

**National Day reception**  
**French Residence, 14 July 2016**

***Cher Boris, if I may call you that,***

**Ministers,**

***Madame la Ministre,***

***Monsieur le Sénateur,***

***Mesdames et Messieurs les élus,***

**Lords, ladies and gentlemen,**

**It's a great pleasure for me to welcome you to the French Residence for my second fourteenth of July in London.**

***Cher Boris, I'm very pleased that you are able to join us this evening for one of your first official appearances, less than twenty-four hours after your appointment! Allow me to congratulate you warmly on this promotion, which I welcome.***

**I welcome it because I know you're very familiar with France, our language and our culture. For eight years you were Mayor of London, Paris's sister city, and you often boasted, too, that you were in charge of one of France's biggest cities.**

**Some will say you're keen on French-bashing, but as we say in French, "*qui aime bien châtie bien*" – which I'm told translates roughly as "spare the rod and spoil the child".**

**I know you are a friend of France, and this is borne out by your prominent support in the wake of the terrible attacks which struck our country.**

**You were one of the first British politicians to go to Trafalgar Square after the Charlie Hebdo attack, and the French people remember your decision to illuminate London buildings in French colours, an initiative which was followed throughout the world. You also attended the match at Wembley between England and France after the Bataclan attack.**

***Cher* Boris, ladies and gentlemen,**

**The past year has been especially action-packed.**

**As you know, France wanted the United Kingdom to remain a member of the European Union, because we thought that it was in all our interests, to tackle the economic, security and climate challenges of the twenty-first century.**

**But the British people took a different decision, and we respect it.**

**We must now face up to a complex and totally new situation.**

**Discussions will have to begin, firstly on the circumstances of the UK's departure, and secondly on the new framework of relations between the UK and the EU.**

**The EU is ready to embark on these talks, but it's first up to the UK to give official notification of its wish to leave the Union, as provided for by the treaties. We hope this can happen as quickly as possible.**

**In this context, the Franco-British bilateral relationship will become even more important.**

**As the French President has said very clearly, and I quote: "France, for both its own sake and that of the UK, will continue to work with this great friend, with which we are bound by so many historical and geographical ties in economic, human and cultural terms", and "our close relations in the defence sector (...) will be preserved".**

**The President yesterday called the UK's new prime minister, Theresa May, to congratulate her on her appointment and assure her of our wish to continue working together as closely as possible.**

**We'll go on coordinating closely in the international institutions, be it in the United Nations, NATO, the G20 or the G7, to defend our shared values and interests and contribute to a better world.**

**We'll go on deepening our exceptional security and defence cooperation, as we intervene side by side in Iraq and Syria to destroy Daesh.**

**We'll go on preparing our armies for the future, as our two defence ministers recently validated the operational concept of the Joint Expeditionary Force, which means we'll soon be capable of projecting together a ten-thousand-strong force, within a few days, to any point in the world.**

**We'll go on investing in our two countries' young people, as we are launching a Young Leaders programme.**

**And, finally, we shall quite obviously go on trading with each other.**

**Trade between our two countries smashed all records again last year, accounting for over fifty billion euros, and as I like to recall, the UK is home to more than three-thousand French companies employing some three-hundred-and-sixty-thousand people. Likewise, UK companies are among the largest foreign-based employers in France.**

**With so many French entrepreneurs choosing to showcase their innovative expertise in the UK, I wanted to highlight this pool of creativity for this year's fourteenth of July.**

**France launched a major campaign in October last year called "Créative France".**

**Créative France demonstrates how France stands out among its peers, with skilled people whose talent extends beyond borders and throughout the world. The campaign puts the spotlight on the value of French *savoir-faire*, by showcasing our artists, inventors, researchers, entrepreneurs and other personalities who have contributed to France's international influence in their field.**

**Today, I am pleased to tell you that Créative France has chosen a new face for its campaign in the UK, following a competition in which several very innovative French companies took part, such**

**as La Belle Assiette, Ekimetrics, Merci Maman Gifts or Sponsorise Me.**

**But tonight there is only one winner, and, without further ado, I am very pleased to announce, that this winner is Devialet!**

**Founded in Paris in two-thousand-and-seven, Devialet is the international leader for high-end amplifiers. Its continuous and revolutionary inventions in audio engineering made it a market leader within just four years. Devialet will become the latest icons promoting and embodying French dynamism and creativity, particularly here in the UK.**

**Before asking the representatives of Devialet to come to the stage and on this positive note about French *savoir-faire*, I'd like to finish by thanking tonight's sponsors, without whom we couldn't have had such a fine reception – enjoying, as we are, the finest French products. I am wholly grateful to them for supporting our mission to heighten France's impact in the UK.**

**Thank you, everyone.**

**Long live France, long live the UK and long live the friendship between France and the UK!**