

French-German Declaration of Toulouse

16 October 2019

France and Germany, following their commitments set at the French-German Council of Ministers in July 2017, in Meseberg in June 2018 and in the Treaty on Franco-German Cooperation and Integration, signed on 22 January 2019 in Aachen, recall their joint determination to promote a more sovereign and effective European Union, in a moment of increasing geopolitical challenges. In this context, France and Germany fully support the Strategic Agenda adopted by the European Council in June 2019 and the priorities of the Political Guidelines for the next European Commission presented by Ursula von der Leyen.

- **France and Germany advocate a rapid adoption of the « European Green Deal » to be proposed** by President-elect U. von der Leyen.

Both countries want the European Union to reach **carbon neutrality by 2050**. France and Germany will explore the ways to implement a WTO-compliant EU-border adjustment tax. France and Germany support the introduction of minimum carbon pricing in the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS). In close cooperation with the European Commission, we want to work towards the prospective introduction of a cross-sectoral European ETS. To facilitate transition, it is also crucial to redirect financial flows: France and Germany support the idea to strengthen the role of the European Investment Bank in climate financing to increase public and private investment in green projects and make it the EU “climate bank”.

Regarding **biodiversity**, in view of COP15, France and Germany will work closely towards consequent mainstreaming of biodiversity into all relevant policy areas and will lead joint action in favour of the conclusion by 2020 of a UN treaty on the conservation and sustainable use of the **ocean** biodiversity. Both countries will request the Commission to propose WTO-compatible EU legislative and non-legislative initiatives to avoid imports from producers involved in **deforestation**.

- **France and Germany share the objective of a strong European economy able to face the current global challenges.**

Trade tensions should be addressed and both countries reaffirm their commitment to work within the EU to safeguard and strengthen the multilateral trading system **with a reformed WTO at its core** – working on improving rules (technology transfers, intellectual property, overcapacities etc.), reinforcing monitoring and implementation mechanisms and securing a strong and efficient two-tiered dispute settlement system. In particular, the EU should remain fully committed to engage with the United States and other partners on this agenda, but stands ready to defend its legitimate interests. The EU should complement its support of the multilateral trading system by maintaining an ambitious trade agenda. France and Germany **support the next Commission to set up an updated trade agenda**, in favour of a level playing field in global competition, better monitoring of trade rules and agreements. Furthermore, both countries support compatibility of our trade policy with EU climate policies and their social and environmental dimensions.

The economic outlook also relies on structural evolutions – esp. digital transformation, energy transition, global and European competitiveness. France and Germany underline the importance of a strong and sustainable economic, technological and industrial base in Europe requiring a better functioning Single Market (especially in the digital dimension), updated regulation

(avoiding unnecessary burdens, taking into account the new global competition framework and power market of digital platforms), an EU budget increasing support for innovation and investment, the rapid implementation of the budgetary instrument for convergence and competitiveness in the Eurozone and improved bilateral economic policy coordination.

- **France and Germany promote a higher ambition for innovation in disruptive technologies**, and in the area of artificial intelligence (AI), taking into account ethical guidelines for new technologies.

At the bilateral level, France and Germany encourage the “Conseil pour l’Innovation” (“Grands Défis”) and the “Agentur für Sprunginnovationen” to develop and support **common projects in 2020**. To this end, both governments signed a roadmap for a Franco-German Research and Innovation Network on AI.

At the EU level, both countries will advocate an ambitious agenda, within the next multiannual financial framework, for research and innovation, including the ERC and the newly-created **European Innovation Council**.

Both countries will work together to strengthen Europe in the development and application of leading-edge technologies, especially in the field of AI. To this end, opportunities for additional bilateral and European initiatives will be explored by 2020.

- **France and Germany support a stronger European space policy**.

Both countries underline the strategic dimension of European **independent access to space**. In this respect, they support the **European preference** principle regarding launchers (Ariane 6) and recognise the use of Ariane 6 services by institutional users as one of the key contributions to consolidating its exploitation. Joint work is also needed on the future of this programme. French and German governments call industrial stakeholders to develop **consolidation measures** in order to improve cost-efficiency and international competitiveness and to strengthen the European launcher sector, in close cooperation with their European partners, especially Italy. France and Germany support the implementation of the **new European Commission Directorate General** devoted, inter alia, to space, taking into account the civil character of the EU space programmes.

- **France and Germany step up their cooperation for European security and defence**.

In the French-German Council of Defence and Security which met today in Toulouse, both governments reaffirmed their full commitment to progressively build an effective, coherent and credible European security and defence, also to reinforce the European pillar in NATO, and to make full use of the European Intervention Initiative aiming at fostering common strategic culture. In this regard, they reaffirmed their support to enhancing European military capabilities through PESCO projects and other EU defence initiatives, as well as their **industrial cooperation**, in particular the **NGWS/FCAS** (Next Generation Weapons System/Future Combat Air System) and **MGCS** (Main Ground Combat System) programmes. Such a cooperation requires mutual trust and common rules: the German Government and the French Government agreed in the Treaty on Franco-German Cooperation and Integration to develop a joint approach to **arms export control**. Today, both sides have concluded their negotiations on a legally binding agreement for which the final steps will be implemented as soon as possible.

- **France and Germany will relaunch EU reforms on migration and asylum**.

An agreement was set up in Malta regarding disembarkations in the Mediterranean Sea; the President elect of the Commission promised a fresh start on this overall issue. France and Germany jointly support the **swift presentation and adoption of a new legislative package** reforming the Common European Asylum System (incl. Dublin and Schengen rules), on the basis of **fair responsibility and pragmatic solidarity**. Both countries also encourage the Commission to propose a fully-fledged **European Asylum Office** harmonising asylum rules and practices across the EU as well as a European Asylum Database, providing a comprehensive picture of all asylum cases and the way they affect Member States.

- **France and Germany defend European culture and creation.**

France and Germany reaffirm their determination to implement the new EU law on copyright and to ensure full respect of these rules.

- **France and Germany want a new push for European democracy.**

France and Germany also support the **Conference on the Future of Europe**, to start in 2020. They will make joint proposals to ensure this initiative reaches out to EU citizens and allows for their active participation while also reflecting the key role of EU Member States.

- **France and Germany shape a common future by strengthening their cooperation and integration (Treaty of Aachen).**

France and Germany already have taken concrete steps to fulfil the vision of the Treaty of Aachen with a special attention to promote stronger links between our citizens. The Joint Citizens' Fund will promote Franco-German citizens' projects from early 2020. It will support initiatives by citizens and associations in order to facilitate encounters, exchange programmes and common projects. Mobility programmes for young people will be expanded in 2020. The Franco-German Youth Office has the goal of reaching 20% of young people with special needs in its programs in 2020. Moreover, France and Germany will promote mutual recognition of diplomas and pathways as well as new integrated Franco-German "campus des métiers" / dual degree programmes, develop strategies for bilingualism in border regions and foster language learning in general.

The Cross-Border Cooperation Committee has been established and will embark on its mission of finding solutions for everyday cross-border challenges.

We have adopted a concept for the Franco-German Future Forum to tackle transformational processes in our societies, guided by, inter alia, the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. First projects will start in 2020, with the Forum serving as a platform for dialog between experts, stakeholders and citizens on major social, environmental, technological and economic challenges.

In the same spirit of better understanding and policy coordination, the Franco-German Council of Economic Experts has been set up and started its work.

To advance and monitor the implementation of the Treaty of Aachen, both governments will continue to develop and adapt the Multiannual Agenda as set out in Art. 23 of the Treaty of Aachen.

- **France and Germany work together for peace and stability**, based on the conviction of the primacy of diplomacy and international law in reaching sustainable solutions for the complex crises that affect the security of Europe.

We welcome recent positive developments in implementing the Minsk agreements and are looking forward to holding a summit in the Normandy format in Paris to advance towards the settlement of the conflict in the East of Ukraine. We underline our principled position on the illegal annexation of Crimea by Russia. We also reaffirm our commitment to continue our dialogue with Russia, based on common EU principles, including in the area of arms control and non-proliferation.

In the Middle East, we condemn the current Turkish military activities in Northeast Syria and urge Turkey to reverse its course, while we underline Turkey's obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law. The renewed armed hostilities in the north east have the potential to undermine the stability of the whole region, exacerbate civilian suffering and provoke further displacements. Unilateral military action in Northeast Syria seriously undermines progress achieved by the Global Coalition to defeat Da'esh, of which France, Germany and Turkey are part. International criteria for the return of refugees as laid down by UNHCR – voluntary, safe and in dignity – must be upheld. The end of military actions and the beginning of a political process, facilitated by the UN, are urgently needed. We remain very concerned about the heightened situation of tension in the Gulf region as a result of the attack on Saudi infrastructure and on the freedom of navigation in the Straits of Hormuz. Germany and France are committed to continue jointly with Great Britain our diplomatic efforts to create conditions and facilitate dialogue with all relevant partners interested in de-escalation of tensions in the Middle East. We reaffirm our full commitment to the preservation and full implementation of the JCPoA. In this context, we urgently call on Iran to return to full compliance with its commitments under the nuclear agreement. Building on the JCPoA, we are convinced of the necessity to initiate negotiations with Iran on a long-term framework for its nuclear programme as well as on issues related to regional security, including its missiles programme and other means of delivery.

On Libya, Germany and France are convinced that only a political solution can bring stability. We aim at committing together with partners to bring about a ceasefire and the return to a political process, as facilitated by the UN, in particular via the Berlin process.

Germany and France are committed to their engagement for the Sahel region, as exemplified in our latest joint initiative for a Partnership for Security and Stability in the Sahel, aimed at strengthening the resilience of local defence and security forces through increased and better coordinated international support, and we are looking forward to the high-level conference to be held later this year.