



Statements made by M. Jacques CHIRAC, President of the Republic, during his joint press briefing with Mrs Angela MERKEL, Chancellor of Germany, following their meeting (excerpts)

Reinsberg - Germany, 6 June 2006

THE PRESIDENT (●●●) We looked first at the positive aspect of things, i.e. pursuing the options we had decided on together at the Hampton Court summit under British presidency: organizing ourselves better in order to promote the project-based Europe, concrete Europe, Europe seeking solutions to the problems of direct concern to Europeans, in terms of activities, jobs, etc. And here we decided actively to pursue these different problems ranging from defence to immigration, including energy, security, all the issues on which our European compatriots' lives depend.

Secondly, as regards the institutions, we obviously talked about the problem of the Constitution. Our first conclusion is that it will certainly be necessary to improve the institutions. The way they function at the moment isn't satisfactory. But some positions have been taken, since some countries have voted "yes" to the Constitution, some "no", and others have halted their processes of approving the Constitutional Treaty. In view of this, we thought it necessary to extend the period of reflection we need and, in particular, wait for the beginning of the German presidency so that we can pull together all the possible proposals and entrust to the German presidency the task of summarizing them.

In fact a particularly important series of presidencies will be beginning, starting with Germany's in the first half of 2007 and ending in the second half of 2008 with France's, with everything having, of course, to be coordinated so that we can put our present difficulty behind us.

In the meantime, France has made proposals and Germany is looking at how these proposals for improving the function of the institutions using the existing treaties i.e. without changing anything in the treaties can be implemented. In the framework of the existing treaties, we think a number of things could be improved and we're going to study this will be one of the things the Finnish and especially German presidencies will look at how the operation of the institutions can be improved in the framework of the existing treaties.

We also discussed enlargement, on the understanding that, of course, there's no question of going back on our commitments. But for future enlargements, we must



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take account of the European Union's capacity of assimilation, absorption. This is posing political problems in the minds of the general public in our countries. It's posing financial problems for the funding of the common policies: how can these be funded in the event of enlargement and given the extra costs? It's raising institutional problems: how can we have institutions which are already not working very well with 25 members and, of course, could well deteriorate if there are enlargements?

On all these points we're totally on the same wavelength, as regards the reflection which has to be carried out, and we're looking forward with a great deal of optimism to the German presidency.

We then talked about I won't go into detail, the Chancellor has done this some international problems: Iran, which, as Mrs Merkel told you just now, is a source of serious concern for us. We both genuinely want the debate which has just opened, with not just the Europeans, but also the Russians, Americans and Chinese around the table, to lead to an agreement which complies with the IAEA's demands on Iran.

We also talked about the Palestinian problem and the difficulties confronting us today, particularly as regards the need to continue aid to the Palestinians without thereby undermining the conditions the international community has set Hamas on compliance with agreements and recognition of the State of Israel.

Finally, I also talked thanking the Chancellor for it about the deployment in the DRC of a UN-mandated European mission under German command which will contribute to the security and stability and democratic development of that country, and we're very grateful to Germany for the decision she took. (•••)/.

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