

The Treaty of Paris, March 30, 1856, reincorporated with Moldavia the southern part of Bessarabia, abolished the Russian protectorate, and maintained the suzerainty of the Sultan, who promised to give the two principalities an independent national administration. The representative of France, Count Walewsky, also put forward the question of the union. The idea being, however, strongly opposed by Turkey and Austria, it was decided to convene in both principalities special assemblies (*divans ad hoc*) representing all classes of the population: their wishes were to be embodied, by a European commission, in a report for the consideration of the Congress.

The idea of union was a nightmare to the Sublime Porte, and her commissary compiled the electoral lists in so arbitrary a manner, that it might once more have fallen through, had it not been for the invaluable assistance which the Emperor Napoleon gave the Rumanian countries. As Turkish policy was relying mainly on England's support, Napoleon brought about a personal meeting with Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, at Osborne (August 1857), the result of which was a compromise: Napoleon agreed to defer for the time being the idea of an effective union of the two principalities, England undertaking on the other hand to make the Porte cancel the previous elections, and proceed to new ones after revision of the electoral lists.

The assemblies which met after the new elections proclaimed that union, autonomy, and neutrality under a hereditary foreign dynasty were necessary to the welfare and reorganization of the Rumanian countries. These wishes were considered by a second Congress (Paris, May 1858): but three months of discussion and the sincere efforts of the French representative brought about no understanding on the point of the union. The