

## SCHUMAN DECLARATION OF 9 MAY 1950

Paris, Salon de l'Horloge du Quai d'Orsay

Full text of the proposal presented by the French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman, leading to the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC)

"It is no longer a question of vain words but of a bold act, a constructive act. France has acted and the consequences of its action can be immense. We hope they will be. France has acted primarily for peace and to give peace a real chance.

For this it is necessary that Europe should exist. Five years, almost to the day, after the unconditional surrender of Germany, France is accomplishing the first decisive act for European construction and is associating Germany with this. Conditions in Europe are going to be entirely changed because of it. This transformation will facilitate other action which has been impossible until this day.

Europe will be born from this, a Europe which is solidly united and constructed around a strong framework. It will be a Europe where the standard of living will rise by grouping together production and expanding markets, thus encouraging the lowering of prices.

In this Europe, the Ruhr, the Saar and the French industrial basins will work together for common goals and their progress will be followed by observers from the United Nations. All Europeans without distinction, whether from east or west, and all the overseas territories, especially Africa, which awaits development and prosperity from this old continent, will gain benefits from their labour of peace.

World peace cannot be safeguarded if constructive efforts are not made commensurate with the dangers that threaten it. An organized and revitalized Europe can make a contribution to civilization which is indispensable for maintaining such peaceful relations. France has always held the cause of peace as her main aim in taking upon herself the role for more than twenty years of championing a united Europe. That European task was not achieved and we had war.

Europe will not be made at once, nor according to a single master plan of construction. It will be built by concrete achievements, which create de facto dependence, mutual interests and the desire for common action.

The gathering of the nations of Europe demands the elimination of the age-old antagonism of France and Germany. The first concern of any action undertaken must involve these two countries.

With this objective in mind, the French government proposes to direct its action on one limited but decisive point:

The French government proposes to place Franco-German production of coal and steel under one common High Authority in an organisation open to the participation of other countries of Europe.

The pooling of coal and steel production will immediately assure the establishment of common bases for economic development as a first step for the European Federation. It will change the destiny of regions that have long been devoted to manufacturing munitions of war, of which they have been most constantly the victims.

This merging of our interests in coal and steel production and our joint action will make it plain that any war between France and Germany becomes not only unthinkable but materially impossible. The establishment of this powerful unity for production, open to all countries willing to take part, and eventually capable of providing all the member countries with the basic elements of industrial production on the same terms, will cast the real foundation for their economic unification.

This production would be offered to the world as a whole, without distinction or exception, with the aim of raising living standards and promoting peace as well as fulfilling one of Europe's essential tasks — the development of the African continent.

In this way, simply and speedily, the fusion of interests which is vital for the establishment of a common economic system will be realized. Thus the leaven will be introduced which will permeate and build a wider and deeper community between countries that had continually opposed each other in bloody divisions.

By pooling basic industrial production and setting-up a new High Authority whose decisions will be binding on France, Germany and other member countries, these proposals will bring to reality the first solid groundwork for a European Federation vital to the preservation of world peace.

In order to further the realisation of the objectives it has thus defined, the French Government is ready to open negotiations on the following basis:

The High Authority would be charged with the mission of assuring in the briefest delay the modernization of production and the improvement of its quality; the supply of coal and steel on identical terms to French and German markets and those of other member countries; the development of common exports to other countries; and the equalization of improvement in the living conditions of workers in these industries.

In order to attain these goals starting from the very varied conditions in which the production of the member countries are situated, transitory measures should be instituted such as a production and investment plan, compensating mechanisms for the equalization of prices, and a restructuring fund to facilitate the rationalisation of production. The movement of coal and steel between member states will immediately be freed of all customs duties and it will not be permitted for it to be constrained by differential transport rates. Conditions will be progressively created which will spontaneously assure the most rational distribution of production at the highest level of productivity.

In contrast to an international cartel which aims at dividing and exploiting national markets by restrictive practices in order to maintain high profit margins, the proposed organization will assure the merger of markets and the expansion of production.

The principles and fundamental commitments defined above will be the subject of a treaty signed between the states. The negotiations necessary to define the measures to be applied will be undertaken with the help of an arbitrator, designated by common agreement. The latter will be charged to ensure that the agreements are in line with the principles and, in the case of unresolvable differences, will determine the solution to be adopted. The joint High Authority, responsible for the functioning of the whole regime, will be composed of independent personalities designated on an equal basis by the governments. A President will be chosen by common accord of the governments. His decisions will be binding on France, Germany and the other member countries. Appropriate measures will assure the means of appeal necessary against the decisions of the High Authority. A representative of the United Nations to the High Authority will be charged to make a public report twice a year to the United Nations Organisation, reporting on the functioning of the new body, in particular about the safeguarding of its peaceful objectives.

The institution of the High Authority does not prejudice in any way the ownership of enterprises. In the furtherance of its mission, the joint High Authority will take into account the powers conferred on the International Authority for the Ruhr and the obligations of all types imposed on Germany as long as they continue."

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(Underlining is in the original)