



SPEECH BY MR JACQUES CHIRAC PRESIDENT OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC TO THE MEETING OF THE HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT OF NATO MEMBER COUNTRIES.

Prague, thursday november 21, 2002.

President Havel has used most appropriate words to call to mind the significance of the decision we are going to take.

The enlargement of the Alliance bears further testimony to the end of the artificial division of Europe. The enlargement represents this historic moment when Europe is finally reunited, and when Europe and North America reassert the inseparable nature of their security.

>In Madrid in 1997, we supported, along with a few others, the idea of an ambitious enlargement.

Five years have passed. The vision of our continent's future, which was unable to take root at the time, is now shared by all. Seven new members will join our Alliance and we welcome them.

France is hence pleased with the outcome of the process initiated in Madrid. We are in favour of its continuation and of keeping the door to the Alliance open.