



PRESIDENCE DE LA REPUBLIQUE

CLOSING SPEECH BY JACQUES CHIRAC
PRESIDENT OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC

TO THE FRENCH AMBASSADORS' CONFERENCE

FRIDAY 27 AUGUST 2004

Prime Minister,
President of the Senate,
President of the National Assembly,
Minister of Foreign Affairs,
Ministers,
Members of Parliament,
Ambassadors,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure for me to welcome you to the Elysée Palace for the conclusion of the Ambassadors' Conference which has taken place with the participation of Michel Barnier and the members of Government who assist him in his work.

When I spoke to you here last year, I mentioned the changes taking place in a world that is seeking new equilibria and new perspectives. Significant progress has been achieved in the past months.

In Europe, enlargement, which was our ambition and set our horizons since the fall of Communism, is now a fact. Europe, now reunited, has got off to a good start with the agreement on the Constitutional Treaty.

In the Middle East, the unanimous vote of Resolution 1546 by the Security Council made it possible to restore Iraq's sovereignty and paved the way for the return of the United Nations. This is merely the start of a long and what is daily proving to be an arduous and hazardous process, but, at least, we have finally embarked on it.

We have made a start on the long-range task of addressing the threat of terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Already, at the United Nations, at the G8 and among Europeans, more effective instruments have been drawn up within the framework of existing treaties.

The U.S. presidential election is due to take place in a few weeks' time. As a friend and ally of the United States for over two centuries now, France believes that, today and tomorrow, a balanced and dynamic transatlantic partnership is essential to meet our common challenges.



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At the same time, the positive transitions of Russia and China, as well as of India, Brazil, Mexico and South Africa and of many groups of countries engaged in regional integration processes, confirm the nascent reality of a multipolar world. It is our collective responsibility to devise the ground rules for that world, within the framework of the multilateral system founded by the United Nations Charter which is the law that applies to all of us.

Defending our interests and defending a vision rooted in the values of the Republic should prompt us to constantly adapt our framework for analysis and action to this new situation. In order to map out, beyond enlargement, the future of the European project. To address the threats to our security. To promote a more democratic, more humane and fairer globalization. To serve our country's and its citizens' influence and dynamism, to support their will to go into business, innovate and create. This is what I want to invite you to do today, you who are prime carriers of France's influence abroad.

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Almost a century ago, the rupture of the European continent's equilibrium threw our nations, and the world with them, into a tragic spiral of confrontation and division. The entire history of European construction has aimed to overcome this logic of rivalry and war and to cause peace and democracy to take root on our continent. The accession of Central and Eastern European countries marks the completion of this renaissance. Europe, reborn and reconciled, must now turn with confidence towards its new horizons.

The adoption of a Constitution, of which I put forward the idea before the Bundestag in June 2000, is laying the foundations for a more democratic, more effective, and stronger Europe. It is the outcome of efforts by all, in particular of the determination of the Franco-German couple, which is irreplaceable owing to its historic legitimacy and its driving power.

For our future and that of our children, I will next year call on all French women and French men to rally to express their adherence to this new project for Europe through a referendum.

A Europe I would wish capable of making its voice heard on the international stage and of assuming its responsibilities, including in the military field, in the framework of the European Security and Defence Policy and of NATO.

A Europe that must be in the forefront of global economic competition and enjoy growth as strong as that in other regions of the world. A Europe that must strengthen its social model that is founded on justice and solidarity.

A Europe with a common trade policy and a single currency that will finally put in place the elements of true economic governance. Let us strengthen the coordination of economic and budgetary policies among eurozone member countries. Let us draw inspiration from the United States model to build an



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open and constructive dialogue between governments and the European Central Bank on the European economic strategy for growth and employment.

It is also time for Europe, at the instigation of the next Commission, to implement a more dynamic industrial and scientific policy to compete on equal terms on the global economic stage. Let us give the enlarged Europe the infrastructure needed to ensure its cohesion. Let us adopt a European competition policy that truly takes account of the realities of international competition. Let us resolutely support the creation of European industrial champions. We have all the assets and talents required to succeed.

Following on from the initiative adopted last February with Germany and Great Britain, let us invest massively in research and innovation. Let us develop major scientific projects. Together, the Europeans can cover all areas, including space, nanotechnologies, the environment, biotechnologies and medical research. Let us take the lead in the energies of the future and realize, in particular, the ITER project in Europe, at Cadarache. Let us organize the emergence of high-level university centres that will attract students and researchers from all over the world.

The Europe of tomorrow also calls for forms of financial solidarity towards the new Member States. EU accession has already increased dynamism in those States and their catching up contributes to growth throughout Europe. This solidarity effort, however, should be implemented within a controlled and rigorous budgetary framework, with an equitable sharing of the burden truly reflecting the realities of the Europe of today and no longer those of the Europe of yesterday.

Those who benefit from these new forms of solidarity should, in return, shoulder their share of responsibilities. This is the condition for fair competition within the internal market, in particular in terms of tax, social and environmental standards.

The issue of the geographic extension of the European project is raised today. This is consistent with our objective of having peace and democracy take root on our continent. Bulgaria and Romania are expected to join the Union in 2007. Accession negotiations with Croatia are to begin early in 2005. Prospects have been opened up with the other Western Balkan countries. The European Council will give its opinion in December on the possible opening of negotiations with Turkey. The Union is founded on political and democratic values that must be respected by all. If Turkey effectively meets all the conditions required, it will be possible for discussions to start. In any event, we will need to take all the necessary time – it will be long and difficult – to enable that country to share the Union's acquis. But, in the world of tomorrow, the Union's interest, like that of Turkey, is to travel the same road.

The construction of denser and more appealing neighbourly relations with Union rim countries must be actively pursued.



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First with Russia, to which we are bound by a strategic partnership. Since this great country, which is experiencing all-round positive transition, is destined to be, in its own right, one of the poles of tomorrow's world. France supports President Putin in his reform endeavours and his determination to anchor a strong Russia in the democratic camp. It is in this spirit of friendship and confidence that Chancellor Schröder and I will be meeting him in a few days' time in Sochi.

This ambitious neighbourhood policy should also develop in the direction of the countries of the southern shore of the Mediterranean, with a view to their strengthened association with Europe. I would like France to seize the opportunity of the 10th anniversary of the Barcelona Process in 2005 to propose new developments.

On our doorstep, Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia are striving, with courage and determination, to meet the aspirations of their many young people who are eager to learn and undertake and impatient to use their great enthusiasm to serve economic and social progress. Europe must help them to meet this challenge in a spirit of solidarity and generosity. On our southern borders, we need a united and stable Maghreb grouping constituting an area of democracy, freedom and prosperity for its populations. We should encourage the five Maghreb countries to implement the regional integration process they have launched. Let us help them in their development-related efforts by effectively implementing the forms of enhanced cooperation established at Naples in principle in December of last year. Our relations with the Maghreb will remain more than ever before a political and strategic priority of our external action.

France, for its part, is united with those countries by exceptionally close-knit bilateral ties. It has overhauled its partnership with Morocco and vigorously supports the modernization and development process in Tunisia. The signing of a friendship treaty with Algeria in 2005 will lay the foundations of a sound, ambitious and forward-looking relationship.

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Ambassadors, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Reconciliation and regional integration as achieved by Europe could be a source of hope for all peoples still burdened today with the inevitability of history.

First, in the Middle East. For how long will the world condone this tragedy which is destroying lives and peoples, jeopardizing development and stability in a region that is crucial to everyone's security, and creating a gulf of misunderstanding and resentment between cultures, civilizations and religions?

It is essential that the international community assume its responsibilities. That it acknowledge the disastrous results of its inaction and stop being so overcautious. That it assert at long last and unambiguously that terrorism and the negation of others must be condemned, denounced and fought



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uncompromisingly, but that occupation and settlements are unacceptable and must stop. That it reject the policy of preconditions that plays into the hands of extremists and terrorists. And finally, that it echo those who, in Israel as in the Arab world, are striving to make the voice of reason and peace heard over the roar of battle.

The terms of a fair and lasting settlement are known and were outlined at Camp David, Taba, Beirut and Geneva. We must now make headway, because peace is possible. The world can no longer afford to depend on the goodwill of either side.

The creation in 2005 of a sovereign, democratic and viable Palestinian State living side by side with Israel in peace and security is still our objective. To achieve this, we must encourage, or even impose, the resumption of a negotiation process between the parties. The announced withdrawal from Gaza can only be viewed as a stage in the implementation of the Road Map. An international presence is indispensable to give peace the best possible chance of success. France and Europe are prepared to take part in it.

Finally, with a view to a just and global peace, we must concurrently resume work on the settlement of the Syrian and Lebanese tracks of the conflict.

France, as you know, is deeply attached to respect for the independence and full sovereignty of Lebanon. The upcoming election, for a six-year term, of a new President in accordance with the current constitution must make possible the free exercise of democracy. This election must mark a fresh start for the implementation of the essential structural, economic and administrative reforms which were provided for at the Paris 2 Conference. The consolidation of national understanding and the restoration of confidence depend on it - confidence on the part of the Lebanese in themselves, their democratic institutions and their future; and confidence also on the part of the European Union and the international community in a Lebanon able to carry out its sovereign endeavour to achieve positive transition and modernization.

In Iraq, the devolution of sovereignty to the Transitional Government under UNSCR 1546 commits us all to the same objective, namely the forming of a democratically elected government and return to civil peace in a unified Iraq.

France, which has supported the restoration of a sovereign Iraq fully integrated into its regional environment, wants to accompany it on the road to recovery. With a view to the elections scheduled for early 2005, France is open to dialogue with the Iraqi authorities on all subjects - the training of security forces, the debt and any other issue related to reconstruction and to the well-being of the Iraqi people. It is in this spirit that I will be receiving the Iraqi President in early September.

In Afghanistan, the international community must work towards ensuring the success of the presidential elections scheduled for October, as they are a crucial stage in the country's renaissance. Subsequently, the elected



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government must determinedly take action against drugs, with the support of all. France will continue to play its full role in the reconstruction effort, at military level especially.

Africa, with the African Union and NEPAD, is taking its future into its own hands. France is accompanying Africa in this process. We are working with the British in preparing the next G8 Summit at which support for Africa will be a priority.

Peace is a prerequisite for the success of these development efforts. The United Nations is resolutely engaged alongside Africa to help it overcome the crises it faces. France has mobilized by sending thousands of troops to assist in the reconciliation process and in restoring security, through political support and humanitarian assistance and by increasing and overhauling its official development assistance.

This commitment will only bear fruit if Africa itself organizes to put an end to aggressive policies and the use of violence. The progress made in building up African peacekeeping forces hold out hope, as well as the resolute commitment of African Heads of State to the processes for dialogue and reconciliation.

In the face of a possible stalemate, efforts must be pursued and stepped up. In Côte d'Ivoire, where the parties must comply with the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement in good faith and implement without delay all commitments made last month in Accra; in Darfur, where the scale of the humanitarian disaster justifies energetic mobilization of international aid, France will continue to actively participate in its deployment. France supports the efforts of the African Union to facilitate a political solution to the crisis. But on the ground, there is a continuing lack of security which makes more necessary than ever the full implementation of the measures provided for in UNSCR 1556. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, the transition process remains vulnerable to a variety of attempts at internal and external destabilization but is the only lasting solution to the crisis.

With the introduction of peer review, this logic of accountability extends to the review of strategies for development and the establishment of the rule of law. I reaffirm the commitment that is the basis for the partnership between the international community and NEPAD, a commitment to solidarity and to confidence in Africa: no country that conducts sound policies should see its efforts jeopardized by a lack of resources. This should be the leitmotif for the third meeting of the Africa Partnership Forum to be held this autumn in the United States.

Concern and tension are fuelled not only by regional crises, but also by global threats such as terrorism and weapons of mass destruction proliferation. International action is intensifying to reduce these threats, by implementing UNSCR 1540, the G8 Global Partnership, the Proliferation Security Initiative and the European Security Strategy. And with the NPT Review Conference and the



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negotiation by next year of more stringent multilateral rules for controlling the spread of dangerous technologies. In this framework, control mechanisms with all necessary resources must be implemented with the utmost rigour. However, the countries that comply with those regimes must not be restricted in choosing the energy policies on which their development depends.

We would like to maintain the dialogue conducted with Iran by France, Germany and the United Kingdom in close liaison with Russia, the United States and our European partners. It will be possible to assess the efforts undertaken for almost a year now at the next session of the IAEA Board of Governors. Iran must imperatively understand that it is responsible for creating the conditions for confidence on the part of the international community, in particular by respecting its commitment to suspend enrichment. Restoring confidence must go hand in hand with the cooperation Iran needs for its development.

Vis-à-vis North Korea, France supports the six-way nuclear crisis talks conducted under the aegis of China, that are to lead to the complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantlement of its military nuclear programme.

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Ambassadors, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Globalization is the outcome of economic and political choices rooted in our belief that freedom and openness further prosperity and progress. It is for globalization to serve mankind, not the opposite, that we are pursuing this action aimed at controlling and humanizing it.

The United Nations system will in future remain at the heart of this effort. It must be reformed in order to strengthen its legitimacy and effectiveness. In a few weeks' time the high-level group set up by the Secretary-General will be submitting its conclusions. France, for its part, remains committed to the enlargement of the Security Council membership in both the permanent and the non-permanent categories. France hopes that the United Nations reform will also make it possible to reinforce the economic and social governance of globalization.

In Monterrey, I suggested creating a political body for this purpose. This idea is gaining ground. We must move forward without waiting for it to be fully established, since the G8's composition no longer fully reflects the world's economic reality. I would like a debate to be launched on its evolution, in order to take account of the voice of major emerging countries, as well as of a certain number of developing countries; in order to better articulate its work with that of the relevant multilateral bodies; in order for it to prefigure the impetus-providing, coordinating body I referred to.

Globalization raises the social issue on a global scale. While it enables hundreds of thousands of women and men to have access to prosperity, almost



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half of humanity still faces a highly insecure future. The modern world, in its frantic race for competitiveness, is turning a blind eye to intolerable practices such as slavery or child exploitation, which are fundamentally in violation of human rights.

In order to pursue the debate on development issues, at the invitation of President Lula da Silva of Brazil and the Director-General of the International Labour Office, I will go to New York on 20 September to make proposals on the changes required.

Social change: I would like us to revive efforts to define the minimum social framework for internationalization of trade exchanges. This implies strengthening the international regime of corporate social responsibility, whether in terms of the voluntary commitments of the businesses themselves or of State obligations in this respect.

Financial change: development needs resources. The report that was submitted to me by the technical group on the financing of the Millennium Development Goals has opened up avenues that are both generous and economically realistic. As we increase our official development assistance, we will table these ideas with a view to the decisions to be taken in 2005 during the United Nations General Assembly Special Session to ensure that the international community fulfils its commitments, since it would be unrealistic to claim that we will do so under present circumstances.

Environmental change: to address the environmental crisis, climatic upheavals and depletion of biodiversity, there is no doubt barely a generation for us to react. Ratification of the Kyoto Protocol by Russia would pave the way for its entry into force. I am convinced that Russia will prove capable of choosing to do so. In addition, we must step up discussions on the next steps to combat climate change. We must strengthen global environmental governance organs. The group of States set up at France's instigation to discuss the creation of a United Nations Environment Organization will submit its proposals in 2005.

We will be working on all these issues in close collaboration with the United Kingdom, which will hold the Presidency of the European Union and the G8 next year.

To take a different approach to globalization, we must succeed in combining the solidarity networks that unite us throughout the world. The Francophonie Summit scheduled for November in Ouagadougou will help adopt a common strategy for achieving sustainable development and the Millennium Development Goals. It will also enable Francophones to confirm their commitment to serving cultural diversity and supporting the adoption of a convention by UNESCO in 2005. At the Summit, I will recall the importance of the WTO cultural exception regime. I will encourage countries wanting to join the WTO not to give up their freedom to introduce government policies for supporting cultural and artistic creation, and to preserve their identity as a condition for the dialogue between cultures.



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The agreement reached at the WTO in July will help relaunch the Doha Round. The determination of the European Union, within which France has played its full role together with the Council, has helped to achieve a fairer sharing of efforts in the agricultural field among the leading world trade players. The negotiations that are now going to continue on that basis should achieve ambitious and balanced results, in all areas, serving world growth and development

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Ambassadors, Ladies and Gentlemen,

A France that is listened to, respected and present in the world is a France more assured of its future and of the well-being of its inhabitants.

Millions of jobs and the future of the French economy depend on our exports and the international competitiveness of our businesses that now map out their development and investment strategies at European and world level.

We must further capitalize on this asset. You are essential players in France's international outreach and therefore have special responsibility in this respect.

French businesses are in the forefront of global competition in many areas. Yet we are failing to take sufficient advantage of the potential of many countries, since our exports still focus too much on our traditional European markets.

I expect you personally to be the partners of French businesses, small and medium-sized enterprises in particular, to help them identify opportunities and accompany them in their projects. I expect in particular those of you who represent France in the emerging countries of Asia, Latin America and Africa to totally commit yourselves to promoting in those countries the development of French exports and investment. I further expect you to act as the promoters of our country with foreign investors.

In a few weeks' time, I will be going to Vietnam for the ASEM Summit it will be my second official visit to the country. I will then go to China to launch the Year of France and implement the partnership that binds us to this major pole of the 21st century. I will be accompanied during both these visits by many business leaders.

The global economy is increasingly knowledge based. Capacity for innovation in the global economy constitutes a decisive comparative advantage. Our universities, specialist higher education establishments and research centres must intensify their international activities. I expect you to support them in that effort, just as you foster the taste for our culture and our language.

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Ambassadors, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Under oversight of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs you are serving France, its ambition, influence, and outreach.

In this open world in which the difference between internal and external action is fading, maintaining a global diplomatic network is not a survival of the past, nor a luxury. It is a vital asset. This is why I am making sure that the credibility and effectiveness of our external action are affirmed. Our diplomatic tool must have the resources required to fulfil its missions.

Our network is an irreplaceable instrument of influence. Indeed, a France with its eyes open to the world, a France present on all continents, carries greater weight in Europe.

This is why I expect you to carry France's message all over the world, including in conditions that are difficult at times. A message of peace, humanism and progress.

Beyond the diversity of your missions and assignments, you are preparing the future of our country and of each of its citizens. A future towards which France, at the heart of a unified and strong Europe, is looking with confidence.

Thank you.

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