ENVIRONMENT MINISTERS’ STATEMENT ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL SITUATION IN THE GULF

The Environment Ministers of the OECD countries, of Yugoslavia and the Environment Commissioner of the European Communities condemn the deliberate release by Iraq, as an act of warfare, of huge quantities of crude oil into the Gulf. It constitutes a violation of international law. This crime against Environment threatens the entire ecosystem of the Gulf and the supply of drinking water for millions of inhabitants in the region.

Ministers and the EC Commissioner insist that Iraq cease using the destruction of the environment as a weapon. Ministers and the EC Commissioner pointed to the action they have already undertaken and confirmed their readiness to make every effort in cooperation with the states of the region to combat this ecological disaster, for instance by supplying necessary equipment, personnel and know-how.

Looking beyond the present catastrophe, Ministers and the EC Commissioner pledged to strengthen the capacity of the international community to prevent and confront environmental disasters, taking particular account of the situation of developing countries.

END-OF-TEXT