

**Speech delivered by M. Nicolas Sarkozy, President of the French Republic  
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- General Assembly - MDGs Summit –**

**As delivered**

Heads of Government,

Mr. Secretary-General,

Mr. President of the General Assembly,

Ten years ago, the world decided to reduce extreme poverty by half; to guarantee education for all children; to cut infant mortality by two thirds; to improve maternal health; to combat AIDS and malaria; and to promote gender equality.

That was 10 years ago. Considerable progress has been made, but we still have a very long road ahead of us. We have five years to meet our objectives.

During the past two years, the world has experienced an unprecedented economic crisis. That raises the question: Will we use the crisis as a pretext to do less, or, on the contrary, will we give ourselves a necessary jump-start, will we fulfill our promises?

France has decided to mobilize. We are the world's second-largest public aid donor, providing 10 billion euros annually. And even though we were already the second-largest contributor to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, we decided to increase our contribution by 20 percent during the next three years. Not only do we not wish to decrease our contribution, not only do we not wish to maintain it at its current level—we will increase it by 20 percent.

While the crisis is severe in the wealthy countries, where it has created deficits, its consequences are much harsher in the poor countries. So we do not have the right to do less. And with regard to our decision, we hope that all the developed countries will decide to do more and, naturally, to help Africa on a priority basis.

Malaria kills a million children in Africa each year. To put it bluntly, before the end of my speech, 30 children in Africa will have died of malaria. We do not have the right to hide behind the economic crisis as an excuse to do less.

The Fund cares for 2.5 million AIDS sufferers. If every nation were to follow our example, the number of AIDS sufferers cared for would increase to 4 million. It's not a matter of making speeches; it's a matter of deciding.

I also want to share my conviction that we will not succeed with public funds alone; the private sector must join in our effort. Indeed, as the future president of the G20 and the G8, I will attend the African Union summit at the end of January in Addis Ababa, and during the year of my G20 and G8 presidency, I will strive to promote the idea of innovative financing championed by Bernard Kouchner.

At a time when all the developed countries are running deficits, I also want to express my conviction that we must find new sources of financing to fight against poverty, on behalf of education, and to resolve the major health problems in Africa. We can decide here to implement innovative financing, the taxation of financial transactions. Why wait? Finance has been globalized. Why shouldn't we demand that finance contribute to stabilizing the world through a minuscule tax on each financial transaction?

In Copenhagen, we all made commitments. \$30 billion per year for Fast Start, \$100 billion for development. We will not meet our deadlines if we don't move forward on innovative financing. As future president of the G20 and the G8, we will fight to develop this idea. It is essential and our credibility is at stake.

To conclude, let me add once again that we are committed to keeping our commitments to finance development, to conceive of innovative financing, and to give Africa its rightful place, notably in new global governance. I will reiterate that tirelessly from this podium. This is the 21st century; we cannot continue with the governance of the 20th century.

The coming year is the year of all possible changes. You are Heads of State and Government. After the crisis, let us not fall back into our bad habits and our daily routines. The coming year must be one of great change. You have understood that France intends to participate in it: not, of course, to make speeches; not, of course, to preach; but to lead the entire world toward new global governance, toward greater solidarity and toward the emergence of innovative financing. If we fulfill this condition, we will be believed and respected by all the peoples of the world.

Thank you./.