

PC.DEL/30/13
25 January 2013

ENGLISH
Original: FRENCH

Delegation of France

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR FRANÇOIS ALABRUNE,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF FRANCE TO THE OSCE, AT
THE 938th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

24 January 2013

Mr. Chairperson,

This week, and throughout this year, France and Germany are commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Élysée Treaty signed on 22 January 1963 by General de Gaulle and Chancellor Adenauer.

The Élysée Treaty, or the “Treaty on Franco-German Co-operation”, as it is also called, constituted a historic occasion for our two nations. Patient work had begun as far back as 1945, particularly within the European framework. This treaty, however, really set the seal on reconciliation between Germany and France. It is this successful reconciliation that our two delegations wish to draw attention to in the exposition that you will discover on the way out of this room.

The signature of the treaty was an emotional moment. Konrad Adenauer confided to General de Gaulle that: “What we have accomplished together for our two countries is, in my opinion, the most important event in my 14 years as Chancellor”. In his speech in Ludwigsburg (on 9 September 1962), General de Gaulle had earlier directly addressed the young people of Germany with these words, in German: “*Die Zukunft unserer beiden Länder, der Grundstein auf dem die Einheit Europas errichtet werden kann und muss, und die höchste Trumpf für die Freiheit der Welt, bleiben die gegenseitige Achtung, das Vertrauen und die Freundschaft zwischen dem französischen und dem deutschen Volk*” (“The future of our two countries, the foundation stone on which Europe’s unity can and must be built and the biggest trump card for the freedom of the world remain mutual respect, trust and friendship between the French and German peoples”).

The Élysée Treaty has inaugurated an era of exceptional co-operation between our two countries. Three main fields are covered: politics, the economy and civil society. Permanent consultations between our two governments are provided for. But between our societies, also, close dialogue and co-operation in all spheres have promoted increasingly intense exchanges.

We welcome, in particular, the activities of the Franco-German Youth Office, which have enabled more than 8 million young people to meet, the Franco-German University, with close to 5,000 students following integrated binational courses, and the television channel ARTE. Very diverse forms of co-operation exist between institutions, associations, districts,

towns and regions. France and Germany are the two countries whose local communities have entered into the largest number of twinning arrangements (more than 2,000).

German enterprises also employ 320,000 people in France, whereas French enterprises employ 285,000 people in Germany.

Franco-German partnership is not closed in on itself. France and Germany are conscious of exercising a historic joint responsibility in the service of Europe. Founding members of the European Communities, they have played a leading role in promoting the great advances made in the construction of Europe.

It is the ambition of our two countries to continue to represent an initiating force capable of carrying our partners along with it, without imposing anything on them.

Two days ago, in Berlin, a Franco-German Council of Ministers took place, co-chaired by the French President and the German Chancellor, and the German Bundestag and the French National Assembly held a joint session.

The declaration adopted by the joint Council of Ministers stresses the topicality and the vigour of Franco-German partnership and its contribution to the building of Europe, and establishes the key features of our common action in the future, in particular the priority to be given to young people.

In his address during the presentation of the Nobel Peace Prize to the European Union on 10 December 2012, Thorbjørn Jagland, the President of the Nobel Committee, described reconciliation between Germany and France as “probably the most spectacular example in history of how quickly a continent of war and conflict can be transformed into a continent of peace and co-operation”.

The OSCE has recognized the importance of the work of reconciliation. In our view, it is equipped to do still more in this area. This is our wish for the OSCE as we report to you on the results of the reconciliation and friendship between our two countries.

In this context, I wish to express our appreciation to the Chairperson-in-Office of the OSCE for the communiqué he issued on 22 January regarding this anniversary, and to you, Mr. Chairperson, for the way in which you have facilitated our debates and the presentation of the exposition that you will discover in a moment.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairperson.