



Priorities of the G8 French Presidency

**EXCERPT FROM NEW YEAR SPEECH TO THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS BY
THE FRENCH PRESIDENT, MR JACQUES CHIRAC, ON JANUARY 7, 2003**

(...)

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. 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.

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. (...)

Bringing fairness to globalization

The Group of Eight by French President Jacques Chirac (IHT) – (Saturday, January 25, 2003).

