



College of Europe  
Collège d'Europe

Brugge



Natolin

## PRESS RELEASE

### Official inauguration of the Sir Winston Churchill Room At the College of Europe, Bruges campus



“Let's connect past, present and future”

The official inauguration of the Sir Winston Churchill Room in the Bruges Salons of Garenmarkt took place on Thursday 28 September 2017. The College of Europe was founded in 1949 by leading European figures such as Salvador DE MADARIAGA, Winston CHURCHILL, Paul Henri SPAAK and Alcide DE GASPERI in the wake of the first Congress of the European Movement in The Hague in 1948.

Rector Jörg MONAR quoted Sir W. Churchill as being the pioneer of the European integration idea, and honours him especially as being an important founding father of the College of Europe at a time our institution had to struggle to find recognition and funding in the 1950s. W. Churchill, he said, had many bright ideas on developing the European integration process, based on cooperation and the reduction of cross border barriers.

British Ambassador to Belgium HE Alison ROSE emphasised that post-Brexit, the UK would continue to play an important part in Europe through solid cooperation with the EU. The College of Europe students, she said, stand to receive an important education at the College of Europe, learning to share common values. She was delighted that the College chose to honour Sir W. Churchill and to name a room after him.

Grandson of Sir W. Churchill, Sir Nicolas SOAMES paid tribute to his grandfather, one of the founding fathers of the College of Europe. He referred to documents he had seen where his grandson was asked to be involved in the project. 'You will be in good company' an advisor's note said. He was overwhelmed with the splendid location and was delighted that the dedicated room would also be used for future dining and hospitality. His grandfather would have liked that. He also referred to the fact that the College had been the place where M. Thatcher once expressed her famous speech on Europe. He urged us to read it again, as well as the speeches made by W. Churchill on Europe in the 1940s and 50s. He said W. Churchill would have been devastated about the current political situation in our world.

The two guests and the rector officially opened the Sir Winston Churchill Room with the quote : 'Let's connect past, present and future'.

[www.coleurope.eu/press](http://www.coleurope.eu/press)

The speech can be viewed on the following link:

<https://www.coleurope.eu/events/official-inauguration-sir-winston-churchill-room>