



Final Communiqué for the 24TH Conference of Heads of State of Africa and France

1. The 24th Conference of Heads of State of Africa and France was held in the Palais des Festivals et des Congrès in Cannes, France, on 15-16 February 2007 at the invitation of Mr. Jacques Chirac, President of the French Republic.

2. Forty-nine delegations from African countries took part in the Conference with France, along with representatives from the United Nations, the African Union, the European Commission and the International Organization of the Francophonie. For the first time, Ms. Angela Merkel, Federal Chancellor of Germany, was invited to take part in the Conference. Japan was also invited for the first time and was represented by Mr. Yoshiro Mori, former Prime Minister and Chairman of the African Commission of the Japanese Diet.

3. A ministerial-level preparatory meeting preceded the Conference in Cannes on 13 February 2007. Its central theme was Africa and Global Balance. At the instigation of President Chirac, an Afrique Avenir Forum met on 12 February 2007 in Paris at the Parc de la Villette. Approximately sixty Africans, who are symbols of success in areas that include the economy, politics and culture, attended the Forum and shared their achievements.

4. At the official opening ceremony of the 24th Africa-France Summit:

- The Conclusions of the Afrique Avenir Forum were read by Mr. Erik Orsenna, member of the Académie Française, and Ms. Christine Kelly, journalist.

Speeches were given by:

- Mr. Amadou Toumani Touré, President of the Republic of Mali, Chair of the previous Africa-France Summit;
- Mr. Hosni Mubarak, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt and candidate to chair the next Summit to be held in Cairo in 2009;
- Mr. Yoshiro Mori, former Prime Minister of Japan;
- Ms. Angela Merkel, Federal Chancellor of Germany and President-in-Office of the European Union;
- Mr. John Agyekum Kufuor, President of the Republic of Ghana and Chairman-in-Office of the African Union;
- Mr. Jacques Chirac, President of the French Republic.



5. The Conference's theme was Africa and Global Balance . Three thematic meetings were held to discuss the issues of raw materials, Africa's position and role in the world and Africa's relationship with the information society.

6. The work in thematic meetings has led to the following conclusions:

Raw Materials in Africa.

This meeting was chaired by Mr. Blaise Compaoré, President of Burkina Faso, in the presence of two leading authorities , Mr. Erik Orsenna and Ms Thandeka Gqubule. The following were the conclusions of the proceedings of this thematic meeting:

- The current buoyancy of the global economy provides Africa with an exceptional opportunity to take up its rightful place in the globalisation process and to convert its wealth of riches into development. Balanced industrial partnerships, a strengthening of infrastructures and improved representation of Africa in international negotiations and institutions are contributing to this. Adherence to the principles of good governance will guarantee sustainable management of natural resources.

With regard to cotton, the reinvigoration and deepening of the Europe-Africa Partnership, the implementation of innovative mechanisms for the mitigation of the effects of volatility in global market prices and the early application of the undertakings given in Hong Kong on cotton were emphasised. The creation of a University for Cotton, supported by France and the European Union, will also contribute to the required modernisation of the industry.

Africa's Position and Influence in the World.

This meeting was chaired by Mr. Sassou Nguesso, President of the Congo, in the presence of two leading authorities , Mr. Jacques Diouf, Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and Mr. Jean-Pierre Landau, Deputy Governor of the Banque de France. The following were the conclusions of the proceedings of this thematic meeting:

- The security and growth of the world as a whole are now closely linked to the stabilisation and development of the African continent. This confirms the necessity of reinforcing both the representation of Africa in international institutions (Security Council, United Nations agencies, international financial institutions), and improving their coordination with African organisations.



The participants underlined the requirement for mechanisms for controlled globalisation: in the trade domain, with increased consideration for the duration of the advantages of countries currently benefiting from preferential arrangements; in the area of development financing, with the implementation of the innovative mechanisms needed to attain the Millennium Development Goals; with the setting up of a United Nations Environment Organization designed to guarantee improved global governance.

Africa and the Information Society.

This meeting was chaired by Mr. Paul Biya, President of Cameroon, in the presence of two leading authorities, Mr. Mohamed Ibrahim, founder and chairman of the Mo Ibrahim Foundation and Mamadou Diouf, Senegalese historian and academic. The following were the conclusions of the proceedings of this thematic meeting:

- The spread of NICT is essential if Africa is to take up its place in the information society and enhance its image. The launch of what would effectively be a Marshall Plan and a UN Decade were mentioned as ways of closing the digital divide.

The necessity of raising the educational level of the general population and professionalising the journalistic professions was also emphasised.

All participants were agreed on the responsibility of Africans and their leaders in the image given of Africa by the media.

7. The reports on the work of these three thematic meetings were given by their Chairs to their peers at the plenary session held on Friday 16 February.

8. A meeting, which was opened by President Jacques Chirac and attended, under the chairmanship of Mr. John Agyekum Kufuor, President of Ghana and incumbent President of the African Union, by Presidents Hosni Mubarak, Omer El Bashir, Idriss Deby Itno, François Bozizø, Omar Bongo and Denis Sassou N'Guesso, was held in the margins of the Summit. This led to the declaration appended to the present Communiqué.

9. The Heads of State expressed their concern with regard to the situation in Guinea and adopted the declaration appended hereto.

17 African countries announced their joining of the UNITAID initiative, the International Drug Purchasing Facility launched in New York in September 2006. They also adopted a policy declaration aimed at ensuring the implementation of



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innovative financing of development essentially in the form of a solidarity levy on air tickets, all or part of the proceeds of which are allocated to UNITAID.

10. The African countries joining UNITAID are thus going further with their commitment to the combat against the three most deadly pandemics - AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria which are devastating their continent. They have thus decided to become not only beneficiaries but also donors to and fully-fledged actors in UNITAID, thus highlighting the partnership aspect of this initiative.

11. The participants in the 24th Conference of Heads of State of Africa and France accepted the offer made by Egypt to organise the next Summit in Cairo in 2009.