



## Treaty of Rome 50th anniversary celebrations press conference given by M. Jacques CHIRAC, President of the Republic (excerpts)

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Berlin, 25 March 2007

THE PRESIDENT - I'm very happy to be in Berlin to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Treaties of Rome. I'd like, once again, very warmly to congratulate Germany, Federal President Mr Köhler, and Chancellor Angela Merkel, for the absolutely remarkable organization of the whole of this great event, marked in particular by a speech by the Chancellor wholly reflecting the views of both Germany and France on this essential ambition: Europe.

Berlin symbolizes two things: it obviously symbolizes Franco-German reconciliation, which we owe, essentially, to the vision shared by two men, Chancellor Adenauer and General de Gaulle. It is, in a way, the cornerstone of the European enterprise. Because Europe can't be built, given momentum, if there's no Franco-German agreement, which is essential. This is what we've always seen. Without it there are difficulties.

Berlin also symbolizes the reunification of Germany and, more broadly, the reunification of Europe. This moreover explains why it was particularly appropriate to hold this celebration, this commemoration, here, in Berlin. It's a city which can be proud of its success, of what it embodies. It symbolizes the return of the Central and East European countries, released from the iron curtain, to the path of democratic transition and the success of European democracy. (•••)

50 years ago, the Treaty of Rome signalled a decisive break with a war-torn past, one of oppression; it signalled the victory of humanism over barbarity, the beginning of one of the key undertakings in our continent's history. And we can be very proud, as Mrs Merkel rightly said this morning, of having achieved the ideal of a reconciled, reunified Europe, entrenching peace, democracy, human rights and social progress throughout its territory, and making Europe a force for peace, stability and progress in today's world. It's a great success.

CHALLENGES FACING EUROPE



## PRESIDENCE DE LA REPUBLIQUE

50 years is a short time. In fact it was yesterday. And the European adventure is only beginning. It's absolutely vital to pursue it. Vital to guarantee peace and democracy in the face of the ever-possible resurgence of nationalism, racism, anti-Semitism and xenophobia. Vital to take up our century's challenges: the environmental challenge, and Europe has just clearly affirmed its world leadership in the fight against climate change; the economic, scientific industrial challenge so that we stay in the vanguard of progress and remain a major economic power. This challenge brings in its wake the social challenge, i.e. that of maintaining our European social model, the guarantee of our cohesion. The challenge of solidarity with Africa, vital for the future and as legitimate on the moral as on the political front, where we constantly need to do more to combat poverty and also to control - the two things go hand in hand - the migration flows of which poverty is essentially the cause. The challenge too of security in the face of terrorism and organized crime. The challenge of the dialogue of cultures faced with a sort of clash of civilizations which some would like to see take place. The challenge, finally, of the multipolar world in which Europe must now take its full place. Because of the way the world is changing, we are moving from a unipolar to a multipolar world. To address these challenges, we need a powerful Europe, strong because of its diversity and social cohesion, geared to innovation and unashamedly taking on its natural political role.

### FRANCE/EU

All French governments - I'd nevertheless like to stress this, since I sometimes see critical, short-sighted comments - all French governments in the past 50 years have been keen to contribute to this, with a continuity which merits emphasis.

For my part, I have ensured that France is always spearheading proposals and progress for Europe. The past 12 years have been marked by substantial progress. The euro, for example; France played a crucial role in enabling us to establish the euro. The continent's reunification, i.e. the successive enlargements, which France has always been in favour of and argued for. Defence Europe which, after an initial setback, was relaunched - I remind you - as a result of a French, or more exactly Franco-British initiative, in Saint-Malo in 1997, allowing it to be relaunched in a way tailored to modern imperatives, and these efforts must be followed by further action. Freedom of movement and increased security. The progress of Environmental Europe manifested particularly at the last European Council - progress not totally unrelated to France, as you know, we campaigned a long time for it. None of that would have been possible had there not been, at bottom, agreement between France and Germany.

We haven't managed to complete the institutional reform. But the foundations are solid. I think that the solution will emerge quite naturally from the discussions led by the German presidency and culminating at the end of 2008 under the French presidency, so I'm not worried. In fact I wholly share - we've often talked about it - the analysis Mrs Angela Merkel developed this morning.



BERLIN DECLARATION

The fine declaration we adopted this morning sends European citizens a message of confidence and hope. It's a necessary message and a justified one. When you look at everything that has happened and the situation we're in now, it does look as if the message of hope which has been expressed is a justified one.

The declaration bids us remember that what brings us together is far more important, in every respect, than what divides us, understand that to take up this century's challenges we need a strong Europe, strong because of its values, its diversity and social model, a Europe which fully shoulders its responsibilities in today's world. This is why I have particularly appreciated this event, held extremely opportunely in Berlin and, because of this, as I said, doubly symbolic, and which has, what's more, taken place in beautiful sunshine, superb weather, which is a positive sign for the future. The weather has been with us!

(...)

TURKEY

Q. - Mrs Merkel didn't invite Turkey to Berlin, telling journalists "rendezvous with Turkey in 50 years' time". What's your comment on that?

THE PRESIDENT - You mustn't confuse different types of meeting. Today it was only the heads of State and government of the EU 27. It was totally legitimate for her to take that decision and I hope that subsequently Turkey, becoming a member of the European Union, will have the opportunity to take her full place in it - in less than 50 years' time, of course. I hope so.

MIDDLE EAST PEACE SETTLEMENT/BRITISH SAILORS AND MARINES/IRAN

Q. - How do you envisage the role Europe could now play in the peace settlement in the Middle East? What message are you leaving your European colleagues on this subject? In this context, was the matter of the British marines captured by the Iranians raised at the lunch, or in conversations between the different heads of State?

THE PRESIDENT - As regards the British marines, I don't have to tell you that we are all foursquare behind Britain, and all affirmed our total solidarity with her, that goes without saying. So I don't need to comment, especially as it's clearly emerging that these sailors weren't in Iranian waters at the time.

As regards the Middle East, we are always concerned about the situation. You talked about what should and could be done. The main thing is to try and rebuild trust between the parties, between the Palestinians and the Israelis, it's essential. This trust, for explicable reasons, did exist and has deteriorated. It must now be rebuilt. It's a long-term job demanding a lot of effort and a lot of heart. This morning I presented the great conductor Mr



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Barenboim with the insignia of Commandeur de la Légion d'Honneur. I stressed in particular that he was a peace campaigner, that he had organized, set up, an organization called the "West-Eastern Divan", in which he brings together Palestinian and Israeli musicians who give concerts in various places. It's a point of contact. I think we must step up the number of such initiatives if we want to restore the trust which will once again allow discussions between Palestinians and Israelis. For the moment, it isn't there.

(...)

### LEBANON/INTERNATIONAL TRIBUNAL

Q. - Do you think that before the end of your mandate you'll be able to instigate a new Security Council resolution for the creation of an international tribunal to try the criminals responsible for assassinating Rafiq Hariri and for the other assassinations in Lebanon? You were on the phone to President Putin a few days ago; did you get the impression that Russia would veto a resolution creating the tribunal under Chapter VII?

THE PRESIDENT - I think the international tribunal and its urgent creation after the Riyadh summit are absolutely necessary, in conformity with justice. Since it's normal for Rafiq Hariri's murderers and those guilty of the 15 murders committed subsequently to come before the courts and be punished, not only for reasons of justice, but also for reasons of deterrence. If the international tribunal isn't set up, then the guilty will in a way be free and even encouraged to continue this form of political action, by assassination, whilst if there's a tribunal, which is organized and capable of reacting and convicting, then it can help act as a deterrent. I've often had the opportunity of stressing this point, with both Arab and European, Russian and Chinese leaders. The international tribunal is necessary at the deterrent level. It must be set up as a matter of urgency.

Let me add that Mr Brammertz's latest report clearly shows that he thinks there's a political motive behind these acts. Consequently, the tribunal must be set up. It's desirable for the Lebanese authorities themselves - in Lebanon there's a legitimate government which can't be contested - to take the necessary initiatives, i.e. to decide on the terms and conditions for setting up the tribunal. If the local Lebanese circumstances were to make this difficult or impossible, another solution will certainly have to be found, urgently. And indeed this can only be a UN Security Council decision, taken under Chapter VII. Personally, in that eventuality, I'll be in favour of that initiative. But, I repeat, it would be preferable for Lebanon to instigate this. But we can't wait any longer. An initiative must now be taken rapidly and I'd like it to be before the end of my mandate. (...)/.

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