

Statement by Christian Pineau on the resolution of the Saar question (27 October 1956)

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This is a historic day for Franco-German relations. In the political sphere those relations are based, in particular, on the agreements of 23 October 1954 and are developing in the direction of a close association. Economic relations between the two countries are flourishing in the context of their shared membership of the OEEC and of long-term bilateral trade agreements, such as that of 1955. Cultural relations, too, have reached a high level. Solutions have now been found to the last problems which were still outstanding. The agreements just signed are the outcome of a long period of negotiations. Agreement has been reached only because both sides have made sweeping concessions and both countries are mindful of their European responsibilities. The sacrifices made are testimony to the resolve of both governments to open up a new stage in Franco-German relations in which the two nations will work together for a better future. Any problems which still exist between them should only be of the kind which normally arise in the context of good-neighbourly relations. The two governments also see the settlement which has just been reached as a vital prerequisite for the strengthening of the free world and the establishment of a united Europe. They will now pursue even more vigorously their joint efforts to set up that new Europe.