

*(Non-official translation)*

Mr. President of the General Assembly,  
Heads of State and Government,  
Mr. Secretary-General, Kofi Annan,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The United Nations stands for the best that is in us - our aspiration to peace, justice, the freedom of individuals and peoples. Despite our divisions and our doubts, the time has come to adapt it to the changes in our world in order to strengthen its legitimacy and allow it to fulfill its political potential.

Sixty years on, the task remains immense.

For the first time since the Millennium Summit and Monterrey, we share the same development goal. So let us take up this challenge. Let us be true to our commitments, especially in Africa. This is the reason why France, through the voice of Jacques Chirac, the President of the Republic, has proposed new financing mechanisms along with other like-minded countries.

Let us also learn what experience has to teach us, be it in Iraq, in the Middle East, in Côte d'Ivoire, Afghanistan or Haiti, and in all the regional crises that destabilize the world. Where division has brought about failure, we must together find new ways forward. Where unity has enabled us to achieve initial success, we must persevere. New principles are needed, such as the responsibility to protect. We also need new instruments, such as the Peace-Building Commission.

What our peoples require of us first and foremost, is security. To combat terrorism we need an organization that mobilizes the determination and energy of one and all. France firmly believes that operational cooperation must be stepped-up, but that complying with the rule of law and setting a democratic example are our best weapons. To combat proliferation, let us stand united and set up stronger verification mechanisms.

Our peoples also require respect - the best guarantee of this being respect for human rights which is central to our common goal. And yet these basic rights are still under threat on all continents, as a result of violence and indifference: we need a new instrument, the Human Rights Council. Men and women who enjoy equal rights and dignity – that is the meaning of what we are doing here.

On all these questions, the declaration we shall be adopting paves the way. Let us keep the momentum going. For what is urgently needed right now is an in-depth reform of our institutions. If reform is to have legitimacy, it must respond to the requirements of our times: the unity of the international community, respect for the rules of law, affirmation of collective responsibility. If it is to be effective, it must ensure better representation of the international community.

Thus the reform of the Security Council must be concluded by the end of the year. The plan put forward by Brazil, Germany, India and Japan enshrines the rights of each continent, in particular Africa, and strengthens the Council. We must also set up a United Nations Environment Organization. Lastly, we must establish genuine economic and social governance.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In 1945, in San Francisco, the hopes of the world's peoples were borne by a small number of States. Today, in New York, all the world's countries have decided to act together. Because no single state has the means to respond alone to the problems that our planet faces.

Whatever our power, whatever our culture, our religion, our history, we all have a common ideal: a world of justice and solidarity. We all have a common enemy: cowardice and selfishness.

Here, on American soil, France wishes to express its grief at what has befallen Louisiana, Alabama and Mississippi. We share the suffering of the American people.

And here in this world forum, France cannot simply stand by and watch the pain of the men, women and children, the world over, from the Middle-East to Sub-Saharan Africa, who bear witness to our common humanity, which is yet too often denied them. It is to their appeal that we must respond. France also knows that globalization, although it awakens hopes, can also bring with it scorn for human values and the treatment of people as merchandise. In the face of this urgent need, the pressing situations everywhere, let us rouse our consciences. Let us respond to all those who suffer and who want to believe in us.

When faced with the all too frequent images of a divided and broken world, how could we not wish to build together a world with, at last, a warm heart and willing hands, worthy of the expectations of our peoples? So, yes, let us act together; for all our words will be empty if they are not grounded in solidarity, justice and respect. We will be judged not on what we say but by what we do.

I thank you./.