



Press conference given by M. Jacques Chirac, President of the Republic, following the Gleneagles G8 (excerpts)

Gleneagles, 8 July 2005

THE PRESIDENT Ladies and gentlemen, this summit is drawing to a close and I'd like to begin by expressing my gratitude to the United Kingdom for her welcome, here in Scotland, an old nation with which France has for a very, very long time maintained special and very warm relations ever since the Auld Alliance.

LONDON BOMBINGS

Despite the tragic circumstances, this summit has been absolutely perfectly organized. My thoughts understandably go first to the victims of the barbaric terrorist attacks which hit London and inspire in all French people, as in everyone, both feelings of solidarity with the United Kingdom in this dreadful ordeal, and feelings of horror at the methods used. (...)

I want once again to pay tribute to the British Prime Minister's sang-froid and resolve in these circumstances. All of us together, yesterday at the meeting with five emerging countries, today with seven African countries, demonstrated our solidarity, our unity against terrorism. We have also stepped up our counter-terrorist measures. As far as France is concerned, I gave the government yesterday a number of instructions in this respect. I don't know whether the terrorists intended to disrupt our discussions on the two essential subjects of our debates. In that case, they undoubtedly failed.

CLIMATE CHANGE/KYOTO

Firstly, we achieved some substantial results on both the climate and Africa. (...) The agreement obtained, even though it doesn't go quite as far as France would have liked, has a great virtue in that it re-establishes the essential dialogue and cooperation both between the industrialized countries, those which ratified Kyoto and those which didn't i.e. the United States, and between the industrialized and emerging countries. Indeed, everyone clearly understands that, given the dangers we face on the climate front, our only chance of changing things is through united action. And this united action requires us to be genuinely united when it comes to the mechanisms we use and to have convergent approaches.

That, in reality, was the success of this G8 meeting. The aim isn't, of course, to replace multilateral action by an informal dialogue. For us the Kyoto Protocol remains the rule and the law of international action, but the marked



shift of the American position in the very last few days made it possible to end the deadlock which was, I repeat, extremely dangerous for the action's effectiveness and so for the balance of the world.

AFRICA/DEVELOPMENT FINANCING

Our discussions today, first of all in the G8 format, then with seven African heads of State and government invited by the United Kingdom, by the British Prime Minister, were devoted to Africa and financing development. And, as you know, France has always considered this a priority and I hope a further step forward will be taken at December's Africa-France Conference in Bamako.

MDG

The essential task in Gleneagles was to take decisions enabling the United Nations Summit in New York on the Millennium Development Goals to be successful. It's a particularly important summit: will we or won't we achieve the goals set for the Millennium in the fight against poverty. If we had failed here, there would have been certainty of failure in New York. The success in finding an agreement between the Eight, after discussion with the emerging countries and African representatives, is a very important step towards finding an agreement at UN level in September.

AFRICA/G8

Overall, Africa is a bit healthier, particularly thanks to a growth rate of around 5% over the past few years. It nevertheless still lags very far behind in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. It can probably catch up, but we must give ourselves the means to do this. And this has been what we have been working on today. On the Africans' side, this requires efforts in the area of peace and harmony between peoples, that of good governance and of the fight against corruption, human development and regional integration. On the G8 side, there's a strategic choice. This choice was envisaged at the G8 summit in Genoa. Clear memories don't remain of it because of a number of incidents which took place at the time which saw the idea launched of African cooperation.

This was confirmed and given a strong boost at the Kananaskis G8, particularly prompted by the then Canadian Prime Minister, Jean Chr tien, and I paid tribute to his vision of things and his extremely positive action. Then, at the Evian summit, France pursued this, with the concept of a partnership with Africa, based on the NEPAD process. And here we have given a fresh boost to the process as the British presidency wished. ODA We all made commitments, particularly on official development assistance. Europe confirms that it will bear the brunt of the effort, after deciding a few weeks ago to raise its official development assistance to 0.56% of GDP in 2010. This means 32 billion more including 16 billion for Africa official development assistance in 2010 compared with 2005. So we're not tinkering round the edges, we're doing what's essential. The United States and Japan have also decided to make an important effort with respect to their official development assistance.



HIPC DEBT CANCELLATION/INTERMEDIATE COUNTRIES/NIGERIA

We also confirmed the agreement on the cancellation of the multilateral debt which the finance ministers had achieved a fortnight ago. I called for new efforts for the intermediate countries because there's something politically and morally unfair about abolishing, cancelling the debt of a number of highly-indebted countries and taking no measures for countries whose incomes and gross products are a little bit higher and have often made efforts to reach this situation.

And they aren't getting any benefit. Typical cases: for example, El Salvador, in Latin America, surrounded by countries whose debts have been cancelled, who has nothing at all, and, in Africa, Gabon. Consequently, I stressed how essential it was I've already said this at several G8s to take measures to help the debt of intermediate countries for, I repeat, both political and moral reasons.

We also took advantage of this session to decide once and for all on an agreement on the cancellation of Nigeria's debt, which presented a special problem as regards both substance and procedure. All in all, we are pledging to increase official development assistance by \$50 billion, including \$25 billion for Africa, by 2010. Of course, we have to go further, faster, but all the same it's a very positive signal.

NEW YORK SUMMIT

Some not among our African colleagues, who appreciated this effort can rightly say that it isn't enough, that we must go further, which is true and what France feels. Perhaps we'll be able to try and go further, particularly in terms of innovative financing, I'm going to come back to this at the New York meeting. But I'd simply like to point out that it's easier, and will be easier in New York, to push open wider a half-open door than to come up against a closed door which doesn't want to open. And so from this point of view, the fact that we have opened the door, that it's half open is a positive sign for the New York summit decisions.

INNOVATIVE FINANCING MECHANISMS

The G8 summit also adopted decisions on two innovative financing mechanisms. As you know, France was one of the promoters and even the key one. We won't be able to finance what's lacking in terms of official development assistance out of State budgets. We can regret and condemn this, but it's a fact. And consequently, we have to find complementary financing, hence the idea of innovative financing. That was the conclusion of the report of a working group led by M. Jean-Pierre Landau, to whom I want to express my high regard and gratitude, and especially the result of the efforts of the President who is here, to whom I address my warm greetings, expressing to him too my tremendous esteem and gratitude. He did a huge job in convincing everyone, and particularly the G8 members, of the validity of the French approach. This



success is largely due to him and I want to stress this and thank him.

PLANE TICKET LEVY/IFF

One of the mechanisms is an international solidarity levy on plane tickets which is going to start by financing the purchase of AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria drugs. The other is the International Finance Facility, a British proposal which we have supported from the outset, in a climate of a sort of fairly general indifference, but in the end we got a result. The first experimental application will be to pay for vaccination, and then these contributions (...), in particular the air ticket levy and, I hope, in the coming years new levies or new international taxes, can be used for reimbursing IFF loans. And so we're going to launch these mechanisms at September's United Nations summit on development.

GLOBAL AIDS FUND/REPLENISHMENT/WHO MEDICINES AGREEMENT

On the subject of the fight against AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis, we pledged to ensure the successful replenishment of the Global Fund, with the replenishment meeting to take place in September. We need significantly to increase resources. For her part, as you know, France has decided to double her contribution and continue ranking second behind the United States for contributions to the Global Fund. We also confirmed the WHO agreement on medicines and our goal is universal access to treatment in 2010 for everyone with AIDS, which is, here too, a positive step in an unquestionable direction.

TRADE/AFRICA/TRADE PREFERENCES/HONG KONG WTO

We had a discussion on trade and Africa. First of all, Africa must be able to export more. Today I drew attention to the importance of the trade preferences offering Africa lucrative guaranteed outlets.

These preferences must be consolidated and placed on a lasting basis, and this will be one of the tasks of the Hong Kong WTO conference next December. I also stressed that Africa must be able to protect itself, that it isn't in a position to cope with international free trade, and that this must today be recognized. Liberalization, which is necessary, must be asymmetrical, benefiting Africa, and it's with this in mind that the European Union must review the approach to the post-Cotonu economic partnership agreements.

You know that France has repeatedly urged the need to look again at these economic partnership agreements which were far too liberal for Africa to bear at the moment by "at the moment" I mean in the next 20 years.

AGRICULTURAL EXPORT SUBSIDIES

The agricultural export subsidies' issue is still outstanding. I want to draw your attention to the fact that, a year ago, the European Union accepted at the



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WTO the principle of abolishing the agricultural export subsidies. We are totally agreed on this, contrary to what some may have said or pretended to believe, provided that the other developed countries – I'm thinking inter alia of the United States, Japan, Australia, Canada and others – also abolish their export subsidy systems. I'm thinking in particular of food aid, export credits and State boards which have to be included in this reform.

These three systems are – as are others, but they are the main ones – the equivalent of agricultural subsidies which have to be abolished at the same time as the agricultural export subsidies. And the decision on the final date of their abolition will have to be taken as part of a global agreement, and of course before the end of the [Doha] Round. For Africa which urgently needs aid, I repeat what I proposed in 2003 – at the Africa-France Summit – we need to move faster and establish an immediate general moratorium on all agricultural subsidies on exports to that continent, regardless of their form. I reiterated this proposal in 2004, I did so again today: it still hasn't been accepted, it's still on the table.

COTTON/WTO/US

Similarly, the problem of the dispute with the United States in the wake of the [WTO] ruling against her on cotton. Finally, here too we hope that we are going to succeed, since this is vital for a number of African countries, especially Niger who is today suffering from a severe drought and famine and because of the American subsidies system can't get a minimum income from cotton, an absolutely essential resource.

LEBANON

Finally I'd like to say a word on the situation in the Middle East and especially on Lebanon, a problem we discussed at length – it was the main subject we talked about – during yesterday evening's working dinner. We took note of the result of the Lebanese elections, of course, we encouraged the swift formation of a new government made up of flawless people. And we unanimously reiterated that every part of UNSCR 1559 had to be fully implemented. (...)

HIV-AIDS/AIR TICKET LEVY

QUESTION My question concerns universal access to treatment by 2010. UNAIDS estimates that between now and 2008 extending access to AIDS treatments is going to cost \$12.3 billion. So what, a priori, will be France's share of the bill for this very large increase needed to attain the goal in 2010, and, secondly, is the air ticket levy going to be enough?

THE PRESIDENT The air ticket levy probably won't be enough, even though we hope there will be other forms of innovative financing, since the air ticket levy is only one example. We'd like markedly to increase a number of international contributions to the fight for development and particularly the



battle against the major pandemics, that's clear. What will be France's share?

As things stand at the moment, as you know, France ranks second in the world in the global fight against AIDS, behind the United States of course. And in this respect our colleagues paid tribute to France's position and particularly her most recent decision on the replenishment of the AIDS Fund. I think I can pledge that France will always be set on ranking second among these contributors. And this won't be possible if there's no development of innovative financing. And so we're fighting for this.

CLIMATE CHANGE/LONDON CLIMATE CONFERENCE

QUESTION How do you explain that the Americans and those who ratified the Kyoto Protocol moved closer together? Was it because of the new atmosphere created at this summit by all these events? And what's the climate conference, which Tony Blair announced is to be held in London in November, in the coming months, going to consist of?

THE PRESIDENT The fact that the Americans moved closer to us isn't linked to the tragic events in London. Since, to tell the truth, everything is negotiated at sherpa level, and "ad referendum" to use the jargon, i.e. subject to the agreement of the heads of State and their discussions I'd say that until less than a week before the deadline, i.e. the opening of the G8 summit, it seemed that the gap wasn't reducible.

This is moreover what led me to take a public position which I expressed on the Wednesday and Thursday before Gleneagles at meetings at the Elysée with, respectively, the NGOs and trade unions, a five-point position, which was widely reported, stating that if those five points weren't adopted (...) no agreement was possible, at any rate for France, and I think for others too. So what part did this play? How much was due to the Americans' tactics right up until the last day? How much was due and this was certainly not insignificant not just to international public opinion but also to US public opinion?

I can't tell you. What's true is that the American position shifted in the two days before the Gleneagles meeting. But this nevertheless proves that the further we go, the greater the influence of public opinion, something which is relatively new in the past few years, particularly of course as a result of the work of the NGOs and also of a number of personal initiatives.

BOB GELDOF/BONO

Obviously, the campaign led by two non-political celebrities, Bob Geldof and Bono, undoubtedly played an important role in the decisions we took, not on the climate, but on Africa. The campaign conducted, the mobilization to end poverty in the world spearheaded by the two celebrities, who aren't from the world of politics, was undoubtedly an important factor. It finally led to results which were more positive than we feared we'd get on official development assistance.



LONDON CONFERENCE

QUESTION And the London conference?

THE PRESIDENT The British Prime Minister proposed the London conference, I immediately approved. We're going to see, it's for him to prepare it. We're going to see how things go, but it's certainly good to keep up the pressure on climate issues.

ODA/TERRORISM/POVERTY

QUESTION Would you say that this G8's priority was development aid, and was there, for any of the G8 members, an explicit, de facto link between terrorism and poverty?

THE PRESIDENT First of all, I'd say that official development assistance was a key, priority issue, but that the climate was too. So I won't say that either our concerns on the climate or our concerns on official development assistance were more of a priority two equally priority and equally key issues. We also talked about the problems of terrorism because it was on the agenda and then because, sadly, it was in the news as we do regularly, and I'd say, virtually constantly. But we didn't speculate on relations between terrorism and poverty.

COUNTER-TERRORISM

QUESTION Did you, with your counterparts, take new steps at international level to combat terrorism?

THE PRESIDENT First let me say that we are constantly taking new steps, i.e. we're constantly adapting the measures in place to prevent or combat terrorism. (...) We've been doing this for a long time. And obviously we're going to continue. But everyone took a number of measures. For example, I took some measures for France. But effective counter-terrorism requires us constantly to improve the coordination we don't wait for something to happen of our information services and means of action. And this is what we're doing every day and irrespective even of tragic events.

INNOVATIVE FINANCING MECHANISMS

QUESTION On innovative financing mechanisms, you said that the levy, like the one you proposed, could apply to other products. Can you elaborate on this? What other products? Also, the other day during the dinner with the Queen, what advice did she give for the leaders who were present?

THE PRESIDENT On the second point, I'm not in the habit of commenting on the advice Her Majesty The Queen may give to leaders. All I can tell you is that, as always, she had organized things perfectly, and was the perfect hostess for the occasion (...). I'm not going into detail on the innovative mechanisms, it



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would take a very long time. I draw your attention to the fact that M. Landau's report has been published and commented on. When Bob Geldof and Bono came to see me this morning in my hotel, they both had copies in their hands, and it wasn't just for show. There were notes on the pages, which were scrunpled, etc. So I'm not going to go into detail, that would take rather a long time, there are 40 or 45 proposals. But you can find it everywhere and particularly in an edition put out as part of the major effort launched by these two celebrities in their campaign. And they've already sold 50,000 copies. I strongly advise you to make your own contribution to it by buying their little book. Thank you.

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