

Franco-German Declaration of Berlin, 31 May 2021

In the Treaty of Aachen, Germany and France affirmed their determination to work together for a strong, sovereign, sustainable and resilient European Union. Following the bilateral Franco-German statement on 18 May 2020 and the proposals on the economic recovery of Europe, the European Union has equipped itself to regain a dynamic upward trajectory. We are convinced that only solidarity and unity within the European Union and global cooperation will foster constructive and forward-looking answers to the challenges of our time.

France and Germany welcome the launch of the Conference on the Future of Europe as a means to produce tangible and concrete results for the benefit of our citizens.

Germany and France will continue to enhance their bilateral cooperation while aiming to put it at the service of the European Union's objectives as well as its fundamental values and principles. In this spirit, we are encouraged by the successful implementation of key bilateral projects launched since the signing of the Treaty of Aachen.

Drawing first lessons from the pandemic

1. The current crisis has shown the necessity to increase European resilience and capacity to act. We, therefore, agreed to work towards ensuring resilient and sustainable EU supply chains and developing strategic health sovereignty with regard to COVID-19 vaccines and critical medicinal products for the pandemic response. We join forces with our European and international partners on targeted research and innovation initiatives. We acknowledge the need to reinforce our capacities of investment in the development of therapies and vaccines against COVID-19 and to strengthen preparedness against emerging pathogens in a One Health approach.
2. We consider the swift adoption of the European Health Union Package as a crucial step to learn collectively the lessons from the crisis. A decisive step is to strengthen the European Center for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) with the establishment of a permanent EU Health Task Force and involving Liaison officers in Member States. Other European Agencies, such as EMA, should also be strengthened.
3. The health crisis has revealed European dependencies on third countries as regards several critical active pharmaceutical ingredients and other critical goods. Europe faces growing medicine shortages and does not control the full value chain in the health industry. Yet, thanks to its outstanding research and well-developed industry, Europe has the potential to be a world leader in the creation and industrialization of new health technologies as well as innovation in mature segments. France and Germany will hence strive towards the development of common industrial initiatives in the health sector.
4. In order for the Union to increase its resilience after the Covid-19 crisis, we support the initiatives improving the quality and safety of patient care and cross border mobility of patients, developing a European pharmaceutical policy based on the existing division of competences between the Union and the Member States, setting up a new authority to manage crises and anticipate future pandemics, as envisaged with the new EU Health Emergency Response Authority -HERA-, while avoiding overlap with existing EU agencies and creating a health data space (EHDS).
5. We commit to an open, transparent and multilateral approach and reaffirm our support for all pillars of Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator (ACT-A), including its COVAX facility, in which

Franco-German Declaration of Berlin, 31 May 2021

the EU is a key contributor. We recognize that equipping the ACT-Accelerator with adequate funding to that end is crucial. We further recognize the importance of sharing vaccine doses using the ACT-A mechanisms as recently announced by Germany and France. We also commit to strengthening the WHO as the world's leading organization in fighting pandemics and the EU's active and leading role in the strengthening process.

6. We recognize the need to align pathways towards recovery with the 2030 Agenda. The pandemic has exacerbated existing vulnerabilities worldwide, particularly affecting women and girls. We recall the importance of achieving gender equality at all levels and in all political, economic and social fields. The upcoming Generation Equality World Forum in Paris creates an opportunity to reiterate jointly the importance to protect women's rights, especially in the post-pandemic context.

The pandemic has also underscored the importance of adopting an ambitious new global biodiversity framework capable of bringing about transformative changes in our societies and economies, strengthening implementation and contributing to significantly reducing the risk of zoonoses and even pandemics. We are committed to its adoption at the 15th Conference of Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity and to its implementation.

Consolidating our Economic Recovery and Resilience

7. With the decisive fiscal efforts by Member States and EU measures over the last year, Europe has provided an effective response to the immediate crisis. The Recovery Fund as a temporary and targeted measure set up following a joint initiative by France and Germany shows the determination of the EU to overcome the pandemic, support a sustainable recovery and address the challenges of the future. It is now the time to enter into the swift and successful implementation of our ambitious Recovery and Resilience plans to speed up the economic and social rebound, tackle country-specific challenges and make the EU fit for the digital and green transition. We call on all Member States to use the opportunity provided by the funds under the Recovery and Resilience Facility to live up to the joint reform and investment ambitions.
8. Germany and France commit to coordinated fiscal strategies by supporting our economies with temporary measures until the pandemic is under control and restrictions ease, then gradually phasing out immediate crisis support measures and shifting towards supporting potential and inclusive growth via investments and structural reforms. Once the recovery is firmly under way, we are committed to address the increased public debt levels by implementing sustainable medium-term fiscal strategies and growth-enhancing strategies. We support the EU's agenda on new own resources in line with the December 2020 Interinstitutional Agreement.
9. We call for a stronger support to investment and innovation in strategic sectors, to fill the structural investment gap in Europe and enable the EU to meet the challenges of global competition. EU financial instruments should be mobilized in that perspective, including through the European Investment Bank.
10. In order to emerge from the crisis with stronger economies, France and Germany call upon the European Union to develop a vision of its trade, competition and industrial policies, with a view to invest massively in green and digital technologies while defending its economic interests in the global competition. In this respect, we are committed to supporting the European Commission's effort towards shaping the new system of global economic governance based on an ambitious and balanced free trade agenda with the WTO at its core and complemented by a comprehensive bilateral trade agenda, while protecting ourselves from unfair and abusive

Franco-German Declaration of Berlin, 31 May 2021

practices, aiming at reciprocity, mutual benefits and coherence with the EU's climate policy. We welcome the recent favorable developments in transatlantic relations and remain determined to pursue the resolution of pending issues.

11. In this context, we have also joined forces to initiate three Important Projects of Common European Interest (IPCEI), as part of our Recovery and Resilience Plans. They will foster the competitiveness of the European industry and investments and are crucial for the green and digital transition and to its technological sovereignty: "IPCEI hydrogen", "IPCEI microelectronics and connectivity", and "IPCEI on next generation cloud infrastructure and services". We will also explore possibilities to mobilize the IPCEI tool in other innovative sectors, for example health and mobility. We call interested Member States to join these initiatives and ask the European Commission to give utmost support to these truly European projects, also in the context of state aid control.
12. The ESM-Amending Treaty signed in January 2021 implements key elements of the Franco-German ESM reform concept. Strengthening the Economic and Monetary Union, completing the Banking Union and making progress towards a true Capital Markets Union remain essential, as we need to foster incentives for private capital to fund the recovery and assert our financial independence. In that regard, we must ensure European banks' competitiveness and their ability to finance the real economy and preserve the variety of business models in the European banking sector.
13. We continue to join forces in the context of the ongoing OECD work to achieve progress towards a fairer and more effective taxation at an international level. We welcome the recent progress of the Inclusive Framework on Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS) on the two-pillar approach. We commit to a high level of ambition on the rate for a global minimum tax, with a rate of at least 15%. We emphasize our shared willingness and commitment for a consensus-based solution on both pillars by mid-2021, followed by an implementation at EU-level that is in alignment with the global agreement. Introducing fair taxation of the digitalized economy within the Union remains a priority.
14. We welcome the ECB's exploratory work on the possible introduction of a digital Euro as a means of payment. A digital Euro could contribute to a more efficient and resilient European payment infrastructure and to the international role of the Euro. We are committed to working alongside the ECB to analyze the feasibility and the optimal design of such a project.
15. We have undertaken decisive steps in order to secure jobs and mitigate social consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. We support the social dimension of the European Union as emphasized by the Heads of State and Government at the Porto Social Summit. We will continue our cooperation on vocational mobility between our countries, in particular with regards to young workers and apprentices.
16. We are committed to the Green Lanes transport strategy. We want to join forces to guarantee seamless cross-border goods transport within the EU.

Implementing the European Green deal to fight Climate Change

17. The European Green Deal enables the EU to lead by example on a global stage in delivering a successful green transition towards climate neutrality. We commit to support an ambitious implementation of the Green Deal.
18. We will pursue our very close coordination towards major emitters. It is essential that G20 countries make new, stronger and transformative commitments to NDCs and climate neutrality to keep a limit of 1.5° temperature rise within reach. We reaffirm our commitment to the

Franco-German Declaration of Berlin, 31 May 2021

collective developed country goal of jointly mobilizing US\$100 billion annually and with regard to our climate finance contributions through to 2025. We commit to enhance, accelerate and scale-up adaptation actions, including nature-based solutions, and to support the most vulnerable to adapt to and cope with the impacts of climate change. We also commit to working with all parties towards ambitious outcomes in the negotiations at COP26, including the outstanding mandates relating to the Katowice Rulebook.

19. The forthcoming Fit-for-55 policy package should enable us to embark on a sound and accelerated transition to a climate neutral, competitive and prosperous EU by 2050. Fairness and cost efficiency need to be considered as key criteria. Furthermore, efforts of all Member states need to progressively converge to collectively reach climate neutrality by 2050.
20. The EU Emissions Trading System (ETS) is a cornerstone of the Union's climate policy and is a key tool for reducing emissions in a cost-effective way. We agree that the ETS needs to be strengthened to contribute its fair share to the new 2030 climate target. We support an adequate minimum price on carbon emissions with a view to enhancing the carbon pricing system. The envisaged proposal by the Commission on the carbon border adjustment mechanism needs to ensure the environmental integrity of EU Policies and avoid carbon leakages in a WTO-compatible way.
21. In light of the upcoming amendments of the Renewable Energy Directive and the Energy Efficiency Directive, we support an adequate alignment of the EU 2030 targets for renewable energy and energy efficiency with the new EU 2030 climate target of at least 55% net greenhouse-gas reduction. We will continue our close cooperation in the field of energy research on sustainable renewable energy technologies.
22. We are also closely cooperating, within the "IPCEI hydrogen", in the development of large-scale electrolyser capacities, sustainable transformation of industrial processes (i.e. steel and chemical production).
23. Ambitious climate policies can only be successful if they correspond with a competitive, modern resource-efficient and circular European economy and a prosperous society, and are socially accepted. We stress the need to implement the new climate target in a way that spurs economic growth, thereby creating jobs and contributing to the long-term global competitiveness of the EU economy, while supporting a fair transition for all, making use of the means provided within the Multi-annual Financial Framework 2021-2027 and Next Generation EU. In particular, we need to enable energy-intensive industries to develop and deploy innovative climate-neutral technologies while maintaining their industrial competitiveness. We also need to support – both on the national level and by using existing EU instrument – the most vulnerable citizens by fighting against energy poverty. We also underline the importance and the need for a forward-looking regulatory framework that spurs innovation and investments in world-leading climate solutions and business models.
24. We collaborate closely to pave the way for climate-neutral transport and to make bilateral cross-border as well as European mobility sustainable and efficient. With the TransEuropExpress strategy (TEE 2.0), we are promoting, together with other European states, international long-distance passenger rail services, including a night-train connection between Berlin and Paris. In addition, we aim to strengthen cross-border public transport at the regional and local level and foster rail freight.
25. Finally, we support ongoing work on ways to preserve and restore biodiversity and notably setting binding and realistic restoration targets on the basis of thorough impact assessment

Franco-German Declaration of Berlin, 31 May 2021

including in the absence of international binding targets. We support the EU targets set in the EU biodiversity strategy.

26. We also look forward to the discussions on a robust European legislation to fight imported deforestation and forest degradation. We will support the consumption of products from deforestation-free supply chains with measures on information sharing, transparency, traceability and labelling, support for producer countries and provisions in trade agreements.

Supporting digitalization and increasing our technological sovereignty

27. The green and digital transitions are among of the 21st century's major challenges. We commit to successfully leveraging the digital transformation for more environmental and climate action, while significantly reducing the ecological footprint of digital technologies.
28. We recognize the central role digital identity will play in the future of our economies and Europe as a whole. We also share concerns that foreign actors, particularly big tech, are making significant inroads towards controlling the digital identity market, threatening European digital sovereignty.
29. We welcome the European Commission's proposal for a Digital Services Act (DSA). We are convinced that platforms have to assume greater responsibility for content moderation and that the DSA is a vital step towards new systemic obligations. We will work together to find a balanced approach that protects freedom of speech on the one hand and prevents the development of hate speech, radicalization and violent extremism online on the other.
30. Against the background of the challenges of digitalization and globalization, we support the European Commission's proposal for a Digital Markets Act (DMA) which complements competition law to ensure the contestability and fairness of digital markets. We support focusing the DMA's scope on "gatekeeper" platforms while allowing more flexibility to cope with the realities of digital markets. We underline that the merger control rules in the DMA vis-à-vis certain gatekeeper platforms have to be strengthened.
31. We reiterate our commitments from 2019. In this light, we underline our commitment to European independent access to space and to the European preference principle for launchers. Consolidation measures aiming at improved cost-efficiency and international competitiveness are still to be pursued to improve the situation of the European launchers on the markets. The independent access to space needs to be maintained in the future. We agree to continue our close cooperation in the domain of European launchers. We affirm the critical role of space for economic, security and defense interests. A collaboration between ESA and the European Commission on eye-to-eye level should be pursued. The exchange on international regulatory matters needs to be strengthened. Exploration activities in ESA led by France and Germany need further attention.
32. We welcome the progress made by project GAIA-X and will continue our strong support jointly with other European Member States.
33. We agree on the need to build a governance framework for the use and sharing of agricultural data taking into consideration the activities by the European Commission and GAIA-X.
34. Food origin labelling is a major concern and common interest to us. We support the EU-Commission's Farm to Fork-initiative to consider an extension of the mandatory indication of origin or provenance to other products.

Further cooperation for our citizens and in education and culture

35. Cross-border cooperation is an essential aspect of the Treaty of Aachen and we actively support the cooperation mechanisms contained therein, in particular the cross-border cooperation committee, with a view to improving the daily lives of our citizens. Since the beginning of the health crisis, when the Federal Government and the Länder took care of patients from France, we have strengthened and intensified our exchanges and cooperation mechanisms in the health sector.
36. We emphasize the importance of educational cooperation as crucial for the Franco-German friendship. In this perspective, we reaffirm our intention to develop strategies and concrete measures to promote the acquisition of the partner language in both countries and to make existing language promotion programs more visible and accessible. We welcome in this regard the newly founded Franco-German high schools in Hamburg and Strasbourg. Furthermore, we are particularly in favor of increasing cross-border mobility of future teachers.
37. In this context, we welcome that the Joint Citizens' Fund has proved itself a success by enhancing direct contacts between the people of our countries. We emphasize that the Citizens' Fund should continue to provide low-threshold funding and aim to further strengthen the Fund.
38. In addition, we want to deepen exchanges in vocational education and training beyond the 20 new partnerships between vocational education centers that have already been established notably by facilitating long-duration mobilities of trainees, and are experimenting 3 pilot projects in this view.
39. We also stress the importance of cultural cooperation as a means of strengthening dialogue between our societies. We will address our historical responsibilities in connection with our colonial past. In particular, we want to take responsible account of collections from colonial contexts in close exchange with the countries and societies of origin. In particular, we want to extend our cooperation between German and French museums, especially on shared issues such as collections related to colonial contexts, but also on mediation, digital uses of collections or education through museums.

Stronger ties in the fields of security and defense

40. We consider an effective, coherent and credible European security and defense as crucial. We seek to reinforce the European pillar in NATO and to strengthen EU-NATO cooperation, with the aim of complementarity. We aim to foster a common strategic culture in the EU, as well as enhanced European military operations and capabilities. We will also consult in the framework of the European Intervention Initiative. The initiative for the Strategic Compass of the EU, launched under the German Presidency of the Council of the EU, will be finalized and adopted under the French Presidency in March 2022, setting ambitious objectives until 2030. Efforts towards full implementation of PESCO binding commitments, as well as swift progress of PESCO projects will be essential to strengthen the European Union's ability to act. The strong interest expressed by third States to join some of PESCO projects, in accordance with the Council decision, is a positive signal for this major EU defense initiative.
41. We reaffirm our commitment to enhancing European military capabilities through industrial cooperation, such as MGCS (Main Ground Combat System). We welcome the agreement reached between the French, German and Spanish governments and our industries on the Next Generation Weapons System/Future Combat Air System (NGWS/FCAS) with the goal of

Franco-German Declaration of Berlin, 31 May 2021

awarding the associated contract during the summer 2021 timeframe. We support the strengthened cooperation of our defense industries and reaffirm our shared aim to advance joint defense cooperation, based on the successful implementation of the Franco-German agreement concerning export controls in the field of defense.

42. We reaffirm the need to maintain our efforts during the coming years to support the appropriate defense investments. In this context, we reassert the need for the European Defense Fund (EDF) to support the competitiveness of European industry in accordance with the MFF-conclusions by co-funding ambitious and inclusive projects meeting the needs of the European armed forces.

Closer cooperation in the field of justice and counter-terrorism

43. In light of the recent attacks, we re-affirm our commitment to the counter-terrorism measures formulated in the Joint Declaration of EU Ministers of the Interior of November 13, 2020, placing particular emphasis on protecting religious freedom, strengthening social cohesion, reinforcing security of a well-functioning Schengen area, ensuring security and preventing radicalization – offline and online. We reiterate the need to ensure a close cooperation between judicial authorities involved in the fight against terrorism. We welcome the renewed dialogue between the competent public prosecution offices, and increased cooperation regarding fight against radicalization in Prison.
44. We intend to resume our bilateral consultations on the fight against Antisemitism, which were interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, before the end of 2021.

Reforming Schengen and advancing the European Pact on migration and asylum

45. While the European Commission will soon present a communication and legislative proposals on the Schengen area, France and Germany share the view that the area of free movement is one of the most valuable achievements of the European integration. In order to preserve it, we call for a reform that would allow the better control of the external border, limit irregular secondary migration within the Union, promote police cooperation at our borders and better guarantee the respect of the common rules by each Member State.
46. France and Germany take note of the recent progress in the negotiations on a European Pact on migration and asylum in particular on strengthening cooperation with countries of origin and transit of illegal immigration. However, we stress the need to swiftly reach an agreement on the key principles that should govern the common response of the Member States to the challenges of migration in the future. It is notably essential to quickly agree on a fair balance between effective and compulsory procedures at the external border, which are the only way to guarantee its effective control, the definition of clear rules of responsibility that should effectively prevent irregular secondary migration, and a functioning mechanism of reinforced solidarity between Member States.
47. Integration issues are one of the current challenges our societies are facing. Therefore, we agree on the need of a continuous dialog with our civil societies by supporting the creation of an annual Dialogue Forum for Integration which will allow to continue the work of the Franco-German Council for Integration on a more inclusive, flexible and broader perspective.

Increased cross-border police cooperation

48. In accordance with the employment regulation signed on 18 September 2020 between our border police forces, joint operations are carried out in the border area with regard to illegal

Franco-German Declaration of Berlin, 31 May 2021

immigration and cross-border crime. Furthermore, we look forward to the setting up of a joint French-German unit to combat illegal immigration, which will make it possible to perpetuate the action of our joint border patrols.

49. We are determined to continue and develop cooperation between our internal security forces, whether in the fight against terrorism or in law enforcement. We commend the development of the French-German Operational Unit, a concrete step toward strengthening cross-border police cooperation, and we call for the development of a common European culture of our internal security forces.

Cooperation on international issues

50. We will continue strengthening the transatlantic partnership, and, based on the relevant EU Council conclusions and documents, will pursue an ambitious transatlantic agenda including concrete progress on climate, digitalization, technology and strengthening the rules-based multilateral order.
51. We support a united, value- and interest-based EU policy towards China in line with the EU's "Strategic Outlook". We support a renewed, global EU connectivity strategy. We support a European Indo-Pacific strategy based on inclusiveness and a rules-based international order to strengthen the EU's contribution to stability, security, prosperity and sustainable development of the region.
52. We welcome and continue to support the substantive discussions between JCPoA participants, and with the United States, aimed at facilitating a US return to the JCPoA, ensuring Iran's return to full compliance with the JCPoA. Building on that, we are committed to then further stabilizing and strengthening the JCPoA. Together with regional parties and the wider international community, we also aim to address broader regional security concerns related to Iran's missile programs and regional activities.
53. We commit to promoting rapprochement and cooperation between the parties in the Middle East Peace Process, supporting efforts at relaunching credible political dialogue, notably by the Middle East Quartet, and engaging together other regional actors such as Egypt and Jordan, with a view to generating a conducive environment for peace negotiations and advancing efforts for the two-state solution and an end to the conflict.
54. We are committed to continuing our substantial engagement for peace and stability in the Sahel region and foster the implementation of the civil surge in the framework of the Coalition for the Sahel, especially within the Partnership for Security and Stability in the Sahel (P3S) and the Sahel Alliance.
55. We take note of Mali's suspension from the institutions of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), which was decided at the Extraordinary Summit of Heads of State and Government on 30 May. Like ECOWAS, we believe that organizing the presidential election in Mali on 27 February 2022 is an absolute priority, and we support its monitoring mechanism for the transition period. Compliance with these parameters is a condition for maintaining the commitment of Mali's partners and support for the transition.
56. On Libya, we continue supporting the UN-led Berlin Process and welcome the substantial progress achieved since the Berlin conference toward securing lasting peace and stability, including through the reopening of the energy sector, the nationwide ceasefire agreement of 23 October 2020, the roadmap for holding national elections on 24 December 2021, and the selection of a transitional unified executive authority. We underline the importance of effective

Franco-German Declaration of Berlin, 31 May 2021

implementation of the Ceasefire Agreement, respect for the UN arms embargo, and withdrawal of all foreign fighters and mercenaries in accordance with the UNSC Resolutions.

57. We reiterate our full support to deepening a strategic partnership agenda between Africa and Europe at the upcoming EU-African Union Summit and confirm our commitment to the G20 Compact with Africa as a major initiative to promote private sector development, foster investment and accelerate structural reforms in Africa. We will work together in the G20 on the strengthening of the Compact announced at the Summit on financing African economies. We reaffirm our joint ambition to strengthen the EU-Africa relations, amongst others through cooperation frameworks such as the EU-AU-Partnership and the EU-ACP-Partnership as well as relevant contributions to some Team Europe Initiatives for Africa such as AfCFTA.
58. In light of recent tensions, we underline the importance of the implementation of the Minsk agreements, as well as the Paris Summit conclusions of December 2019, for achieving a sustainable settlement of the conflict in the East of Ukraine, commit to working towards this aim in the Normandy format and commend the various OSCE efforts on the ground.
59. Unresolved issues with Russia, including destabilizing behavior and continuous breaches of international law, have strained our relations and need to be addressed resolutely. We, however, reaffirm our commitment to continue our dialogue with Russia, based on common EU principles, and to engage selectively in areas of common interest.
60. We strongly condemn the diversion of a Ryanair flight to Minsk on 23 May 2021 by the Belarusian regime and demand the immediate release of Raman Pratasevich and Sofia Sapega. We welcome the immediate and determined response by the European Council. Regarding the political situation in Belarus, we reiterate our demand to allow for early Presidential elections, release all political prisoners and end the use of violence against the people of Belarus.
61. We reaffirm our strategic interest in cooperative and mutually beneficial relations with Turkey and stand ready to enhance cooperation in a mutually constructive atmosphere, provided de-escalation in the Eastern Mediterranean is sustained and a constructive contribution to the resolution of regional crises is made. In the Eastern Mediterranean, we encourage all relevant actors to contribute to a sustainable solution of the underlying issues.
62. We reaffirm the strategic importance of the Western Balkan countries and remain firmly committed to their European perspective, while calling for continued substantial reforms, in line with the new methodology. We reiterate our full support for the EU-facilitated Kosovo-Serbia dialogue, as expressed in joint high-level meetings in 2019 and 2020.