



The

Continuing the miracle into South Africa's second decade

FW de Klerk Foundation

EMBARGO: 23H55 MONDAY 11 SEPTEMBER 2006

SPEECH BY FORMER PRESIDENT FW DE KLERK TO KENT STATE UNIVERSITY, CANTON, OHIO, 11 SEPTEMBER 2006

COMBATting TERRORISM IN A GLOBALISED WORLD

Today is, of course, the fifth anniversary of the day - that like 7 December 1941 - will live in infamy forever. 9/11 was more than an attack on two great cities and a great nation: it was a day that ushered in a new era in global politics. Many of the developments that have come to dominate the world in which we now live had their roots in Al-Qaeda's attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon.

Five years after 9/11 the war against terrorism shows no signs of abating. Just last month the British authorities arrested fanatical Moslems who were about to carry out another wave of murderous attacks against innocent civilians. The US and British governments continue to warn that future terrorist outrages are inevitable.

The objective of terrorists is - of course - to cause terror and to disrupt society.

By this definition, the authors of the 9/11 attacks were successful. The horrific damage done to downtown Manhattan and the Pentagon and the 3 000 lives that were lost still reverberate in our hearts and minds. However, the success of the perpetrators did not stop there:

- It took many months for airline flights to return to pre-9/11 passenger levels;
- Markets throughout the world were affected, as was the American economy.
- The attacks also had a dramatic effect on the American body politic and led to the adoption of quite draconian measures. This includes the Patriot Acts and the establishment of a powerful new bureaucracy - the Department of Homeland Security.

This necessarily more restrictive political atmosphere provided the backdrop for the United States decision to invade Iraq and for the development of global politics ever since then. As intended, the following terrorist attacks in Spain had a significant impact on the national elections that followed shortly afterwards.

And it continued until today. Think of the train bombs in London and the recent very real threats to flights from England to the USA.

9/11, and the many incidents since then, underline a frightening escalation in terrorism.

Easy access to modern technology has greatly enhanced the destructive potential of terrorists:

- Powerful bombs can be built with industrial and agricultural components that are commercially available to anyone.
- Seemingly peaceful items - like cars, trucks, ships and planes - can be converted into deadly weapons.

- Populations can be threatened with potent biological and chemical agents.
- Most seriously, terrorists might one day acquire a nuclear weapon.

Coupled with implacable fanaticism, modern technology can present a potentially disastrous threat to society.

9/11 signalled a further disturbing development in terrorism. The new terrorists are not people who bargain, who put demands, who wish to see mutually positive outcomes. On the contrary, they are motivated by irrational hatred and by a cold-blooded determination to destroy and to kill, without remorse and without compassion. As they themselves boast: they embrace death.

Against this background the question that I would like to address today is

- how does the war against terrorism fit in with the broader global environment and how should the United States and other leading nations of the world respond to these developments?

Firstly, 9/11 and the ensuing terrorist attacks illustrate the degree to which we now live in a globalised world.

Globalisation is leading to an unprecedented flow of people, ideas and products between countries and regions. The days of the homogeneous nation state have gone. Today, a quarter of the populations of more than half of the countries in the world comprise important ethnic and cultural minorities.

More and more US and international cities have culturally diverse populations. In 2001, 59% of the population of Miami was foreign-born. The figure for Toronto was 44% and for New York 36%. 23% of the population of even a supposedly homogenous city like Paris was born overseas. The number of Moslems in the European Union doubled between 1989 and 1997 - and now stands at 14 million - or 2% of the total population.

These facts pose a big challenge. Increased interaction between different cultures, religions and nationalities often lead to tension - even in traditionally tolerant countries like the Netherlands and France. The challenge lies in reducing or, even better, preventing such tensions.

We must realise that global politics are no longer dominated by confrontation between opposing ideological blocs or by warfare between nations. Nearly all conflicts now take place within countries primarily between religious, ethnic and cultural communities. These conflicts often have their roots in deeply held perceptions that cultural and religious identities are under threat.

In a globalised world we can no longer ignore such conflicts. We cannot ignore crises and grievances in other parts of the world. And in particular, we cannot ignore the insistence of many people around the world on maintaining their cultural and religious identities.

A deep sense of cultural or ethnic alienation lies at the root of many of the nasty little wars throughout the world - most of which seldom impact on the evening news. Who, for example, has ever heard of South Ossetia, a break-away province of Georgia, where local forces supported by Russia are ranged against Georgian forces trained by the United States and Britain? Who knows about the bitter conflict in Guatemala where the native Mayan people are struggling to maintain their cultural identity?

Think of the vicious fighting that has once again broken out between the Tamils and Singhalese of Sri Lanka. Think of Sudan where the Government is continuing its offensive against the people of Darfur

- an offensive which has already caused the deaths of an estimated 300 000 people and the displacement of more than two million people.

Maybe the main root cause for these and many other conflicts lies in failure to manage diversity.

Too often, minority communities around the world feel that they are not sufficiently accommodated, politically or culturally, in the processes by which they are governed. They feel that their governments are insensitive to their languages, cultures and religions; that they are subject to discrimination, repression and efforts to integrate them forcibly into the majority culture.

This sense of alienation often breaks out in conflict, rebellion, demands for secession and sometimes in acts of terrorism.

Religion also lies at the root of much of the ongoing conflict in the world. Differences between Catholics and protestants in Northern Ireland; Hindus, Moslems and Sikhs in India; and Moslems and Christians in Nigeria and Sudan all create volatile situations that can explode into increasing violence and terrorism at almost any time.

Most seriously, the rampant advance of a globalised consumer culture with its attendant political and social ethos, poses a fundamental threat to radical conservative Moslems. They fear it with every fibre of their being precisely because their people find its shiny consumer products, its flashy, free-wheeling life-style and its amoral pop culture so alluring.

These religious conservatives believe that the attendant liberal values of unrestrained freedom, democracy, sexual emancipation, abortion on demand, gender equality and materialism are irreconcilable with the austere piety and purity of the vision of their prophet.

The result has become fanatical rejection of western culture and its chief exponent, the United States - in what Samuel Huntingdon describes as the 'clash of civilisations'.

This is further exacerbated by the sense of deep injury that most conservative Moslems feel over Western influence in their region. They are deeply aggrieved

- by continuing American support for Israel as recently illustrated in Lebanon;
- by western influence on what they regard as corrupt Moslem national leaders and governments;
- by the western invasion of Iraq; and
- by what they regard as the defilement of their most holy places by the continuing American presence in, and influence on, Saudi Arabia.

These grievances create the seedbed in which the fanaticism of organizations like Al-Qaeda takes root.

How should the international community - and, in particular, the United States - react to the growing irrational fanaticism which underlies most serious terrorist threats?

Throughout its history America has oscillated between isolation from and active involvement in the outside world.

At present, the United States is in a phase of active engagement in global affairs. In fact, if the world has become a globalised village, there can be little doubt that the United States is its Mayor and - its Chief of Police. America holds these positions - not because it has been elected to them - but because of its unchallenged military, economic and IT pre-eminence.

America's role of *de facto* global leadership bears with it heavy burdens and responsibilities:

- The United States has to spend a disproportionate share of its national wealth on the upkeep of its global military capability. It currently has more than 300 000 troops stationed overseas and has so far committed more than \$ 300 billion dollars to its activities in Iraq.
- The United States pre-eminence also makes it a target for disaffected groups all over the world. Osama bin Laden would not have targeted the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon if they were not military and commercial symbols of the richest and most powerful country in the world.
- The price of pre-eminence is, and always has been, unpopularity. America must endure the jealousy of some of its oldest allies, many of whom delight in taking pot-shots at her policies, while sheltering beneath her strategic umbrella.
- The United States is likely to be criticised, whatever it does. If it acts to enforce United Nations resolutions on Iraq, it is accused of imperialism. If it fails to intervene in other crises - such as the present conflict in Darfur - it is slated for being insensitive to the plight of Africans.

As Gilbert and Sullivan observed over a hundred years ago "the Policeman's lot is not a happy one".

Unfortunately, this is the price that must be paid for being the only remaining super-power. It is a price that was well understood by other pre-eminent powers throughout history - from the Romans two thousand years ago to the British during the nineteenth century.

The only consolation is that such global pre-eminence seldom lasts.

The temptation under these circumstances will be great for America to withdraw once again into a new period of isolation. It might well argue that it is self-sufficient and is much less dependent on the rest of the world than most other countries. After all, America's imports and exports amount to less than 15 % of its GDP compared to over 35% for a country like Germany or more than 90% for Ireland.

I believe, however, that the key reality of globalisation is that isolation is simply no longer an option.

One of the implications of the globalising world is that no country - and particularly no leading power - can any longer withdraw from the international community. Involvement in the globalised economy will increasingly be the key to growth. No country will be prepared to forego the commercial, cultural and technological opportunities that globalisation presents.

Another implication of globalization is the need for multilateralism. In our globalised world it is simply not possible for individual nations - regardless of their power and their good intentions - to achieve their objectives through unilateral action. Our integrating world requires global responses to global problems:

- The threat to global security posed by international terrorism requires a concerted multilateral international response. I will return to this later.
- The threat to the environment posed by global warming and unsustainable development can only be addressed through effective international co-operation and adherence to international agreements. Hurricane Katrina has brought home to us the danger that global warming poses. During the past decade hurricanes have proliferated and become more devastating as a result of warmer surface temperatures in the Caribbean. The accelerating melting of the polar ice caps will possibly have an even more disastrous impact on our fragile ecological systems. All of this requires urgent action and global co-operation.
- The global economy requires multilateral responses that will ensure the stability of international financial system and equity in global trading relationships. We need global agreements to ensure

a balanced international trade dispensation. We need to stimulate free trade on the one hand, but also ensure fairer competition on the other.

Returning to terrorism I believe that the leading countries of the world should be working together - far more closely than they are - to eliminate the continuing threat of global terrorism. They should develop a multi-faceted strategy that should include the following elements.

- Firstly, they should continue to do everything that they can to tighten security. They need the best possible intelligence. They need to improve surveillance and vigilance. Governments must develop the capabilities and adopt the laws and procedures that they will require to combat terrorism.
- Secondly, the international community must apply strict measures against any state that harbours, supports or tolerates terrorists. There are still too many safe havens for terrorists - particularly in the Middle East and South Asia.
- Thirdly, the international community must do everything that it can to strengthen controls over nuclear, chemical and biological weapons to ensure that they do not fall into the hands of terrorists. We know that Al-Qaeda wants to obtain nuclear weapons - and we know that it would not hesitate to use them against the West.
- Finally, the international community must address the underlying causes of terrorism. I would like to suggest the following steps in this regard:

We must learn to manage the problems of religious and cultural diversity that lie at the root of most of the conflicts in the world.

The international community must devise principles, approaches and mechanisms to deal with the relationships between groups in multi-community states. Populations all over the world are going to become more diverse. We must develop approaches that will ensure that people from different cultures and religions can co-exist in the same societies.

We have learned that forced integration does not work. However, the UK's experience with a minority of fundamentalist Moslems has shown how dangerous disaffected and un-integrated communities can be.

On the one hand, we need to foster a culture of toleration, mutual respect and pride in diversity. On the other we must create overarching national loyalties that can bring groups together, irrespective of their differences.

We must show the greatest sensitivity when dealing with other religions and cultures.

Although we may be convinced of the superiority of our typical liberal, democratic and free-market models, we must refrain from trying to impose them on others.

For example, there are fundamental problems in trying to export our idea of democracy to conservative Moslem societies.

In our view, sovereignty belongs to the people. In the view of conservative Moslems sovereignty belongs to Allah. The task of their political leadership is to act as his stewards and representatives on earth.

In our system, we hold elections for legislatures whose task it is to adopt laws – laws that will best promote what we believe to be the public good. In the view of conservative Moslems the law has already been perfected and revealed in the Quran and the teachings of the Prophet,

Mohammed. The task of government is simply to interpret and apply the existing divine commandments in the affairs of their people.

In our view the task of government is to promote the freedom, social development and material well-being of the people. In their view, government must create an environment in which the faithful can lead lives of piety in conformity with the will and laws of Allah.

This brings me to the conclusion that we must engage with other religious and cultural groups with a sense of respect and toleration. Let them conduct their affairs as they see fit and evolve systems of government and social values that best suit their cultures and conditions. We may find many of their customs unacceptable. However, they are equally affronted by many of aspects of our attitudes and our lifestyle.

Despite Francis Fukuyama's idea that we in the West have perfected human political and economic society, we must in all humility accept the prospect that our system might not be best for all people at all times.

In saying all this I am not advocating that the USA and other leading countries should tolerate or subscribe to systems which lead to gross violation of human rights. With regard to that we need to do everything possible to eradicate such violations.

We must address political conflicts that exacerbate international relations.

The international community should redouble its efforts to work for a just and lasting peace between Israel and the Palestinians. This unresolved conflict remains one of the primary causes for regional and international terrorism. We need solutions that will assure the security of Israel on the one hand and that will make provision for a viable Palestinian state on the other. Simply trying to manage the conflict is no alternative to trying to resolve it.

We, in South Africa, showed the world twelve years ago that even the most intractable conflicts can be resolved through negotiation, compromise and goodwill.

Similarly, the United States, its allies and the countries of the region, should do everything they can to create a situation in Iraq, and now Lebanon, that will enable them to withdraw their forces as soon as practicable. Whatever its justification, there can be no doubt that the continuing presence of western troops in Iraq is the other principle cause of alienation between much of the Arab world and the West.

The international community must also act firmly and decisively to defuse conflicts in other parts of the world - because in a globalised world they can threaten regional and international security. As I have mentioned, the Sudanese Government is at this very moment escalating its attacks on the people of Darfur. It has called for the withdrawal of the present African Union peace-keeping force and opposes the deployment of any other international peace-keepers. The international community must make it clear that it will not tolerate ethnic cleansing or violent solutions.

In the long term the West must address the prime reason for its continuing involvement in the Middle East - its dependence on oil from the Gulf.

For as long as the West remains dependent on the Middle East for its primary energy source it will be tempted to secure and promote its interests in the region. In so doing it will inevitably alienate significant elements within societies that are both complex and extremely volatile.

Sooner or later, environmental factors and the rising price of oil will force western economies to lessen their dependence on fossil fuels. Would it not be better to spend the hundreds of billions of dollars that are currently being spent on the US involvement in Iraq on the development of alternative energy sources? If the West can reduce its dependence on Middle East oil, it will also be able to reduce its presence in the region - which conservative Moslems evidently find so objectionable.

I believe that these then are the prime steps that we need to take to combat terrorism:

- Multi-lateral action and international cooperation are the keys to success in the struggle against terrorism.
- The international community must continue to improve security measures and intelligence.
- Action must be taken to ensure that chemical, biological and nuclear weapons do not fall into the hands of terrorists;
- The international community must address the root causes of terrorism - which often lie in ethnic, cultural and religious conflicts and in the alienation of conservative Moslems. It must do this
 - by making the world safe for diversity - and particularly by promoting respect for the rights of cultural, religious and ethnic minorities;
 - by showing the greatest sensitivity to the religious and cultural concerns of Moslems;
 - by working for the resolution of ongoing conflicts in Israel/Palestine and Iraq; and
 - by developing alternative energy sources that will lessen dependence on Middle Eastern oil.

If we do all these things we shall greatly limit the threat posed by international terrorists. However, it is doubtful that we will ever eliminate the threat entirely - precisely because it is irrational.

What impact does all this have on ordinary citizens?

We will simply have to factor the threat of terrorism into the equations by which we rule our lives. We should encourage our governments to take the steps that I have spelled out above and we, ourselves, should take whatever reasonable measures may be necessary to enhance our individual security.

But we can't allow the threat of terrorism to dominate our lives. We can't allow it to affect the decision

- of whether we are going to take a flight or not;
- of whether we are going to ride on the London underground again;
- or even, within reason, where we are going to take our next holiday.

Neither should we allow it to influence the way in which we in general view Moslems, Israelis or any of the other people from the Middle East.

And in particular, we should not allow the threat of terrorism to scare us into diluting our own freedoms or disturbing our sense of balance. We must not be scared into supporting unbalanced policies in the Middle East or anywhere else.

If we do any of these things - if we allow ourselves to be terrorized - we shall behave exactly as the terrorists want us to behave. We must not allow them to achieve that victory.

The FW de Klerk Foundation: Zeezicht Building, Tygerberg Office Park, 163 Hendrik Verwoerd Drive, Platteklouf 7500, South Africa. P O Box 15785, Panorama, 7506, South Africa. Tel +27 (0) 21 930 3622. Fax: +27 (0) 21 930 3898. Email: fwdkfoun@mweb.co.za. Website: www.fwdklerk.org.za.