

« Navigating a multipolar world »
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I am very happy to have the opportunity to be here in Cape Town to address the stakes of the century to come. I want to thank SAIIA, the EU Representation and the French Embassy and Consulate General for making this conference possible.

The world is entering today into dangerous waters. No less dangerous than those a handful of Portuguese sailors around Bartolomeu Dias discovered the Cape of Tempests. Tensions are many and new risks arise, in a context where different power poles have entered a global competition for political, economic and cultural influence.

The US are still the main power. But China seems bound to overtake Washington in terms of economics in a foreseeable future, maybe before the hundred years of the People's Republic of China in 2049 and China is playing a more and more valuable role on the international stage. In the Middle-East, we can see that Russia has taken the initiative. Europe still is struggling to unite and speak with one voice, barely recovering from the succession of crisis between 2005 and 2012. Africa, although challenged by multiple political crises, gets more and more involved into the world's future.

Africa has suffered shockwaves of all kinds in the last decades.

First, Africa suffered political shockwaves through the consequences of decolonization and independence processes, such as political struggles and violence. This led to undervaluation of Africa's role in the global governance, as its role was reduced to being a battleground for proxy conflicts.

Africa also suffered several economic shockwaves, especially since the 1990's, with IMF adjustment plans, and the 2008 crisis, which affected raw material prices.

This led Africa to be more or less left alone in cyclical trends of African optimism and African pessimism.

But this is beginning to change dramatically.

Africa will be at the center of international exchanges in the decades to come for many reasons.

First, Africa should account for a quarter of the world's population by 2050. And today, half of the African people are under 20.

Second, Africa is modernizing at a rapid pace. Education is undergoing a fast take-off throughout the continent, and economies are diversifying.

This makes Africa the largest growth reserve for the world in the XXIst century.

And therefore, as a European, I cannot miss the opportunity to underline the importance of building bridges between our two continents. Indeed, I believe we both represent valuable alternatives to today's global tensions.

I/ Globalization has changed the world and brought new risks. It even created new paradoxes.

1) *First paradox: globalization favors the comeback of identities against the risk of cultural standardization*

a. Nationalisms and identities have been reinforced

- The end of the Cold War has made us believe for some time that the “wind of change” would overcome outdated differences between people.
 - Some believed that the *American way of life* would gradually attract all advanced nations.
 - Some believed that market economy would gradually expand to the whole planet.
 - Some believed that liberal democracy would gradually conquer the heart of all world citizens.
- This has not been the case, since we saw, on the contrary, that particularisms and specificities prevailed and even grew stronger in many parts of the world.
 - It is the case in India, the ruling government still abides, to a certain extent, to the traditional system of hierarchy and social casts. The victory of Narendra Modi and the BJP
- In the most dramatic cases, this movement of identities even created the most violent reaction, terrorism, as with jihadism in the Islamic world.
 - But Jihadism is a paradox in itself, announcing the way of life of the Middle Ages, through the technical means of the 21st century, on the Internet and the smartphones.
 - Jihadism is also a paradox because it demands the possibility to close the Islamic world to outside influence but at the same time it acts and develops as

a global resistance to globalization all over the world, attracting a number of recent converts.

- It is a real threat in all of the permanent member states of the UN Security Council, China, Russia, Britain, France and the US.
- It is a threat in two thirds of the world, from South East Asia to Sahel and even Central Africa.

b. In the Western world itself, populism and nationalism are rising

- The election of Donald TRUMP in November 2016 revealed the strong divides in America between pro- and anti-globalization.
 - The nation that profited the most from the unprecedented opening and fluidity of global economy now wants to recede from the game.
 - The USA are still home to the most prosperous companies as well as to the highest number of foreign investors, with around \$8 000 billion dollars of investment stock worldwide.
 - But the US are also home to millions of voters who want to protect the US economy from the rest of the world and do believe in raising trade tariffs.
- In Europe too, populism has obtained victories.
 - Hungary, Poland, Czech Republic, Serbia, Austria, Italy are all governed by nationalist parties or have the first fraction of parliament belonging to this movement.
 - At the heart of the European Union, in Germany and France, far-right parties earn a larger and larger popular acclaim in recent elections. The *National Front* in France and the *Alternative für Deutschland* in Germany both represent large parts of the population. In last October's elections in Germany, the AfD conquered a hundred seats, becoming the first opposition party in Germany.

2) *Second paradox: never before have inequalities been more striking than today.*

a. Modernization crises in different part of the world have brought new dangers

- Globalization has changed social behaviors
 - Traditional values and family ties tend to disband where market economy expands, because this system promotes the individual labor as source of all wealth.

- The countryside and the cities are more and more opposed, following different paths of growth. This is true on all continents, especially in Europe and in Africa.
- Between the winners and the leftovers of globalization, tensions are more and more difficult to reduce.
 - In the emerging world, inequalities grow at a rapid pace, as the profits of tremendous wealth creation are not equally shared.
 - In the advanced economies, income gaps also tend to grow.

b. Between countries, economic competition brings risks of tensions

- It is true in the Pacific.
 - The USA and China have entered a tariff war and a regional influence competition, since Donald TRUMP has pulled out of TPP. The recent American demands to China to reduce the trade deficit of the USA by 200 bn sounds like a provocation.
 - We know that trade disputes can lead to open wars. In fact this is the lesson of the whole 19th century in Asia, the breakup of China in the name of free trade or the antagonism between Japan and Russia in the Far East.
- It is true in Africa.
 - Africa is a divided and heterogeneous continent in terms of economy. Its different regions are taking more and more different paths.
 - We see a strong South Africa leading in industry and big corporations.
 - We see strong oil-dependent countries like Nigeria struggling with the rent economy.
 - We see smaller countries developing fast modernization through labor intensive industries, especially textiles, or through an investment friendly environment, like Rwanda, Ethiopia, Malawi.
 - There are first steps towards economic and financial integration, as was announced with the continental free trade agreement in Rwanda recently.
 - There are also trade agreements, specially with Europe, that allow to take into account the specific needs of the African economy, as with the Lome agreements and the Cotonou agreement between the EU and 70 countries from Africa and the Caribbean.

3) *Third paradox: instead of a general homogenization of state structures through liberalism, we witness an opposition between strong states and weak states.*

a. More and more failed states appeared on the scene

- In the Middle-East and North Africa.
 - Afghanistan
 - In Libya, specially after the Western intervention against the Khadafy regime in 2011.
- It's true in Africa too.
 - In Central Africa and Sahel, states are struggling to keep their unity, to provide basic services to their population.
 - In Eastern Africa, South Sudan and Eritrea are examples of vicious cycles of state failure, leading to ever more civil war and ever less state influence. If Charles Tilly was right to note that states are the made by wars, today states are unmade by civil wars.

b. We see now a hierarchy of state organization, similar to a feudal past.

- There are main powers that take the right to intervene militarily to defend their interests or what they believe to be their values.
 - It's true with the United States and even France since 2003 in Iraq and then in Libya and Mali.
 - It's true with Russia in Syria
- There are states depending on a sphere of influence to protect a minima autonomy.
- There are almost stateless regions where rival powers wage proxy wars or remain indifferent.

II/ In this broken world, I see three main risks that could lead us to war.

1) *First, there is a huge risk of bipolarization. This would mean going back to the times of the Cold War but maybe with more massive means of confrontation.*

a. Liberal democracies and authoritarian regimes oppose each other more openly than ever

- The affirmation of an Asian political model, based on authority, stability and sovereignty sets the scene for a new confrontation with a Western model based on

liberal democracy. Chinese leaders are more and more vocal about such a model, specially since the 19th Congress of the Communist Party in last October.

- The Asian model is based on authority of charismatic leaders, as LEE Kuan Yew showed in Singapore, CHIANG Ching-Kuo in Taiwan, PARK Chung-hee in South Korea.
- The Asian model fosters stability, laying out the base for a safe economic environment and foreign investments. Singapore, for instance, has gathered a stock of foreign direct investment of around 1 400 billion dollars.
- The Asian model is attached to sovereignty, through a nationalist discourse and protectionist policies. It is also attached to financial and digital sovereignty.
- The Western model on the contrary continues to defend liberal institutions, civil rights, rule of law as the conditions of economic development rather than its result.
 - It's an interventionist model justifying in some cases regime change and democratization in the name of the common humanity. But force only creates more use of force in return as has been shown in all recent examples.
 - It is a moral model. This approach, developed as a reaction to the horrors of World War II, today appears sometimes as too one-sided. The International Court of Justice is under fire from its critics because it convicts more easily African leaders from smaller countries but no one from major powers.

b. The danger today is to fall into an antagonism of new blocks, reminding of the Cold war era, in which China and USA would face each other in a bipolar world.

- In the field of military capacities the competition is growing fast.
 - The USA have declared China a strategic rival and orient their national security policy against China.
 - China is modernizing its army to be more professional, better equipped, specially in terms of aircraft carriers, anti-access/area denial capacities and navy in general.
- In the field of technology, the opposition is growing too.
 - China is opposing its FAANGS to the American GAFAM, restraining access and development capacities on its huge domestic market to foreign IT companies.

- The US are ring-fencing their technologies against Chinese influence, as shown by the recent decision to ban the supplier ZTE for seven years and to contest the Qualcomm-Broadcom bid on microchips concentration.
- In terms of spheres of influence, China is building up forces to impose its presence in the South China Seas, based on the 9 lines
 - Philippines are attracted toward China, despite tensions in the South China Sea and a judgement in favor of the Philippines issued by UN, under its Convention on the Law of the Sea.
 - Central Asian countries are attracted by China's development promise, embodied by AIIB's structural projects.
- c. This creates the condition for what has been called "Thucydides' trap"
 - Graham Allison has described the Thucydides trap based on the Greek historian's analysis of the war between Athens and Sparta in the 5th century BC. According to him when a power declines and another one rises, history teaches us that war occurs in 12 cases out of 16 known.
 - For Europe and Russia the consequence of bipolarization is the growing risk of being attracted against their will in one zone of influence.
 - This would mean less power of decision for their own future for both of them. In Eastern Europe for example I can only be worried by the prospect of NATO deciding alone on the strategy towards Russia, after the mistakes of the past.
 - Less power of decision, but at the same time more direct risk of confrontation because this would make Eastern Europe, as well as the Pacific, the contact zone between the two global poles.
 - That's why I believe Europe and Russia have a responsibility to work together in order to avoid global escalation. This means, even if there are many differences of appreciation and different conceptions of politics, we need to structure tools for our common destiny.
 - The North Korean issue is decisive.
 - The crisis over North Korea embodies this risk of new antagonism. It is at the same time the last cold war conflict and the first new world order conflict.

- The North Korean regime is inherited from the Cold War, and Korea is the last divided nation from that period, while Germany, Vietnam and Yemen have all been reunited.
- The crisis tends to reinforce the old alliance of China with the North and USA with the South.
- From Donald Trump's point of view, the North Korean crisis is a hot priority, because:
 - It is a matter of domestic security against the North Korean missile threat on the US territory.
 - It is a matter of tightening relations with historic allies in the area, and specially with South Korea. South Korea is tempted today to move toward China, by far its first economic partner.
 - It is of course also very probably a matter of putting pressure on China.

2) *The second risk is the collision of an unorganized multipolarity, recreating the world of the Sleepwalkers of the 19th century.*

- If we manage to avoid bipolarization, we still have to achieve the transformation from a unipolar moment of the world to a multipolar balance.
 - The risks concentrate in-between major powers in the zones of friction or equal attraction between two powers. The tensions in Eastern Europe between Russia and the Europeans can be interpreted as a symptom of these frictions.
 - Risks will also concentrate between India and China with the growth of two nuclear powers with old border conflicts and an unsolved issue with Pakistan, supported by China.
 - There are potential conflicts between Russia and China, rooted in history and cultural wariness that should not be under evaluated in the relationship between the two powers. In some regards, the ambitious New Silk Road project worries Russia, whose territory is a geographical link between Europe and Asia.
 - There are risks of conflict also between Europe and China as we see debates on the New Silk Road sometimes growing sour and some Europeans have the feeling of an unfair Chinese competition on the African markets.

- The dynamics of military alliances in an unbalanced order of several poles of power creates the risk of automatic military responses. What was true in 1914 and has been demonstrated by Christopher Clarke is even more true in a hyper technological world where a tenth of a second will be decisive to win a war. This means the place for politics has dramatically reduced in settling large scale conflicts.
- Unorganized multipolarity leads to defensive coexistence. This means a new conflictuality of borders. We see it with the phenomenon of wars and with the issue of traffics.
 - The US-Mexican border wall advocated by Donald Trump is one example of a pole of power shutting itself up to the outside world, conceived only as risks and threats.
 - But let's be aware that the treatment of borders by Europe is a similar response of fear and powerlessness. The strategy in the Mediterranean is becoming more and more incoherent, neither efficient, nor humane, creating the conditions for resentment and even violence, specially in Africa.

3) *The third risk lies in the fact that there are many new eruptive crises linked to the absence of a coherent world governance.*

- The new economy is shifting the geography of strategic resources creating incentives or capacities in some countries to fight over the control of resources.
 - Cobalt and lithium are particularly important for instance in the development of electric cars and their batteries, creating social and political tensions in some African or Latin American countries
 - Rare earths, available in scarce quantities have recently been discovered in new countries, in Greenland, in Japan or in Tahiti. In some cases it favors demands for independence, in the hope of total control of these reserves.
 - The geography of natural gas reserves is also shifting through the wave of explorations at the beginning of the century. Specially the eastern Mediterranean, Egypt, Lebanon, Cyprus, Israel are becoming key countries. In already divided and conflictual countries, this can only be worrying news.
- We see also violent political movements spreading, either through dissemination or through imitation to promote nationalist or identitarian causes.

- Muslim countries all around the world are affected by the risk of jihadist movements, not only in North Africa and the Middle East, but also in Indonesia, the Philippines or Bangladesh.
- Political instability is heightened by economic change and global interdependency, creating the possibility of revolutions and counter-revolutions, as was the case with Color Revolutions in the former Soviet Union or with the Arab Springs in the Middle East. This sequence of revolutionary outbursts and of battles of political factions is a reality also in Africa.
- We see frozen conflicts of regional scale becoming more and more entrenched, with an escalation in military expenses and sporadic fighting, as is the case in Nagorny Karabakh between Azerbaijan and Armenia.

III/ That is why we, Africa and Europe, should defend a new multilateral world able to guarantee some basic principles.

1) First and foremost, I think independence and sovereignty are key.

- a. We need to respect each state sovereignty, because it's the core of our world order for four hundred years.
- Sovereignty is and will remain the base of international relations in the Westphalian order.
- We have to reaffirm the framework of international legality and halt military foreign interventions that are not supported by the United Nations. Because they have been a major source of instability. They have been fuel on the fire of our world.
- b. We need to foster the reinforcement of states and administrations in each and every country.
- State to state diplomacy is irreplaceable.
 - It is normal that civil societies should be more and more involved in diplomatic relations, specially in business, science and culture.

- But this should not replace state level discussions. It is the only legitimate level, even when we don't agree with the existing regime.
- If we don't respect state administrations, states will continue to fail
 - The Syrian case is emblematic.
 - Only Russia has steadily kept on talking with President Al-Assad, and this show that Moscow is the only credible broker for peace today.
 - On the contrary, Western powers have continuously changed directions on the matter.
- We need new tools to avoid state failure, through preventive collective action.
 - This means organizing specific high-level conferences for weak countries, putting together all the main stakeholders.
 - This means having a permanent state building corps of civil servants from different countries, transmitting their administrative culture and training and providing administrative resources.

2) *Second, I believe cooperation and multilateralism will be the problem solvers*

- a. We need project diplomacy, with large inclusive projects.
 - The Chinese Belt and Road project is the embodiment of an inclusive diplomatic project.
 - Other projects in the line of OBOR are essential for tomorrow's world. And I specifically believe in a partnership project between Europe and Africa. This means creating specific and innovative tools, a dedicated policy bank, a specific body for political governance or a joint private-public investment fund specializing on the main bottlenecks of the African economies.
- b. All organizations that avoid pre-formed alignments are useful.
 - Organization such as BRICS are needed in order to avoid mindless bipolarization.
 - South Africa has a unique voice in the world. It can be an example of peaceful reconstruction, of regional leadership and of innovative diplomatic thinking, through strategic partnerships with major emerging or industrialized countries, in the spirit of the former non-aligned countries.

3) *Third, I think regional integration in stable poles should be a priority*

a. Regional stability can be ensured through ambitious infrastructure projects.

- It is the case in certain African regions.
 - The Addis-Abeba/Abuja train in East Africa.
 - The *Plan Sénégal Émergent* is an example how to connect new airport and road infrastructures and new approaches on urban development.

b. Africa must be at the heart of multiscale projects and partnerships.

- The African Union is undergoing a large reform process under Paul KAGAMÉ's presidency, proving it is a young, dynamic and creative organization.
- The African Union and the European Union need to enter into closer and more structured cooperation within the European-Africa partnership.
- But Chinese investments and projects in Africa should also be seen as opportunities, for the Europeans, to work together with African companies on mutually beneficial projects that build on each partner's special skills.

c. Because we have important common challenges.

- The most important of all is climate change.
 - *"Our house is burning and we look away. Notre maison brûle et nous regardons ailleurs"*, said President CHIRAC in 2002 at the Earth Summit here in South Africa, in Johannesburg.
 - Africa suffers from global warming more than most regions of the world because of its environmental vulnerabilities, especially where deserts gather momentum over farmland.
- The refugees are another common challenge that we will have to tackle in the long term. Let's remember that In the Mediterranean, more than 5 000 people died in 2016.
- Last of all security is our common duty, and our common risk.
 - We need to support structured initiatives of counterterrorism and intelligence sharing, with the United States, but also with other powers concerned by the threat.
- We need to build security mechanisms, like the G5 Sahel, in order to guarantee security in troubled regions with strong initiative coming from the African countries themselves.

- We need a permanent peace force of the United Nations, at least 100,000 men, recruited, trained and promoted directly by the UN, linking aid and reconstruction to the deployment of the international peace troops, in order to avoid the insufficiencies of UN interventions in Africa in the last decades.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In this broken world, we have to learn to navigate a sea of troubles.

The XXIst century will be African. And I am convinced that Africa will surprise the world and hopefully show us the way to resolve multiscale crises. That's why it's Africa and Europe's duty to unite in order to mend the scars of our divided world.