available for verification of the content of this statement.

Group of Eight Birmingham Summit Communiqué May 17, 1998

Introduction

1. We, the Heads of State or Government of eight major industrialised democracies and the President of the European Commission, met

in Birmingham to discuss issues affecting people in our own and other countries. In a world of increasing globalisation we are ever more interdependent. Our challenge is to build on