



PRESIDENCE DE LA REPUBLIQUE

Address by M.Jacques CHIRAC, President of the French Republic on the occasion of the presentation of New year's greetings to the diplomatic corps.

Prime Minister,
Minister of Foreign Affairs,
Ministers,
Ambassadors,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Nuncio,

I thank you very much for your kind and moving words. I would in turn like to extend my best wishes to you and ask you to convey to His Holiness Pope John Paul II my deferential greetings and the warm regards of the French people.

Ambassadors,

The fall of the Berlin wall brought about the disappearance of a world order based on a balance of terror and bipolar confrontation. Some, at the time, saw fit to prophesy the end of History as a result of the rapid spread of democracy and the market economy throughout the world. In fact, a new and highly complex chapter was ushered in; a chapter in which humankind with its diverse heritage has discovered a common destiny which it faces with feelings of hope mixed with apprehension.

This has released enormous energies. They have swept away all our certainties and habits. They have met with enthusiasm from some, opposition from others. They are reshaping the world and its borders. Observing their effects can at times make one's head swim.

The year 2002 indeed witnessed too much crisis and tragedy. Economic and financial turmoil again swept South America. The great pandemics, especially AIDS, continued to gain ground. In Africa, famine returned and conflicts erupted. Despite the efforts to combat it, terrorism again cravenly claimed innocent lives. Violence continued to rage in the Middle East. And war still threatens in Iraq.

But 2002 was also a year of peace and progress. In Monterrey and then Johannesburg we set the stage for a world alliance for sustainable development. In Kananaskis, Africa and the G8 established an innovative partnership. In Beirut the Francophone countries demonstrated the benefits of cultural dialogue. In New York the international community adopted Resolution 1441, unanimously expressing the importance it attaches to compliance with the United Nations Charter and choosing to give peace a chance when disarming Iraq. In



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Copenhagen, Europe celebrated its reunion while continuing the debate on its institutions and its future.

This progress shows that together we are able to control our destiny. France is sustained by the conviction that, in the face of a threat, inaction leads to acquiescence and lashing out to destruction, whereas only the will to act and the ability to organize, which are the hallmarks of human beings, can enable us to weather trials and stave off the otherwise inevitable.

France is strengthened by this conviction as it moves into 2003, a year which it intends to devote to serving peace, humanizing globalization, and refounding Europe.

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Serving peace. The disarming of Iraq is an obligation for the Middle East and for the world. It is a matter of peace and collective security. We must therefore solve it collectively. The framework provided for doing so is the United Nations. It is the only legitimate one in our view.

International action cannot depart from the principles on which it is based: legality, responsibility, equity, democracy or it will be discredited. The international community can only go to war as a last resort, once all the other options have been exhausted. Any decision to use force must be explicit and must be taken by the United Nations Security Council on the basis of a report by the inspectors giving the reasons for their conclusions. France, which has always shouldered its responsibilities, intends to remain free to fully exercise its own judgement.

These principles will continue to underpin our approach. Thanks to the efforts made by all, the international community demonstrated its cohesion in adopting Resolution 1441. The effectiveness of the action we take depends on this community of views. Together let us all make sure that this community of views is preserved. Let us resolutely repudiate the temptation of unilateral action. Let us avoid attitudes that would tarnish the legitimacy of the action we take. Let us continue to place our full trust in the United Nations Inspectors.

Meanwhile, the message to the Iraqi leadership is clear: they have been given one last chance to disarm in peace. They must understand that there is no alternative to full cooperation with the United Nations inspection teams which must be given the comprehensive facilities and information needed to fulfill their mandate. The Iraqis know that otherwise they would lay themselves open to a war with incalculable consequences.

On all the issues raised by the Iraqi crisis, I call on the Government to organize a new debate in Parliament, which will be involved in all stages of this crisis as it unfolds. I attach the utmost importance to the entire Nation coming together to face these issues of vital importance to France.



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In this region of the world, another threat hangs over us. The crisis in the Middle East continues to do immense harm. Leaders are at a loss or snared in their own calculations. Peoples are deprived of hope, trapped by fear and resentment, imprisoned in a pitiless struggle which everyone knows is hopeless but from which no one can withdraw.

It is time for this to stop. It is time for the peoples of the region to finally live in peace, security and dignity, as they deeply aspire to do. We all know the solution. We glimpsed it barely two years ago. We know that the solution requires an end to terrorism and violence, compliance with international law, withdrawal from the occupied territories and dismantling of the settlements. It requires the creation, in the Palestinian territories, of a viable and democratic State coexisting in peace with Israel, with the security of Israel guaranteed. The solution also requires the establishment between Israel and its neighbours, with the return of the land, of peaceful relations based on mutual recognition and respect. In this connection I welcome the initiative adopted by the Arab Summit in Beirut last March.

It is time for the international community to overcome its apprehensions, or its inhibitions, and shoulder its responsibilities. It should not just say to the parties that they must sit down at a table again and negotiate, it should bring them to the table. It should not just spell out its vision and the principles of a settlement, it should help the parties to implement them. I hope that 2003, an election year in Israel and, we hope, in Palestine, will bring an opportunity to re-open prospects for peace.

Serious crises are under way in Africa as well. Often they reflect a combination of domestic difficulties and conflicts with neighbouring countries. It is therefore first up to regional mediators to intervene. In this manner a number of results were achieved in the Ivorian crisis thanks to mediation by ECOWAS. Similarly, in the Central African Republic, CEMAC has done much this year to reduce tensions.

But sometimes the efforts of the neighbouring countries are not sufficient or take too long to have an effect. It is then up to certain outside partners to shoulder responsibility; this occurred in Sierra Leone during the British intervention and it is occurring now, with France's involvement in Ivory Coast. For obvious humanitarian and historic reasons, France has a duty to support the Ivorian people at a time when the acute crisis it has been going through for the last three months could at any moment spin out of control, break the country apart and cause an upheaval in the region.

This is why, in conjunction with the Heads of State of the ECOWAS countries the Ivorian parties and the African Union, France is proposing that the genuine political dialogue which is the only means to reconcile Ivory Coast with itself be now, at last, initiated in Paris. We will therefore be organizing in Paris, in the second half of January, an inter-Ivorian reconciliation conference followed by a Summit of African Heads of State attended by the Secretary General of the United Nations together with a number of eminent international



figures.

Once reconciliation has been set in motion, France will head an alliance of donors to support the economic reconstruction of Ivory Coast.

In this matter, we obviously require the support of the United Nations. Indeed, in dealing with crises in Africa, France encourages UN involvement and takes part within the Security Council in the search for appropriate solutions on a case-by-case basis.

Ambassadors,

Globalization is an exhilarating stage in the human adventure. Freedom, creativity, and the instant transmission of information and knowledge have opened the path to peace and prosperity, cultural interchange and progress in Human Rights - provided we act and provided we endow globalization with more solidarity, more responsibility, more security and more democracy. The French presidency of the G8 summit will be pursuing these principles.

First, solidarity. In Evian we are determined to prove that the agreement between the G8 and Africa within the context of NEPAD can provide new momentum and serve as the basis for concrete projects that will transform the continent.

France will be receiving Africa in February in Paris. At this biennial summit, I will be confirming the G8's commitment to African Heads of State and calling on them to remain mobilized to shape this partnership.

The decisions taken at the Millennium Summit and the Johannesburg Summit commit the international community. Now these decisions must be put into practice. Based on the results of the forthcoming Kyoto Conference, which I shall attend, I will be proposing that the G8 devote itself to one of mankind's most fundamental needs - water.

Our commitment to halve the number of people without access to safe drinking water and sanitation services by 2015 requires a doubling of annual investment in the water sector. In Kyoto and Evian we will be working out a worldwide plan to achieve that goal.

In the same spirit of solidarity, we must work to halt the spread of the major pandemics and especially of AIDS. The epidemic is progressing faster than our efforts to contain it. It is a major obstacle to development and to the stability of a number of regions. We have come a long way. Treatments exist; we have created the Global Fund, which must be maintained on a long-term basis; we recognized, in Doha, that the poor countries need to have access to medicines at affordable prices. I deplore the fact that short-term self-interest prevented an agreement from being reached within the WTO at the end of the year. It is urgent that negotiations be resumed and brought to a conclusion.



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Our task in Evian will be to make progress on implementing of these decisions.

The second principle that will underpin our action is responsibility. Every State has a responsibility to set the stage for stable economic growth and orderly financial liberalization. It is particularly urgent that discussions on support to countries experiencing payment difficulties be concluded, with the G8 countries providing the impetus. Recognizing the central role to be played by the IMF, we must get public creditors, private creditors and countries in difficulty to work together. We will then be better able to prevent and control crises such as the one affecting Argentina. Similarly, we will be able to consolidate the process begun with Lebanon last November.

Excessive debt hampers development. Following the initiative taken on the heavily indebted poor countries, we must now think about middle-income countries, as I said in Johannesburg.

The industrialized countries have a primary responsibility toward the planet and toward future generations. Sustainable development is urgent. There is an urgent need for more discipline. There is also an urgent need for new scientific and technological breakthroughs - a challenge to our inventiveness and competitiveness.

For example, in the fight against climate change, it is vital that all States immediately implement the Kyoto Protocol. But substantial technological progress will then be needed if we are to achieve long-term reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. In Evian, we will be seeking to better focus scientific research and technological innovation on environmental protection.

We will then turn to the responsibility borne by businesses and economic players. The role of a business is to produce, but not under just any conditions. We cannot allow the pirates of globalization to prosper.

I suggest that, after consulting the players concerned, the G8 meeting in Evian spell out the financial, social, environmental and ethical principles underpinning a responsible market economy.

The third principle is security. In Evian we will also be focusing on strengthening the fight against terrorism and proliferation, scourges which take advantage of the fault lines in globalization.

Our relentless struggle has hit hard at the terrorist networks. Thanks to the coalition set up within the UN framework, States have closed ranks. But the recent attacks in Asia, Europe and Africa show that the threat remains. For this reason, France will, during its Presidency of the Security Council, examine the possibility of in-depth consultations on international action against this scourge.



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Terrorist networks are widely dispersed and mobile, and they know how to take advantage of modern technologies. We must do everything in our power to prevent them from gaining access to radioactive sources and chemical and biological weapons. This is the purpose of the world partnership launched in Kananaskis. France is determined to implement it.

The danger of proliferation also comes from States which behave irresponsibly in a reckless attempt to pursue the arms race and to blackmail and challenge the international community. North Korea in particular must understand that it has no choice but to abandon the nuclear weapons programme which it has pursued in violation of its commitments and of international law. The Board of Governors of the IAEA has just demanded that that country immediately comply with its safeguards agreements. In close consultation with our partners and with the States of the region, we are determined to obtain North Korean compliance with its international obligations. We want to have broad consultations with them and to permit, when the time comes, the Security Council to play its full role.

This example should encourage us to strengthen multilateral instruments to control proliferation. I welcome the recent launch in The Hague of the International Code of Conduct Against Ballistic Missile Proliferation as the first step toward a legal instrument of universal scope.

I would also reiterate my proposal that the Heads of State and Government of the member countries of the Security Council meet this year in conjunction with the United Nations General Assembly to lend new impetus, in the wake of recent crises, to non-proliferation policy.

Solidarity, responsibility, security - but also democracy. I have attentively observed the growing focus on globalization in the public debate and the pressing questions our citizens are asking about the future. I find the demand for a democratic debate legitimate and think it should include ample dialogue with trade unions, NGOs, local authorities and companies. They will all be closely involved in preparing the Evian Summit. I will be meeting with them in coming months.

The G8 is not the world's management board. Its purpose is to provide momentum and its activities must be carried out in the context of the international institutions and a wider dialogue. Several years ago the G8 countries opened up to consultations with the rest of the world. In Genoa and Kananaskis, we invited those promoting NEPAD. Let us go a step further. As I have informed our G8 partners, I will be inviting to Evian several Heads of State and Government from emerging and poor countries representative of the world in all its diversity to discuss how globalization can be made to benefit all and how we can move toward global democracy.

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Ambassadors,



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To ward off the political chaos that would result if international rivalries were left to blindly play themselves out, France is engaged in building a multipolar world. This involves affirming Europe and the values for which it stands: a commitment to peace, progress, democracy and human dignity.

Following the successful introduction of the euro, 2002 culminated in Copenhagen with a historic enlargement. The European family is at long last coming together. France welcomes the ten new member countries with great joy. This enlargement is an opportunity, opening up for the Union new horizons, new areas of activity and prospects of renewed exchanges among people.

But enlargement is also a challenge and a responsibility. When the Union expands from 15 to 25 members in the spring of 2004, its very nature will change. It will be more richly diverse but also more disparate. The operation of its institutions will have to be adapted to a new reality. It must be possible for those willing and able to do so to go forward and show the way. The European Union will also have to consider how far it should extend and to define special partnerships with its new neighbours in the East and around the Mediterranean rim. France wants to do its part. These issues will be a major focus of President Putin's visit to France and my own travels to the North African countries, starting with a State visit to Algeria.

The success of Copenhagen has spawned new ambitions for Europe and will ultimately lead to its refoundation. This is the mission entrusted to the Convention which will, next summer, propose a draft Constitution for Europe.

Making a contribution to this process which will shape its future is a priority for France. We have already made numerous proposals for a more efficient and more democratic Europe, a Europe with which our citizens will more readily identify, a Europe with enhanced stability, visibility and influence.

The process must include a reform of the half-yearly presidency, with Heads of State and Government electing a President to head the European Council. It should include the appointment of a European Minister of Foreign Affairs in charge of implementing the decisions of the Council and ensuring consistency in external action by the Union. It should, finally, include clarification and strengthening of the respective responsibilities of the Council, the Commission and the European Parliament and closer involvement of national parliaments in the life of the Union.

Affirming Europe includes deepening Defence Europe. A Europe able to take action, including in the military sphere, is needed to ensure balance in the world. This means that each member must do its part in making the necessary effort, as France has just done.

Europe must start by shouldering this responsibility in the western Balkans. From now on the Union can work with NATO. It is now in a position to take over the mission of the Alliance in Macedonia. This is a first operation. It must also prepare to take charge of the international force deployed in Bosnia. In



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this manner the Americans and the Europeans will express the reality of their strategic partnership in crisis management.

France wishes to start by working with Germany to take this action to delineate the Europe of tomorrow, since our two countries, together, have always played a decisive role in the major milestones of European construction.

Forty years ago, the Elysée Treaty sealed a community of destiny between Germany and France. On 22 and 23 January, in Paris and then Berlin, Chancellor Schroeder and I will present our vision for the Europe of tomorrow. We will show that in building Europe we are laying the foundations of a more peaceful, more stable and more prosperous world.

Nuncio,

Distinguished Ambassadors,

This is the message I wish to ask you to convey, together with my personal best wishes, to your Heads of State and Government. And to each and every one of you I extend my warmest wishes for happiness and prosperity.

Thank you.

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