

# Robert Schuman

## SUMMARY

Sixty years ago, Robert Schuman was elected president of the European Parliamentary Assembly, predecessor to the European Parliament. This French politician, who was particularly sensitive to the tensions between France and Germany, is regarded as one of the 'founding fathers' of what is now the European Union. After the Second World War, he supported the establishment of the Council of Europe and helped to bring many other European projects to fruition.

With his declaration of 9 May 1950, considered the founding act of the European integration process, Robert Schuman assumed political responsibility for a common coal and steel market that would later become the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). The declaration underlines the role of France in building a strong, prosperous and peaceful Europe, starting with France and Germany. Going far beyond mere objectives, the declaration also sets out the precise basis upon which the negotiations should begin.

Robert Schuman was president of the European Parliamentary Assembly from 1958 to 1960. This institution was the political institution par excellence of the Communities: at once a democratic organ representing the peoples of Europe, a body invested with the power of executive scrutiny, and a unifying element between the three Communities.

Highly influenced by Christian values, Robert Schuman campaigned to build a strong and united Europe step by step, and to establish institutionalised solidarity between European countries. Robert Schuman's legacy continues to influence and shape the European Union to this day.



Charcoal portrait of Robert Schuman (1886-1963), R. Müller-Graefe, 1953, European Parliament.

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Robert Schuman (1886-1963) – a political figure emblematic not just of France but also and above all of Europe – was actively involved in founding what is now the European Union. The two World Wars and the profound changes in Europe in the 20th century shaped his life and his political career. The 60th anniversary of his presidency of the European Parliamentary Assembly (1958-1960) provides an opportunity also to celebrate the progress made since then. In the current times of upheaval and uncertainty, it is well worth pausing to consider the history of the European institutions. There is no doubt that certain of the founding fathers' messages and their vision for a united Europe could help illuminate the way forward.

## A man from a border region

Having grown up in a border region, Schuman's personal history made him particularly sensitive to the divisions between European countries and the need to overcome them. He was born on 29 June 1886 in Clausen, Luxembourg, his mother's country of origin. His father was from a Lorraine village annexed to the German Reich in 1870 after the French defeat in the Franco-Prussian War and therefore had German nationality. Schuman was thus German by birth, but would spend his childhood in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. His outlook and culture were both French and German. For his higher education, he went to study law at the German universities of Bonn, Munich, Berlin and, finally, Strasbourg, where he defended his law thesis. In 1912, he opened a law firm in Metz. During the First World War, he was declared unfit for service and thus did not serve in the German forces. Employed in administrative services, he distanced himself from the nationalist policy of the Reich.

Schuman took French nationality at the age of thirty-two in 1919, when the provinces of Alsace and Lorraine were restored to France by the Treaty of Versailles. Schuman's political career then began in France, when he was elected *député* (member of parliament) for the Moselle. He worked in particular on the transition and reintegration of Alsace-Moselle into France.

Schuman's experience of the Second World War would also help to develop his European commitment. He was one of the first French *députés* to be arrested by the Gestapo on 14 September 1940. Placed under house arrest, he escaped in August 1942 and lived in hiding until the Liberation. After the war, as a member of the Popular Republican Movement (MRP), Robert Schuman was elected Minister of Finance in 1946. His national and international career began then when he was sixty years old. He became successively President of the Council (Prime Minister) in 1947, Minister of Foreign Affairs until 1953 and Minister of Justice in 1955. As a result of his political activity, Robert Schuman came to embody Franco-German reconciliation. He was particularly sensitive to the rifts in Europe during the Cold War and understood the importance of defusing tension between France and Germany and building an area of peace in Europe. This sensitivity to border-related divisions and tensions strengthened his commitment to European unity. His role was acknowledged unanimously when he was appointed first president of the European Parliamentary Assembly (EPA) from 1958 to 1960. President of the European Movement from 1955 to 1961, in 1958 he received the Charlemagne Prize, awarded to figures who have made an exceptional contribution to European unification.<sup>1</sup>

## Europe's founding father

The title 'founding father' of the European Union is given to the main figures who contributed to the founding of the European Communities, now the European Union.

Between 1948 and 1952, a number of European politicians laid the groundwork for the process of political and economic unification in Europe. The unofficial, non-exhaustive list of these politicians includes personalities such as Konrad Adenauer (DE), Joseph Bech (LU), Johan Willem Beyen (NL), Alcide De Gasperi (IT), Jean Monnet (FR) and Paul-Henri Spaak (BE).<sup>2</sup> Robert Schuman is, however, the only one to have been given this title officially by a European institution, the EPA, of which he was president from 1958 to 1960.

Before the Second World War, Schuman had not been particularly receptive to the ideas of Aristide Briand, who had begun expounding the idea of a European federation before the League of Nations as early as 1929. After the war, however, he became a defender of the European project as a vehicle for promoting peace and cooperation. Holding a succession of prominent posts in the French government, Schuman would support many European projects. With Winston Churchill, he contributed to the birth of the Council of Europe and the adoption of the European Convention on Human Rights. It was he who suggested that the seat of the Council should be Strasbourg, a city that symbolises Franco-German reconciliation. He also supported the signing in Brussels on 17 March 1948 of the Treaty establishing the Western Union, which aimed to prevent any armed aggression in Europe. He favoured the creation, on 16 April 1948, of the Organization for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC) which, in addition to monitoring national programmes and aid granted under the Marshall Plan, sought above all to promote the growth of intra-European trade. Robert Schuman did not participate directly in efforts to relaunch European integration or the negotiations that led to the signing of the Rome Treaties in 1957, but he welcomed them.<sup>3</sup> However, not all such projects were equally successful. For instance, two projects, the European Defence Community (EDC) and the European Political Community were rejected in 1954 just as the scheme for a Franco-Italian customs union had been in 1949.<sup>4</sup>

Robert Schuman is remembered in particular for the eponymous declaration of 9 May 1950. This declaration is considered the founding act of Europe integration. Indeed, 'Europe Day' is still celebrated on this date by the European Union and its institutions. In 1949, Schuman, then French Minister of Foreign Affairs, was looking for a solution concerning the future of Germany in a period marked by rising tension between France and the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) over what was to become of the Ruhr and Saar regions. Jean Monnet, General Commissioner for the Modernisation and Equipment Plan and former secretary-general of the League of Nations, submitted the coal-steel pool project to him. This innovative project paved the way simultaneously for:

- reconciliation between France and Germany;
- the creation of new structures intended to make a return to war impossible and to encourage cooperation between partner countries;
- the integration of Europe within a Community invested with a supranational High Authority; and
- the democratic and community-based management of heavy industry, the basis of the arms industry.<sup>5</sup>

In the space of three weeks, with the help of the team around Monnet, Schuman prepared the project discreetly, while securing the support of German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer and US Secretary of State Dean Acheson.<sup>6</sup> The United States was enthusiastic about the creation of a union of Western European countries because it viewed it as a way to prevent the spread of communism. Schuman assumed political responsibility for the Schuman Plan on 9 May 1950 during a press conference given in the Salon de l'Horloge at the Quai d'Orsay in Paris. This initiative broke with the age-old tradition of bilateral or multilateral state-to-state treaties and proposed the creation of a totally new kind of entity in which each member freely agreed to give up part of its sovereignty.<sup>7</sup>

European countries were invited to join in: Chancellor Adenauer, Italian Prime Minister Alcide De Gasperi and the leaders of the three Benelux countries immediately signed up for the project and formed the 'Inner Six' (Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the Federal Republic of Germany). On 18 April 1951 the Treaty of Paris establishing the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) was signed by representatives of the six Member States. It set out in precise detail how the new Community should function and established a supranational organisation with four oversight bodies:

- an executive High Authority responsible for carrying through the objectives set by the Treaty;

- a Parliamentary Assembly charged with examining the annual activity reports of the High Authority in order to exercise executive scrutiny;
- a Special Council of Ministers to coordinate the Community's activities and exert scrutiny over the activities of the High Authority; and
- a Court of Justice to oversee application of the Treaty and interpret the law.<sup>8</sup>

This new Community was restricted specifically to the coal and steel sectors, but those behind the project were counting on a spill-over effect to facilitate economic integration.

With the Declaration of 9 May 1950, Robert Schuman laid the foundations for the European Communities and made a gesture of reconciliation towards a recent enemy. It required political courage to lead the European countries out of the crisis and on to the road to peace, just five years after 1945 and the end of the Second World War. Robert Schuman strongly believed that Europe's salvation lay in cooperation and dialogue organised by an authority higher than the associated states that would be unable to overrule it. The foundation of the European Union was therefore the result of a revolutionary act that has changed the course of history by standing up to totalitarianism and embarking on the path of justice and peace.<sup>9</sup>

## Schuman's role in the European Parliamentary Assembly (EPA)

Robert Schuman was elected first president of the European Parliamentary Assembly (EPA) on 19 March 1958, a post he held until 1960. This was largely an honorary position as the EPA lacked broad powers. It was nevertheless dear to Robert Schuman because it was the political institution par excellence of the Communities, being not only a democratic body representing the peoples of Europe, but also an authority for executive scrutiny and a unifying element between the three Communities.

The EPA was the heir to the ECSC Common Assembly and was therefore a stage in the process of European integration. The Assembly served all three Communities: the ECSC, the European Atomic Energy Community (EAEC) and the European Economic Community (EEC). The Assembly's 142 members were appointed by the national parliaments. While the direct election of members by universal suffrage was envisaged by the founding treaties, it would not come about until 1979. The role of the EPA was to scrutinise the executive (the High Authority of the ECSC, the Euratom Commission and the Commission of the EEC) by means of written or oral questions; it also had the power to force the executive to resign by adopting a motion of censure.

During the first few sessions the Assembly dealt mainly with technical matters as it found its feet; it then moved on to more substantive issues.<sup>10</sup> During Robert Schuman's term as president, the EPA discussed a broad range of subjects, not least issues relating to the future of Europe. During these two years, the EPA thus addressed the free trade area, coordination with the executive, budgetary issues, the protection of the population from the harmful effects of nuclear energy, relations with overseas countries and the location of the seats of the institutions.<sup>11</sup> While recognising that the dispersion of the European institutions was inevitable but entailed a number of disadvantages, Robert Schuman proposed that they should be concentrated in three cities (Brussels, Luxembourg and Strasbourg): meetings during, or on the sidelines of, the plenary sessions of the EPA should take place in Strasbourg, meetings concerning the ECSC in Luxembourg and those relating to the activity of the EEC and Euratom in Brussels.<sup>12</sup>

Schuman set great store by the role of the EPA: 'This Assembly, which represents public opinion in the various associated countries, is destined to play an increasingly important role. The value of its work and the dignified nature of its meetings will enable it to preserve and further increase the prestige that it has already acquired'.<sup>13</sup> In his view, it was the political and unifying element of the European Communities, since Members of the EPA were both representatives of the peoples and players in the process of European unification.<sup>14</sup> The Assembly was the democratic embodiment of the voice of the Europeans and 'by exercising parliamentary scrutiny over the actions of the High

Authority, it has given the lie to the frequently expressed fears that the European economic institutions would be dominated by a technocratic approach'.<sup>15</sup>

'The Assembly created by the new treaties is not only, as the successor to the Common Assembly of the ECSC, the democratic element of the Communities. It is above all the political and unifying element. It is, in fact, together with the Court of Justice (but the latter, by definition, is barred from playing a political role), the only institution common to the three Communities of the Six. Of course, it does not play the same role in each. The Parliamentary Assembly is, however, a single body. Its Members do not fulfil three different functions in three distinct fora. They apply a common political approach to different situations. They are the coordinators of – and therefore the driving force behind – European unification. It is on them that much of its future progress will depend. They firmly expect that it is by their efforts as representatives of peoples of Europe that the United States of Europe will be realised'.<sup>16</sup>

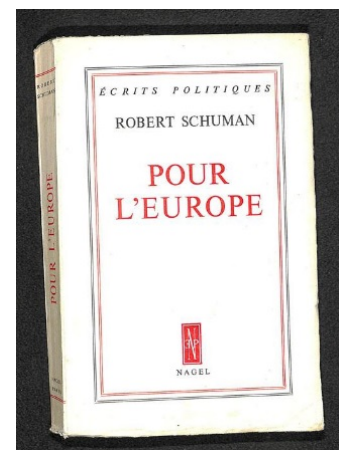
In 1960, because of his declining health, Robert Schuman resigned as president at a time when the Common Market and the measures provided for by the Treaty of Rome were beginning to bear fruit. He was then unanimously acclaimed the 'father of Europe'. Robert Schuman would, of course, continue as president of the European Movement but he increasingly withdrew from public activities.<sup>17</sup>

## Vision for Europe

Throughout his career, Robert Schuman gave many speeches, expressing his views on the European project. He left few written documents, however, with the exception of his book *Pour l'Europe* (For Europe), which contains the text of eight lectures he gave between 1950 and 1961. In this book, Robert Schuman gathered together the core ideas that guided his political work on building Europe. It is therefore a kind of spiritual testament.<sup>18</sup>

After the Second World War, the nations of Europe became aware that their borders had become problematical. The challenges they faced could no longer be solved on the basis of their own military and economic resources. It had become necessary to move beyond nationalism and build a new sovereign and peaceful community endowed with new political means to anchor solidarity between countries on an institutional basis and reduce the risk of rising nationalism and dictatorships.

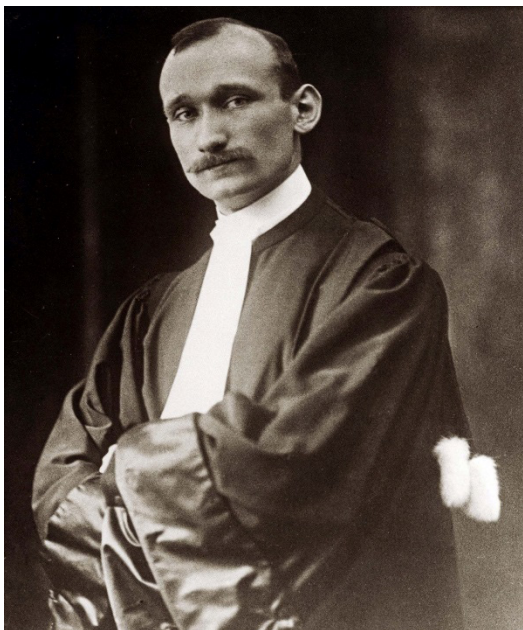
While Schuman, like Jean Monnet, was convinced that only a supranational body could lead the nation states to work together to forge a common interest, he did not envisage integration in the same way as Monnet.<sup>19</sup> He did not want to eliminate borders. On the contrary, he thought that the new European Community should be built on national foundations and bring states together without merging them: 'It is to unite that which is divided and separated, but not necessarily to fuse that which remains distinct'.<sup>20</sup> Europe's states were a historic reality and it was essential to respect the particularities of each – their history, culture and political, social and administrative organisation. The various countries, for all their cultural diversity, could nevertheless be united through the values they shared. This vision was decisive for his vision of Europe, and Robert Schuman recalled it in a lecture he gave at the Luxembourg Rotary Club in 1963: 'The European Community must create the conditions for mutual understanding, while respecting the particularities of each'.<sup>21</sup>



Robert Schuman wrote 'Pour l'Europe', a kind of spiritual testament, towards the end of his life. It was published in September 1963, just a few days after his death.

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Having studied law at the German universities of Bonn, Munich, Berlin and Strasbourg, where he defended his thesis, Robert Schuman moved to Metz in 1912 as a lawyer. Specialising in civil and commercial law, he was politically committed to defending the special nature of the regions of eastern France. Source: Moselle Departmental Archive.

On 9 May 1950 in the Salon de l'Horloge of the Quai d'Orsay, Robert Schuman, French Minister for Foreign Affairs, officially invited France, Germany and other European States concerned to place their coal and steel production under the control of a supranational European institution. Source European Parliament.



On 5 May 1949 in London, Robert Schuman, French Minister for Foreign Affairs, representing France, signed the Statute of the Council of Europe. Source: European Parliament.



During the preparations for establishing the coal and steel pool, Robert Schuman and his private secretary Bernard Clappier met Jean Monnet at the latter's home in Houjarray for a working session. If Monnet was the inspiration for the Schuman plan, Robert Schuman was its 'political arm'.

Source: Fondation Jean Monnet pour l'Europe, Lausanne.





The men who set up the European Coal and Steel Community Treaty shared a number of convictions. Belonging to the same generation, they were supporters of an integrated Europe. The good relations between the 'Fathers of Europe' contributed to the success of the first European initiatives. Source: European Parliament.



On 19 March 1958 in Strasbourg, Robert Schuman became the first president of the European Parliamentary Assembly. He would remain president until March 1960. Source: European Parliament.



On 10 May 1960, to mark the 10th anniversary of the Schuman Declaration, the European Parliamentary Assembly paid tribute to its former president and adopted by acclamation a resolution declaring that 'Europe can be proud of Robert Schuman'. Source: European Parliament.



Robert Schuman's house in Scy-Chazelles, near Metz, has been converted into a museum and now houses the Robert Schuman European Centre, which organises exhibitions, meetings and European and intercultural educational activities. Source: European Parliament.

According to Schuman, political action must always adapt to the situation on the ground. European integration should take place gradually. Robert Schuman had even entertained the idea of a European Community on a smaller scale, comprising only Germany, France and Italy. Moreover, he did not think of investing the European institutions with absolute authority. He believed that national governments should retain their prerogatives in all areas where this could be done without undermining the promotion of the common interest.

From the outset, Robert Schuman had grasped that European integration would take place by degrees: the first step would be to set up European authorities specialised in certain specific tasks (the management of resources such as coal and steel), contained within the framework of European organisations open to the various countries of Europe. Once the journey along the path towards European integration had begun other areas would follow. This functional approach of gradually transferring various competences to the jurisdiction of the European institutions was also more likely to convince the UK and the Scandinavian countries to join the movement. After all, more ambitious integration projects, such as the proposed tariff union between France and Italy around 1950, had foundered. Although Robert Schuman used the expression 'Federal Europe' twice in his Declaration of 9 May 1950, he knew that it was not immediately attainable and did not wish to impose it precipitately. His priority was to make progress sector by sector.

Schuman's vision for the European Community can be summed up in the following key ideas:

- bringing European countries together to manage their coal and steel resources can provide a definitive solution to tension between Germany and France and ensure peace;
- the fragmentation of Europe is anachronistic, countries can no longer satisfy their needs or solve their domestic problems with their own resources; borders must be redefined and solidarity established among nations;
- solidarity among European countries will help fight the decline of Europe;
- Europe will not happen all at once, different stages are needed;
- the Community will have to bring various areas under a common authority; some majority decisions will also be binding for the minority. However, there will be a limit to supranationality: it is not a question of merging states into a 'super-state', nor of erasing the existence of nations;
- it is a spiritual and cultural community based on the foundations of Christian civilisation and democracy;
- the role of the European Community should not be limited to being an economic and military power; it should also assume a moral role and act according to convictions.

Schuman believed that 'Europe will have to cease being a geographical assembly of states existing side by side to become a community of nations that are distinct but associated in an effort to defend Europe from external threats and build something new; it is not a temporary remedy intended to ward off an exceptional danger or a stop-gap solution. Europe needs to live better by pooling its abundant resources. It must become a pro-active entity, mindful of its specific features, and organise itself in the light of its own needs and possibilities'.<sup>22</sup>

For Robert Schuman, even if a federal Europe could not be imposed immediately, it was the future towards which the European Communities should be moving. Nevertheless, even today Europe is still not going in the direction that Schuman hoped.<sup>23</sup>

## The importance of faith

Schuman's life and world view were strongly influenced by Catholicism. This Christian influence came mainly from his mother, a fervent Catholic. As a young man, he received a Christian education and made a pilgrimage to Lourdes. At University, he joined *Unitas*, a Catholic students' organisation that provided assistance and solidarity and explored Catholic doctrine and the life of the Saints. He subsequently joined a number of Catholic associations, including the Catholic Youth Movement in Lorraine.<sup>24</sup>



Robert Schuman's main allegiance was not to any political party, but to his faith – a modern faith in tune with doctrinal renewal, and attaching particular importance to social problems. This made him a rather atypical figure in the world of French politics. He aligned himself with centre-right parties and groups, particularly the Christian Democrats, whom he considered the least hostile to Christian values. He set particular store by the dignity of the human person and the people. In his view, political action should be harnessed for the good of humanity, the common good.<sup>25</sup>

These Christian values would influence his ideas for the European Communities and his vision for Europe. For Schuman, Europe was 'the construction of a generalised democracy in the Christian sense of the word', that is to say in the sense of a deeply democratic state of mind and less in the sense of a particular system of representation or government. By playing a part in the foundation of the European Union, Schuman was making a leap of faith. He was convinced that the future of Europe lay in reconciliation, solidarity and cooperation between nations under the authority of an organisation that could impose its decisions on governments for the common good.<sup>26</sup> During a plenary sitting of the EPA, Robert Schuman reiterated his ideas in a tribute to Pope Pius XII: 'The assembly is, in effect, the expression of spiritual and human solidarity that must form the basis of all our efforts to build Europe... Europe, an association of peoples with a common social and human base, thus has both a spiritual and moral dimension. It rises above the contingencies of material development.'<sup>27</sup>

His spiritual aura and the influence of Christian values on his political activities have made Robert Schuman a potential candidate for the sainthood. In fact, an investigation is under way with a view to his beatification.<sup>28</sup>

## Schuman today

Robert Schuman's house in Scy-Chazelles, where he lived for more than thirty years, has now become a museum and a monument to his memory. It also houses the Robert Schuman European Centre (CERS), an independent association established on the initiative of the deputy mayor of Montigny-lès-Metz, Joseph Schaff. In addition to its role in renovating the church where Robert Schuman is buried and the museum house, the association sponsors European projects launched by civil society and has set itself the task of 'promoting the work and the memory of Robert Schuman, familiarising the general public with the European integration process and fostering among young people and adults alike an awareness of what is at stake and the difficulties facing the European Union, by involving them in a dynamic process of reflecting on the future of Europe'. In addition to the permanent exhibition, the CERS organises lectures, seminars and travelling exhibitions on topical European issues. It also manages a European information and documentation centre and runs a network of sites dedicated to the pioneers of Europe and memorials to wars in Europe. In March 2007, Robert Schuman's house was one of the first sites to be awarded the 'European Heritage Label' and on 9 January 2012, it received the label 'Maisons des Illustres' (houses of famous men and women) from the French Ministry of Culture and Communication.<sup>29</sup>

The Robert Schuman Foundation, which was established in 1991 almost thirty years after the death of Robert Schuman, is a pro-European think tank. Its aim is to promote European integration. Based in Paris and Brussels, it produces studies on European policies and topical issues involving the European Union and stimulates debate about Europe. In addition to its numerous publications, the Foundation organises conferences and seminars. It develops research programmes in cooperation with universities, information centres and other think tanks. Its main mission is to keep the spirit and inspiration of Robert Schuman, father of Europe, alive and to promote European values and ideals both within and beyond the Union's borders.

## Conclusion

Robert Schuman had a profound influence on the foundations of European construction. In the wake of the Second World War, at a time when people were still recovering from the conflict, he proposed building agreement in Europe gradually, on the basis of dialogue between peoples. By proposing the creation of a European Coal and Steel Community, whose member countries would pool their coal and steel production, he launched the first European supranational organisation. The ECSC was based on a common market that translated into the free movement of iron and steel products and coal, and equal access to raw materials. The objectives were political, economic and social. The ECSC enabled France and Germany to be reconciled and peace to be cemented on the European continent. The role Schuman played in the history of the European Parliamentary Assembly is also significant. As the representative of the assembly he made many official visits and used those opportunities to share his European convictions. Through the importance he attached to solidarity and the search for the common good, he breathed life and a moral dimension into the European project. The inspiration he provided and his humanistic outlook are his invaluable legacy: one that should be built upon today in order to rise successfully to the new challenges of the future.

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- <sup>14</sup> M.-T. Bitsch, *op. cit.*, p. 310.
- <sup>15</sup> PE0 AP DE/1958 DE19580319-05 0010 Speech by Robert Schuman, President of the sitting.
- <sup>16</sup> M.-T. Bitsch, *op. cit.*, p. 310.
- <sup>17</sup> M.-T. Bitsch, *op. cit.*, pp. 29, 231, 241, 310 and 313.
- <sup>18</sup> R. Clement and E. Husson, *op. cit.*, p. 73.
- <sup>19</sup> R. Clement and E. Husson, *op. cit.*, p. 90.; A.P. Fimister, *Robert Schuman: Neo-Scholastic Humanism and the Reunification of Europe (Philosophy and Politics Book 15)*, PIE Peter Lang, 2008.
- <sup>20</sup> *Robert Schuman: Neo-Scholastic Humanism and the Reunification of Europe...*, p. 220.
- <sup>21</sup> R. Clement and E. Husson, *op. cit.*, pp. 151-152.
- <sup>22</sup> F. Roth, *Robert Schuman, du Lorrain des frontières au Père de l'Europe*, Fayard, 2008, p. 537.
- <sup>23</sup> R. Clement and E. Husson, *op. cit.*, p. 106.
- <sup>24</sup> R. Clement and E. Husson, *op. cit.*, p. 106; M.-T. Bitsch, *op. cit.*, pp. 18-19; C. Pennera, *Robert Schuman. La jeunesse et les débuts politiques d'un grand Européen, de 1886 à 1924*, Pierron, 1985, pp. 33-34.
- <sup>25</sup> R. Clement and E. Husson, *op. cit.*, pp. 71, 89, 106 et 142; M.-T. Bitsch, *op. cit.*, p. 17.
- <sup>26</sup> R. Clement and E. Husson, *op. cit.*, p. 91.
- <sup>27</sup> PE0 AP DE 1958 DE19581021-01 0010, Tribute to Pope Pius XII.
- <sup>28</sup> R. Clement and E. Husson, *op. cit.*, p. 17.
- <sup>29</sup> A. Munoz, *op. cit.*; CERS [website](#).



## Annex: Extracts from the Schuman Declaration (9 May 1950)

*The contribution which an organised and living Europe can bring to civilisation is indispensable to the maintenance of peaceful relations. In taking upon herself for more than 20 years the role of champion of a united Europe, France has always had as her essential aim the service of peace.*

*A united Europe was not achieved and we had war.*

*Europe will not be made all at once, or according to a single plan. It will be built through concrete achievements which first create a de facto solidarity. The coming together of the nations of Europe requires the elimination of the age-old opposition of France and Germany. Any action taken must in the first place concern these two countries.*

*With this aim in view, the French Government proposes that action be taken immediately on one limited but decisive point.*

*It proposes that Franco-German production of coal and steel as a whole be placed under a common High Authority, within the framework of an organisation open to the participation of the other countries of Europe.*

*The pooling of coal and steel production should immediately provide for the setting up of common foundations for economic development as a first step in the federation of Europe, and will change the destinies of those regions which have long been devoted to the manufacture of munitions of war, of which they have been the most constant victims.*

*The solidarity in production thus established will make it plain that any war between France and Germany becomes not merely unthinkable, but materially impossible.*

*The setting up of this powerful productive unit, open to all countries willing to take part and bound ultimately to provide all the member countries with the basic elements of industrial production on the same terms, will lay a true foundation for their economic unification.*

*By pooling basic production and by instituting a new High Authority, whose decisions will bind France, Germany and other member countries, this proposal will lead to the realisation of the first concrete foundation of a European federation indispensable to the preservation of peace.*

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