

STATEMENT BY EC PRESIDENCY ON BEHALF OF THE TWELVE AT THE UN,
29 NOVEMBER 1988

Turning now to the most important issue before us in this item we would like to stress the following:

The Twelve have taken notice with concern of the refusal by the US government to grant an entry visa to Mr Y Arafat, Chairman of the PLO, in order to visit the UN Headquarters and address the General Assembly on the question of Palestine.

The Twelve believe that in accordance with the Headquarters agreement and the opinion of legal counsel of the United Nations Mr Arafat should be allowed to address the UN Assembly in New York.

The Twelve are also firmly of the opinion that at this crucial stage of the situation regarding the Middle East it would be important not to hinder the role of the UN as a forum before which a leader of a party to the dispute would express his views on the matter.

Moreover, the Twelve feel it is necessary to maintain and encourage the momentum created by the recent decisions of the National Palestinian Council.

The Twelve call upon the US government to review the legal arguments and reconsider its decision.