



**OPENING ADDRESS  
BY JACQUES CHIRAC  
PRESIDENT OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC  
TO THE XIIIth FRENCH AMBASSADORS' CONFERENCE**

ELYSEE PALACE - MONDAY 29 AUGUST 2005

Prime Minister,  
Foreign Secretary,  
Ministers,  
Members of Parliament,  
Ambassadors,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure for me to welcome you to the Elysee Palace for this opening session of the French Ambassadors' Conference, which is taking place with the participation of Mr. Douste-Blazy and the members of Government who assist him in his work.

Under sometimes difficult and always demanding conditions, you convey the message of France, a universal message serving human dignity and progress. Our Republic's values of freedom, justice and solidarity, the values that underpin our social compact, set our message apart and provide reference points in a world in search of new equilibria. Now more than ever, France must take action as part of the vanguard, and you must take the lead in this vanguard.

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It must take action, first and foremost, to respond to threats to peace and international security.

The terrorist attacks this summer in London, Sharm el Sheikh, Turkey and Israel are reminders that the terrorist threat is unremitting. This barbaric practice, which usurps and distorts the causes it claims to defend, must be fought without letup or weakness, and of course, in full compliance with our values.

Meanwhile, proliferation crises fuel regional instability and threaten strategic balances.

The use of civilian nuclear energy, which is perfectly legitimate, must not serve as a pretext for pursuing activities that could actually be aimed at building up a military nuclear arsenal. All guarantees must be given that nuclear programmes undertaken are for peaceful purposes.



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In the case of Iran, the IAEA showed that Iran conducted a secret nuclear programme in the past. France, Germany and the United Kingdom thereupon embarked on a dialogue with Iran, which they pursued under IAEA auspices in cooperation with Russia, in full transparency with the United States and in association with our European Union and G8 partners as well as with China. The goal of the approach remains to persuade Teheran to provide objective guarantees of the civilian nature of its programme. We have at the same time shown that we are prepared to undertake broad-based political, economic and energy cooperation with Iran.

Today I call on the Iranian authorities to choose the path of cooperation and confidence by carefully examining Europe's offer and resuming their commitment to suspend activities related to the production of fissile materials, in accordance with the requirements of the Paris agreement. The European offer is commensurate with the role that the great country of Iran should play in the world, for it is an important role that has its place. There is room for dialogue and negotiation. We call on Iran's spirit of responsibility to restore cooperation and confidence, failing which, the Security Council would have no choice but to take up the issue, and this is something I would feel very sorry about.

Persistent trouble spots in Europe, Asia and Africa fan resentment and constitute a challenge to the international community as a whole. But the Middle East remains the focal point of worldwide instability.

For this reason, all our partners in the region place great hopes in our common determination to support them in promoting a settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The courageous Israeli decision to withdraw from Gaza and the efforts of the Palestinian Authority to put an end to the violence have set the stage for a new momentum. France commends the exemplary way in which this first step has been carried out. The negotiation process must now be resumed without delay, based on the roadmap, in order to arrive at a peace based on two democratic States living side by side in security.

In Iraq, the road leading to consolidated institutions and fully restored sovereignty will be long and painful. We must help Iraq to maintain its integrity and to build a future in which each component of Iraqi society has a place. Neighbouring States must also be persuaded to work for regional stability.

In Lebanon, an unprecedented popular mobilization, supported by exemplary international solidarity, has overcome a long-standing Syrian military presence. The Lebanese people has at last been able to express itself freely. Now the new authorities are turning to the immense task of reform, which the international community stands ready to support. Much remains to be done, as well, to consolidate implementation of Resolutions 1559, 1595 and 1614, which must be fully applied. These major developments must be further amplified in order to restore full sovereignty to Lebanon and rebuild the domestic security to which the Lebanese rightly aspire. They also provide an opportunity for



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Syria - if it can seize it - to place its relations with Lebanon on a new footing and to undertake the changes that the world and this changing region expect of it.

It is first and foremost by making a determined commitment to bringing about a just resolution of conflicts that the international community can best contribute to the success of the reforms in the Middle East. This change originated within the region a long time ago and has now reached the point of no return. Fears are being dissipated and taboos overcome, revealing the extent of the changes that have taken place in behaviour and attitudes. Already, democracy is making headway, as elections - some of them unprecedented - bear witness.

If we want to support this change, encourage the forces of progress and win over a growing number of countries and peoples, we must prove to them that change can be brought about, respecting their specific identities, in peace and without dragging them into chaos. This is why we must lend a helping hand to governments and to civil societies that have set out to establish the rule of law, in which the citizen is represented, heard and respected. As a result of their history, their culture and their identity, the peoples of the region will not accept interference, stigmatization or vilification. But they do aspire to balanced and confident cooperation with the rest of the world. We must therefore build a true partnership, based on jointly defined projects, with each of the countries concerned.

Europe has been a pioneer in this regard. On 27 and 28 November, a conference of Heads of State and Government will commemorate the tenth anniversary of the Barcelona process. The European Neighbourhood Policy provides an opportunity to affirm a new solidarity between the two shores of the Mediterranean, enabling the Mediterranean region to become a more cohesive economic and social entity, an entity in which our political dialogue can be deepened and in which the intercultural dialogue between the different worlds that share this area can finally get under way. France will do its part to further this great goal.

Calling for a Maghreb more united in solidarity, France is endeavouring to strengthen its ties with each of the countries that make up the region. A case in point is the friendship treaty on which we are working with Algeria. The prosperity, security and stability of the region are at stake.

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Alongside regional crises, there are other challenges to the future of humankind and of our values. Trade liberalization and the movement of people and ideas are bringing unprecedented prosperity, but the response they have elicited from peoples should alert us to the growing malaise being generated by globalization.

With its focus on international trade and finance, globalization appears to threaten cultural diversity, endanger the environment and constitute an insidious challenge to the equilibrium of societies. In democracies, globalization fosters fears that fuel populism and xenophobia.



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Globalization also allows hundreds of millions of men and women, especially in Africa, to be left in extreme poverty, hunger, disease and ignorance.

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It is now more than ever the case that no single country has the answer to these challenges. It is this conviction that underpins France's resolute commitment to an international system that is more democratic, more just and more representative of the realities of today's world.

In a few days I will be going to New York for the United Nations Summit. Sixty years after the Organization was founded, the need for it is clearly greater than ever. As the authors of the San Francisco Charter understood, the United Nations derives its unique international legitimacy from its universality. The United Nations remains, on this basis, the principal and irreplaceable framework for collective action.

I wish today to pay tribute to the vision of Secretary-General Kofi Annan and to his work in preparing this summit. In choosing to link the issues of institutional reform, strengthened collective security, human rights and development, he has staked out the appropriate terms for a consolidation of the international order resting on three pillars: responsibility, security and solidarity.

The first pillar, responsibility, requires the involvement of the major powers and also of the emerging regions and the regional groupings in the collective decision-making process and in the management of global problems.

To address the new challenges of collective security and to ensure peace, the world needs a strong Security Council that better reflects today's realities and equilibria. The time has come for enlargement - too long postponed - of this essential body. The proposal submitted by Brazil, Germany, India and Japan meets the requirements relating to efficiency and to representativity of the various regions, in particular Africa. France is fully aware of the difficulties but nevertheless hopes that this reform will be adopted by the September summit or, since this deadline is expected to be difficult to achieve, at the latest by the end of the year.

Beyond that, we must continue to strengthen world governance. I hope that the September Summit will lend strong impetus to the creation of a United Nations Environment Organization. From the struggle against climate change to the conservation of biodiversity, the environment is at the heart of the international community's responsibilities, and the only way to effectively protect it is through international treaties that are binding on States, such as the Kyoto Protocol. It is important that all the countries in the world be able, as initiated at Gleneagles, to work together.

In New York I will also be supporting the creation of a new forum for the economic and social governance of globalization. In the G8 framework, the dialogue has been systematically broadened to include the emerging and also the





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poorest countries, bearing witness to the need for such a forum.

The second pillar is the strengthening of collective security systems. In a world affected by so many factors of instability and in which terrorism is killing the innocent and seeking to undermine States, the struggle against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems remains more than ever a priority. I propose that this issue, together with the fight against terrorism and peacekeeping, be a focus of the discussions of the Security Council Heads of State and Government at this Summit.

To strengthen the security of persons, France will actively support approval at the New York summit of decisions on major issues such as an international definition of terrorism, a peace consolidation commission and a reinforced mechanism for protecting human rights.

The third pillar is solidarity. The September Summit should constitute a further step in development financing, with the launch of the first international solidarity levy on airplane tickets. Algeria, Brazil, Chile, Germany and Spain have joined France in deciding to jointly support this project in New York. To enable it to take concrete shape as broadly and as rapidly as possible, our country will be hosting a ministerial conference in February 2006. Pending that, I have asked the French government to undertake the procedures for introducing a levy of this kind next year.

France wants to begin by allocating the proceeds to the fight against AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. It proposes to devote a share, at a later stage, to reimbursing the international finance facility proposed by the United Kingdom, and in this general context, supported by France.

There are other national and international health issues requiring our urgent attention. One example is avian influenza, which requires a vigorous and concerted international response. The WHO is already recommending that States stockpile medicine. France, for its part, will be taking such preventive and precautionary measures, in order to protect its population. We will be intensifying our efforts. Given the risk of a very large-scale health crisis, I have also asked the Government to work with our partners, the competent international organizations - especially the WHO, whose Director-General I will be receiving in a few days' time - and the pharmaceutical industry to discuss measures that can be taken to accelerate development of a vaccine and to ensure that, if need be, sufficient stocks of medicine will be immediately available, including in the poorest countries, to stop the scourge from spreading.

Development also involves the conclusion of the Doha round in 2006. For its part, the WTO conference in Hong Kong in December will be decisive. The conclusion of the negotiations will depend on the balance of the various parts of the agricultural issue on the one hand and the other issues addressed in the round on the other. In the interest of development, and without waiting for the negotiations to be concluded, I reiterate my proposal for an immediate



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moratorium on all subsidies of agricultural exports to Africa.

Organizing a new world order based on human dignity also involves respecting the diversity of identities and cultures. We are on the last lap of the negotiations on the Cultural Diversity Convention. I ask each of you to make a concerted effort to consolidate support for this text with a view to its adoption by the forthcoming UNESCO General Conference in October.

Francophony has from the beginning spearheaded the struggle for cultural diversity. Its goals and activities have now been extended to cover the establishment of an area of democracy, peace and solidarity. In each of your postings, it is your task to foster this ideal and to ensure that the commitments made at the Ouagadougou Summit are met. The international news channel project, to which, as you know, I attach the greatest importance, is part of this same spirit of outreach conveying our language, our culture and our values.

And finally, this year, the International Year of Development, will be concluded in December in Bamako with the Africa-France Summit. The meeting will give me an opportunity to reassert our commitment to stand shoulder to shoulder with Africa and its young people, who aspire to being able to obtain, in their countries, the education, health, work and security that will enable them to participate fully in the modern world. These goals are notably those of the African Union and the NEPAD and we must mobilize to achieve them. They lie at the heart of the French Cooperation reform, bolstered by the steady increase in funding available for our official development assistance, to which I continue to pay very close attention.

The African Union's aim is to become a peaceful and committed Africa on the road to development and to the establishment of the rule of law. For this reason, determined action with a view to conflict resolution is paramount. Today more than ever, the post-crisis process involves holding indisputable presidential elections in the Côte d'Ivoire: it is clearly a matter of urgency for its politicians to genuinely mobilize themselves around this goal. Together with the entire international community, France has confidence in Africa's mediation efforts led by South Africa as well as action being taken by the United Nations to enable all Côte d'Ivoire nationals to choose their president freely, and to set out on the road to reconciliation without delay.

Organizing our world also means accepting the new reality of a world in which new players are asserting themselves and in which regional integration is proceeding apace in Africa, Latin America and South-East Asia.

In this multipolar world, only the European Union possesses the critical size to establish a dialogue on an equal footing with its major partners. It guarantees our security and prosperity for future generations. A strong Europe also contributes to the vitality of balanced transatlantic ties, which are required for world stability and grounded in a relationship based on cooperation and confidence with the United States, with which we share the bond



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of many common values. For these reasons, we must seek, in the crisis Europe is now going through, the strength for a new European impetus.

To do this we must take on board the anxieties and expectations expressed on 29 May; we must forge a new consensus on, indeed a new allegiance to, the European project among our citizens.

In the run-up to the informal meeting of Heads of State and Government organized by Tony Blair in October, and then to the meeting scheduled under the Austrian Presidency in the first half of 2006, I asked the Prime Minister to draw up proposals for me on ways to involve France's Parliament, as well as local authorities, social partners and civil society, more closely in the European decision-making process. We must offer the French a different, more democratic way of building Europe that gives them a greater role in arriving at the decisions that affect their future.

In the debate now getting under way on the future of Europe, France will reiterate the need to renew and adapt the institutions. I will be strongly reaffirming the French vision of a political, ambitious, social Europe rooted in solidarity. This is a vision that France shares with Germany and which our two countries, the irreplaceable engine of European construction, will continue to jointly support.

Europe is not destined to become a vast free trade area diluted in the globalized economy. Europe is first and foremost a political project based on common values; a project based on rules, on pooled resources, on cooperation and on common policies.

The heart of the European project is first and foremost a call for solidarity: solidarity to enable Europe to better defend its interests in a world in which economic competition is sharpening; solidarity to support a European preference and to vigorously defend our trade interests against unfair competitive practices.

Solidarity with the new Member States will enable them, like their predecessors, to catch up with the living standards of their partners and undergo development that will benefit the Union as a whole. This is what is at stake in the European budget for the 2007/2013 period. I therefore hope that an agreement can be reached, if possible by the end of this year, based on proposals put forward by the Luxembourg Presidency and in compliance with agreements already reached, with the goal of ensuring that all Member Countries of the Union contribute their fair share to funding the enlargement.

The European project is also based on a call for harmonization. Europe is not a race to the bottom as regards taxes and social benefits. Europe stands for common rules to harmonize social legislation upwards, to defend consumers and public services and to protect the environment. France will be very vigilant regarding the new Services Directive proposal and in the discussions on the Working Time Directive.



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To safeguard its unity and its political vocation, Europe must stay on course toward cohesion. In the absence of institutions that can enable the enlarged Europe to function efficiently, the issue of its geographic extension is at the heart of the discussions we must hold with our partners. It is clear that commitments have been made and France will live up to them, but subject to the countries wishing to join the Union fully meeting all the conditions. The opening of negotiations with Turkey is only the start of a long and difficult road, of uncertain outcome, on which that great country - very great country - will be embarking in its aspiration to join the Union - that is, to take on board all our rules and values.

Following its unilateral statement on Cyprus, Turkey must provide the 25-member European Union with clarification and assurances of its determination to fully live up to its commitments.

Europe must not confine itself to abstract and normative institution building. It must, if it is to exist in the hearts of its citizens, take shape in concrete and tangible projects that respond to the expectations and concerns that have been voiced.

Let us do our utmost to foster research and innovation, as we have begun to do with Germany. Let us make the most of our industrial assets to create great European champions. Let us resolutely strengthen economic governance within the Euro zone through a more demanding dialogue between the Eurogroup and the European Central Bank on exchange rate policy and more generally on ways to stimulate growth and employment. Let us accelerate construction of the great Transeuropean Networks, in order, especially, to strengthen ties with our new partners. These issues will be the focus of proposals that I will put forward at the informal European Council meeting in October.

Europe must also continue to make progress in the area of defence, in terms of outside commitments, resources and training.

The need for Europe is now felt on all the continents. In the Balkans, the Union must continue its action in Bosnia and lend greater support to moving Kosovo toward final status, taking over the policing task of the United Nations. In Africa, France is prepared to place its RECAMP programme in the European Union framework in order to more efficiently and effectively support the efforts of the African Union, as it has done in Darfur. In Asia, the mission of the European Union in the Indonesian province of Aceh reflects Europe's wish to be a strategic partner for ASEAN.

But to be recognized in the world as a global player in the field of peace and security, Europe must continue to reinforce its collective instruments. The European Union Operations Centre must be in a position to conduct further autonomous military operations along the lines of Operation Artemis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Europe must be at the leading edge of military technologies. The European Defence Agency must be given a genuine research and development budget and must forthwith take on responsibility for





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concrete projects, such as drones and tanker aircraft fleets.

Last but not least, our military personnel will increasingly be called upon to work together. We have worked with Belgium to submit proposals on fighter pilot training. I hope that a similar discussion can be held on the training of our Naval officers, based on a European training ship. It is through enhanced integration of our defence and security assets that we can give Europe resources to support its influence and prestige.

Ambassadors, Ladies and Gentlemen,

France has resolutely taken up the global economic battle.

By seeking to conquer new markets and by successfully taking up new opportunities for our economy, we will accelerate the creation of jobs in France and sustainably reduce unemployment. This is one of your responsibilities.

France has the brainpower, the talent, the industrial capabilities, the technologies and the know-how to accommodate the development of its partners and contribute, through its momentum and its investments, to meeting the needs of rapidly expanding emerging markets. By winning the competition to host the ITER site, it has again demonstrated its appeal as a location for researchers from all over the world. We must do a better job of leveraging these assets and resolutely look beyond our traditional European markets. We must make up for lost time.

It is my intention in the coming year to strengthen our ties with our major partners in order to promote the advanced technology capabilities that underpin the reputation and the strength of our country and to boost France's political, economic and cultural outreach on all continents.

In October I will be going to Kazakhstan and Ukraine, two countries undergoing rapid growth with which France wishes to develop a balanced partnership.

France intends to further strengthen its partnership with Russia in order to support the modernization under way in that country. It hopes to work with Russia to implement the four common spaces with the European Union and to support the preparation of Russia's first Presidency of the G8.

In Asia, France will make the most of the confidence it enjoys among partners such as China, India and Japan, with which it has been engaged for several years in a strategic dialogue.

In a few days' time the President of the Senate will be attending the conclusion, at the Summer Palace in Beijing, of the France-China cross-cultural years, which have contributed to strengthening our global partnership. I will be receiving the Chinese Prime Minister this autumn and I will again be going to China next year.



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With India, whose Prime Minister I will be receiving a few days from now, our commercial and investment relations are rapidly expanding. To lend further impetus to our strategic relationship with this great democracy, I plan to go there in early 2006.

At a time when ASEAN is further integrating, we must also expand our political and economic ties with this great and dynamic grouping. After visiting Singapore in July, I will be going next January to Thailand for the first visit by a French Head of State, and to Indonesia, where we must enhance the French presence.

Latin America is asserting itself and major prospects for growth are opening up there. After having received President da Silva as a guest of honour at our national celebration, I hope to go to Brazil and Chile in the spring.

On all of these trips I will be accompanied by business leaders. I plan to promote this modern, entrepreneurial, innovative and creative France, a France that is determined to take up the challenges of the future and to mark out a path in this century commensurate with its history.

Thank you.

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