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**LECTURE BY FORMER PRESIDENT FW DE KLERK
NOBEL PEACE PRIZE LECTURE AT THE FRAUENKIRCHE
DRESDEN
3 APRIL 2017**

**ACCOMMODATING DIVERSITY IN A SHRINKING WORLD: THE MAIN CHALLENGE TO PEACE
IN THE 21ST CENTURY**

It is a great honour for me to address you in this beautiful church. The Frauenkirche is a symbol of the victory of faith and peace over the brutality and destruction of war. It was rebuilt and reconsecrated after it had been destroyed in one of the most dreadful episodes in a dreadful war. It stands as an indomitable symbol of mankind's ability to resurrect the best qualities of our civilization from the ruins and ashes of the worst.

Demography, as they say, is destiny.

Much of human history has been driven by the movement of people and the growth of populations.

Just consider the impact of migrations on mankind's history:

- The movement of tribes from central Asia against the ramparts of the Roman Empire;
- migrations of the Huns and Mongols across the Eurasian landmass; and
- the huge migrations from Europe from the beginning of the 16th century which dramatically changed the history and demography of much of the planet.

Now, once again, in our globalised world, people are on the move.

The dominant image of our time may be the hundreds of thousands of refugees who each year are risking their lives in unseaworthy boats to reach Europe. As I speak there are hundreds of people, huddled together in leaking boats, desperately trying to reach the southern shores of Italy, Spain and Greece.

All of this is happening at a time of the unsustainable growth of the human population and dramatic changes in life expectancy and fertility.

In 1950 global life expectancy was only 47 years - by 2011 it had increased to 70. A Japanese girl child born today can expect to live to 107. An English girl baby will live till 103.

At the same time fertility rates in many European countries have plummeted far below the levels required to sustain present populations. At the present fertility rate, the population of the European Union will shrink by 100 million by the end of the century. In some countries it will fall by half.



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In the coming years more and more refugees can be expected to seek safety and a better life in the prosperous and secure societies of Europe and North America.

What is already a steady flow of refugees could become a torrent if climate change causes a succession of bad harvests in the developing world. How would Europe react if 10 million refugees a year were to knock on its doors and appeal for refuge?

At what stage would the so-called “lifeboat effect” come into play: that is the point when those in the lifeboat stop doing all they can to save and haul aboard shipwreck victims - to the time when they violently fend them off for fear of being fatally overloaded?

Everywhere populations are becoming more and more heterogeneous. It is predicted that by 2050 a third of Britain’s population will comprise minorities.

The days of the single ethnic group nation state are gone. One of the central challenges in the emerging multicultural world will be the accommodation of diversity.

Globalisation during the past four decades has led to an enormous increase in the interaction between people from different backgrounds, cultures, languages and religions.

The management of the resulting cultural, language and religious diversity will be one of this century’s greatest challenges -

- For the international community;
- For the European Union; and
- For countries like Germany, South Africa and the US.

Throughout the world populations are becoming more cosmopolitan: the world’s 200 countries now include more than 6 000 different cultural communities. More than 130 countries have cultural minorities comprising more than 10% of their populations. Cultural diversity is being augmented by new waves of migrants seeking economic opportunities, freedom and security.

Everywhere people are on the move - and everywhere they are confronting once homogenous societies with new challenges.

Among these is the impact on cultural identity.

We humans are complex social beings with many important concentric relationships. We are individuals. We belong to families. We pursue our economic interests. We belong to clubs and organisations. Many of us have religious affiliations. We often belong to distinct cultural groups. We have gender and sexual orientation. We are citizens of countries and increasingly we belong to the international community.



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All of these relationships are important to us - and some are critically important. In many, if not most of them, we are minorities. True freedom consists of our being able to make lawful choices for ourselves and our families in all these spheres. The borders of these freedoms should be defined only by manifest public interest and the point where our freedoms begin to impact negatively and unfairly on the interests of others.

For example, I am an individual. I belong to the De Klerk family. I belong to the Reformed Church. I am a member of a number of private organisations. I am an Afrikaner. I derive my language, my history, and my traditions and much of my identity from all these associations. I am also very proud to be a citizen of the new vibrant and multi-cultural South Africa. Like my ancestors since 1688, I am an African - and I like to think that I am a citizen of the world.

None of these relationships is mutually exclusive. People can be all these things at the same time. Their reasonable rights in all these spheres need to be protected. Neither should they suffer discrimination because of any of these affiliations.

In the same way, my friend and former colleague, Nelson Mandela, also called himself an African and a citizen of the new South Africa. He was, however, also very proud of his identity as a Xhosa - one of the South Africa's nine indigenous cultures. He was born and raised to be the hereditary adviser to the Paramount Chief of the Tembu, one of the great clans of the Xhosa people. One cannot really understand Nelson Mandela without also understanding his cultural roots and the history and language that helped to form him.

I believe that we South Africans are all richer because of the cultural diversity that we enjoy. We have a collective responsibility to show that diversity does not need to be a source of tension and conflict - but can help to enrich our lives by providing differing perspectives of the world in which we live.

Apart from the 11 black cultural groups; two white language groups and the coloured and Asian communities, South Africa is now host to as many as five million illegal immigrants from countries as far away as Somalia and the Congo. During recent years we have experienced ugly riots against the new arrivals by South Africans who felt threatened by competition from foreigners in the local job market.

How are we going to ensure that all these communities will be able to co-exist peacefully?

There are a number of facets to this challenge.

In many countries, cultural minorities have arisen through historic processes. They have always lived in the country they inhabit: they often speak their own languages and have their own cultural traditions. Ideally, they should have a right to use their languages; practise their cultures and to have a voice in the processes by which they are governed.



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Other societies have become multicultural through immigration. Here it is often argued that as a price of admission to their new societies they should accept the values of their host countries and learn the languages that they use.

From all this one thing is clear: the management of cultural diversity is an increasingly important challenge for countries throughout the world.

Let us look at America. There are now more than 12 million illegal immigrants in the United States. For most of America's history, the invariable practice was for immigrant communities to coalesce around the existing national identity and to learn to speak English as soon as possible.

On this model the United States was able to develop from 13 Atlantic colonies to a continental power in less than a hundred years. In 1800 its population was only five million. By 1900 it had swelled to 75 million.

The existing cultural base of British settlers, American Indians and Afro-Americans was enormously strengthened by the arrival of widely diverse European immigrants - Germans, Irish, Italians, French, Scandinavians and Poles. However, virtually everyone who arrived in the United States accepted the values articulated in the US Constitution and quickly learned English.

The United States - and many other countries that have opened their arms to immigrants - have benefited enormously from the contributions that immigrants nearly always make to their new countries.

More recently the United States' cultural diversity has been further enriched by the emergence of over 40 million Hispanic Americans as the largest ethnic minority. They are also the fastest growing minority and will include more than 100 million people - or one in four Americans - by 2050. Already they make up more than a third of the populations of Texas and California and more than 40% of the population of New Mexico.

But should they accept the convention that all migrants should eventually become English-speaking - or will the United States increasingly have to accept bilingualism and multilingualism?

The accommodation of diverse immigrant groups has also become one of the most controversial issues in Europe. It has played a crucial role in recent elections in a number of European countries - and has now become one of the main issues of contention within the EU.

It has led to some of the worst riots that France has experienced since the Second World War - and even in tolerant Britain it is fueling a resurgence of far-right nationalist sentiment.

Where does toleration of diversity begin - and end?



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A few years ago the European Union's Justice Commissioner said that issues of migration should be at the top of the EU's agenda.

According to the Commissioner, the European Union needed to strike a balance between facilitating immigration of sorely-needed skilled workers and controlling illegal immigration and trafficking. The present work force is expected to decline by 20 million people by 2030 - and the only way of replacing most of them will be through immigration.

All of this is, however, part of the broader challenge of managing cultural and religious diversity in a world in which inter-communal conflict is the greatest threat to peace and stability.

Virtually all of the 14 conflicts that currently afflict the world either have their roots in ethnic and religious differences - or have been seriously exacerbated by these factors.

Too often, minority communities 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 and cultures; 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. Present or recent conflicts in Bosnia, Kosovo, Chechnya, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia and Turkey and in many countries in Africa provide more examples of this phenomenon.

Religious diversity also lies at the root of some of the ongoing conflicts in the world. Differences between Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs in India; and Muslims and Christians in Nigeria and Sudan all create volatile situations that can explode into violence and terrorism at almost any time.

One of the great challenges of the new millennium will therefore be to address cultural and religious alienation and to devise norms and approaches that will enable different communities to live together in peace.

The international community will have to pay far greater attention to this question than has thus far been the case. Few states welcome international scrutiny of their relationships with minorities within their borders. On the other hand, almost one billion people throughout the world - one in seven of the human population - belong to ethnic, cultural or religious minorities. Many of them experience alienation and discrimination.

There is an urgent need for more intense and informed debate on how the international community should deal with ethnic, cultural and religious diversity.



The challenge is to devise approaches and to establish norms that will enable different cultural and ethnic communities to coexist within the same states. To achieve this, we must reach broad agreement on the cultural, linguistic and educational rights that such communities should enjoy. However, it is equally important to reach agreement on underlying values that can provide a basis for co-operation and national unity.

The need to promote multicultural approaches in diverse societies is increasingly recognised by the international community. According to the United Nations Development Programme's 2004 Human Development Survey multiculturalism is the most effective response to the challenge of diversity.

The UNDP identified cultural liberty as a vital part of human development. If handled well, it could lead to greater cultural diversity and enrich people's lives. However, if it was mismanaged it could "quickly become one of the greatest sources of instability within states and between them." The answer was to "respect diversity and build unity through common bonds of humanity".

The UNDP Survey went on to deal with - and dismiss - various myths relating to the management of inter-communal relations and concludes that "policies recognising cultural identities and encouraging diversity to flourish do not result in fragmentation, conflict, weak development and authoritarian rule. Such policies are both viable, and necessary, for it is often the suppression of culturally identified groups that leads to tension."

As I have pointed out earlier, the key to the maintenance of peace and harmony in our shrinking global community is the management of diversity:

- We need to do much more to define and protect the rights of cultural, ethnic and religious minorities throughout the world.
- We need to establish an international norm for these rights, just as we have already done for individuals, for women and for children.
- We need to promote acceptance of the role that education can and must play in the preservation of religious, cultural and language diversity. We also need to establish the principle that states have a duty to support and finance such education.
- We need to measure the behaviour of governments against these norms. If we do so, I am confident that we will soon discover that the societies that are the worst afflicted by inter-communal violence are also those that have the least respect for the rights of their constituent communities.

In the final analysis, managing diversity is about accepting the need for freedom of choice, toleration and common values:

- People should be free to be themselves and to maintain the many concentric identities that make them individuals;
- Managing diversity is about promoting a culture of toleration and respect for difference;



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- But it is also about reaching agreement on core values and approaches that bind people together.

We have entered the global village. It is exciting; it is often very confusing; and sometimes a little frightening. Increasingly, people from different cultural backgrounds will be rubbing shoulders in the streets, market places and international companies that make up our global village.

The presence of people from so many different cultures is one of the most enriching aspects of our new world. But it will also require us to observe new codes of behaviour and to acknowledge the multidimensional rights of people - as citizens, as members of organisations and communities, and as individual men and women.

I understand that you have a delightful custom here of promoting the idea of a “wishful world”. You have created this glass globe that you can see here beside the lectern. You have invited students from the winning groups to write personal wishes on origami creations and deposit them in the globe. All these colourful origami pieces are placed inside the globe before the lecture. During the year, the globe is positioned underneath the lantern of the Church, visible for all the visitors of the Church and sending out a message of hope and peace from the next generation.

I hope that the globe this year will include wishes for:

- The enrichment of our lives through interaction between people from different cultures and religions;
- Toleration and mutual respect;
- A compassionate commitment to host and protect people whose lives are being threatened by conflict; and
- Determination to build a better world where conflict, injustice and poverty do not force people to flee from their ancestral homes and the countries of their birth.