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Recommended Citation

 $Khol, Barbara. \ "11\ Foreign\ Ministers\ Convene\ In\ Caracas\ To\ Discuss\ Strategies\ For\ Confronting\ Oil\ Market\ Fluctuations."\ (1991).$ https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/notisur/5981

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ISSN: 1060-4189

11 Foreign Ministers Convene In Caracas To Discuss Strategies For Confronting Oil Market Fluctuations

by Barbara Khol Category/Department: General Published: Tuesday, January 29, 1991

On Jan. 28 in Caracas (Venezuela), foreign ministers from 11 Latin American nations began discussing strategies to confront the economic impact of the war in the Persian Gulf, including the creation of an oil fund to help both importer and exporter nations in the event of price fluctuations. The Latin American region pumps 6.6 million barrels of oil daily, and consumes up to 5 million barrels. While the region exports roughly 3.5 million bpd, mainly to the US, its imports total 1.2 million bpd, mostly from the Middle East. If the ministers support an arrangement under which Latin America would be supplied first, the region would have only 1.6 million bpd left for exports. A study presented to the ministers by the Quito-based Latin American Energy Organization (OLADE) states that oil trade should be based on international market prices. The region, the study says, should also take advantage of existing infrastructure, including transport, refining and storage facilities. According to the study, Latin American refining capacity is adequate to process 6.4 million bpd, covering nearly all the oil produced in the region. Consumption of refined products is estimated at 4.4 million bpd. (Basic data from AP, 01/28/91)