



Paris, 19 april 2018

Joint statement

**By the president of the committee on European Union's questions of the
Bundesrat of the Federal Republic of Germany**

**And the president of the committee for European affairs of the Senate of
the French Republic**

On 19 april 2018, at the invitation of the president of the committee for European affairs of the French Senate, a delegation of this committee and one from the committee on European Union's questions of the Bundesrat met at the Senate to hold a common meeting. Having regard to the themes addressed during this meeting, both presidents, minister Guido Wolf and senator Jean Bizet, make the following joint statement :

1. The coming year, marked by the European Parliament elections, the negotiations on Brexit and the next multi-annual financial framework, will be crucial for the future of the European Union. During this period, the founding countries, especially France and Germany, have an essential responsibility, they will have to go forward for a revival of the European project.

2. With regard to the second phase of negotiations with the United Kingdom, the two presidents recall the importance of maintaining the unity of the 27 other European Union's Member States, as it has been the case until the present day since the British vote for Brexit.

3. A few days before the European Commission's announcement of its proposal for the 2021-2027 multi-annual financial framework, the presidents recall that the setting of a budget must be the expression of a political project and not the reverse. It is therefore important that the future budget preserves the Community acquis in particular regarding the common agricultural policy and the cohesion policy, while meeting the European citizens' new expectations in terms of security and preparation for the future.

4. The two presidents welcome the adoption in March 2018 by the French regions and the ministers in charge of European matters in German Länder of a joint statement in favor of the cohesion policy, recalling the necessity for this policy to cover the whole territory and regions, even those more developed, and to simplify the programmes proposed. They believe that regions have also an important role to play in the discussion on the future of the European Union.

5. The presidents also consider that the European Union must be more ambitious in the digital field and regarding artificial intelligence. It is worth facing the challenges of economic competitiveness and Europe's independence with the emergence and emphasis on flagship projects on these fields. It is also essential to ensure a high level of cybersecurity across the European Union.

6. The presidents use the occasion of the 55th anniversary of the Élysée Treaty to act together in order to deepen the inter-parliamentary cooperation of the two committees by organising joint meetings on a regular basis, to address topical subjects of the European Agenda.