

Beat: Politics

## **PART I OF HISTORICAL SPEECH OF PRESIDENT MACRON IN OUAGADOUGOU**

### **AFRICA MUST LOOK THE FUTURE & MOVE FORWARD**

Paris, Washington DC, Zanzibar, 04.12.2017, 18:43 Time

**USPA NEWS** - French President Emmanuel Macron began his first tour of Africa with a speech to youth in Burkina Faso in a hearing of young students, University Joseph Ouagadougou. President Macron told a young student that he is not responsible for air-conditioning in Africa and that it is the role of their speaker "in response to his down-to-earth and understandable question of non-accessibility to air-conditioning. In Burkina Faso, the President advised students to "get to work" to succeed in their studies, adding that "students are often paradoxical, but those are much more than others." The classroom was in delirious, with applause and warm bursts and enthusiasm overflowing excited students, who performed a show. The President Macron was even found to organize the speeches as the disorder was general! The atmosphere was electric and crazy, as never seen during the visit of a French Head of State, because for once the students have felt that President Macron spoke to them "as equals, without loophole and very frankly with a e disconcerting honesty! The Burkinabé President Kaboré left the room, during this exchange with the young student about air conditioning.

Emmanuel Macron kick off last Tuesday, the first African tour of his mandate. President Macron's African trip began with Burkina Faso, followed by Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire, where he attended the European Union summit and the African Union, the most delicate terminal phase of the trip. Indeed, Morocco, which has returned in force by its return to the OAU, and its accession to ECOWAS, on the one hand marked this important African-European summit, by the proximity of this country both North African and Arab which is at the gates of Europe by its geography and historically cultural.

President Macron had already begun his involvement this summer with the reception of several African Heads of State (including President Ouattara Cote d'Ivoire, President Macky Sall of Senegal and more recently Alpha Conde of Guinea Conakry) and stressing on the presence of France in the fight against terrorism in the Sahel. President Macron had also mentioned the end of the post-colonial relationship of "France-Africa", explaining that from now on it will be a question of developing and reinforcing Franco-African bilateral relations in a more balanced way and "Win-Win".

The current context is indeed much more deeply tense than one might believe: the strong French military presence in the Sahel to counter terrorism and the persistent problem of migratory flows are all important diplomatic and even geopolitical issues. In the eyes of the French President, Emmanuel Macron's laid-back appearance has managed to get the message out in a more "casual, cool" way, though with a bold spoken word, never before taken by his predecessors "has made a strong impression since the Ouagadougou speech. Indeed, the President Emmanuel Macron has just marked both a new style but also a new deal, a young presidency with young and innovative ideas that fit with their time. The real paradox lies in the fact that the new African generations complain (rightly) of the looting of the neo-colonists and the continuation of France Africa, but once they have the word to face the French President asks him "This is a big paradox." The honest, frank and direct speech of President Macron should have resonated rather in the sense of "I understood you I respect you and speak to you as equals. equal, so that you take control of yourselves and envisage the Franco-African relations in a state of spirit of partnership and not of subcontracting "

It begins with a balanced, fair and honest speech that will be the starting point of actions in the same tone, it is also necessary to agree already on the speech to hope acts in this sense of the co-constituted and co-development in the future, near and future. The time of past discourses and borrowing arrogance Legendarily so French, when it comes to "France Africa" "seems to have passed, at least the time of the five-year Macron Emmanuel Macron is decidedly more and more surprising when it comes to breaking codes and dare progressivism. At all this is not the very definition of the progressive that is not cold and always tries new methods given the failure of previous and obscure conventions, often outdated?

### **SPEECH GIVEN BY THE PRESIDENT MACRON OF FRENCH REPUBLIC AT THE UNIVERSITY OF OUAGADOUGOU**

The speech was written by President Macron himself during two hours at Elysee Palace, few hours before the trip to Africa.

Burkina Faso - Tuesday, 28 November 2017

"Mr President,

Ministers,

Mr President of Ouaga I University,

Parliament members,

Ladies and gentlemen,

"I would first like to express my deepest gratitude to President Kaboré, to the President of the university and to all of you for welcoming me to your country, to your region and here to this place today. Your presence and your faces give me a full vision of the promises for the future that is being built here. Thank you, Mr President, for the hospitality you have shown us starting last night in your country, for this day that we will spend together and for allowing me to speak to all of you in this setting.

I am also grateful to each of you for having taken some time off from the most valuable task in the world: building the "future that you dare to invent" in the eloquent words of one of your compatriots. "This future that you dare to invent", words you surely recognize as those of Thomas Sankara, to whom I would like to pay officially tribute today.

I was told that this auditorium was Marxist and pan-African. I therefore said to myself: "This may be the place where I have to go to speak!"

Because I did not come here to tell you that we were going to make a great speech to start a new chapter in France and Africa's relationship. Nor did I come to tell you what France's policy for Africa should be, as some people may claim. Because there no longer is a French policy for Africa! There is a policy we may conduct, there are friends, there are people with whom we agree and others no. But above all, there is a continent that we need to look in the face.

Yet, it is never easy "given our shared history" for a French president to come and speak about Africa this way, and I would never pretend to express the complexity and diversity of a continent made up of 54 countries. First because it would be terribly arrogant to attempt to explain that there is absolute unity and complete uniformity; 54 countries, each with its own history, with even more ethnicities and languages, with relationships that are not the same with regard to France and a past very often full of very different traumas.

I do not want to act here as a historian in the university that has taken the name of one of Africa's greatest historians. I want to speak here in this country of upstanding men and women because I know that we are not just talking to Burkina Faso, nor just to West Africa or even just to French-speaking Africa; because such barriers that long shaped our perceptions, our political considerations, and our analyses are no longer the barriers of today's Africa, your Africa.

These barriers between a French-speaking Africa and an English-speaking Africa, between a North Africa and a sub-Saharan Africa, between a French-speaking Africa and a Portuguese-speaking Africa; all these barriers are artificial, they merely, to a certain extent, impose upon us a past that we must move on from, perceptions that were, and constructions that must evolve.

Speaking before you, I would therefore call Africa a plural, multiple and strong continent and a continent where part of our shared future will play out. I would speak to you sincerely, with our deep friendship in mind.

"I AM FROM A GENERATION FOR WHICH ONE OF THE MOST WONDERFUL POLITICAL MEMORIES IS NELSON MANDELA'S STRUGGLE AND VICTORY OVER APARTHEID"

"Like you, I am from a generation that has never known a colonized Africa. I am from a generation for which one of the most wonderful political memories is Nelson Mandela's struggle and victory over apartheid, chased out by a pan-African solidarity spanning from Algiers to Rabat, from Luanda to Conakry. That is the history of our generation.

Therefore I refuse to always refer back to the same perceptions of the past. There has been fighting, there have been errors and crimes, there have been great things and happy stories. But I am deeply convinced that our duty is not to make matters worse, our duty is not to stay in this past but to wholeheartedly live this generation's adventure.

I am from a generation of French people for whom the crimes of European colonization cannot be disputed and are part of our history. I identify with Albert Londres and André Gide, who denounced thousands of deaths caused by the Congo Railway and I will not forget that at that time they voiced minority views in France and in Europe.

I am also from a generation that has been struck by the determination of Burkina Faso's young people in defending, on two occasions, democracy and the rule of law, which at times has cost them their lives.

I am from a generation that does not come and tell Africa what to do or what the rule of law entails, but rather one that encourages young African women and men who want to shoulder their responsibilities, who want to do what they can to see the winds of freedom and empowerment blow as you have done here. And I am from a generation who has seen that, throughout Africa, African young people are clamouring to help build the future of their country and globalization. I am from a generation of French people who does not consider Africa to be a burdensome past or just like any other neighbour. France has maintained long, unwavering historical ties with Africa, full of suffering and heartbreak, but also so often of brotherhood and mutual assistance.

Africa is carved into France's collective memory, in its culture, in its history, in its identity. This is a strength and a source of pride that I would like to cultivate, that I would like to champion as a French asset, for France and for Africa, in our relationship with the world. I think there has been a technical problem. I would like to make sure that it is nothing more than that. Is everything OK? If anyone was harmed by sparks, please say something instead of bravely bearing it. (sound cut off)

We are a generation whose destinies are interwoven "whether we like it or not" since we have this shared history because our

parents, our brothers and sometimes our children made the choice to cross continents and oceans. And like you, I am from a generation convinced that African diasporas in France are also key to our opening up to the world. And I am also convinced "" as are many of you in this room "" that we cannot simply consider ourselves to be thousands and thousands of miles away from each other, but also often interwoven through our blood, history and destinies." President Macron stated

"I OFTEN HEAR PEOPLE SAY THAT AFRICA'S STRENGTH IS IN ITS YOUTH" PRESIDENT MACRON STATED

I often hear people say that Africa's strength is in its youth. When I look at the numbers, whether for Burkina Faso or the entire region, it is difficult to say otherwise. But may I say that France's strength, especially in Europe today, is also in its youth. And part of this youth is a product of our shared history. France's youth, in part, also looks to Africa. They listen to us when we speak about Africa because we are speaking to them about themselves. France's youth are also in part Senegalese, Ivorian, Guinean, Burkinabé, Nigerien, Malian. They are also all of those things. And so when I talk to you about you, I also talk to you about me. Lastly, I am from a generation that is deeply European. From a generation that is highly attached to their country but also to what can be built with other countries. I am deeply convinced that it is not simply French-African dialogue that we must rebuild together, but a project between our two continents, a truly new relationship, redesigned at the appropriate scale where the European Union could speak and build with the African Union and with Africa as a whole. It is on this scale that things should happen. It is for all of those reasons that I am standing here before you today, here in Burkina Faso, and in this particular place. A place where we must be honest, a place that sums up the two faces of Africa: that of its amazing opportunities and that of its hardships, challenges, and daily struggles that each of you face with courage to forge your own futures. I will not stand by those who see Africa as a continent of crises and poverty, nor will I stand by those who tout an enchanted Africa, an Africa suddenly attributed with every virtue under the sun and made into a model.

I will not be one of those who turn a blind eye and ignore the difficulties of your daily lives. One of those who ignore strikes, lost years, problems acquiring textbooks or scholarships, and at times just living a simple and happy life. I am of those who have a realistic view. Those who do not consider Africa to be a lost continent or a saved continent. Quite simply, I consider Africa to be the world's central, global and key continent because it is where all of today's challenges intersect.

Africa is where the world will be transformed. If we fail to meet these challenges together, Africa will sink into obscurity. This could happen. It will regress, it will decline. But along with it, Europe will have the same hardships because it will enter into a long period of migration, poverty, and routes of necessity and of even greater pain than today. However if we manage to join forces to meet these challenges, if we are able to rise up and successfully face this great time of change we are living, then this is where a portion of global growth will be generated. This is where there will be a successful and conquering youth because there is everything to be conquered. This will thus be an era of development, growth and new opportunities for both Africans and all of those who wish to embark upon this adventure alongside them.-----

This great time of change is when in Africa, we do need to meet all the challenges. Terrorism, which has already struck your capital twice, and that every day, insidiously, upsets the balances and stability of our country. Climate change, which is ravaging the Sahel more than any other region in the world, which in Lake Chad "" and in the whole Sahel-Sahara strip "" is upsetting entire populations, plunging into the most dire poverty women and men who live off farming, the sale of fish or trade routes that have been operating for centuries and centuries." President Macron declared TO BE CONTINUED IN NEXT ARTICLE

**Article online:**

<https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-12533/parti-of-historical-speech-of-president-macron-in-ouagadougou.html>

**Editorial office and responsibility:**

V.i.S.d.P. & Sect. 6 MDSIV (German Interstate Media Services Agreement): Rahma Sophia Rachdi, J Foster

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