

Letter from Harold Macmillan to Johan Willem Beyen (July 1955)

Caption: In July 1955, Harold Macmillan, British Foreign Minister, sends a letter to his Netherlands counterpart, Johan Willem Beyen, in which he informs him that a representative of the United Kingdom will attend the first meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee established by the Messina Conference, due to be held on 9 July 1955 in Brussels.

Source: Archives historiques du Conseil de l'Union européenne, Bruxelles, Rue de la Loi 175. Négociations des traités instituant la CEE et la CEEA (1955-1957), CM3. Comité intergouvernemental: réunion des chefs de délégation, Bruxelles, 09.07.1955, CM3/NEGO/028.

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Your Excellency,

I have the honour to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of your note inviting her majesty's government in the United Kingdom in the name of the Governments of Belgium, France, the German Federal Republic, Italy, Luxemburg and the Netherlands, to participate in the studies to be undertaken by the committee referred to in paragraph 2 chapter ii of the conference of Messina of June 2.

Her majesty's government are naturally anxious to ensure that due account should be taken of the functions of existing organisations such as O.E.C.E., and that work should not be unnecessarily duplicated. They also hope that the views of different countries affected may be heard. On this understanding Her Majesty's Government will be glad to appoint a representative to take part in these studies and have noted that they are intended to begin in Brussels on July 9 next. There are, as You are no doubt aware special difficulties for this country in any proposal for "a european common market". They will be happy to examine without prior commitment and on their merits, the many problems which are likely to emerge from the studies and in doing so be guided by the hope of reaching solutions which are in the best interests of all parties concerned.

I have the honour to be, with the highest consideration, Your Excellency's obedient servant

(w.g. Macmillan)