

Sciences Po Alumni UK gala dinner
Museum of London, 11 October 2016

Ladies and gentlemen,

Cher Enrico Letta,

Cher Frédéric Mion,

Chère Cécile d'Angelin,

It's a pleasure to be with you this evening for the third year running.

I'm most grateful to Cécile d'Angelin and the whole team at Sciences Po Alumni UK for bringing us together in this magnificent venue.

I want to reiterate to you my support and my respect for your collective efforts and for what you're achieving for Sciences Po.

And I'd like to take the opportunity of this prestigious meeting to pass on two brief messages to you.

My first message is that, more than ever, I'm counting on you, Sciences Po, the network of alumni, the young people here this evening, to nurture the links between France and the United Kingdom.

We're living in uncertain times. Speaking to you last year, I expressed my hope that the UK would remain in the European Union. That was the French government's wish. The British people took a different decision.

Negotiations will start at the beginning of next year. The British government has clarified the timetable. It must now make clear what it wants.

But whatever the outcome of those negotiations, France – for its own and Britain’s sake – will continue working with this great country, our friend, to which we are united by so many ties of history and geography, at economic, human and cultural level.

Proof of this is the major step that was taken very recently on industrial and energy cooperation between our two countries.

I mean, of course, the signature of the agreement on Hinkley Point, worth eighteen billion pounds. It's one of the largest investments ever made in the UK since the Second World War.

So we’re moving forward.

My second message will be much more prosaic. Twenty-seventeen will be a very important year for France and therefore for French people in London – many of you are here this evening.

If you want to vote in London in the presidential and general elections, don’t forget to register at the Consulate before the thirty-first of December this year.

Fifty-four polling stations will be open in the UK, forty-one of them in London. We’ll need volunteers to help us preside over and run those polling stations.

We invite as many of you as possible to answer the call for volunteers that will be issued on our website this week.

Thank you.