



## **Statements made by M. Jacques CHIRAC, President of the Republic, during his joint press conference with M.s Angela MERKEL, Chancellor of Germany, and M. Lech KACZYNSKI, President of Poland, following the seventh Weimar triangle (excerpts)**

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Mettlach, 5 December 2006

THE PRESIDENT Ladies and gentlemen, (•••) I'm particularly pleased with this seventh Weimar Triangle, in Mettlach, held with the Chancellor and President Lech Kaczynski. On behalf of us all, I'd like to thank Saarland, its people, and also its Minister President, Mr Peter Müller, for his welcome, which we very much appreciated.

### **WEIMAR TRIANGLE**

This meeting marks the 15th anniversary of the Weimar Triangle. The Weimar Triangle plays its full part in Europe, an important one not only in coming up with the necessary compromises on Europe's institutions and policies, but also bolstering the European Union's role in today's world, and developing innovative policies which Europe needs. I'm particularly thinking of those to do with energy and research.

### **EU/GERMAN PRESIDENCY**

Our meeting was especially important because we're on the eve of the next European Council and Germany's European Union presidency, which will be hugely important. A German presidency to whose success we both the Polish President and I really hope to make a very positive contribution.

We first of all identified a number of key areas, particularly the neighbourhood policy. We clearly reaffirmed that a neighbourhood agreement between the EU and Ukraine is naturally a necessity. We talked about European defence and armaments. We're going to develop our cooperation within the European Defence Agency. We have decided to create a battlegroup composed of Polish, German and French troops by 2012. Finally, we're absolutely determined to pursue our cooperation in third countries, like our joint action in the



## PRESIDENCE DE LA REPUBLIQUE

Democratic Republic of Congo, as well as in Lebanon and Afghanistan.

### **INDUSTRIAL COOPERATION AND INNOVATION**

We talked about industrial cooperation and innovation where we can act at the level of our local authorities, thanks to stronger cooperation between our competitiveness centres.

We also decided to increase the depth and breadth of the dialogue between our three countries, looking ahead to the German presidency, which will be so important for Europe. We of course talked about the EU's institutional future, at a time when Europe is getting ready to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the Treaty of Rome. Here too, Germany will have an altogether critical role.

### **ENLARGEMENT/TURKEY**

We also discussed the enlargement. Among other things, I drew attention to the importance of a European Council decision on Turkey. We agree on the need to think through the consequences of the lack of progress on the Ankara Protocol. We regret this lack of progress, but we want a positive and encouraging decision to move things forward.

### **WESTERN BALKANS**

We also discussed the situation in the Western Balkans and particularly Serbia. We need Serbia, as Serbia needs Europe. It's essential for Serbia to agree to cooperate wholeheartedly with the International Criminal Tribunal. But we must also take on board developments in that country and in its people's attitudes.

### **RUSSIA**

We talked about relations with Russia. We hope that negotiations on the future framework of European Union-Russia relations can be launched very soon and the meat embargo issue swiftly resolved.

### **MIDDLE EAST/LEBANON**

Finally, we discussed international issues of current concern, particularly the Middle East. We feel it is absolutely necessary for Europe to be strongly involved in order to encourage the essential developments in the Middle East.

On Lebanon, we clearly indicated that we want Lebanon's independence, sovereignty, unity and integrity respected by everyone. We support the government headed by Mr Siniora and the democratically-elected majority led by Mr Saad Hariri. We are also actively working for Lebanon's reconstruction. We'll be making the necessary efforts, in the coming weeks, concretely, collectively to help Lebanon get her economic and financial situation back on a sound footing.



## PRESIDENCE DE LA REPUBLIQUE

We call on all the Lebanese political forces to act peacefully, with due regard for the Lebanese institutions, as is right and proper for a great country and a great people, in a spirit of national dialogue. Only through this dialogue will it be possible to find a solution to the problems and clashes which are tending to develop today, to the detriment of all the Lebanese.

### TURKEY

Q. President Kaczynski has just very clearly expressed his view on the desire for Turkey's future accession. You, Madam Chancellor, proposed the rendezvous clause [a date for talking about a starting date], and I think you've talked to the President of the French Republic about it. Do you think it's a good procedure, and do you think you will get a majority, or unanimity for it at the European Council in Brussels?

(...)

THE PRESIDENT I confirm to you that France's position is exactly the one the Chancellor has just expressed. French and Germans, we have the same position on this problem. And I gather that the Polish position is not very far removed from ours. (...).

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