

Letter from Duncan Sandys concerning the European Assembly (London, 21 July 1948)

Caption: On 21 July 1948, Duncan Sandys, President of the International Committee of the Movements for European Unity, sends to the Foreign Ministers of the five member countries of the Consultative Council of the Brussels Treaty Organisation a letter informing them that, in the event that the governments or parliaments are unwilling to convene a European Assembly, the Committee is prepared to undertake such a task itself.

Source: Archives historiques de l'Union européenne, Florence, Villa Il Poggiolo. Dépôts, DEP. ME Mouvement européen. Convocation d'une Assemblée européenne, ME 850.

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Letter from Duncan Sandys, Chairman of the International Committee of the Movements for European Unity, to the Foreign Ministers of Belgium, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom

London, 21 July 1948

The International Committee of the Movements for European Unity has learned with great satisfaction that the creation of a European Assembly was debated at the conference of Foreign Ministers on 20 July 1948 and that the issue will be brought before the five governments represented in The Hague.

Three essential features of the status of this Assembly require a rapid decision:

1. its remit
2. the composition and method of appointing its members
3. its convening by an authority yet to be determined.

A committee chaired by Paul Ramadier is studying the first two of the abovementioned points, and its recommendations will be submitted to the governments as soon as possible. Furthermore, at its meeting in Paris on 17 July, the International Committee considered which authority should be chosen to be responsible for convening the Assembly. Three possible options emerged: the European governments, the European parliaments or the private organisations campaigning actively for European unity.

The International Committee hopes that the governments will act. However, should they be disinclined to do so, this Committee, which organised the Congress of Europe in The Hague, is prepared to take the initiative straight away.

Given the urgency of this question and the importance of determining who is to take responsibility, the International Committee has the honour of requesting that you receive a small delegation for talks on this issue in the next few days.

(Signed) Duncan Sandys