

'The ceremony at the Quai d'Orsay' from Le Monde (29 May 1952)

Caption: On 29 May 1952, the French daily newspaper Le Monde describes the ceremony held to mark the signing of the Treaty establishing the European Defence Community (EDC), which took place two days earlier in the Clock Room at the Quai d'Orsay in Paris.

Source: Le Monde. dir. de publ. Beuve-Méry, Hubert. 29.05.1952, n° 2 283. Paris: Le Monde. "La cérémonie du Quai d'Orsay", p. 3.

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The ceremony at the Quai d'Orsay

The Treaty establishing the European Defence Community was signed in Paris yesterday afternoon, Tuesday, in the *Salon de l'Horloge* at the Quai d'Orsay by the Foreign Ministers of France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg, in the presence of Dean Acheson and Anthony Eden and representatives of other member states of the Atlantic Alliance. A crowd of diplomats, photographers and journalists were present at the signing of the numerous texts that determine the organisation of a common defence of Europe within the Atlantic community.

It was at 5 p.m. exactly that Mr Robert Schuman took his seat under the famous clock, with, on his right, Mr Van Zeeland and, on his left, Mr De Gasperi. Chancellor Adenauer sat on the right of the Belgian delegate, with the Foreign Ministers of Luxembourg and the Netherlands on the left of the Italian delegate. The two wings of the traditional U-shaped table were occupied by the permanent delegates from NATO and the diplomatic representatives in Paris of the 14 member states of the Atlantic Alliance.

Mr Robert Schuman opened the proceedings a few moments later and made a brief speech, which we reproduce below. He then invited the six countries belonging to the European Defence Community to sign the Treaty and the five texts annexed to the said Treaty, namely:

1. A military protocol relating to basic units, to the general organisation and the setting up of the forces of the EDC, to personnel, to principles concerning the standardisation of military theory and methods, to training establishments of the EDC and to the use of languages;
2. A financial protocol dealing with the preparation of a common budget, its structure, its implementation and ongoing control procedures, funding, the questions of transfers and arbitration, external aid and, lastly, accounting procedures;
3. A protocol relating to the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. This text, 'taking into account the fact that Luxembourg, because of its demographic situation, finds it impossible to make available to the EDC a basic unit of homogeneous nationality', lays down that Luxembourg may be exempted from certain provisions of the Treaty;
4. A convention relating to the trade and fiscal arrangements of the EDC, dealing in particular with customs procedures (taxes on consumption and transactions);
5. A protocol on the status of the troops of the EDC.

Guarantee protocols

Three other protocols annexed to the treaty of the European army were then signed at the same time by the Foreign Ministers of the six Member States of the EDC.

The first concerns relations between the EDC and NATO. It allows for consultations between members of the two organisations in order to maintain close cooperation on a technical level and each time one of the parties considers there to be a threat to the territorial integrity or the political independence or the security of any one of them, or even to the existence or integrity of the organisations themselves.

The other two protocols deal with the commitments to mutual assistance between members of the EDC and NATO. These commitments are the same as those laid down in Article 5 of the Atlantic Alliance.

A guarantee protocol between Great Britain and the European Defence Community was also signed by the Six and by Mr Eden, British Foreign Secretary.

Lastly, Mr Schuman, Mr Eden and Mr Acheson signed the tripartite declaration relating to the European Defence Community.

The ceremony lasted in all 55 minutes; 127 signatures were appended to the Treaty establishing the European Army, nine annexed conventions and a tripartite declaration added. A brief reception then provided the Ministers, their colleagues and the press with an opportunity to meet and talk.

Mr Robert Schuman: ‘An entity which may not be broken up.’

‘We submit for approval by all, in the light of day, this work of good faith and unprecedented innovation.

‘We do not intend to impose it: had we ever wanted to do so, our democratic institutions would have prevented us. But we would like the public in our countries to accept freely a daring concept, one which forms an intrinsic part of a constructive policy for peace.

‘Yesterday, in signing the Bonn Agreements, we paid tribute to a determination, which never wavered. Having selected the way forward, we put our trust in a confidence rekindled.’