

The Messina Conference

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The Messina Conference

The Messina Conference, attended by the Foreign Ministers of the six Member States of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), took place from 1 to 3 June 1955 in the parliamentary constituency of the Italian Foreign Minister, Gaetano Martino. The Luxembourger Joseph Bech chaired the meeting, which was attended by Antoine Pinay for France, State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Professor Walter Hallstein for the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), Paul-Henri Spaak for Belgium and Jan Willem Beyen for the Netherlands.

Discussions concentrated essentially on the memorandum presented by the Benelux countries, which had set out a summary of the various opposing arguments. The Ministers of the Six agreed to consider the extension of European integration to all sectors of the economy, and a committee of experts, under the chairmanship of Paul-Henri Spaak, was immediately given the task of drawing up a detailed report by the end of the year on the feasibility of both a general economic union and a nuclear energy union. Furthermore, the Spaak Committee replaced the term *intégration européenne*, which frightened supporters of intergovernmental cooperation, by *construction européenne*. On a proposal from France, Jean Monnet was replaced by René Mayer, an MP and former French Prime Minister, as Head of the High Authority of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC).

The revival that started in Messina led to the signing of the Rome Treaties by the six Member States of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). These Treaties simultaneously established the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (EAEC or Euratom).