

Extract from the address given by Jean Monnet (Luxembourg, inaugural session of the High Authority, 10 August 1952)

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For the first time, the traditional relations between States have been transformed. According to past practice, even when European States have been convinced of the need for joint action, even when they have set up an international organisation, they have retained full sovereignty. This means that the international organisation can neither take nor enforce decisions, but only make recommendations to the States. These methods are incapable of eliminating our national antagonisms, which will inevitably become more pronounced as long as the national sovereignty of each State has not been overcome. Now, by contrast, six parliaments, after thorough discussion and by huge majorities, have decided to create the first European community which fuses part of each country's national sovereignty and makes it subordinate to the common interest. Within the limits of the powers conferred on it by the Treaty, the High Authority has been given a mandate by the six Member States to take, in complete independence, decisions which immediately become enforceable throughout their territories. It has a direct relationship with all undertakings. It obtains its financial resources not from contributions by the Member States, but from direct levies on the forms of production for which it is responsible. It is not accountable to the Member States but to a European assembly.