



Address by Jacques Chirac President of the French Republic on the occasion of the presentation of New Year's greetings from the Diplomatic Corps

ELYSEE PALACE, FRIDAY 4 JANUARY 2002

Mr. Prime Minister,
Ministers,
Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,
Your Excellency the Papal Nuncio,

Thank you for your words which have touched me and which have particular resonance at the close of a year which was witness to such terrible events. I too would like to express to you my most sincere best wishes and to ask you to convey to His Holiness Pope John Paul II my respectful greetings and the warmest regards of the French people.

Excellencies,

Just over a year ago, at the Millennium Summit, we had the dream of reconciliation and progress. Then our certainties were shaken by the economic downturn, the upheavals at the G8 summit in Genoa and the excesses of the Durban Conference. And suddenly, the criminal insanity of September 11 struck us at the heart.

We remember the horror, the intense trauma, the shock felt by millions of women and men who witnessed that tragedy as it struck the symbols of the greatest power. All of a sudden, the world seemed to lurch in its foundations.

And yet our peoples overcame the anxiety felt at that moment. The very next day, at the initiative of France, the Security Council reaffirmed the law: terrorism constitutes a threat to international peace and security and a riposte is therefore legitimate. Law, but also a firm hand: with extraordinary spirit, the American people, supported by the entire world, responded.

And then over the ensuing months, there were auspicious tidings from Doha with the launch of the new round of trade negotiations ; from Marrakesh with the Marrakesh Accords on the Kyoto Protocol ; from the Balkans, that historically troubled region where a political agreement was found in



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Macedonia with the support of the European Union ; from Kosovo, where the turnout of all the communities in the elections should foster the consolidation of democracy.

But the crisis touched off by September 11 is not really over. Our thoughts and actions remain focused on it. What do these attacks, as well as the response to them, teach us ? What are we to make of the changes which these events reveal ? Let me share with you France's views and proposals on these issues.

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First, Afghanistan. We must finish the job we undertook there with three goals. First, to destroy Al-Qaida and its support structure. This mission is now being completed. France took part in it from the start, since in a time of trial we stand, self-evidently, with our ally. Our Navy, Air Force and Army were engaged. We must carry this military objective through to its conclusion and limit it to Afghan territory barring irrefutable proof of the collusion of another country in organizing the attacks or sheltering those primarily responsible for these criminal acts.

Meanwhile everything must be done to foster implementation of the political agreement reached by the Afghans at the Bonn Conference. This is the only way for that country to achieve stability while ensuring respect for rights and freedoms. The future of Afghanistan is a matter for the Afghans to decide; but that future must accommodate a complex regional environment. And Afghanistan must cease to serve as a terrorist base. It must also cease to be a centre for the production of drugs.

The search for a political solution is therefore essential. This is why I have called for the United Nations to play a major role; this is why France supported the efforts of Lakhdar Brahimi; this is why it urged, from the start, that the Afghan parties meet at the earliest to establish forthwith a provisional administration for the country. This is why it also intends to support the establishment of that administration and why it is part of the international security force under the Bonn Agreements. The first French soldiers belonging to this force have just arrived in Kabul. Their mission is to facilitate the establishment of the new authorities to enable the latter to assume their responsibilities with full sovereignty.

Lastly, we must continue to provide humanitarian assistance. That is a moral duty and France is doing its part to lighten the sufferings of a people ground down by decades of war. To this must be added a reconstruction effort. We are also prepared to join in it as soon as a sound political programme has opened up real prospects for the future.

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Beyond Afghanistan, the attacks of September 11 mean that, to guarantee the security of our peoples, we must now be more vigilant.

Terrorism has occurred frequently throughout history. Always, its contempt for human life has expressed the same fanaticism, its destruction has demonstrated the same hate. But what is new in today's terrorism is its ability to strike our societies at their core.

The attack on the Indian Parliament on December 13 is a new case in point. France, like the international community, condemned it in the strongest terms. France calls on Pakistan to redouble its efforts to deprive the terrorists of their bases. It calls on both countries to exercise restraint to ensure that this terrible event does not end in armed conflict.

Against terrorists, our societies must defend themselves with determination and efficiency. We must prevent terrorists from operating from States. We must make sure that they are never able to lay their hands on biological, chemical or nuclear materials. We must take action to keep them from exploring modern communications resources and taking advantage of the differences between the laws of different States. We must choke off both their clandestine and their legal sources of financing. We must make certain that those who perpetrated these crimes and their accomplices find no refuge or asylum. We must everywhere hunt them down.

We are waging this fight together with the Government. France is engaged in this fight with determination. It was at France's initiative that the G8 undertook, at the Lyon Summit in 1996, to combat money laundering. It was France which proposed last November that the jurisdiction of FATF, the instrument used to implement that policy, be extended to cover terrorism. It was also at France's initiative that the Terrorist Financing Convention was concluded, the main provisions of which were included in Security Council Resolution 1373.

But the struggle against terrorism cannot be based on cooperation and good faith alone. Countries will always seek to sidestep their obligations, either directly or for lack of proper oversight. France therefore calls for increased surveillance, provision of incentives and the adoption of enforcement measures against States which refuse to cooperate.

To ensure legitimacy, these enforcement measures must not be unilateral. A basis for them already exists in the Security Council which has a mandate to act on a case by case basis under Resolution 1373. But we must also make certain that all agreements on the fight against terrorism, as well as all agreements on non-proliferation, are accompanied by a system of effective international oversight. New or additional work will be needed on many instruments, particularly the Biological Weapons



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Convention. Providing it with an effective and universal verification mechanism must remain a priority objective.

Finally, the crisis we are going through reminds us of the destabilizing potential of countries in which the State is incapable of enforcing law and order. All such territories where terrorist trafficking and networks can flourish must be looked at in a new light. The international community cannot allow such lawless zones to develop. It is the responsibility of the Security Council to address this problem.

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Excellencies,

An analysis of the events of September 11 also requires that we consider the gap between the virtually unanimous condemnation of the attacks by governments and the reactions of certain peoples.

Some see in these reactions a confirmation that the 21st century will witness a clash of civilizations; that Al-Qaida was acting on behalf of Islam; that it was expressing rejection of an arrogant and imperialistic western world.

Again I strongly condemn those who would equate Islam and terrorism. That is both wrong and unjust. Like the other great religions, Islam carries universal values. Any religious extremism, with its accompanying fanaticism and intolerance, is based on a crude distortion of the essential messages of religions.

As to the reference to the clash of civilizations, that is a trap set by the terrorists, whose goal is to pit people against each other, culture against culture, religion against religion.

But we must be attentive to these reactions on the part of peoples, and to the scale of the anti-globalization protest movements. While we must reject intellectual confusion and views that are at times simplistic, we must not be blind or deaf. Conflicts which, if perpetuated, can only give rise to frustration and excess must be resolved. We must address the anguish and distress of peoples. We must not leave them with no hope of development, with no hope of peace in dignity.

In the Middle East there has been too much bloodshed and too much violence since Camp David. Israelis and Palestinians are locked in a vicious circle of violence and lose sight of the essentials: security for the Israelis, in a peaceful environment conducive to cooperation; the creation of a viable State for the Palestinians, ensuring progress with dignity.



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Fear, frustration and anger must be overcome. The Palestinian Authority must show no weakness towards terrorism because it is leading Palestine into chaos. Israel must not weaken Yasser Arafat and subject resumption of dialogue to conditions which cannot be met, since that enables the extremists to call the shots.

The time has come for the international community to weigh the risks which an end of the peace process would entail, and revive it. Ten years ago a great hope was born in Madrid; just under a year ago, at Sharm El-Sheikh, the meeting of the parties and countries that are their friends gave new hope. This is what must be achieved again today, by establishing negotiations. I hope there will be full engagement by the United States, with the support of Europe, to impose this approach, since it is the only one.

Meanwhile at a time when the destinies of peoples are intermingled as never before, a dialogue among cultures, as a true pledge of peace, must be fostered, of course. States can contribute by focusing the debate on this theme. Francophonie will focus on this in Beirut next October. I further propose that UNESCO organize an ambitious programme of meetings bringing together a broad spectrum of representatives of the great civilizations, chosen from within our civil societies, to discuss our common future. These meetings could be held in highly symbolic venues such as the great library in Alexandria, the Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, the University of Salamanca or the Sorbonne.

Lastly, it is time to be more bold in our approach to the financing of global public goods and of development. Urgently needed infrastructure in the poor countries, the fight against global warming, control of soil deterioration and sustainable management of freshwater resources all require considerable investment.

An increase in official development assistance is imperative. But this will not be enough to cover needs. Other sources of financing must be called on. These exist, since globalization is generating immense wealth by itself.

Let us be pragmatic in our approach to the international aid debate. By levying, under a procedure which remains to be defined, a very small part of this new wealth, we can provide the additional resources which the world needs. More private sector funding must also be raised in addition to public sector financing, with the goal of concluding a new global pact between the North and the South in Johannesburg.

And France, meanwhile, will be unremitting in its endeavours for Africa. In Genoa at the G8 and in Laeken at the European Council, I called for us all to seize the historic opportunity of the "New Partnership for Africa's Development". It has been proposed by the Africans themselves. It meets the concerns of the northern countries, which must show



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generosity. This is a chance to make a new start.

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Excellencies,

Since September 11, we no longer see the world in the same light. These events and their aftermath have revealed threats which must be countered and weaknesses which must be corrected, but also positive trends which must be encouraged.

Never in the last fifty years have the main powers known such agreement. Never have the United States, Europe, Russia, China and other major political areas in the world known this degree of unity. Each has seen the extent to which its own security is connected to that of the others.

The many summit meetings have demonstrated this. We have a responsibility to see to it that this spirit of dialogue is sustained over the long haul. This responsibility is first and foremost incumbent on the United States. This will be necessary if we are to find common solutions to the world's major problems.

To give but one example, there is a need to ensure strategic equilibrium in this new century. At a time when the United States has just withdrawn from the ABM Treaty, we must define the elements of a new binding strategic framework. This is a goal which concerns us all.

I hope, in this context, that the relationship based on cooperation which has taken shape in recent times between Russia and the West will be further strengthened. This is crucial for the stability of Europe and the world.

France, which initiated the 1997 Founding Act, is working today to ensure that the strategic choice made by Moscow receives an open response. Russia and the NATO Member States must work together on military and defence issues to reach common conclusions, even common decisions.

And at a time when the European Union is acquiring the capability to conduct military operations, let us make it possible for Russia to join in. Beyond the military issues, that great country must be a global partner of the European Union. Together we can do better at dealing with many security issues and in particular those relating to organized crime, trafficking in human beings and the drugs trade. In this spirit France proposed in Laeken the creation of an internal security council bringing together the Fifteen and Russia on an equal footing. As you know, our partners have accepted this in principle.

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Europe has learned the lessons from the events of September 11, but much progress remains to be made.

Our common identity, symbolized by the moment of silence observed across the continent at noon on September 14, has asserted itself. This identity is rooted in our common values: peace, democracy, a commitment to human dignity. It is now further shored up by the use of a common currency. This is a historic moment for the Union. The European economy has acquired, in the euro, a stable and sound currency. We are creating a zone of monetary stability covering more than 300 million people which will strengthen the world monetary system. But it is not just an economic Europe which we are building with the euro, it is also a Europe of our citizens who are henceforth united by a common asset - their currency, which they embraced confidently and readily from the first day onward.

The Union also mobilized rapidly to respond to the need for security expressed by its citizens. With the adoption of a European arrest warrant, the legal system has taken a step forward whose ultimate implications are not yet fully appreciated. It reflects the confidence which we have in each other's democracies and justice systems. The Union is the proper level at which to protect citizens from terrorism and organized crime. Today, more than ever, Europe is at once self-evident, necessary and urgent.

But Europe must make further progress if it is to be able to take collective action, particularly military, in a crisis such as that in Afghanistan. We have set up the instruments for diplomacy and defence. But it is not enough to simply declare the Union "operational". Europe must now take concrete action on the ground, because it is by effectively carrying out the responsibilities we have assigned to it that Europe will take its proper place in the world.

In the Balkans, the European Union has played a major role for more than ten years now in ensuring stability and the victory of democracy. European soldiers have been in the front lines. But the Union must do more. It has, as such, both the vocation and the means to take on an operational role in this region. I do not doubt that it will have the determination to do so and France will be making proposals to this effect.

And beyond that we must make certain that Europe conducts truly active, consistent and inventive diplomacy. This will be one of the main goals of the fundamental reform of the European Union which will be engaging us over the next two years. The other goals are equally important: bridging the gap between European citizens and their institutions, making representativity compatible with efficiency, meeting the need for leadership in a Union with more than twenty-five member States.



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These are the main issues which the Convention on the future of Europe must address. The presence at its head of President ValØry Giscard d'Estaing, whose commitment to Europe is known to all, is a major asset in preparing for the great negotiation for which France has great ambitions.

Europe has much to contribute : because it was built on the ruins of war, its message is one of reconciliation ; because it has managed to combine the single market and solidarity, it offers a model for a balanced society ; and because it was built in the respect for Nations, it is a successful example of the dialogue among cultures.

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Excellencies,

The path which Europe is following is that of unity in diversity, of progress in peace. This is the message of the founding fathers. It is a message of hope. It is this message which I ask you to convey, with my warmest personal regards, to your Heads of State and Government, many of whom are my friends. And to each and every one of you I express my sincerest wishes for happiness and prosperity.

I thank you.

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