



The

Continuing the miracle into South Africa's second decade

FW de Klerk Foundation

PRESS STATEMENT

F W DE KLERK CALLS FOR GLOBALISATION THAT PROMOTES EQUITY AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Speech by Former President FW de Klerk to Northwest Missouri State University, Missouri.

In a speech yesterday to Northwest Missouri State University in Missouri F W de Klerk called for an approach to globalisation based on multilateralism, equity and cultural diversity.

The first requirement in an integrating world was that states should work together to deal with global problems. In the new globalised world there would be no place for unilateral action. The second response to globalisation had to be equity to ensure that globalisation took place in a fair and reasonable manner and that the playing fields were even. He said that the playing fields for Africa were very uneven and that aid was not necessarily the answer to most of its problems. Better and fairer access to first world markets - particularly for agricultural exports - would help to level the fields. The first world's agricultural subsidies often made it impossible for developing countries to compete in global markets for agricultural products - the one area where they could achieve a competitive advantage. He said that agriculture was of critical importance to most African countries and that America's agricultural subsidies had to be phased out if we wanted to create a fairer and more stable world.

De Klerk said that the third response to globalisation should be the protection of cultural diversity. Globalisation had ended the days of the homogeneous nation state and today a quarter of the populations of more than half of the countries in the world comprised ethnic and cultural minorities. The failure to accommodate diversity lay at the heart of most of the conflicts that currently afflicted the world. Today nearly all conflicts took place within countries primarily between religious, ethnic and cultural communities. These conflicts often have their roots in deeply held perceptions that minority cultural and religious identities are under threat. The challenge was to develop approaches that would enable diverse communities to coexist in harmony, toleration and mutual respect - since attempts to ignore or suppress diversity could lead to confrontation and conflict. The international community should articulate, entrench and promote respect for the rights of communities and devise ground rules for harmonious co-existence.

The question, according to FW de Klerk, was how the United States - as the world's last surviving super-power - should respond to the emerging reality of globalisation. He said that America's role as the *de facto* global leader bore with it heavy burdens and responsibilities, and also unpopularity. He warned that despite the temptation, America had to refrain from withdrawing into a new period of isolation.

ISSUED BY THE F W DE KLERK FOUNDATION

CAPE TOWN, 6 October 2005

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