

Message from Ernest Bevin to Robert Schuman (25 May 1950)

Caption: On 25 May 1950, in connection with the implementation of the Schuman Plan, the British Foreign Secretary, Ernest Bevin, rejects the idea of an international conference and suggests to his French counterpart, Robert Schuman, the opening of direct negotiations between France and Germany in which the United Kingdom might participate.

Source: Anglo-French Discussions regarding French proposals for the Western European Coal, Iron and Steel Industries May-June 1950. N°9, Miscellaneous, Cmd 7970. London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1950. 15 p.

Copyright: Crown copyright is reproduced with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office and the Queen's Printer for Scotland

URL: http://www.cvce.eu/obj/message_from_ernest_bevin_to_robert_schuman_25_may_1950-en-6443b07c-6e6e-4b48-b6d6-e49e8f61f9a6.html

Publication date: 04/09/2012

Message from Ernest Bevin to Robert Schuman (25 May 1950)

1. I have now been able to give some thought to the organisation of further discussions about your proposal for a Franco-German Coal and Steel Authority, in which other European countries might participate.

2. I feel that the important thing is to get something started soon. The welcome given to your proposal and the effect which it has had on Franco-German relations lead me to think that no time should be lost in following it up. A full-scale international conference to which no participating country could come without a great deal of preparation and some degree of commitment seems to me an inappropriate way of handling this affair in the next stage. In my view, the most desirable step would be the earliest institution of direct conversations between France and Germany. His Majesty's Government would like to participate in these from the outset, with the hope that by obtaining a clearer picture of how the proposals would operate in detail, they would be able to join the scheme.