THE WHITE HOUSE
CORRESPONDENCE TRACKING WORKSHEET

DATE RECEIVED: AUGUST 27, 1990

NAME OF CORRESPONDENT: MS. VIRGINIA HAMILTON

SUBJECT: URGES CONSIDERATION OF AN EMERGENCY
ALLOCATION OF FUNDS TO MAINTAIN FIRST ASYLUM
IN JORDAN FOR WOULD-BE REFUGEES AND DISPLACED
PERSONS ATTEMPTING TO FLEE IRAQ

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<th>ACTION</th>
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<td>ROUTE TO:</td>
<td>OFFICE/AGENCY (STAFF NAME)</td>
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<td>ACT CODE</td>
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SHIREE SANCHEZ

REFERRAL NOTE: __________________________

COMMENTS: ________________________________________________________________

ADDITIONAL CORRESPONDENTS: MEDIA:L INDIVIDUAL CODES: ___ ___ ___

PL MAIL USER CODES: (A) _______ (B) _______ (C) _______

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*ACTION CODES: *DISPOSITION *OUTGOING
* * *CORRESPONDENCE: *
*A-APPROPRIATE ACTION *A-ANSWERED *TYPE RESP=INITIALS *
*C-COMMENT/RECOM *B-NON-SPEC-REFERRAL *OF SIGNER *
*D-DRAFT RESPONSE *C-COMPLETED *CODE = A *
*F-FURNISH FACT SHEET *S-SUSPENDED *COMPLETED = DATE OF *
*I-INFO COPY/NO ACT NEC* * *OUTGOING *
*R-DIRECT REPLY W/COPY * * *
*S-FOR-SIGNATURE * * *
*X-INTERIM REPLY * *
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REFER QUESTIONS AND ROUTING UPDATES TO CENTRAL REFERENCE
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LETTER AT ALL TIMES AND SEND COMPLETED RECORD TO RECORDS MANAGEMENT.
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President George Bush
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We are writing to urge the U.S. government to consider an emergency allocation of significant funds to maintain first asylum in Jordan for would-be refugees and displaced persons attempting to flee Iraq.

As you know, the Jordanian government today announced that it has closed its border with Iraq for everyone except Jordanian nationals. We fear that this will likely close the only escape route available to tens of thousands of persons fearing for their lives or safety.

At the same time, we realize that Jordan finds itself in a difficult situation not of its own making and legitimately feels overwhelmed by the prospect of assisting hundreds of thousands of refugees and displaced persons.

The United States has long predicated its refugee policy on the principle of preserving first asylum. This assumes that the burden for responding to mass forced movements should not be borne alone by those states who have the misfortune of geographical location in conflict areas, but should be shared internationally. This reality has proven the basis for the leadership exerted by the United States in providing refugee assistance for countries such as Pakistan and Thailand over the course of the last decade. We believe that the current emergency in the Middle East requires similar leadership.

We realize that decision-making at this time requires the factoring in of a myriad of geopolitical considerations. We ask, however, at this critical moment, that we not lose sight of the humanitarian concerns for the first victims of conflict--innocent, uprooted civilian populations--and the need to move expeditiously and effectively to protect them.

Sincerely,

Virginia Hamilton
Assistant Director

cc: King Hussein, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
UN High Commissioner for Refugees Thorvald Stoltenberg