



**Letter from M. Jacques Chirac, President of the Republic, to 145 Heads of State and Government inviting them to join in establishing an international tax on plane tickets designed to finance the fight against the major pandemics, such as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria.**

Le PrØsident de la RØpublique

Paris, 26 July 2005

Dear Mr. President,

Almost a year ago, on September 20, 2004, nearly one hundred and ten countries gathered in New York at the initiative of the President of Brazil, Mr. Luiz InÆcio Lula da Silva, and gave their support to a Declaration on the Action Against Hunger and Poverty, urging the international community to mobilize and act more boldly.

Progress has been made since then, and many countries, including the members of the European Union, have announced sharp increases in their development assistance. But budgetary aid alone will not suffice to meet the financial demands of the Millennium Development Goals. Ampler, more stable and more predictable flows are needed in order to enable the poor countries to finance their human development programmes in sectors such as education, health and infrastructures, which call for continuous efforts over a very long period.

We therefore need to devise innovative development financing mechanisms. On the political side, the IMF and World Bank Development Committee has acknowledged the importance of these mechanisms, as for instance on the occasion of the High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development, that took place in New York on June 27-28 within the framework of the UN General Assembly. More recently, their importance was acknowledged by the Heads of State and Government at the Gleneagles Summit. Moreover, the work done by the task force on innovative sources of financing, set up in 2004 by Brazil, Chile and France, subsequently joined by Spain, Germany and Algeria, has helped to clarify the contours of such a mechanism.

For its part, France has proposed that an international solidarity levy to be collected by each government, in accordance with internationally coordinated



## PRESIDENCE DE LA REPUBLIQUE

procedures, be implemented forthwith. We recommend that the opportunity provided by the UN 2005 Millennium Summit on the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, in September, be seized with a view to:

- first, securing recognition, in the declaration to be adopted by all members, of the crucial role of innovative forms of financing, as a means of complementing existing budgetary mechanisms, in working to achieve the Millennium Development Goals;
- and, second, launching the first projects aimed at raising significant funds in the service of major causes, and demonstrating that these mechanisms are practicable.

With that in mind, I am writing to invite you to join in establishing an international solidarity contribution on airline tickets designed to finance, among others, the fight against HIV/Aids, tuberculosis and malaria, one of the most urgent needs of our time.

Numerous countries have expressed their support for this proposal, as have the heads of international institutions. The solidarity contribution would take the form of a small levy on airline tickets sold to passengers flying from airports situated on the soil of countries taking part in the mechanism. The mechanism would be simple to implement, practically neutral from an economic standpoint, and would have to allow for the level of development and specific characteristics of each of the participating countries. The lessons learned from this first step would serve as a springboard for more far-reaching programmes in the future.

My hope is that, in the weeks between now and the September Summit, we can gather around this plan all those who share this ambition. Your aides and representatives will be approached shortly with a view to clarifying the contours of this proposal and examining the possibility of your country supporting it.

If the September Summit does serve to launch this plan, it will mark an historic moment of hope, mobilization and action. It would give me great pleasure if [COUNTRY NAME] were to take part in it.

Please accept, Mr. President, the expression of my highest consideration.

Jacques Chirac

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