

# EUROPE

April  
2020

# *Diplomatic*

magazine



## BREXIT:

What the departure of Britain  
means for the European  
Parliament's political mix



THE PORT OF ANTWERP  
Europe's main entry  
point for illegal drugs

# NICOLAS SARKOZY

## *Patience, Persistence, Power*

# Fly Royal Jordanian from Copenhagen

3 weekly direct flights!

## ROUTE DESTINATIONS:

Aqaba	Dammam	Kuwait
Abu Dhabi	Doha	Medina
Beirut	Dubai	Najaf
Baghdad	Erbil	Riyadh
Bangkok	Sulaimaniyah	Tel Aviv
Basra	Jeddah	
Cairo	Kuala Lumpur	

**Fly to and from Copenhagen, the land of historic landmarks, beautiful architecture and the world's first amusement parks!**

From Copenhagen to Amman  
3:25 PM to 9:00 PM

From Amman to Copenhagen  
10:45 AM to 2:30 PM

For more information, please visit [rj.com](http://rj.com), RJ mobile app, RJ sales offices or your preferred travel agent, call +45 5 373 2333 or email [cphgdrj@rj.com](mailto:cphgdrj@rj.com).

\*Fares start at advertised prices and are subject to availability.

[rj.com](http://rj.com)



ROYAL JORDANIAN

الملكية الأردنية



# IN THIS ISSUE



■ **Nicolas Sarkozy** Patience, Persistence, Power ..... p.4

■ **The port of Antwerp**

The city on the brink of becoming a narco-state..... p.12

■ **Diplomacy** A skill to acquire ..... p.16

■ **Friends, enemies and loopholes**

Military proliferation through the back door ..... p.22

■ **EU SatCen**

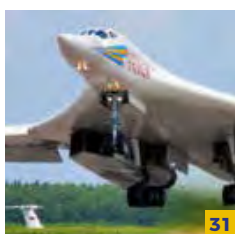
Geospatial intelligence at the service of EU's common foreign and security policy Europol..... p.28



■ **Portugal**

A vast transnational organized crime investigation dismantled..... p.30

■ **We ought to be giants** - Putin tries to make Chekhov's words come true by force ..... p.31



■ **The SIM hijackers**

How criminals are stealing millions by highjacking phone numbers..... p.38

■ **All change?** What the departure of Britain means for the European Parliament's political mix..... p.40



■ **European Court of Human Rights**

Swedish pro life nurses case rejected ..... p.46

■ **Minetrain** Advanced training for mining industry professionals..... p.48

■ **Venturi Monaco** 20 years of innovation..... p.50



■ **News in Brief** From around Europe ..... p.52

■ **Expo Sorolla** Spanish master of light..... p.55

■ **Timeless Chic**..... p.56

■ **Books** Our selection..... p.57

EUROPE  
*Diplomatic*  
magazine

international officials or academics, the magazine gives everyone the necessary and useful information about all topics that make up our daily lives. Covering sensitive issues such as nuclear, the rise of Islamism and energy dependence, the magazine opens its pages to recognized specialists who would like to express first order and exclusive information. But Europe Diplomatic Magazine is not only a source of information on recent topics. It is also addressing older facts with deep thought for further analysis. Whether it's news, security, diplomacy, technology, energy, terrorism, European affairs, no subject is treated superficially. Europe Diplomatic Magazine is an independent media, conveying balanced ideas of openness and analysis based on almost 30 years of experience in the journalistic world.

Visit our site and please give us your comments:

<https://europe-diplomatic.eu/>

[europediplomaticmagazine@gmail.com](mailto:europediplomaticmagazine@gmail.com)



© Best Image

Nicolas Sarkozy mayor of Neuilly-sur-Seine

# NICOLAS SARKOZY

## *Patience. Persistence. Power*

Neuilly-sur-Seine, 29 April, 1983... In the City Hall of this wealthy, residential suburb just west of Paris, votes are being counted for the election of the new mayor. Nicolas Sarkozy is eager to find out whether he has managed to convince a majority of city councillors to side with him. It's a closely run vote between the young Gaullist candidate and his main opponent from a centrist party. The atmosphere is tense. To win, Sarkozy needs an absolute majority; there are 49 city councillors voting, which means that he will need 25 votes. At the end of the count, he obtains 26 votes and is proclaimed mayor in the midst of wild celebrations by his supporters. Against all odds, the 28 year-old Nicolas Sarkozy gains his first political victory; a victory witnessed that night by his brothers, his mother as well as his father, a long-absent figure in his life.

Nicolas Paul Stéphane Sarkozy was born on 28 January 1955 in the 17th Arrondissement of Paris to an aristocratic Hungarian father, Pal Sarkozy de Nagy-Bocsa and a Greek mother, Andrée Jeanne Mallah, who had both emigrated to France in the mid 1940s. They were married in Paris in 1950.

In 1959, after years of enduring the humiliations caused by the constant infidelities of her wealthy husband, Andrée Mallah finally left him, taking

the young Nicolas and his two brothers with her. They settled in the 17th Arrondissement, in a house owned by her father, Bénédict Mallah who also ran his medical practice on the ground floor. Later that year, Pal Sarkozy and Andrée Mallah were officially divorced.

Of the three brothers, it was Nicolas who most acutely felt the absence of a father figure in the household and for him, this period of his childhood was a most unhappy one. His mother was obliged to find work in order to make

ends meet and his father, despite his wealth, refused to help the family financially.

Eventually, Sarkozy was enrolled at the Lycée Chaptal, a reputable school in Paris where he failed his sixth form exams. He was then sent to the Cours Saint Louis de Monceau, a prestigious Catholic private high school where he also was apparently a mediocre student, but where he nevertheless passed his baccalauréat in 1973.



Nicolas Sarkozy, Secretary General of the RPR in 1997

During this period, one man had succeeded in appeasing the internal conflict that Nicolas Sarkozy was experiencing ever since his parents' divorce : his grandfather Bénédict Mallah. This staunch Gaullist and admirer of Pope John Paul II had a strong moral influence on the young Nicolas who, in turn, looked up to him as a father figure.

However, in late 1973 Bénédict Mallah died.

And it was only then that the three brothers discovered a well-kept family secret. Their grandfather was Jewish. He was born in Thessaloniki and he, along with other family members had managed to escape deportation during World War II.

In the summer of 1974, Nicolas Sarkozy, together with a close friend, decided to travel by car to Greece, try to track down any remaining family members and recover a part of the inheritance that his grandfather and his mother had never received.

Maternal uncles and cousins in Thessaloniki confirmed the existence of properties belonging to the family. Sarkozy immediately decided to obtain, come what may, his mother's rightful share of the inheritance. After more than three hours of tough negotiations with a solicitor, he finally managed to wrest out the equivalent of around 4,000 French francs in cash.

Although this sum didn't represent much, for Sarkozy's mother who had

moved to Neuilly-sur-Seine after her father's death, it was a highly symbolic gesture of love and dedication on the part of her son.

## THE BIRTH OF AN AMBITION

It was in this fashionable and wealthy suburb of Paris that the 21 year-old Nicolas Sarkozy embarked on his political career. He had already decided whose side he was on; it would be his grandfather's party, the Gaullist Party.

Previously, he had enrolled at Paris University X in Nanterre and graduated, first with a Masters degree in private law, followed by a degree in business law. Despite the fact that Paris X Nanterre was a stronghold of leftist students and had in fact seen the birth of the student revolts in May 1968, Sarkozy joined the right wing student organisation in which he became very active.

From 1979 until 1981, Sarkozy studied at the prestigious Paris Institute of Political Studies, known as Sciences Po, but failed to graduate due to his insufficient knowledge of the English language. However, he successfully passed the bar examination and began practicing as a lawyer specialising in business and family law. He was even, for a time, one of Silvio Berlusconi's French lawyers.

One morning in 1974, Nicolas Sarkozy went to the local UDR Party (Union for the Defence of the Republic) offices in Neuilly and applied for membership. And it was soon after that the young militant had the opportunity of showing his determination.

He would be among the first to arrive in the mornings and the last to leave; he would participate in all meetings, distribute political tracts and organise events.

He quickly rose among the ranks in the party apparatus and at university, he demanded that lectures continue at the Law faculty despite a strike organised by left-wing student unions. He also managed to convince and recruit a considerable number of his fellow students for the party.



Nicolas Sarkozy

Sarkozy has said that being abandoned by his father shaped much of who he is today. He also has said that, in his early years, he felt inferior in relation to his wealthier and taller classmates. "What made me who I am now is the sum of all the humiliations suffered during childhood", he said later.



French student revolts in May 1968

But very rapidly, Neuilly-sur-Seine became too small a playground for the ambitions of the budding politician. He began spending more and more time at the headquarters of the UDR Party in Paris. In May 1975, Sarkozy was given an opportunity to present some aspects of the party programme for a televised event. He instinctively felt that this would be a pivotal moment; he practiced speaking to an imaginary audience before an imaginary TV camera until he felt he could master the required techniques.

A few weeks later in June, the party bosses and militants of the UDR gathered in Nice for their annual conference. After the big names in the party had delivered their speeches, a number of young party members were invited to briefly address the audience; among them was Nicolas Sarkozy.

He was initially allotted only four minutes speaking time, but he displayed such exuberance and overflowing enthusiasm that he managed to win over the audience in a speech that went well beyond the time limit. A speech that certainly did not go unnoticed by the most important person in the conference hall. The party leader, Jacques Chirac.

In 1976, Chirac founded the RPR Party (Rally for the Republic), a new political movement that would carry forward with added impetus the ideals of Gaullism. Sarkozy publicly proclaimed his unconditional support for its leader :

*"What interests us is to help Jacques Chirac take full charge of his destiny; a destiny that is great...so very great ! This current majority government is of no interest to us...it belongs to the past !"*

Nicolas Sarkozy evidently relished the debating forum and strived to perform like the famous showmen he admired, including television personalities and pop singers whose styles and communication techniques he studied closely.

And in October 1977, there was one particular event that Sarkozy did not want to miss at any cost. The civil wedding ceremony of famous French singer Michel Sardou at Neuilly city hall. To add to the glamour, the bridegroom's witness happened to be another superstar, Johnny Halliday who was also one of Sarkozy's favourite singers.

That day, when Sarkozy tried to gain access to the reception room, he was



Nicolas Sarkozy, Jacques Chirac and Alain Juppé in 1998

refused entry by the security people who did not believe him when he declared that he was a city councillor. What's more, he had forgotten to bring his official identification papers with him and the chief of security thought he was much too young hold such a position in the city council.

The extreme humiliation that Sarkozy felt that day stayed with him for a very long time; until six years later, when the young councillor had been elected, at the age of 28, mayor of Neuilly-sur-Seine.

## A NEW CONQUEST

In August 1984, Sarkozy cut short his holiday in Corsica in order to officiate at the civil wedding of famous television host Jacques Martin. This was another media event that would put the new mayor and his city in the spotlight. But it also rather unexpectedly proved to be an event that completely changed the course of Sarkozy's private life.

In the course of the ceremony, the mayor showed himself to be extremely friendly towards the newlyweds and addressed the bridegroom in a very surprising, even enigmatic manner:

*"At this moment, I would like to make you a present of something, but I simply cannot give it to you... you couldn't possibly use it. I would have liked you to have my mayoral sash!"*

This was a cryptic message that nobody understood at the time. What Sarkozy really meant was that even though he was declaring the couple man and wife, he would have liked Jacques Martin to

have been the mayor and he the bridegroom.

At the time, Sarkozy himself had been married for two years to Marie-Dominique Culioli, whose uncle had been mayor of Neuilly-sur-Seine from 1947 to 1983 and Sarkozy's political mentor. She was a very discreet woman who shunned parties, receptions and glamorous events that her husband, on the contrary, was most eager to attend.

The couple had recently become close friends of the television host Jacques Martin and his wife Cécilia; the same man at whose wedding Sarkozy had officiated a few years earlier. However, this friendship would soon be undermined by Sarkozy's feelings for Cécilia that were becoming more and more apparent.

Nicolas Sarkozy's private life was heading for a bumpy ride.

The mayoralty of Neuilly had given him a political base and a certain credibility, but he knew that to go further, he needed to remain in the wake of Jacques Chirac, the mayor of Paris. He began showing up at Chirac's office at all times of day and night and showed himself ready to take on any task that was asked of him.

He earned the trust of not only Chirac himself but also that of his immediate family and inner circle.

## THE FAVOURITE SON ?

Over the course of the following months, Chirac's trust in Sarkozy became so great that their relationship was more akin to that between father

and son. Chirac bestowed a number of responsibilities upon his protégé, including one in which Sarkozy excelled : the renewal of the public image of the RPR Party in the media.

During the campaign for the presidential elections of 1988, Sarkozy did all he could to rejuvenate Chirac's public image . He began by modernising and revitalising party conventions and public meetings, on the same principles as those used by popular television personalities and performers in their shows. All this naturally did not go unnoticed by Chirac's close entourage, as well as a man who would be pivotal in Sarkozy's future political career. That man was Edouard Balladur, Chirac's closest confidant and advisor.

But despite all the hard work put in by Sarkozy and his staff during the campaign, the results failed to match the high expectations. In May 1988, Jacques Chirac lost the presidential election for the second time.

A new period of cohabitation with the socialists was on the cards, but this time Chirac was reluctant to accept the post of François Mitterrand's Prime Minister. For his part, Nicolas Sarkozy was keen to find his place in the new government majority and just like Jacques Chirac and Valéry Giscard d'Estaing before him, he had set his sights on the post of Minister of Finance. A post he would occupy in due course.

In May 1993, when Edouard Balladur



Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, former French President



Nicolas Sarkozy in 1995

Nicolas Sarkozy quickly realised that Balladur was someone whose trust he must also gain in order to consolidate his own plans for the future. And so, he placed himself in the position of someone who would simply observe, from a distance, the inner workings of these two powerful men.

was designated as Prime Minister, Sarkozy made it known to him, his ambition of taking over the Ministry of the Budget. Eventually, Sarkozy brought with him his team of trusted collaborators, as well as his partner Cécilia who was to work for him as his trusted personal secretary.

After the initial enmities and snide remarks from the employees, Sarkozy and his team soon settled in and smoothly and efficiently set about conducting the Ministry's affairs.

### THE RELUCTANT HERO

But it was an unexpected and totally unrelated event that once again placed Sarkozy in the media spotlight.

In May 1993, twenty one nursery school children together with their mistress

were taken hostage in a school in Neuilly-sur-Seine. At the time, Nicolas Sarkozy was attending a meeting at the Prime Minister's office and was unaware of the events that were unfolding in Neuilly.

Some 40 men from the Special Forces of the French police take up positions around the school and begin negotiating with the hostage taker. They soon discover that the man who is demanding a ransom of 100 million French francs has placed explosive charges in the classroom and has threatened to blow up the school should anyone try to force his way inside. Nicolas Sarkozy soon arrived at the scene and against the advice of police, the Prime Minister and the Interior Minister, went into the classroom to directly negotiate with the hostage taker. In the meantime, the authorities had arranged for the ransom to be brought to the school in cash.

A few hours later, fifteen children – some carried away by Sarkozy himself – were released at varying intervals until there were only six left inside. Some 45 hours later, on the morning of May 15, while the hostage taker had dozed off, the police forced their way in and freed the remaining children. The hostage taker was killed.

Nicolas Sarkozy became the focus of all the attention from the domestic and international media that had gathered in front of the school. There was a spectacular rise in his popularity ratings and after this incident, he became a minister like no other.



Édouard Balladur in 2014



© Pete Souza

President Barack Obama walks with French President Nicolas Sarkozy from the Palais Rohan (Palace Rohan) April 3, 2009, following their meeting in Strasbourg, France.

At this point, there were two years left before the next presidential election and a new event – a political one this time – was to radically alter the course of Sarkozy's political career.

### AT A CROSSROADS

By the autumn of 1993, Nicolas Sarkozy, Minister of the Budget as well as government spokesman had become the indispensable member of the Prime Minister's cabinet. Edouard Balladur himself was riding a big wave of popularity with ratings as high as 75% in various polls.

Balladur and his inner circle were now in a position to legitimately envisage a bid that could take them to the ultimate position.

As for Nicolas Sarkozy, he now had to choose sides, a difficult choice between remaining faithful to Jacques Chirac or accompanying Edouard Balladur in his quest for the supreme position. His decision was made even more difficult as not one single name from the right had yet been put forward.

Who should he choose? Sarkozy invited 41 members of his RPR Party to lunch at his office to discuss which of the two leading lights should be given their full backing. They decided that Balladur was their man.

Jacques Chirac considered Sarkozy's action an act of treason for which he probably never forgave him, and in November 1994, he declared that he would run for president in the upcoming election.

Meanwhile, in view of the favourable

opinion polls, Balladur's camp continually flaunted its optimism until January 1995, when Edouard Balladur, in a solemn television broadcast, officially announced his candidature. Sarkozy immediately threw all his weight behind his boss in meeting after meeting: *"We are 20.000 strong; he needs all the support you can give. France needs him. I give you Edouard Balladur!"*

But despite all of Sarkozy's enthusiasm and tireless efforts in trying to give a modernist and progressive image to Balladur, Jacques Chirac overtakes him in the opinion polls. In the first round of voting Balladur obtains only 18.5%, trailing Chirac in second place with 20 % and the Socialist candidate Lionel Jospin with 23.4%.

With Balladur eliminated from the race, Sarkozy realised the extent of

the miscalculation he had made. But ironically, things were far from over for him. He and Balladur promptly announced they were now going to back Jacques Chirac. They both attended a major RPR rally where they were both copiously booed and jeered by Chirac supporters and party militants. Some even spat at them.

And to rub salt in the wound, following the second round of voting in May 1995, Sarkozy witnessed Chirac's victory. The man who had been his political mentor finally became the president of France.

### SPELL IN THE WILDERNESS

Faced with no other choice, Nicolas Sarkozy withdrew and fell back on his functions at Neuilly city hall. This proved a difficult and lonely period for the ambitious Sarkozy who had effectively fallen from grace. But he had been bitten by the political bug ever since his teens and he had elaborated far too many projects in his head to just leave politics altogether and embark on a career in law.

In fact, he was constantly thinking about how he could reposition himself on the political chessboard after those recent damaging episodes in his career. He knew deep down that it was only by mending his relations with Jacques Chirac that he would succeed in freeing himself from this quagmire. However, Chirac had no intention of coming to the rescue of someone he had considered as his spiritual son and who had then betrayed him so unashamedly.

But in politics, nothing is certain. Chirac



© Archives nationales/Présidence de la République

Nicolas Sarkozy and Jacques Chirac on Mai 16 2007



Jean Marie Le Pen

had been defeated in the legislative elections and parliament had been dissolved. What's more, the cohabitation with the Socialists had completely changed the factors.

A politically weakened Jacques Chirac felt that it was time to forgive and forget; this is what politics is all about. He eventually accepted the idea of seeing his former protégé. And so, Nicolas Sarkozy eagerly set to work in getting Chirac reelected in 2002.

The first round of voting sees Chirac defeat the Socialist candidate, Lionel Jospin. He now had to face the far right candidate Jean-Marie Le Pen; there was now no doubt as to the final outcome. So much so that speculation was already rife as to the name of Chirac's future Prime minister.

This was the second time that Sarkozy was secretly hoping to accede to that post and even though he was among the early favourites, Chirac finally designated Jean-Pierre Raffarin. However, Sarkozy was named Minister of the Interior, which is after all the second most important position after that of the Prime Minister. But deep down, Sarkozy felt he deserved better.

He resolved to show all that he was capable of in his new capacity, and in May 2002, he arrived at the ministry to take up his post. But he was not alone; Cécilia whom he had married in 1996 accompanied him. Sarkozy wanted to send a clear message that from now on, he would be climbing the political ladder of power with his wife.

He even famously declared : *"She is the non-negotiable side of myself!"*

## PRESIDENTIAL AMBITIONS

Sarkozy's wife was by his side at all times; she meticulously took care of his daily agenda, without overlooking the slightest detail. She also acted as his adviser on many political issues, as well as Sarkozy's social and professional dealings with his colleagues and other acquaintances. In a carefully worked out strategy aimed at projecting a new public image of himself and his family, Sarkozy's offices at the ministry were, for the first time, declared no longer out of bounds for television cameras and press photographers.

is no dispute of any sort between the Minister of Finance and myself...and for a simple reason. Notably, as far as expenditure is concerned, I decide and he carries out the orders !"

However, these words of reprobation fell on deaf ears. In fact, Sarkozy had already embarked on the next stage of his quest. He knew full well that in order to attain his goal, he needed a party and what's more, his victory must be grandiose.

In November 2004, the UMP Party (Union for a Popular Movement)



French Interior Minister Nicolas Sarkozy during a demonstration in 2006

Within the space of a few months, Sarkozy became a prominent media figure and the most popular minister in Jean-Pierre Raffarin's cabinet. He won over the media, the political world, and of course, the general public who found his lifestyle utterly enticing. Talk of Sarkozy's presidential ambitions was no longer taboo and articles and opinion columns began to appear regularly in the press.

In July 2004, Sarkozy who, in the meantime, had been renamed Minister of Finance attended the 14 July annual garden party at the Elysée Palace. He arrived with his elegantly-dressed wife and immediately all eyes were on him again. He literally stole the show.

Jacques Chirac's growing annoyance at the young minister's having the gall to covet the president's post, not to mention his spectacular rise in popularity, was publicly expressed on the occasion of the president's annual speech. At one point, Chirac declared : "There

organised a gigantic meeting with over 40.000 militants in attendance. It was planned along the lines of American political conventions, on a grand scale. Nothing was left to chance; this was an event that had to impress and make a lasting impact. Among the attendees was President Chirac's wife, Bernadette. She, contrary to her husband, had decided that Sarkozy's treacherous act of 1995 was something to be forgotten.

Sarkozy walked up to the stage and began addressing an expectative crowd :

*" I am as ready as I will ever be. I am ready because deep down inside, I know that France isn't afraid of change any longer. In fact, France expects change. And it is we who shall bring about this change ".*

Following Sarkozy's nomination to the leadership of the UMP, he stepped down from his government post in accordance with a rule established by Jacques Chirac himself. There was now no doubt in anyone's



President Putin and his wife, Lyudmila, meeting with French President Jacques Chirac and his wife, Bernadette (far right)

mind as to Nicolas Sarkozy's plans for the future.

However, during the campaign for the referendum on the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe, there occurred an event that had a profound effect on Nicolas Sarkozy's private as well as public life.

In May 2005, what began as vague rumours about the deteriorating relations between Sarkozy and his wife Cécilia became so insistent in the media that Sarkozy had no choice but to intervene personally and to try and quell speculations on his private life. He publicly admitted that his marriage was going through a rough patch but added that this was something that could happen to anyone.

But the worst was yet to come. Towards the end of May, the Swiss newspaper *Le Matin* published an article revealing that Cécilia had left Sarkozy for Richard Attias, a French-Moroccan national who was head of the New York branch of Publicis, a French multinational advertising

and public relations company. *Le Matin* later published other accusations, again of a private nature which led to Sarkozy suing the newspaper.

In June 2006, after one year of uncertainty, dashed hopes and disappointments, Cécilia did return. Sarkozy was reappointed as Interior Minister and the couple tried to pick up the pieces. But as far as Cécilia's role in her husband's day to day affairs were concerned, nothing would ever be the same again. Sarkozy, the man, was certainly going through a great deal of moral suffering throughout his campaign for the 2007 presidential election.

He won the first round of voting and his wife was next to him at his party headquarters when the results were announced.



Sarkozy and his wife Cecilia celebrating his election as President in 2007

For the second round, Nicolas Sarkozy would confront the Socialist candidate, Ségolène Royal; the feeling of expectancy had reached its peak when the final results came through.

Nicolas Sarkozy had won with 53% of the votes and by becoming president, he at last, fulfilled his lifelong ambition. He promised new developments in France, including radical economic reforms that would reduce taxes and liberalise the country's labour market, and closer relations with the United States.

But as far as he was concerned, the celebrations couldn't be complete; his friends, his mother and even his father, together with his brothers were there, but Cécilia was not; she did not deign to come and join in the victory celebrations.

## HIGHS AND THE LOWS OF LIFE AT THE TOP

Sarkozy's first year in office was a difficult one on the political front. Shortly after his appointment, he began negotiations with Colombian president Alvaro Uribe and the left-wing FARC guerillas in view of the release of hostages held by the rebel group, including especially Franco-Colombian politician Ingrid Betancourt.

His next move drew worldwide attention as he and his wife Cécilia played a major role in gaining the release of six Bulgarian nurses who had been held in Libya since 1999. While applauding the release, some in France and the EU criticised Sarkozy's involvement and especially his wife's participation.



Jean Pierre Raffarin, former French Prime Minister

In the following months, Sarkozy carried out some of his promised cuts in taxes and labour market reforms. He decided not to eliminate the 35-hour maximum on the standard work week but rather to use tax relief on overtime pay to justify the law's rigidity. He also won narrow approval from the legislature for a constitutional change to reduce the presidency to two five-year terms.

He made several unexpected cabinet appointments, including the country's first woman Finance minister, Christine Lagarde, the first full cabinet member of North African origin, Rachida Dati, and a maverick Socialist, Bernard Kouchner as Foreign minister. Sarkozy also nominated Socialists for several other posts in the government.



President Nicolas Sarkozy of France and his wife, Carla Bruni Sarkozy, prior to the summit dinner at the Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens in Pittsburgh, Pa., Sept. 24, 2009

Another major, albeit controversial event in 2007 was Sarkozy's invitation of Libyan leader Col. Gaddafi to France. There were objections from the opposition as well as from members of his government. France agreed to sell 21 Airbus aircraft and signed a nuclear cooperation agreement. There were also plans for the sale to Libya of more than a dozen Rafale jet fighters as well as military helicopters. French media had traditionally avoided too much interest in the private lives of French leaders. Sarkozy's personal problems were well known even before his presidency; then came news of his separation from his wife. And later that year, in October 2007, Sarkozy and Cécilia divorced.

Less than a month later, he met Italian-born singer, songwriter and former fashion model Carla Bruni at a dinner party, and soon entered into a relationship with her. They were married in February 2008 at the Élysée Palace.

Compared to his predecessors, Sarkozy was pro-American and he showed signs of being more accommodating to American culture and ideologies. In this respect, he proved to be somewhat more troublesome to some of his Euro-zone partners.

In 2009, he worked with Egyptian ex-President Hosni Mubarak, to bring up a plan which called for a ceasefire along the Gaza Strip. The plan was welcomed by then US Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice who claimed that the move would bring forth real security.

In 2011, he was among the first world leaders to demand the resignation of

former Libyan strongman Col. Gaddafi and called for military intervention in Libya. He also levied a no-fly

zone and promised French military assistance to the Libyan National Transitional Council. The move earned him support from political groups on all sides.

After five years in power, Sarkozy was defeated by a margin of only 3.2% by Socialist Party candidate François Hollande in the 2012 election. Interestingly, he did not take his defeat negatively and instead supported Hollande's appointment.

### SHROUDED IN CLOUDS OF WOE

Since his defeat in 2012, Sarkozy has faced a series of investigations into allegations of corruption, fraud, favouritism and campaign-funding irregularities.

One particularly high-profile case concerns alleged illegal funding for his election campaign in 2007.

During an interview with Euronews in 2011, Col. Gaddafi's son stated that Libya had donated €50 million to Sarkozy's presidential campaign in exchange for commercial access and other favours which were not honoured; he demanded Libya be reimbursed.

The affair took on major and damaging proportions when French magistrates later came upon diaries of former Libyan oil minister Shukri Ghanem in which payments to Sarkozy were mentioned. However, shortly thereafter

Ghanem's body was found floating in the Danube in Austria. Therefore, no corroboration became possible.

Sarkozy denied the claims, saying his Libyan accusers wanted revenge for his decision to send French warplanes during the 2011 uprising. And Les Républicains (LR) Party which Sarkozy founded in 2015 to succeed the UMP, meanwhile issued a statement saying the former president had their full support. Its spokesman Christian Jacob later suggested that the accusations against Sarkozy were politically motivated.

But how will Nicolas Sarkozy be remembered ?

His reforms will be his best legacy. After François Hollande came to power, his close adviser and Finance Minister, Michel Sapin confirmed this by saying that the new president will not reverse most of Sarkozy's work; merely a few measures would be replaced, such as minimum wages or territorial reform.

What better tribute could Nicolas Sarkozy have hoped for than seeing his work recognised by the political opponent who accused him of having done nothing for five years ?

*Hossein Sadre*



Nicolas Sarkozy and Muammar Gaddafi



# THE PORT OF ANTWERP BECOMING EUROPE'S MAIN ENTRY POINT FOR ILLEGAL DRUGS

*The city on the brink of becoming a narco-state*

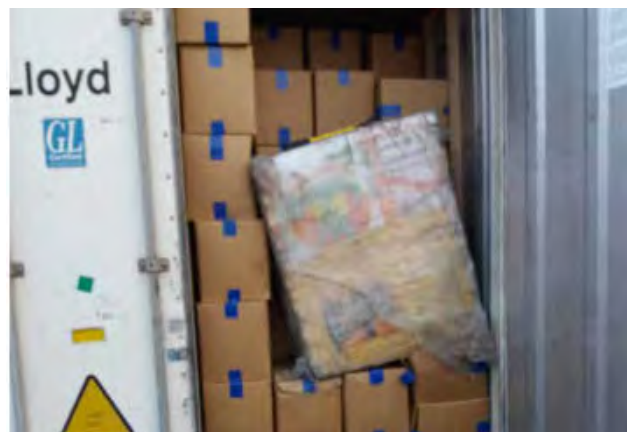
With 61.8 metric tons of cocaine and 504 kilograms of marijuana seized in 2019, the Port of Antwerp has produced an increase of violence in Belgium's second largest city. Rival, violent gangs are competing for control of smuggling operations in the area. A gang war has overflowed into the streets of the city. Narco-fueled criminals are using methods most commonly seen in terrorist operations, such as car bombs, on city streets and residents of the city are in fear for their lives. It is estimated that about 2 billion euros have been generated through this illegal business.

Stronger law-enforcement action must be taken, not only to address the symptoms of the issue but to eradicate the root cause. Ending narco-trafficking in the port of Antwerp will drastically decrease regional violence by removing the motivation for in-fighting, as well as removing the primary source of funding for violent activities.

Moreover, this dramatic situation is eroding the local economy through the increase of violence. This unrestrained violence degrades local infrastructure and human capital which ultimately weighs heavily on the local economy. Additionally, if it continues to increase, it will threaten the operational viability of the port of Antwerp - a key regional economic hub in Europe.

This situation has been going on since several years but it seems as the lack of effective reaction from the local and national authorities has given the drug trafficking organisations an advantage that has enabled them to increase their criminal activities. Facing a popular outcry and a strong admonition from the international law enforcement institutions, the judicial authorities and law enforcement agencies launched in 2018 the "Stroomplan" (flowplan) aimed at stemming this traffic. The initial squad of 40 officers was called Kali most probably as a reference to the famous Cali drug cartel in Colombia. It became soon obvious that this governmental initiative would quickly be countered by the drug trafficking organisations who would counter the "Stroomplan" with even more violence. "Fortunately we are still light-years away in Antwerp from being like Cali" said Antwerp mayor Bart De Wever to the Belgian television station VRT. "But the increasing cash volume of drug gangs means that they can disrupt the city and society." As for the then minister of interior Jan Jambon: "These actions have only one aim in sight; to trap the drug gangs operating on our territory".

Unfortunately, mainly because of the complicated Belgian linguistic political system, the cooperation between the different Belgian judicial entities did not facilitate the tremendous task of the Kali squad. More than a year later, the Antwerp Mayor



© Wikimedia

170 kilos of cocaine inside a container coming from the port of Callao (Peru) and destined to the port of Antwerp (Belgium). A total of 150 cocaine bricks were hidden in rucksacks inside a container transporting frozen vegetables as a legal load

had to admit that the multi-agency approach made appear cultural disagreements and rivalry between local and federal agents to the extent that about half of the task force members resigned. In a request by the City of Antwerp study evaluating the “Stroomplan”, the Institute for International Research on Criminal Policy (IRCP) asserted that ; *“The multitude of actors concerned, skills, policies and regulatory frameworks constitutes an obstacle to the implementation of an integrated and integral security policy”*. It proposes to give the federal government a more important role in facilitating the exchange of information. Reacting to this study Bart De Wever asserted : *“As the researchers indicate, it is not just a question of drugs and Antwerp. The next federal government will have to be persistent in tackling drug problems and the criminal activities that result from them.”*

Antwerp's statue of Brabo throwing the severed hand of Antigon into the river Scheldt © Edm

It is interesting to mention that the same Bart De Wever is a key player in the long-lasting (300 days in mid-March) Belgian negotiation saga to form a government since the last elections that have left the country with very limited power. Bart De Wever who is a member (and previous leader) of the New Flemish Alliance (N-VA), a Belgian political party advocating independence for the Flemish region of Belgium within the European Union, is the object of a political boycott from several Belgian political parties that are reluctant to form a governmental alliance with the N-VA which they regard as a right wing, radical party.

Recently, Bart De Wever declared on Flemish television “Justice is the weakest link in the flow.” A clear joke from the

Antwerp mayor (New Flemish Alliance) addressed to Justice Minister Koen Geens (Flemish Christian Democrat). The latter accusing the Interior Minister Jan Jambon (New Flemish Alliance) of not having responded to the appeal by the Antwerp federal judicial police to recruit additional people, adding “The deficit has only increased in recent years, even to 30 percent. The recruitments of that service fall under the Interior, and not under the Justice department.”



© Edm

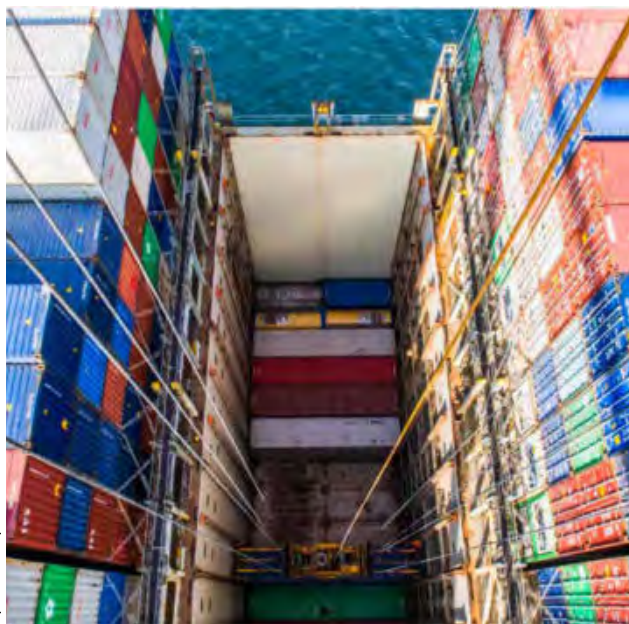
Police looking for illegal drugs

Meanwhile, the situation in Antwerp seems to get worse; the city is regularly shocked by drug violence. Moroccan and Albanian organized crime gangs have taken over the cocaine trafficking and distribution in the area and do not hesitate to resort to violence to strengthen their grip on the city. The federal police reported several incidents with grenade attacks and other explosives, arson, physical threats and other urban



© Antwerpse gemeenteraad

Mayor Bart De Wever (centre) and members of Antwerp City Council



© portofantwerp

Containers in the port of Antwerp

violence. "I dare say in Antwerp we are on the verge of seeing people also buying political influence" had to admit the mayor in another interview to the Flemish press.

In September 2018, seven months after the creation of the "Stroomplan", Filip Dewinter, one of the leading members of Vlaams Belang, a right-wing Flemish nationalist and secessionist political party who is a member of the Antwerp city council and member of the Flemish Parliament, asserted in an interview with the daily, De Morgen: "The illegal economy in different parts of the city of Antwerp, due to the drugs mafia has become bigger than the legal economy" He added: "Some neighbourhoods have become like Gotham City".

A year later, when several drug related explosions took place in the area around the Spoor Noord Park in Antwerp, showing that the situation did not seem to improve, more members of the city council came forward to criticise the mayor. "It looks like the drug mafia is doing what it wants in our city," said Wouter Van Besien, a leading environmentalist. As for Filip Dewinter, he requested that soldiers be able to patrol the neighbourhood and that searches be carried out on known drug traffickers. "You can't really win the war on drugs," said Socialist council member Jinnih Beels on Flemish television VRT "it is an effect of communicating vessels, if the drug problem is fought in one place, it reappears elsewhere".

In the last months, due to the Belgian political "saga", the drug fight has been put aside by the politicians who are entangled in their endless negotiations in view of forming a viable coalition to lead the country. Even the harshest critics of De Wever in the Antwerp political spectrum have shifted their attention away from that problem. To the extent that in order to form a coalition, some have become the mayor's allies, avoiding frontal attacks.

With Belgium without a government and the fight against the coronavirus taking up most of the nation's resources, it seems obvious that for the near future the war on drugs in Antwerp will not be high on the list of priorities.

At present, Bart De Wever, basing his judgement on the conclusion of the study by the Institute for International Research

on Criminal Policy said: "it is up to the next Federal Government to demonstrate perseverance to combat the drugs problem and related criminal activities. Therefore, it would do well to follow the recommendations, provide more people and resources, and create more legal and organizational clout."

The only beneficiaries of this political skirmish are those illegal drug organisations that increase their traffic in the region, taking advantage of the lack of a strong judiciary counter-measure. And business goes on as usual. In confirmation, in January 2019, the Belgian police arrested 10 suspects during a cocaine bust of 413 kilos of cocaine, seized in a container coming from the Dominican Republic.



© Flemish Parliament

Filip Dewinter

The European institutions are aware and also worried about this situation. "The port of Antwerp has emerged in recent years as a significant international drug trafficking hub, primarily for cocaine" says The European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA). "Current law enforcement priorities in Belgium aim to ensure public safety and order through enhanced interagency cooperation, with a focus on consistent enforcement of criminal justice measures in the field of drugs. While particular emphasis has been placed on the port of Antwerp in recent years, the police mainly focus their activities on the large-scale production of illicit substances".

According to the EMCDDA, in 2015, total public expenditure related to illicit substance use was estimated at almost EUR



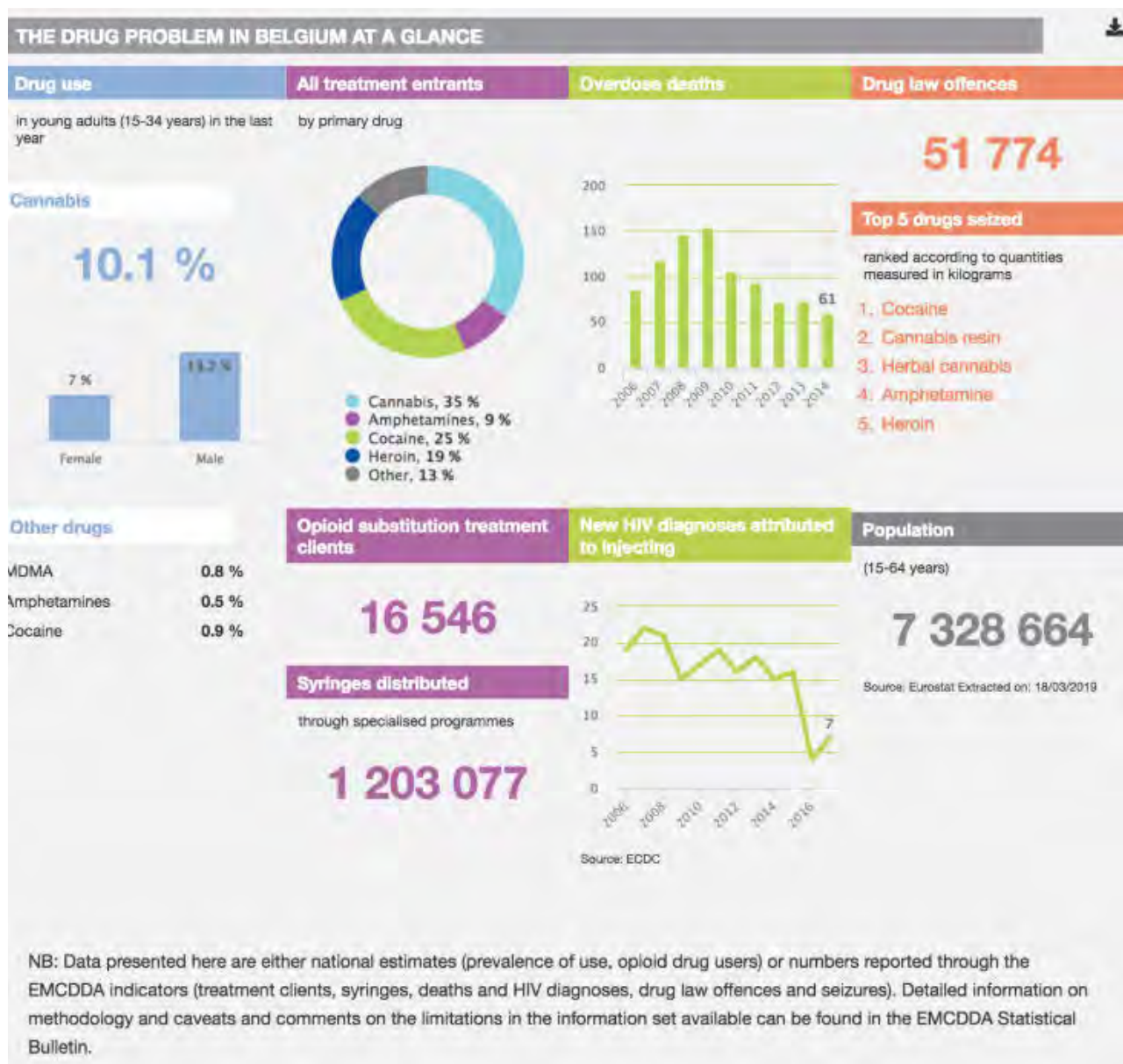
Seized cocaine in container

470 million, amounting to 0.1 % of Belgium's GDP (0.5 % in the UK).

The port of Antwerp which covers the largest port area in the world is an ideal terrain for drug - related illicit activities. Each day 150,000 people enter and leave the port. With a surface area of 12,068 hectares, or about 24,000 football fields, 710

quay numbers, 91 port numbers and 900 companies, the port is a veritable, large city. In 2019, more than 41,000 kilograms of cocaine were seized on cargo ships in the port of Antwerp, with a street value of more than two billion euros. Most of the merchandise originated from South America.

*James Lookwood*



The drug problem in Belgium at a glance



Container cargo Antwerp



# DIPLOMACY : A SKILL TO ACQUIRE

## *Training diplomats for a fractured world*

Diplomacy, according to my Chambers Dictionary, is “the art of negotiation, especially in relations between states”. However, my rather more elderly Walker’s Dictionary from 1850, has a very different definition: “the state of acting by a diploma”. That’s rather appropriate: how does someone get a diploma in diplomacy? It takes training to learn the skills a diplomat will need in today’s uncertain world. Diplomacy - and those with the necessary skills to do it - have never been more needed. “The qualities of a diplomat are multiple,” Fouad Nohra told me. He is an Associate Professor in political science at a Paris university as well as being Academic Director of the Centre d’Études Diplomatiques et Stratégiques (CEDS), an educational institution that trains diplomats, among other things. We were meeting at the CEDS training facility in the 7th arrondissement, not far from the tourist-haunted and better-known Eiffel Tower. “The first thing is knowledge, because you cannot be a good diplomat if you do not know the political situation. If you are just a hostage to your stereotypes you would have to get out [of the profession].” In other

words, you cannot approach diplomacy from behind a pile of preconceived ideas and prejudices. “You have to develop your political thinking,” Nohra told me. “The second quality is pragmatism: being able to move according to the constraints of reality and not being led by your conceptual perception or your theoretical knowledge, acknowledging that the theory will never be able

to match the practice.” In other words, don’t assume you know the situation on the ground as well as the people whose day-to-day experience it is.

CEDS was created thirty-two years ago by Pascal Chaigneau, a University professor and Director of the HEC centre for Geopolitics, (part of the École des hautes études commerciales) as well



Fouad Nohra



© French National Assembly

Florence Gabay, Development Director for the Centre and Chief of Staff at the French National Assembly

as being Dean and Founder of CEDS. It was originally established as a place where diplomats working in Paris could meet and develop their knowledge. Over time, its specialised programmes were expanded beyond the diplomatic world to train international civil servants and military attachés from more than a hundred countries. Since 2017, CEDS has been in partnership with UNESCO to help promote peace studies. Given the current state of the world, peace studies have seldom had more relevance. Now the new board is headed by Philippe Cattelat, a renowned director at the L'Institut des hautes Etudes Economiques et Commerciales (INSEEC U) group, which owns CEDS, and Fouad Nohra is working with Florence Gabay, a Chief of Staff at the French National Assembly, who was recently appointed as a Development Director for the Centre. Just forgetting to abide by local feelings can make all the difference; cultural sensitivity is vital and forgetting that can be very dangerous. Local conventions are important: never suggest your interlocutors are beneath you or in any way inferior. It may seem like an obvious thing to follow the protocols of those with whom you're negotiating and not to hurt their feelings, but politicians and others can get it badly wrong. It's what Nohra says is the 'third quality' a diplomat needs: "the ability to understand other cultures and other peoples." Nohra cited one especially good example of a French ambassador, Michel Raimbaud, who taught for more than a decade at CEDS, and who was sent to various African countries. "He was appointed wherever there were crises," Nohra said, "in Zimbabwe, in Sudan, in Mauretania. He was in Egypt

and other countries in the Arab world. He learned Arabic and he knows how to understand the culture of the Arabs and how to speak with them."

### TALKING IS GOOD FOR YOU - USUALLY

That's a lesson that not everyone in the diplomatic service seems to have learned. "The problem of some diplomats who are trained by their governments is that some governments tell them 'always keep your distance'". Nohra is convinced that is bad advice. "To keep a 'poker face' is what is taught in many academies, but I do not believe in it. I don't believe in the 'poker face' attitude in diplomacy. I believe that the ability to engage in dialogue, the ability to face others, is one of the key qualities in a diplomat." Today, of course, fears over the spread of the corona virus are making that very difficult. Some reports claim that it has all but halted international diplomatic efforts, with major summits cancelled and diplomats left stranded by temporary travel bans. Even the World Trade Organisation (WTO) has now cancelled or postponed a number of conferences on subjects ranging from human rights to the Law of the Sea and, somewhat ironically, antimicrobial resistance. Nohra is worried that international reaction to the virus will lead increasingly to people only communicating electronically, rather than face-to-face, and that this will play into the hands of populists governments deliberately fomenting an 'us-and-them' attitude that could drive a wedge between their people and those of different nationalities, thus creating a pool of people to blame when things go wrong. There have been cases where leaders



Sir Harold George Nicolson

would have been better to leave the job of negotiating to professional diplomats. For instance, Harold Nicholson was a junior diplomat for the United Kingdom at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919 where he was upset that the leaders and heads of government there were getting it wrong. "Amateurish diplomacy leads to improvisation," he commented afterwards. "Nothing could be more fatal than the habit (the at present persistent and pernicious habit) of personal contact between the Statesmen of the World," he wrote. "Diplomacy is the art of negotiating documents in a ratifiable and therefore dependable form. It is by no means the art of conversation." Now, in the age of hastily-written emails and unwise late-night Tweets, this is more than ever the case, according to the Politico website. "Traditional diplomacy is becoming archaic," the site quotes a veteran US State Department official as saying, whilst admitting that not everybody in Washington, London or Brussels might believe that that's a bad thing. "It's like the coal industry — should we really rescue it?" he asked. If the alternative is further misunderstanding, possibly leading to war, surely the answer must be yes?

However, there are claims that President Donald Trump is increasingly seeking to side-line professional diplomats in favour of political appointees who are more likely to follow his instructions, however undiplomatic they may be. Political appointments now make up around 45% of the US diplomatic service, according to the American Foreign Service Association, a kind of trade union for US diplomats. Many of today's appointees are from business backgrounds.

Gordon Sondland, who had worked in the hotel industry, was Trump's choice for Ambassador to the EU, where he was reported to have said that his mission was "to destroy the European Union", hardly a diplomatic remark calculated to endear him to his interlocutors in Brussels, Berlin or Paris. Then there's former journalist Richard Grenell, Trump's ambassador to Germany, who enjoys annoying his hosts in a way some argue reflects more faithfully Trump's approach to foreign policy. Grenell says he wants to "empower" conservatives in Europe, and in so doing is not playing to please the public but purely to entertain and delight his boss. "Trump



© Wikipedia

Gordon Sondland, former US Ambassador to the EU

wants that kind of message,” said a State Department official, quoted in Politico. “If it smashes the china, that’s OK. He’s being a disruptor.” Grenell is certainly not popular in Europe and his effectiveness is open to question. “Current American diplomacy is less effective in defending US interests than the current administration appears to believe,” one senior German diplomat told Politico. However, there is a rôle for business people in diplomatic relations, says Nohra. “When you do business with somebody you hate, finally you stop hating him because you make money with him.” We shouldn’t forget that when Robert Schuman made his famous speech on 9 May, 1950, effectively launching the European Coal and Steel Community that would evolve eventually into the European Union, he said that by uniting the industries that were “the engines of war” - coal and steel - it would prevent

the participating parties from fighting each other. And it has. Similarly, Nohra pointed out that up to now, there has seemed very little chance of a shooting war between the United States and China, and this despite the last warning of Graham Allison, the American political scientist and long-serving Professor of Government at Harvard University, who predicted that one dominant power could be nudged into war by another that is growing in power and influence. He called it the ‘Thucydides Trap’. “China was, until very recently, the first creditor to the US Treasury, the first exporter to the USA. The US relies on Chinese imports and the US exports a lot to China.” Financial interdependency can be an aid to long-term peace, however much sabre-rattling goes on between Washington and Beijing.

If, on the other hand, diplomacy is to smooth over misunderstandings and help avoid conflict, diplomats need to be trained professionally, not by their governments, and they must understand the people with whom they’re dealing. CEDS runs a number of programmes, not all of them designed to produce professional diplomats. Among its specialised objectives in Paris, claims its brochure, its primary aim is to meet the needs for upgrading and updating the knowledge of senior civil servants, diplomats and decision-makers in the fields of international relations, defence and security strategy, and the communication of influence developed by the new media. Graduate studies are primarily intended for diplomats, civil servants,

senior executives and senior officers holding a Master’s degree. Since its creation, senior officials from over 100 countries have been trained there and are now working around the world as ambassadors, plenipotentiary ministers, military attachés and in a variety of other rôles. These courses are run in French but CEDS also has a PhD course in international relations and diplomacy which is taught in English and designed for diplomats, senior civil and military officers, and the senior executives of private companies. CEDS has branches in seven cities altogether: Athens, Rome, Rabat, Ankara, Antananarivo, Dakar La Paz, Tokyo and Seoul, and they operate independently, although for their academic courses their curricula are controlled from Paris.

### DON'T BLAME ME, BLAME THEM

These days, people fulfilling diplomatic rôles, whether or not they are working as professional diplomats, have to be wary of political leaders who try to excuse their own failings by whipping up a storm of nationalist feelings against other groups, whether that is immigrants, asylum seekers, neighbouring countries or people with different or no religious faiths. “Demagogic leaders and people who make extremist speeches never deliver what the people really need, they deliver what they push the people into believing they want,” argues Nohra. He cited an example. “When you have a phenomenon like unemployment in a country where there is immigration, you can believe that unemployment is due to the economic system, then you want to change it. You can believe that unemployment is the result of immigration. Then you push the immigrants out. You can believe that unemployment is coming from the fact that people are lazy and won’t work, then you cut off their social benefits and push the people onto the jobs market. These are what people can believe but none of these answers is true. The reality is much more complicated.” Nohra says that populist governments prefer to propose simplistic solutions because doing so excuses and wins support for extreme measures. “The problem for these politicians is to persuade the people to believe in one of these extreme theses in order to organise the people in a way that suits their political agenda.” Look around the world and



Graham Allison



© fmp.gov.cn

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian

it's not hard to see examples, in Europe and further afield, where hate-speech is helping to keep demagogues in power. If you can't deliver what they need, goes the argument, give them what you want instead - and work to ensure they want what you want. It's easier, cheaper and helps keep you in office for longer.

Now the world is facing up to the corona virus issue, which Nohra says is considered a 'safe' subject to raise at a diplomatic level: everyone is against the virus so opposing it cannot be controversial. "The corona crisis means that all of humanity is against the virus," he told me, "so this is consensual speech, to talk about corona now, about fighting against corona." He added that "health diplomacy has for a long time been treated as a matter of 'low politics' for many governments which used to put the greatest emphasis on military issues as well as on resource control". That is not in any way to downplay the seriousness of the pandemic and the fear it is causing. Even so, there were rumours being circulated on Indian social media sites suggesting that corona had been created in Chinese military laboratories as a weapon, just as there were rumours when AIDS was first diagnosed that the HIV virus had been created by American scientists to use as a weapon in Africa. US officials claimed Beijing had been too slow to take action when covid 19 - the illness caused by the corona virus - was first detected in Wuhan late last year.

Now Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian has tweeted that the virus could have been brought to Wuhan by the US military. He offered no proof. Such ideas would be risibly ridiculous but, as the old saying goes, mud sticks and some people are going

to choose to believe it or something like it. It's comforting to have someone to blame, especially if they're foreign. "The perception of the world is one thing, the reality is something else," warns Nohra. He points out an article he wrote "on the transformation of the media world and the fabrication of the enemy" (Entertainment and Law, April 2019, p223-238) in which he mentioned the way in which extremist social networks and media gave a misleading interpretation of photographs of refugees and asylum seekers crossing the border into Europe. They cleverly selected only those photographs that showed lines of young adult men, avoiding those pictures (the majority) that included women and children. The groups misusing them in that way wrote "These are not refugees, they are terrorist invaders". Extremists are always willing to use misleading images to support a lie, knowing that their followers will believe it without question. Hate is a great driver of populism.

### THIS COULD CHANGE EVERYTHING

The corona virus issue, though, poses another problem, which worries Nohra. "I think this will bring about a change in civilisation and in social habits," he says. We're not just talking here about the deaths of individuals but the possible death of society and the body politic, he fears. "This will consolidate the distance between people, this will consolidate the distrust and the fear, and this will maybe produce two things. Firstly - and I am afraid of this - is de-globalisation, which means that each country will disconnect [from others]." Diplomacy, after all, is built on contact, and it's

starting to go wrong. "Now the United States has banned travel from Europe for one month and if it continues, it can be for 2,3 or 6 months," he says. In the days since we spoke, entry restrictions have also been put in place by the European Union, Russia and a number of other countries, too. Nohra is concerned at the way in which so many people already spend so much of their time staring at the screens of their smart phones instead of talking. We've all seen young couples (and not such young couples) sharing a table in a restaurant or bar but staring at their 'phones, rather than engaging in conversation. Nohra fears that the virus will make this worse. "It can move socialisations from real to virtual. Virtual, because everything will be done through your screen. This is important. This is very, very interesting to see, because it is already the case for many but it will increase the issue of people staying behind their own screens for everything they need and with few people moving to deliver things they want." The world would become largely immobile and people who don't meet face-to-face seldom fully understand one another. Some observers have noted that this sort of isolation, with places of public entertainment, non-food shops and restaurants closed, quarantining the elderly and all travel restricted plays into the hands of populists. If people are unable to discuss their concerns with others, the fear will worsen. Many of the isolated elderly will die, especially if they live alone and are not allowed access to shops and other public facilities. And it could kill society as we know it for a generation.



Sir Kim Darroch, former British Ambassador to the USA

© Wikimedia

Diplomacy can be a hazardous profession. Take the case of Sir Kim Darroch, who was the British ambassador to Washington from January 2016 to December 2019. He made critical remarks about President Trump in a private communication with the British Prime Minister but they were leaked to a newspaper and he was forced to resign. In this age of Wikileaks, Tweets and other means of instant (often poorly thought out) communication, there is no such thing as complete security for the transmission of reports and documents. It's been reported that some diplomatic staff, fearing hacks to their official laptops, have taken to using public facilities at airports to send private messages and emails instead. There's less chance that the message will be hacked. America's Democrats, especially one-time presidential hopeful Hillary Clinton, know how dangerous that can be, although she also knows that it's not wise to use one's private email account, either.

However, despite this move towards a 'silo' society, Fouad Nohra says the fight against corruption in government is helping to overcome ethnic rivalries, because it's a universal effort. The fight against corruption is bringing people together, whatever their religions, their ethnic groups, their opinions, in order to reform a country that is ill." This shared perception of the need to correct a corrupt and inefficient government can overcome decades of mutual hatred and mistrust. "Take the case of Iraq," Nohra suggests. "People are going against their own religious leaders because they want to hold them to account. You have demonstrations by people who have gathered from all different sects. They are saying 'I want to have a different life, I want to look after my home, my job, I want to live differently and I don't want the people above me to spoil things and take my money.'" Finding that there are points upon which people of different backgrounds can agree is a good starting point.

## OPEN YOUR MIND

The University of Southern California and the Center for Public Diplomacy (CPD) run an interesting programme called 22.33 that emphasises the need for people - diplomats especially but not exclusively - to get to know each other better. Knowledge of 'the other' fosters better understanding. As it says on its website: "If there is a recurring theme



University of Southern California

throughout 22.33, it is the undeniable human need for belonging. Despite all the differences, challenges and culture shock one experiences while traveling abroad, each story moves beyond feeling foreign, language barriers or weird food, to focus on radical hospitality, deep curiosity and breaking down stereotypes." I couldn't agree more, and it sounds like a very interesting initiative. The 22.33 programme is based around podcasts so that people from all around the world can share their experiences and overcome their reluctance to mix and mingle. "Everybody has a story. Whatever the subject - and one never knows what the next podcast episode will be about or where it will originate from; it could be from anywhere, about anything - the foundation that 22.33 builds upon is humanity."

Communication is vital and it's one of the skills in which CEDS trains not only potential diplomats but others in positions of power and influence. It explains in its brochure the diplomatic protocol programme: "Protocol is a set of codes and rules that we can hardly ignore in diplomatic practice," it says. "In recent years, the CEDS has implemented protocol training for diplomats and for senior executives and military officers. The 'Diplomatic Protocol' program is aimed at delegations of specific audiences, and covers a wide range of subjects such as the status of diplomats, immunities, accreditations and rules of precedence. It also teaches adapting the protocol to cultural diversity, but also to conflict situations, as well as to the context of

multilateral diplomacy." Successful candidates receive a certificate to prove they have been through the course.

CEDS is popular with military officers. After a career in the armed services, many of them seem keen to try applying their skills to diplomacy. First, though, they need training. "A general in the Lebanese army graduated with a PhD here," Nohra told me, "and when he went back home he didn't want to continue in purely military tasks. He created the Research Strategic Study Centre, the RSSC, for the Lebanese Army in 2011." It is still a thriving institution. And he was not the only one: an alumni with the rank of colonel left the Belgian Air Force with similar goals because he was upset by what he saw as injustice and an unfair attitude among the great powers towards those that were weaker, and once he had returned to civilian life, he took to publicising his view in the mass media. See what a good education can do for you?

After all, preventing wars is one of the tasks of a diplomat, even one who was first trained to fight in them. "There are a lot of areas of study in diplomacy that are focusing on crisis management and conflict resolution," said Nohra, "and this is very important because there are techniques in conflict resolution." But diplomacy, he admits, is changing, too. "Non-official diplomacy has a big rôle [to play]," he says, "and now we talk a lot about 'track 2 diplomacy', where you have non-official people trying to change the mentality of the conflicting

parties, the conflicting societies, to bring people to believe something different in order to allow the politicians to make a compromise.” That, of course, presupposes that the politicians in question are in a mood to compromise.

## THE BLAME GAME

Diplomats, though, however diplomatic, are also human. Take the case of Sir Christopher Meyer, who was in the British diplomatic service for 36 years, during which time he spent more than 5 years as ambassador in Washington DC. He was popular with other diplomats and, according to the Irish Times, he was seen in Dublin as “a decent interlocutor”. Yet his memoirs, *DC Confidential*, published in 2005, led to questions being asked in the British Parliament and to the outrage of some politicians. The book has been “condemned by London's great and good,” wrote The Irish Times, “He has been accused of disloyalty, vanity, financial greed and breach of trust. His critics say he has damaged the already threatened relationship between politicians and civil servants,” even though, as The Irish Times also notes, there are no shocking breaches of security, no great revelations, apart from Sir Christopher's frequent observations that he was first attracted to Lady Meyer by her legs, which he apparently admired. Perhaps other governments and their ambassadors should note another of Sir Christopher's observations, that “only the governments of Israel, Taiwan, Saudi Arabia and Ireland have, consistently over recent years, shown the ability significantly to influence the direction of US foreign policy.”

Influence is important. While Trump seems to attach most importance to ensuring his diplomats are ‘disruptive’, China has been trying to attract positive responses. According to the Observer Research Foundation, “Since 2012, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, Xi Jinping, has been calling on various Chinese agencies and experts in public diplomacy to ‘tell China stories well’ to the world, and ‘present a true, multi-dimensional and panoramic view of China.’” Beijing and Washington are, on the subject of diplomacy as in so many other areas, a long way apart. Nohra also notes the problems faced by the Ivory Coast between 2000 and 2011, when leaders blamed economic problems on

some of the people of different ethnicity who were assumed not to be genuine Ivorians. Doing this whipped up ethnic hatred, suggesting the government's failings were their fault. He still has great fondness for the country, however, and says the blame for demonising immigrants was the fault of the country's leaders before 1994. But for Europe's and the West's turn towards populism and simplistic solutions, he blames the financial crisis of 2008. He is reluctant to name countries or point the finger of blame at particular politicians - he is, after all, a diplomatic man - but in this



Sir Christopher John Rome Meyer, British former diplomat

case he makes an exception. “Take the case of Hungary,” he says. “Hungary was ultra-liberal before the crisis, but finally the nationalistic and religious speeches of the new leaders came as a backlash against the crisis that hit the country very severely in 2009.” It got worse. “When there is a stable inter-dependency everything is fine, but when the global system reached a crisis this triggered a move towards separatism.” However, that is a vicious circle, “because the more you're in crisis the more you search for false solutions, for kneejerk solutions, and the more you apply these types of solution, the deeper you are drawn into crisis and

you end up being completely destroyed.” Leaders facing problems of their own making or problems they are unable to solve look for scapegoats, who are then sacrificed to legitimise a new social order.

Turning a population - or at least a sufficiently large percentage of it - into believing that outsiders are to blame for a country's woes is an old trick. It has been going on for centuries. Nohra is not surprised by this. “There is no reason why a European country should not live through the same experience as the Ivory Coast did 20 years ago. I think this is universal and we always believe that we are more advanced and that ‘we will never have this’, ‘we will never have that’, but nobody knows.” Nohra says that when people are disappointed because whatever is happening is not what they imagined or wanted, they can turn against the very bodies that brought them human rights and the rule of law, such as the Council of Europe, the Court of Human Rights and European Union standards.

Nohra mentioned how quickly the far right can take advantage of public disappointment to sweep to power. Before the Brazilian election that brought the far-right Jair Messias Bolsonaro to power, Brazil had been demonstrating its successful operation of participatory democracy in Porto Alegre, Rio de Janeiro and other large cities, even bringing French politicians over to study and learn. No-one expected the backlash that made Bolsonaro president. Don't think it couldn't happen in your own country. Don't think it couldn't happen in Europe; we already have some populist leaders. But the only way to prevent the world returning to the era of Fascism is for those who study the mechanisms closely - especially diplomats or those with diplomatic training and skills - to find ways to avoid that outcome. “We have been accustomed to think about systems in a state of stability,” says Nohra, “we have not developed enough theories on disruption. We need to have a better understanding of disruptive mechanisms.” He and his colleagues are working on it.

*By Jim Gibbons*



© Andrea Brizzi

The United Nations Secretariat building with member states' flags

# FRIENDS, ENEMIES AND LOOPHOLES

## *Military proliferation through the back door Part One*

“**Q**ui desiderat pacem, praeparat bellum,” wrote the fourth century Roman military writer Flavius Vegetius Renatus (normally remembered simply as Vegetius). It means, as if you didn’t know, “Let he (or she) who desires peace, prepare for war.” The truthfulness or otherwise of this well-known dictum depends on your definition of ‘peace’, and, for that matter, ‘war’. Is it the peace forced upon a people out of fear, like the kind mentioned by the 18th century poet and dictionary-compiler Samuel Johnson, who said “mutual cowardice keeps us in peace”? Vegetius would have understood that; it was the basis of the so-called Pax Romana. Who wanted to take on Rome’s mighty legions? Or the kind mentioned in the ‘piece of paper’ held aloft with pride by British prime minister Neville Chamberlain on his return from Munich in 1938, following his meeting with Adolf Hitler. “I believe it is peace for our time,” he (and it) boasted. Which, of course, it wasn’t, although the ‘piece of paper’ did at least buy Chamberlain time to start to re-arm and partially prepare for the inevitable war. Today, preparation for war, especially for those somewhat belligerent states, seems to involve what’s called ‘proliferation’,

defined very clearly by the Jersey Financial Services Division as “the manufacture, possession, development, export, transshipment, brokering, transport, transfer, stockpiling or use of nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and their means of delivery and related materials (including both technologies and dual-use goods used for non-legitimate purposes), in contravention of national law or, where applicable, international obligations”. That, incidentally, includes technology, goods, software, services or expertise. Such activity is not just illegal in Jersey, of course.

According to UN Security Council Resolution 1540 - Non-Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction - agreed in 2004, the organisation “Decides that all States, in accordance with their national procedures, shall adopt and enforce appropriate effective laws which prohibit any non-State actor to manufacture, acquire, possess, develop, transport, transfer or use nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and their means of delivery, in particular for terrorist purposes, as well as attempts to engage in any of the foregoing activities, participate in them as an accom-

plish, assist or finance them.”

The methods of enforcement are left to individual countries, but the choice of whether or not to do so is not: “... all States shall take and enforce effective measures to establish domestic controls to prevent the proliferation of nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons and their means of delivery, including by establishing appropriate controls over related materials and to this end shall establish, develop, review and maintain appropriate effective national export and trans-shipment controls over such items, including appropriate laws and regulations to control export, transit, trans-shipment and re-export and controls on providing funds and services related to such export and trans-shipment such as financing, and transporting that would contribute to proliferation, as well as establishing end-user controls; and establishing and enforcing appropriate criminal or civil penalties for violations of such export control laws and regulations.” Phew. Strict rules, widely agreed and vigorously enforced? Well, in theory yes. But, as with all well-meant rules, there is always a loophole if you look hard enough.

## LET'S SEE THE COLOUR OF YOUR MONEY

The United States has been especially energetic in seeking to ensure compliance. In charge of enforcement and control is the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), a branch of the US Treasury Department with an annual budget in excess of \$30-million (€27-million). Although OFAC was created in 1950, it has a much longer history, stretching back arguably to the 1812 war with Britain, when sanctions were applied in response to Britain 'pressing' American citizens to serve in the Royal Navy. The aim in recent years is set out on OFAC's own website: "The Office of Foreign Assets Control administers and enforces economic sanctions programs primarily against countries and groups of individuals, such as terrorists and narcotics traffickers. The sanctions can be either comprehensive or selective, using the blocking of assets and trade restrictions to accomplish foreign policy and national security goals." Where proliferation is concerned, its aim has been to stifle any attempts by unapproved countries or groups of individuals to obtain the means by which weapons of mass destruction (WMD) can be developed or deployed.

OFAC retains and continually updates a list of people, companies and organisations deemed not suitable in terms of gaining access to data and technology and against whom it applies sanctions. It views non-compliance with these sanctions as a serious threat to national security and America's overseas relations. Those who breach the sanctions can find themselves in very serious trouble, with fines of up to \$20-million (€18.4-million) and jail terms of up to thirty years. Furthermore, anyone breaching a sanc-

tion is seen as violating the US Trading with the Enemy Act, and could face fines of \$65,000 (€59,000) for each violation. If the breach also violates the International Emergency Powers Act, the fine goes up to \$250,000 (€227,000). Most of the time, this works. But as always, some people will look for a back door, a traitor's gate, to let them get away with something profitable without the risk of getting caught.

With a vigilant Treasury Department, it's very difficult to trade in anything that has a WMD tag, however vague, without running into problems. Any trade denominated in US dollars becomes instantly suspect unless appropriate licences have been sought and granted. Because OFAC keeps such a close eye on dollar transactions, those determined to avoid restrictions (and, presumably, UN declarations) have been increasingly using the European financial system where trades can be designated in euros or some other widely-used currency instead.

It was in August last year that OFAC targeted two networks with links to Iran for allegedly engaging in covert procurement activities for the benefit of various Iranian military organisations. One such network was run by Hamed Dehghan, who, according to the NGO Iran Watch, "led a procurement network which facilitated tens of millions of dollars in proliferation-related transactions involving U.S. technology and electronic components." The US Treasury and OFAC say that Dehghan "used a Hong Kong-based front company to evade US and international sanctions and facilitate tens of millions of dollars' worth of proliferation activities targeting US technology and electronic components for persons related to the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and the Iranian regime's missile program." The Hong Kong registered company, Green Industries, is owned or controlled (OFAC seems uncertain which) by Hamed Dehghan, who used it as a front organisation to purchase or attempt to purchase export-controlled military end-use equipment from US suppliers for Iranian entities designated by OFAC as being involved in proliferation, specifically in trying to build a nuclear weapon. This particular attempt failed and the Treasury hopes future ones will, too. "As the Iranian regime attempts to use complex schemes to hide its efforts to bolster its WMD programme," said Treasury Under-Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence Sigal Mandelker, "the US Government will continue to thwart them at every turn." Mandelker knows that to achieve that end, the US



The Office of Foreign Assets Control in Washington, D.C

will have to rely on support from other nations' own watchdogs. "We urge governments worldwide," he said, "to recognise the extraordinary lengths to which the regime in Tehran will go to conceal its behaviour, and to ensure that their companies and financial institutions are not facilitating Iran's proliferation activities."

## CAUGHT IN THE ACT

OFAC is quite proud of this particular example of strict enforcement. It says that Hamed Dehghan is the chief executive officer and chairman of Pishtazan Kavosh Gostar Boshra, LLC (PKGB), which has played a central role in the alleged procurement network. He has also served as the general manager and chairman of the board of Ebtekar Sanat Ilya, another company supported to the utmost by the network. Dehghan, his company Ebtekar Sanat Ilya, and Hadi Dehghan are said to have procured more than one million dollars' worth of military-grade electronic components for Rastafann Engineering Company and have had a number of other Iranian military clients. Rastafann was designated (listed for sanctions) on October 13, 2017 for having provided support to the IRGC and Naval Defence Missile Industry Group, which means any assets held in the US are blocked and no US-based company or individual is permitted to have dealings with them. The IRGC and Naval Defence Missile Industry Group were also designated. It doesn't stop there, either. Ebtekar Sanat Ilya's customers include the Iran Aircraft Manufacturing Industrial Company (HESA), Shahid Bakeri Industrial Group (SBIG), and Shahid Hemmat Industrial Group (SHIG), all of which have been designated by OFAC. The European Union and the United Nations have both designated SBIG and SHIG. HESA is designated by the European Union.



Treasury Under-Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence Sigal Mandelker



© Wikipedia

General Qassem Soleima-ni, head of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps killed by a US strike in January

OFAC designated HESA on September 17, 2008, for being owned or controlled by Iran's Ministry of Defence and Armed Forces Logistics (MODAFL) and for having provided support to the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corp.

Allies of the US have also been active in trying to turn off the tap to materials wanted by states trying to develop their own WMD. In January 2019, the EU adopted the first sanctions measures brought in under its new 2018 framework, aimed at parties involved in the use and proliferation of chemical weapons. The EU imposed an asset freeze and travel restrictions on five Syrian citizens as well as an asset freeze on their employer, the Syrian Scientific Studies and Research Centre (SSRC), based on their alleged involvement in the use, development, transfer and production of chemical weapons by the Syrian regime. In addition, the EU has imposed an asset freeze and travel restrictions on four members of Russian military intelligence over their involvement in the 2018 Novichok nerve agent attack on former spy Sergei Skripal, his daughter Yulia and - accidentally - on two British citizens, one of whom subsequently died.

What this means is that all funds and financial resources held or controlled by the listed people and which are held through EU financial institutions are frozen, and no further funds or other economic resources can be made available in any shape or form to the sanctioned people who fall under EU jurisdiction. It may seem a minor point, but the restrictions apply not only to EU territory but also to its airspace, to nationals of EU member states, even if currently living abroad, or on-board aircraft or ships under the jurisdiction of EU member states.

## HOW DO YOU SOLVE A PROBLEM LIKE KOREA?

According to the EU Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Consortium (EU-NPDC), North Korea remains "the most significant nuclear and ballistic missile proliferation crisis of the 21st century." You may not have come across the EU-NPDC but it is made up of some notable constituent parts, as its own website explains, it was created in 2010 by a decision of the European Council to be "a European network of independent non-proliferation think tanks in support of the implementation of the European Union strategy against Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction". The organisation brings together foreign policy institutions and research centres from across the EU "to encourage political and security-related dialogue and the long-term discussion of measures to combat the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their delivery systems." The Council gave the organisational task to the EU Non-Proliferation Consortium, initially based on France's Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique (FRS), Germany's Peace Research Institute Frankfurt (HSFK/PRIF), the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) and Sweden's Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).

The fact that North Korea is not so much in the news does not mean its determination to develop WMD has diminished in any way. As the Consortium puts it: "For decades, North Korea has remained uncompromising in its objective to develop nuclear weapons, ballistic missiles and other weapons of mass destruction in the face of various international negotiation strategies based

on sanctions and incentives, in bilateral or multilateral formats." Apparent lulls in the hostile rhetoric, the Consortium argues, mean little. "Even if US President Donald J. Trump announced after the June 2018 Singapore Summit that 'there is no longer a nuclear threat from North Korea', the North Korea proliferation crisis remains unresolved." At the EU level, there are various initiatives in the European Council, Commission, Parliament and at Member State level, as well as in universities, think tanks and other bodies, to address this problem.

According to a report by the EU-NPDC, there are two misconceptions to avoid. "The first would be to think that because North Korea has not conducted a nuclear test since September 2017 or a long-range ballistic missile test since November 2017, the North Korean nuclear and ballistic missile programmes are on hold. On the contrary, these programmes are ongoing and have significantly strengthened North Korean capacities. The second would be to believe that because of the increase in high-level meetings and the exchange of courtesies between leaders, the situation on the Korean peninsula has been permanently stabilized. The truth is quite the opposite." As Britain's wartime prime minister Winston Churchill once said, it's better to jaw-jaw than to war-war, but not, perhaps, if the former is only a smokescreen to hide preparations for the latter. And it seems unlikely that Kim Jong-un is following the precepts of Vegetius and preparing for war only in pursuit of peace, unless that means peace solely on his terms. Neighbouring China remains suspicious, as it has since the north of Korea became part of the Han empire in 90 BCE, only to remain a thorn in the side of that and successive Chinese dynasties.



© Wikipedia

President Trump and North Korea's Kim Jong Un at their historic summit in Singapore on June 12, 2018

As Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, recalled at the 2019 Paris Peace Forum: “the need to stand together is stronger than ever. Only together do we have the strength.”

## PRETEXT AND PRECEDENT?

The same applies, of course, to other trouble spots and Syria is closer to Europe's doorstep. And in Syria, the Assad government and its Russian ally has consistently and remorselessly broken the international law banning the use of chemical weapons. As the EU-NPDC put it in a report, “In recent years, the international community, the United Nations and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) have found creative ways to address this situation, but no strategy has so far succeeded in truly redressing the problem.” Which is strange: the use of chemical weapons was first codified into international humanitarian law in the late 19th and early 20th century, although that failed to prevent their use in the First World War. The experiences of Ypres and the Somme, however, spurred moves towards the 1925 Geneva Protocol and the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), which banned the use of such weapons. There have been claims that Winston Churchill, during the League of Nations mandate in 1920s Iraq, used tear gas bombs dropped by the RAF to quell Arab resistance, but although he may have done and some historians claim he did, there is little evidence to support it. Britain's Air Ministry is said to have sought permission from the British Colonial Office to carry out the bombings - of tear gas, not phosgene, mustard gas or chlorine, so presumably intended to intimidate rather than kill - but permission was never granted, despite some military and political figures supporting the idea. Since then, the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court has more clearly defined the ban as being on the use of ‘poison or poisoned’ weapons and ‘asphyxiating, poisonous or other gases, and all analogous liquids, materials or devices’, declaring their use to be a war crime.

No state has publicly owned up to having used these prohibited weapons, nor has anyone sought to justify them, despite persuasive evidence of their employment by the Assad regime. Syria, of course, continues to deny having used them, citing a deal with Russia to get rid of chemical weapons as a means of dissuading the US from air strikes. The threat had been made, however, because of chemi-



Ursula Gertrud von der Leyen, President of the European Commission

cal attacks near Damascus in which hundreds were killed. And, of course, despite the deal, chemical attacks in Syria continued.

Secretary-General António Guterres (right) with Fernando Arias, Director-General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. UN Photo/Manuel Elias

## SEARCHING OUT THE CULPABLE

France has certainly taken action to try and prevent the Syrian government from obtaining the ingredients and technology to build chemical weapons or other WMD. The twenty-five companies and individuals accused by France of having links with Syria's chemical weapons programme have consistently denied involvement and have threatened legal

action. France claimed they're suspected of belonging to two 'supply networks' for the Syrian Scientific Studies and Research Center (SSRC), which has been sanctioned repeatedly over the country's chemical weapons programme. Only four countries have not signed up to the UN Convention banning the use of chemical weapons: North Korea, Egypt, Israel and South Sudan. Others, of course, may have signed but with their fingers, figuratively, crossed. And then there is nuclear proliferation. EU member states supported the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) to keep Iran from developing nuclear weapons and expressed concern over the Trump administration's decision to withdraw from it. Now, with the US no longer a party to it, Iran has taken steps towards further nuclear development, announcing in May 2019 that it would no longer consider itself bound by the JCPOA restrictions.

It's no surprise that this causes greater alarm within Europe than in the US itself: Iran's missiles could not cross the Atlantic but they could easily reach Paris, Berlin, Rome or London. That's why the leaders of France, Germany and the United Kingdom met in Paris, together with the EU's High Representative for EU foreign policy, to assess a problem over which they seem to have little effective clout. They have tried to get Tehran and Washington around the table and they have tried to persuade Iran to stick to the provisions, but without success. In a statement, the three countries' Foreign Ministers said “Instead of reversing course, Iran has chosen to further reduce compliance with the JCPOA and announced on 5 January that ‘the Islamic Republic



A member of the UN Special Commission (UNSCOM) inspection team uses a chemical air monitor to detect leakage from a CS-filled 120mm mortar shell at Fallujah Chemical Proving Ground, as part of the inspection to verify Iraq's compliance with the order to destroy the chemical munitions for chemical weapons and weapons of mass destructions in 1992



© EIPA

Iranian soldiers

of Iran, in the fifth step in reducing its commitments, discards the last key component of its limitations in the JCPOA, which is the limit on the number of centrifuges, and that 'the Islamic Republic of Iran's nuclear program no longer faces any operational restrictions, including on enrichment and enrichment-related matters.' The Europeans have registered their concerns under the JCPOA's Dispute Resolution Mechanism over Iran's failure to meet its commitments, a move that has angered Tehran and has been condemned by Russia, which, along with China, was a signatory to the agreement. In a joint statement after the meeting, the European leaders said "Recent events have highlighted Iran's destabilizing role in the region, including through the IRGC and Al-Qods force," and they restated their known position. "Our commitment to the security of our allies and partners in the region is unwavering. We must address – through diplomacy and in a meaningful way – shared concerns about Iran's destabilizing regional activities, including those linked to its missile programme." That decision was backed by Commission Vice-President and High Representative for Foreign Policy, Josep Borrell, who said the aim was not to reimpose sanctions but "to find a solution for the return to full compliance."

## LOOK FOR THE UNEXPECTED

It's worth remembering one odd thing here: during a hearing at the European Parliament in Brussels on President Ronald Reagan's 'Star Wars' strategic missile initiative, I met and interviewed a Russian academician who told me that America had nothing to fear at that time from attacks because of the very limited

number of countries whose missiles could cross the Atlantic, and because none of those countries was especially hostile towards the United States. "An enemy is far more likely to hijack aeroplanes filled with explosives and fly them into New York skyscrapers," he said. That interview, you should note, was on September 10, 2001, one day before 9-11. It was a very prescient prediction, wasn't it?

Meanwhile, OFAC, on behalf of the US Treasury, has been delving into those who try to get around the rules, in close collaboration with the FBI. We met Hamed Dehghan and his pals earlier, but there are others, such as Shaghayegh Akhaei, general manager and board member of PKGB, and Mahdi Ebra-



Iranian ballistic missile capable of carrying a nuclear warhead

himzadeh, who helped Dehghan in trying to procure electronic components. And then there's the Asre Sanat Eshragh Company (ASEC) and its owner and general manager, Sayed Hossein Shariat. According to the Treasury, ASEC has

procured large amounts of aluminium alloy products for several Iranian companies, such as Iran Electronic Industries (IEI) and Iran Aviation Industries Organisation (IAIO), both of them designated by OFAC several years ago for being owned or controlled by Iran's Ministry of Defence and Armed Forces Logistics (MODAFL). IEI has also been listed for sanctions by the European Union and Japan, as well as Australia, Canada, Norway and Switzerland, while the IAIO has been sanctioned by the EU as "an entity linked to Iran's proliferation-sensitive nuclear activities or Iran's development of nuclear weapon delivery systems".

The escalating crisis continues to cause concern on a worldwide scale, however, as Josep Borrell, told the European Parliament in February, 2020. "The intensification of military operations in Idlib has resulted in the indiscriminate killings of hundreds of civilians," he said. "Attacks continue on civilian targets in densely populated areas, medical facilities and settlements for internally displaced people. These are blatant and serious violations of international humanitarian law. There has to be accountability for those responsible." The EU, of course, is restricted to using soft power, not having a real military capability, although that may change now that the United Kingdom, which always opposed an EU military capability, is no longer a member.

Borrell continued: "Since military operations began in Idlib in February 2019, one year ago, more than 1 million people have been displaced towards Turkey. We are talking about one million displaced people in one year. Every day more Syrians are fleeing the fighting and another wave of refugees is quite possibly in the making. We also see clashes between the Syrian regime and Turkish forces, plus the risk of Turkish and Russian militaries confronting each other. These tensions could in turn trigger a wider regional conflict." Borrell insists that the existing ceasefire between Ankara and Moscow must be implemented and acted upon. And the EU has massive economic clout if it chooses to use it. At Turkey's request, the NATO Council has already met to discuss the crisis: under the Treaty, an attack on one NATO member is an attack on all. After the meeting, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg told journalists "Today's meeting is a clear sign of solidarity with Turkey. Turkey is a valued NATO Ally and Turkey is the NATO Ally most affected by the terrible conflict in Syria, which has suffered the most terrorist attacks, and which hosts

millions of refugees. NATO continues to support Turkey with a range of measures, including by augmenting its air defences. This helps Turkey against the threat of missile attacks from Syria.” The risk of all-out war seems to be increasing.

## BUYING THE MEANS FOR WAR

As the Jersey Financial Services Commission points out, the kinds of networks involved in what amounts to the smuggling of proscribed items from one jurisdiction into another, are basically criminals. The states concerned may believe their activities are all in the name of patriotism but the criminal organisations they employ see it as being all in the name of profit. It's up to governments - including offshore entities like Jersey - to be watchful. “Financial measures act as a supplement to effective export controls, to address the financial activity associated with proliferation,” says their official guidance document, published in 2011. “Similar to international criminal networks, proliferation networks use the international financial system to carry out transactions and business deals. Institutions should be alert to the possibility that their customers may be engaging in, or facilitating, proliferation activities.” In other words - and in compliance with OFAC requirements - it's up to those dealing with cross-border financial transactions to keep a weather eye out for suspicious activity.

The EU has a variety of sector-specific bodies that count as its European enforcement authorities (EEAs), and their powers sound impressive, if their nature is diverse. In their report, “the Proliferation of EU Enforcement Authorities: a New Development in Law Enforcement in the EU”, written by Miroslava Scholten, Michiel Luchtman and Elmar Schmidt, the question is posed: “What can EEAs

do? Depending on the statutory remit, they can monitor behaviour of private parties, such as airline companies and banks. If a violation of relevant EU law by the private party is suspected, the EEAs can investigate the alleged violation, including conducting an on-site inspection at the business premises of the private party. If the violation has been proved to occur, they can punish via imposing fines and/or supervisory measures, like public notices and revocation of a permit.” But the EU has specific problems that don't apply to the United States. Since the departure of the United Kingdom, only one EU state (France) has nuclear weapons, although others could have if they wished. They don't. Different member states have very different views on the use of nuclear power for peaceful applications, let alone for weapons. Several of them have a long tradition of neutrality and, in the cases of Sweden, Ireland and Austria, constitutional opposition to nuclear weapons.

All of this tends to suggest that the EU speaks with several voices on contentious issues like Syria. However, in a speech to the European Parliament, Borrell said “The EU has major stakes in Syria and in the surrounding region. We cannot afford more regional instability and another migrant crisis. We must avoid a resurgence of Daesh and other terrorist organisations at Europe's doorstep. The EU has a duty to preserve the rules based international order including the legitimacy of the United Nations Security Council. Yes, I know, we say that once again and we have to continue saying that.” He spoke for many when he added “Recent military gains by the Syrian regime are not translating into stability, on the contrary. The Syrian regime will not bring peace and stability to Syria if it continues to pursue a military logic and the repression of its people. The economic situation is

deteriorating rapidly, exacerbated by the banking crisis in Lebanon. The regime must change its behaviour.”

The EU has used sanctions before in a bid to alter the behaviour of some countries, such as Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) in the 1980s and later South Africa and Russia, as the European Parliamentary Research Service points out. “Implicit in the UN's commitment to preventing threats to international peace is non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the basis for UN and EU sanctions against Iran's and North Korea's nuclear programmes. Territorial integrity is the basis for sanctions against Russia adopted by the EU (but not the UN, due to Russia's Security Council veto). Recognising that threats to peace and security come not only from governments, sanctions also target non-state actors, such as al-Qaeda, ISIL/Da'esh, the Taliban in Afghanistan, and rebel groups in Mali, Libya, Somalia and Yemen.” Incidentally, sanctions can also be lifted, such as those imposed by OFAC on four banks in Estonia.

Borrell has now called an emergency meeting on Syria, issuing a statement on March 1 to explain why. “Everybody, especially the Syrian regime, needs to urgently re-engage in a political process under the auspices of the United Nations,” he said. “We also have to continue mobilising resources to reduce the suffering of the civilian population to provide shelter, food and medicine. And EU member states also continue to do their part. Humanitarian access needs to be ensured, including to the most remote areas, where the most vulnerable people are. I underlined this in all my contacts over the past days.

At the same time, we continue to follow closely the migration situation at our external borders. The EU - Turkey Statement needs to be upheld. The EU is engaged in supporting Greece and Bulgaria in addressing the unfolding situation.”

It's a strange thing. If Vegetius was right, with so many diverse and troublesome countries preparing for war, their leaders must be anticipating a lot of peace. But they're presumably not, so the efforts to prevent their ever-more-cunning attempts at proliferation must continue.



OFAC recommends U.S. companies and overseas affiliates vet customers in countries, such as Hong Kong, to avoid sanctions violations. Photo credit: Hong Kong Maritime and Port Board

*Tobias Bowman-Grant*



# EU SATCEN:

## *Geospatial intelligence at the service of EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy*

Supporting humanitarian aid missions. Assessing the damage caused by a flood or an earthquake. Detecting the presence of military and paramilitary troops. Monitoring national borders. Surveilling the coast for piracy, drug trafficking, human smuggling. Identifying chemical weapon storage sites. The EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy relies on a 'fresh pair of eyes' watching over the Earth 24/7: the Satellite Centre (SatCen), located in Torrejón (Madrid), provides fast and reliable analysis of satellite data in order to face current security challenges. The High Representative / Vice President Josep Borrell visited the centre last February.

"On security-related matters, the European Union's Satellite Centre [SATCEN] has helped to deliver key geostrategic intelligence analysis to the European Union and Member States, contributing to monitoring the crisis of conflict areas and supporting the EU advisory operations", EU High Representative / Vice President Josep Borrell Borrell said at the 12th European Space Conference last January.

### PROVIDING GEOSPATIAL INTELLIGENCE SINCE 1992

Founded in 1992 as a Western European Union body, SatCen was incorporated as an EU agency in 2002. The centre uses high-resolution satellite imagery to create various geospatial intelligence (GeoInt) products useful for different purposes. The basic principle of GeoInt is to organize and combine all available data around a geographical location on Earth and then exploit it in order to prepare products that can be easily used by planners, emergency responders and decision makers.

Although geospatial intelligence is normally associated with a military context, it is increasingly used by civilian and private sector organizations working in areas such as telecommunications, transportation, public health and safety, and real estate. Currently, SatCen supports the following activities:

### HUMANITARIAN AID MISSIONS

GeoInt products based on satellite imagery interpretation are becoming more and more important in support of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief missions. EU SatCen is able to analyse refugee camps in order to provide information on the number of refugees, their provenance, and the existence of humanitarian or security facilities within camps, as well as on the presence of paramilitary activity and potential attacks on refugee camps. In the aftermath of a man-made or natural disaster, SatCen creates maps based on satellite data that are key to define priority areas for action, as well as safe areas and those that are still vulnerable to hazards.

### CONTINGENCY PLANNING

In case of an emergency, SatCen's products can contribute to preventing further casualties, reducing damage to infrastructures and resuming normal operations as soon as possible. Rapid mapping of affected areas, for instance, is key to manage emergencies and plan evacuation operations.

*"When we are planning what to do in Libya, it immediately comes to our mind that we have a powerful tool observing what is happening there and guiding the operations on the ground"*  
Josep Borrell

## GENERAL SECURITY SURVEILLANCE

SatCen provides EU decision-makers GeoInt products on a wide range of security issues such as border control, terrorism, piracy, illegal cropping or cross-border state disputes. The high resolution satellite imagery is often used to monitor illegal cross-border displacements, identify terrorist training camps or smuggling vessels, and back-up piracy operations. It also provides a non-intrusive means of treaty verification in cross-border disputes where the EU acts as a mediator.

## CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

SatCen supports crisis management officials with the delivery of elements-at-risk maps where human settlements and critical infrastructure under threat are identified. They provide the basis for threat and vulnerability assessment studies that evaluate the likelihood of occurrence of identified threats to certain infrastructures (such as a dam, or a pipeline).

## MILITARY CAPABILITIES

Analysing military activity and the deployment of ground, air and naval military forces is one of the main services offered by the EU SatCen. The centre also uses geospatial intelligence to conduct Battle damage assessments (BDA), an accurate estimation of the damage that results from the application of military force.

## WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

The SatCen non-proliferation mission follows the entire process of weapon development, from the detection of uranium mining activity to the assessment of a nation's nuclear fuel



Josep Borrell, during his visit to SatCen in Torrejón de Ardoz (Madrid)

fabrication infrastructure. Locations where weapons are suspected to be produced or stored are identified and monitored thanks to high-resolution satellite imagery.

The EU SatCen closely cooperates with other European schemes such as Copernicus (the EU's Earth Observation Programme) and the Space Surveillance and Tracking (SST) Support Framework in developing new geospatial intelligence capabilities.



The ruins of the ancient city of Nimroud, monitored from April 2013 to February 2018

# NETWORK DEFRAUDING AT LEAST €5 MILLION DISMANTLED IN PORTUGAL

The Fiscal Action Unit of the Portuguese National Republican Guard (Guarda Nacional Republicana) under the direction of the Central Public Prosecutor's Office carried out operation Netto Price which aimed to dismantle a transnational network obtaining illegitimate patrimonial advantages, through a fraudulent scheme based on fictitious invoice circuits. The suspects attempted to evade VAT and carry out fraud and illegal EU fundraising. Due to the international dimension of the criminal activities, this operation was supported by Europol and Eurojust.



© Europol

## ONE NETWORK, FOUR COUNTRIES

This two-year investigation allowed the police officers to identify a network operating simultaneously in Portugal, Germany, Latvia and the United Kingdom. The criminals used invoice triangulation schemes between companies from different Member States and set up missing trader companies that issued false invoices by creating documentary circuits intended to certify the introduction in Portugal of used motor vehicles, evading VAT due to Portugal, with the complicity of state officials involved in the legalisation of vehicles.

At the same time, the organised crime group issued large numbers of false invoices to allow other operators to obtain undue deductions and refunds of VAT, as well as to obtain fraudulently European funds.

Using this fraudulent scheme, the criminal organisation managed to obtain an illegitimate patrimonial advantage of at least €5 million.

## 123 SEARCH WARRANTS

On the action days, 123 search warrants were carried out in the following countries:

- 108 in Portugal;
- 7 in the United Kingdom;
- 6 in Germany;
- 2 in Latvia.

As a result of the operation, 16 commercial companies and 33 Portuguese nationals were indicted, 11 people were arrested under European arrest warrants, alongside the seizure of 139 medium and high-end cars, 5 vessels and 70 pieces of various technological and computer equipment, the estimated value is

up to €2 600 000. The Portuguese Asset Recovery Office froze 72 bank accounts and other financial instruments held by the suspects in Portugal and the United Kingdom.

## INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

The investigation involved the Tax and Customs Authority through the Porto Tax Department. About 300 officers from the Portuguese National Republican Guard, the Fiscal Action Unit and the Territorial Commands of Porto, Madeira, and Intervention Units were involved in the operation, together with other authorities. Internationally, the operation was supported by tax authorities from Germany and the United Kingdom and the Latvian State Police (Latvijas Valsts Policija). Due to the specificity and complexity of the subject matter under investigation, Europol supported the Portuguese authorities by providing digital forensic support experts on the action days.

Pedro Felício, Head of the Economic and Property Crime Unit at Europol, says: “*MTIC Fraud remains one of the most significant Tax Crime in the EU, decreasing Member States budget and impairing the security and public safety of the whole Euro Area and beyond.*” He also remarked the importance of international cooperation when tackling financial crime: “*Since criminals operate across borders, success in the fighting against organised crime can only be achieved with international coordinated operations which bring together the affected Member States, Europol and trusted partners, as well as a strong focus on Asset Recovery. This operation is the perfect example of such international cooperation and strategy. Nevertheless, despite the various efforts made, the threat of Tax Crimes in Europe remains high. Recognizing this underlying menace, Europol is bringing Economic and Financial crime back to the centre of its investigative priorities.*”



Seized cars

© Europol

# WE OUGHT TO BE GIANTS

*Putin tries to make Chekhov's words come true by force*

There's no doubt, according to expert observers, that Russia's current military capacity is far ahead of what it was just a decade ago. Given its rapid advances, many are beginning to wonder where it will be in another ten years. It is certainly raising eyebrows (and hackles) at NATO. In a speech in Hamburg in February, NATO Deputy Secretary General Mircea Geoană warned guests at the Matthiae Mahl dinner of the dangers he foresees. "For many years, we have seen a disturbing pattern of Russian behaviour. Its illegal annexation of Crimea and destabilization of Eastern Ukraine. A massive military build-up. The use of a military-grade nerve agent on Allied soil (the attempted murders of former spy Sergei Skripal and his daughter Yulia in Salisbury, England). Cyber-attacks. Disinformation campaigns. Attempts to interfere in our elections. And the deployment of new, nuclear-capable missiles which can reach cities all over Europe."

According to the Russians, not just Europe either. In December, President Vladimir Putin boasted that "Russia has got a strong edge in designing new weapons" and that it has become the only country in the world to deploy hypersonic weapons. He went on to tell military chiefs that "for the first time in history, Russia is now leading the world in developing an entire new class of weapons unlike in the past when it was catching up with the United States". Mind you, the United States would argue that despite Putin's claims, Russia is not the only country to deploy hypersonic weapons, even if Canada's CBC News says that Russia's missile would be "unstoppable". As one American expert put it, unstoppable now doesn't necessarily mean unstoppable tomorrow. And what's more, although the missiles

themselves may not show up on radar, research by the China Aerodynamics Research and Development Centre suggests that the plume of ionized gas, or plasma, left by a hypersonic vehicle is more visible on radar than the vehicle itself, which implies that radar could give early warning of an incoming weapon.

at Mach 27. Normal propulsion systems won't work at hypersonic speeds so the Avangard is powered by what's called a 'boost glide' system, which accelerates the rocket to very high speeds within Earth's atmosphere using what's called a 'scramjet' (supersonic combustion ramjet) engine, then allows it to glide to its



The new ICBM missile to replace the Soviet-era Voevoda

So, what exactly are hypersonic weapons and should they worry us? They're missiles that travel at or above Mach 5 - five times the speed of sound. Since very few things can achieve such speeds, once they're in the air they would be fiendishly hard to catch, even by very fast anti-missile missiles or the latest fighter jets. But hypersonic flight carries problems of its own, because of the heat generated. In 1967, an American X-15 research plane reached a speed of Mach 6.7, but on landing it was found that the pylon holding the engine to the body had melted. Putin announced that the Avangard rocket was ready in March 2018, and made no secret of the fact that it had been designed to neutralise American missile defences ahead of a hypothetical nuclear attack. The Avangard can travel

destination. Traditional Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs) lift their payloads into low-Earth orbit - Russia uses its UR-100NUTTH missile, known to NATO as the SS-19 Stiletto - then send them down to pre-designated targets. Avangard uses its ISBM booster to lift it no higher than 62 miles (around 100 kilometres), just a third of a normal low-Earth orbit, from where it hits its target at Mach 27, which is 20,716 miles per hour, or if you prefer, 33,340 kilometres per hour. But the vehicles do get extremely hot from air friction, making their electronic guidance systems vulnerable, while turbulence creates additional problems, even if the vehicle is designed to withstand temperatures of 2000°C. At hypersonic speeds, the boundary layer around the vehicle



MiG-31

thickens, and a smooth, laminar flow can suddenly break up into eddies and swirls that cause temperature spikes on the vehicle's skin.

The Avangard is also capable of supple evasive manoeuvres in flight, making it even harder to intercept. Additionally, Russia has an air-launched hypersonic missile in service, the Kinzhal, which is



The Avangard, one of six revolutionary new weapons systems unveiled by Russian President Vladimir Putin in March 2018

carried on MiG-31 fighters. It's not as fast as the Avangard but as it's capable of reaching speeds of Mach 10, with a range of 1,240 miles (2,000 kilometres), it's no slouch, either. What's more, being launched from a fighter, it is more flexible to use. Flexible, but not the cheap option. According to the Moscow Times, it is seen as playing a variety of rôles in any theatre of war, not simply as a way to conduct a nuclear exchange. It concludes "Hence, official statements claiming that it carries a 2-megaton nuclear warhead, or is invulnerable, should be taken with a large grain of salt."

Having said that, with an estimated range of some 2,500 miles (around 4,000 kilometres - Russia claims considerably

more), an Avangard could reach London from Moscow, which gives Russia an impressive range of possible targets. It would be not just a case of "goodnight Vienna", but also goodnight Paris, Rome, London, Ankara and Baghdad. We have to hope Putin doesn't decide to put that to the test. Many are concerned, though, that Russia's militarisation has accelerated since its invasion and annexation of Crimea. What does it mean?

### ARMS RACE GAINS SPEED

One thing it means, perhaps, is over-optimism on the part of Putin. The vast programme of weapons development and deployment was predicated on massive economic growth that hasn't happened. Russia's defence budget for this year (2020) was projected to reach \$200-billion (€180-billion), which would require a growth in GDP of \$5-trillion (€4.5-trillion), more than twice as large as the growth in, say, 2012. Russia's economic forecasters were assuming growth similar to China's, which it is far from reaching. In fact, Russia's year-on-year GDP growth stood at 1.2% in February, 2020, compared with China's 6.1% and America's 2.3%. Russia's

actual defence budget was smaller (but still impressive - and worrying) at just under \$60-billion (€54-billion). It was always Stalin's belief - and Putin shares it - that the defence sector drives economic growth and must therefore grow. It was not a doctrine shared by US President Dwight Eisenhower, who was very wary of the military-industrial complex and its sometimes-baleful effect on the economy. He warned against it. Money spent on very fast missiles cannot then be spent on roads, hospitals, schools or other infrastructure, which worried him. It's not something that seems to worry today's leaders.

Putin has correctly claimed that Russia is the first country with hypersonic weapons already in its arsenal and has boasted to his own military chiefs that the rest of the world is now playing catch-up. He's right, but probably not for very long. Both the United States and China are working on hypersonic weapons of their own.

America seems to be pinning its hopes on the Advanced Hypersonic Weapon (AHW) while Lockheed Martin is developing the Falcon Hypersonic Technology Vehicle 2 (HTV-2). By 2011, the first AHW was ready for trial and in a test launch from the Pacific Missile Range Facility in Hawaii, it accurately struck a target in the Marshall Islands, 3,700 kilometres away. Like the Avangard, it uses boost glide technology, although it carries a conventional, rather than a nuclear, payload. The US sees the AHW and HTV-2 as providing it with the capability for "Prompt Global Strike": the ability to launch a hypersonic missile against a target anywhere in the world in less than one hour. Neither is believed to be quite as fast as the Avangard. Russia is also cooperating with India in devel-



In November 2018, Lockheed Martin stated that a prototype of the SR-72 was scheduled to fly by 2025



© Wikipedia

The Chinese DF-ZF Hypersonic Glide Vehicle

oping a hypersonic cruise missile, the BrahMos-II, while the US and Australia have tested an experimental hypersonic missile as part of their joint HiFiRE programme.

China, meanwhile, has been developing its own hypersonic glide vehicle (HGV) alongside a hypersonic cruise missile known as the DF-ZF, which has already undergone field tests and which featured in last year's military parade in Beijing. It can carry conventional or nuclear warheads, reach speeds of nearly Mach 10 and, like the Avangard, can manoeuvre to avoid anti-missile missiles when it gets near its target. China claims it is sufficiently accurate to use against ships at sea. It is also developing a new missile, the DF-17, which combines hypersonic capability with a ballistic missile, reaching speeds of Mach 10 but with a range probably limited to between 1,100 and 1,500 miles (1,800 and 2,400 kilometres).

Research into hypersonic weapons is not new: work was being carried out in the Soviet Union some three decades or more ago, but it has accelerated since the United States walked away from the anti-ballistic missile treaty in 2002. Russian military planners feared that the Americans might have a breakthrough in missile defence technology, which hypersonic weapons could overcome. According to the Moscow Times, "They do not fundamentally alter the modern character of war, but exacerbate long-standing trends in the drive toward greater speed and penetrating power, making defence a cost-prohibitive proposition. They help move the needle toward war between major powers being even more offence-dominant than it already is." In other words, they increase the likelihood of somebody pressing the launch button first on the grounds that attack really has become the best -

even the only - means of defence. If that attack uses nuclear weapons, the outcome would, of course, be disastrous for humankind. As Albert Einstein wrote in 1946, "The unleashed power of the atom has changed everything save our modes of thinking and we thus drift toward unparalleled catastrophe."

## NUCLEAR NERVOUSNESS

US defence experts believe that Russia retains up to 2,000 tactical (low yield) nuclear weapons of varying types that can be launched from land, ships, submarines or aircraft. They even have nuclear depth charges. Putin himself seems extremely keen on nuclear weapons, if only to prove that Russia remains a force to be reckoned with. He has been boasting of exotic new weapons systems that are unique and unparalleled, such as the Burevestnik, a nuclear-propelled cruise missile, delivering a nuclear payload. Its small nuclear reactor power

source should give it - theoretically - an unlimited range. According to the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, it's more to do with swaggering on the world stage than with defending Russia. "These exotic systems have more of a political function than a strategic or security one," argues a website article. "Their role is to signal Russia's continuing scientific and military prowess at a time when the country does not otherwise have much on offer. Devilishly expensive and sometimes dangerous to operate, they are unlikely to be deployed in big numbers, as a fatal testing accident of the Burevestnik in 2019 shows. If US-Russian arms control remains in place, such systems definitely will not be deployed in big numbers, because they would displace proven and highly reliable intercontinental ballistic missiles in the Russian force structure".

The explosion happened at a Russian navy range on the White Sea, killing five nuclear engineers and causing fears of radioactive contamination in a neighbouring town. Both the United States and Soviet Union experimented with nuclear-powered missiles during the Cold War but abandoned them, largely because they were unsafe. They're also extremely expensive, which means Putin is unlikely to see them as a regular part of Russia's arsenal, even if his technicians can construct a Burevestnik that doesn't blow up on the launch pad.

If all this posturing reminds you of your old school playground, you're probably not far wrong. For school bullies,



© kremlin.ru

Vladimir Putin aboard the guided missile cruiser Marshal Ustinov during the joint exercises of the Northern and Black Sea fleets. With Commander-in-Chief of the Navy Nikolai Yevmenov



Russian Ground Forces Commander-in-Chief Col. Gen. Oleg Salyukov : "Other countries will not be able to design a rival to Russia's Iskander-M mobile short-range ballistic missile systems before 2025"

bombast was usually more important than blows. And to be perfectly honest, Putin is not exactly alone in trumpeting his military capacity. Donald Trump and Xi Jinping have also been guilty of bragging about their strength and their available weapons. Other nations - not many - also have a nuclear capacity (and quite a few more would very much like to) but they lack the means to be a thoroughgoing global nuisance. Their powers are regional, even if North Korea has resumed testing its short-range ballistic missiles into the Sea of Japan from the coastal town of Wonsan. Even so, Kim Jung-un and his ilk are relative minnows; Putin, Trump and Xi Jinping are the only sharks in the pool. Putin insists that his country's development of new weapons is not to start a war but to maintain "strategic balance" and "stability". In an interview with the TASS

news agency, he said "We are not going to fight anyone. We are going to create conditions so that nobody wants to fight against us." One assumes nobody really wants to fight anyone else anyway, except for a few religious or nationalist fanatics; war is rather a big step from diplomacy. Putin told TASS that Russia has created "offensive strike systems the world has never seen." In view of the cost and doubts over reliability, there are good reasons why the world has not hitherto seen their like.

### SPLITTING MORE THAN THE ATOM

The peace campaigning body, the Ploughshares Fund, quotes former UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon and Mary Robinson, the first woman to be elected President of Ireland, on their fears for the future, especially over nuclear weapons. "The two biggest nuclear powers, the United States and Russia - their relationship is not a good one," explained the ever-charming Ban. "They are not talking to each other about how to deal with a lack of nuclear disarmament architecture." Both Ban and Robinson are leaders of The Elders, a group of senior political figures working together for peace and human rights. They were in Washington for the setting of the so-called Doomsday Clock, an annual event organised by the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists. This year, the clock was set to 100 seconds to midnight, the closest it has been since its inception in 1947. Bear in mind that the Cuban Missile Crisis took place during that time. Ban fears that Russia and America simply don't try to understand each other. "Their relationship has been shrouded

in mistrust, denial, and counter-argument," Ban continued. "I'm very concerned about a situation where nuclear wars and conflict can happen." Robinson agrees: she sees climate change and the threat of war between the two countries as the biggest threats to our future. According to the Ploughshares Fund, the Elders have released a plan that calls for the nuclear-armed states - particularly the United States and Russia - to commit to never using nuclear weapons first, taking as many weapons off high-alert as possible, culling numbers of deployed warheads, and finally reducing global stockpiles overall. "We know that this is not the full answer, but if we could do that, we'd have a much safer world," explained Robinson. "At the moment, we're going the other way. We're in a new nuclear arms race. We're talking about hypersonic missiles. We're talking about a space force and we're talking about satellites being attacked. It's very scary." Scary indeed: there is a theory that the very possession of such weapons is an incentive to use them. Back in 1967, the then US Secretary of Defence, Robert McNamara warned that "There is a kind of mad momentum intrinsic to the development of all new nuclear weaponry. If a weapon system works and works well, there is strong pressure from



CapT-14 MBT, Russia's Deadliest Tank to Enter Service in 2020



Russia's Iskander-M mobile short-range ballistic missile system

many directions to procure and deploy the weapon out of all proportion to the prudent level required." This is especially worrying given that the new hypersonic weapons are only really likely to help win a conflict if used first, quickly and before the other side has begun to fight. It's a case of shoot first and ask questions if there are any survivors.

Writing in a blog for the Foreign Policy Research Institute, Felix K. Chang, a



Russian Air Force Tu-160 Strategic Bomber

Senior Fellow, expressed concern over the continuing tensions between Russia and Ukraine, which, in 2018, resulted in an attack by Russian forces on three Ukrainian vessels - a tug and two gunboats - in the Kerch Strait as they tried to sail from the Black Sea to the Azov Sea to reinforce Ukraine's small naval force at Mariupol and Berdyansk. Six Ukrainian sailors were injured and twenty-three in all were arrested by the Russians. "Russia had already begun to strengthen the forces in its Southern Military District, which spans from near Volgograd to Russia's border with Georgia and Azerbaijan," Chang wrote. "Naturally, that has caused concern in Kiev, since the district also abuts the restive eastern Ukrainian region of Donbas and is responsible for Crimea, which Russia annexed from Ukraine in 2014."

Chang points out that one of Ukraine's biggest worries has been Russia's reactivation of the 150th Motorized Rifle Division in late 2016. "Posted only 50 km from the border between Russia and Ukraine, it is equipped with an unusually large number of tanks. Its force structure includes two tank regiments, rather than the standard one; and each of its two motorized rifle regiments has an attached tank battalion. Russian media refers to the division as the 'steel monster.'" The build-up of Russian forces has accelerated recently, however. In January, 2018, Russia's Southern Military District comprised 415 tactical aircraft and 259 helicopters. A year later, the numbers had swollen to more than 500 tactical aircraft and 340 helicopters, whilst according to a senior Ukrainian commander, the number of Russian army battalions within easy reach of the frontier jumped from eight to twelve. And that's not all. Chang writes that Russia's biggest investment in its Southern Military District has

been in air defence. Two years ago, it announced plans to build a Voronezh-M over-the-horizon early warning radar system near Sevastopol in 2019. "In late 2018, Russia sent one of its most advanced A-50 airborne early warning and control aircraft to Saki Air Base in Crimea," says Chang, "which is home to dozens of Russian Su-30 fighters as well as Su-24 attack aircraft. Perhaps most striking of all, by the end of 2018, Russia had concentrated at least five of its most advanced S-400 air defence batteries in and around Crimea. Together with two other S-300 air defence batteries nearby, Russian land-based air defences in the region could simultaneously launch as many as 192 surface-to-air missiles." Chang reports that their crews have been training not only to counter enemy aircraft but also to tackle ship-launched cruise missiles, making the Crimea and Donbas region among the most heavily-defended in the world. Many western observers wonder why, if Russia really has the peaceful intentions Putin claims, is he so massively building up his forces there?

## ON YOUR MARKS, GET SET

Of course, the United States and China have not been sitting idly by as Russia steps up its capabilities for war. The China Academy of Aerospace Aerodynamics described the August 2018 test flight of its Xingkong-2 'waverider' hypersonic cruise missile in glowing terms. The wedge-shaped vehicle, it's claimed, separated from the rocket that launched it, coasting towards its target at speed of up to Mach 6, bobbing and weaving through the stratosphere, "surfing on its own shockwaves". No video evidence of the test was released, but the Communist Party's newspaper, Global Times, said that it meant the new weapon would be able "break through any current generation anti-missile defence system."

The United States is conducting research into ways to defend against hypersonic weapons, whilst also working on its own versions. Experts agree that chasing them would be a tall order, so researchers are also investigating directed-energy weapons: lasers, neutral particle beams and microwaves or radio waves. Directed-energy weapons were part of the US 'Star Wars' military defence scheme back in the 1980s. They were found to be impractical then but four decades later they may be a more realistic bet. The US has, however, abandoned plans to build and test a 500-kilowatt airborne laser and a space-based neutral particle beam. It all begins to sound as if we're entering Gene Roddenberry territory: ahead warp factor one, Mr. Sulu.

Not all of Russia's new arsenal is either nuclear or even hypersonic. There are new conventional weapons, too, like the PAK-FA fifth generation fighter, or Per-



© Pravda report

A prototype of the PAK DA Stealth Bomber



PAK-DA Poslannik

spektivniy Aviacionniy Complex Frontovoi Aviatsii, to give it its full name. It's a multi-rôle aircraft with stealth design to minimise its radar visibility and it can carry six long-range air-to-air or air-to-ground missiles and bombs. Several of these aircraft are already in service and by 2040 there will be up to 450 of them.

Add to that the PAK-DA Poslannik long-range strategic stealth bomber, built by Tupolev. Then there's the four-engine swing-wing Blackjack Tu-160 bomber, capable of delivering its payload by flying below enemy radar, armed with the new Kh-101 long-range cruise missile. Just in case war should ever break out between Russia and China, there's the next-generation tank for the Russian Ground Forces, the Y-14 Armata is a replacement for the T-72/T-80/T-90 series of tanks. It is a totally new design, bigger, heavier, with more protection and better armament, ideal for rapid counter-attacks into Manchuria. The T-14 outclasses China's frontline Type 99 tanks, which are based on an older design. Armour appears to be composite laid out in a modular fashion, making it easier to repair. Weapons include an improved 125-millimeter main gun, 12.7-millimeter remotely operated machine gun and 7.62-millimeter coaxial machine gun.

There are more items on Putin's list, although he insists it's not about brinkmanship, sabre-rattling or threats, merely an issue of defence.

Russia has, in the past, accused NATO of warmongering by increasing its military presence in the Baltic. NATO has always argued that it is only in response to aggressive remarks from Moscow about Poland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Valery Gerasimov, the Russian military's Chief of General Staff, has said that the

Alliance's troop movements, exercises and missile units point to an "intention to go to war". Meanwhile the European Union has always sought friendly relations with Russia, even having a delegation to monitor political life in the country over issues such as human rights, justice, freedom and security. According to the European External Action Service (EEAS), Russia remains a natural partner for the EU and a strategic player combating the regional and global challenges, despite the freeze that settled in after Russia's 2014 annexation of Crimea and its support for separatists in Eastern Ukraine. Although some of the contact mechanisms remain frozen, the EEAS remains theoretically hopeful of better relations. "Both the EU and Russia," says its website, "have a long record of

members and restore their voting rights, was controversial: Ukrainian members immediately walked out in protest and there were scuffles between Russian and Ukrainian journalists when the Russian delegation returned.

## LESSONS LEARNED

Reform and restructuring of Russia's military began in earnest in 2008, after Putin temporarily stepped down from the presidency to meet the demands of the constitution, assuming the rôle of prime minister instead, while Dmitry Medvedev kept the presidential chair warm. This coincided with Russia's disappointing performance in its war with Georgia in August that year.

Reforms were steered through by Ana-



Vladimir Putin with Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu (left) and Commander of the Strategic Missile Forces Sergei Karakayev during a visit to the Peter the Great Military Academy of the Strategic Missile Forces

cooperation on issues of bilateral and international concern including climate change, migration, drugs trafficking, trafficking of human beings, organised crime, counter-terrorism, non-proliferation, the Middle East peace process, and protection of human rights. Furthermore, the EU develops a range of informal operational contacts that allow for a detailed understanding of Russian priorities and policies on international issues, provide early warning of potential problems and support the coordination of policy planning." Members of the Russian Duma have returned to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe after walking out in protest over the Assembly's condemnation of its actions in Crimea. The decision in June 2019 to re-admit the Russian

toly Serdyukov, who was defence minister at the time. Rumours of corruption began to circulate, however, and Putin chose to replace Serdyukov with Sergei Shoigu, seen as a 'safe pair of hands'. Putin reappointed Shoigu earlier this year, making him the longest-serving head of the defence ministry since the fall of the Soviet Union. Shoigu gets on very well with the Chief of the General Staff, Army General Valery Gerasimov and he has been praised in the pages of Komsomolskaya Pravda by retired colonel Viktor Baranets, one of that newspaper's columnists. In the article, Baranets said that Russia's armed forces had benefited under Shoigu from his continuing reforms and from the operations carried out in Syria in support of Bashar al-Assad. He also highlighted



© Sergei Bobylev/TASS

Tigr armored vehicle

another important factor: Shoigu has an excellent relationship with Deputy Prime Minister Yury Borisov, who's responsible for overseeing the defence and space industry. Strangely, perhaps, the article makes no reference to the conflict in Ukraine. There is no doubt, however, that Shoigu, working in tandem with Borisov, has made a difference to the modernisation of Russia's armed forces. Baranets points out that when Shoigu originally took up his post, only 10 to 15% of Russia's weapons were new. That figure is now around 70%. Meanwhile, the new Prime Minister, Mikhail Mishustin is making the further development of defence manufacturers a key priority. Shoigu is one of the survivors of Putin's recent re-shuffle, and this may be as much to do with his network of contacts as with his actual achievements. His partnership with Borisov ensures a close link between the defence ministry and defence industries.

One observer, Fredrik Westerlund, deputy research director and co-editor of the report 'Russian Military Capability in a Ten-Year Perspective - 2019', wrote that "Over the past ten years, Russia has bridged the gap between its policy ambitions and its military capability." Analysing Russia's armed forces, their arsenal and their fighting power, as well as the effects of political and economic factors, the report finds that "the impressive pace of improvement of Russia's Armed Forces in the past decade is probably not sustainable. Instead, the next ten years will consolidate these achievements, notably the ability to launch a regional war. Strategic deterrence, primarily with nuclear forces, will remain the foremost priority." Project manager and the

report's co-author, Dr. Gudren Persson, adds that "The current trend in Russian security policy indicates that the authoritarian policy at home and the anti-Western foreign policy will continue. We're in for the long-haul of confrontation with the West. We can also expect a recurrent use of armed force and other means to sustain its great power ambitions and protect Russian interests abroad." Putin



Russia's annual military parade

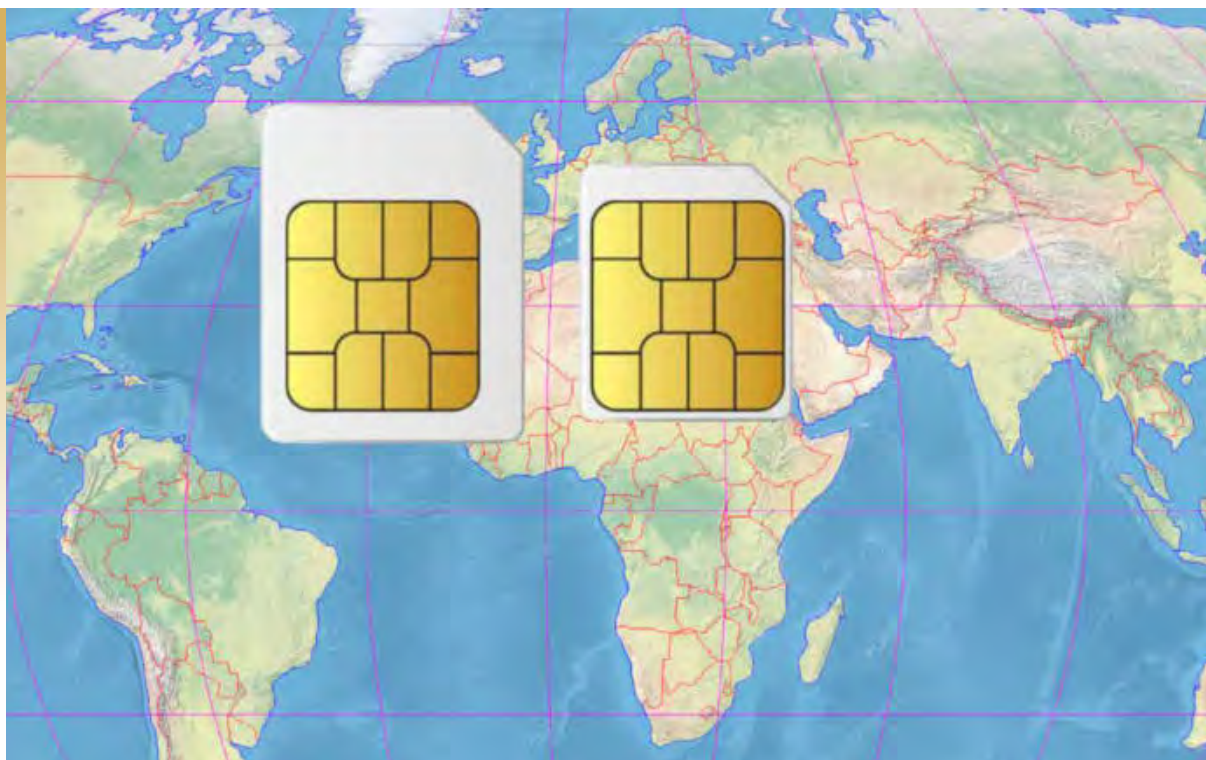
often accuses NATO and the United States of trying to push Russia into an arms race its economy will never let it win, but this is misleading. With Putin at the helm, Russia is more likely to follow a strategy that will be more than enough to provide for Russia's defence.

But while Russia gears up for a war Putin says he doesn't want, it's worth remembering a few facts. As the EEAS

states, the EU remains a key trading partner for Russia, representing in 2018 €253.6-billion and 42.8% of Russia's trade. Russia is now the fourth largest trading partner of the EU for trade in goods, representing 6.4% of overall EU trade. Russia is also the fourth export destination of EU goods (€85.3-billion in 2018) and the third largest source of goods imports (€168.3-billion in 2018). Imports from Russia to EU increased by 16.7% from 2017 to 2018 and was driven by the growth of imports of energy products from Russia that account for some 70% of imports from Russia to the EU. In the first half of 2019, EU-Russia trade has to a large extent remained at the same level, compared to the first half of 2018. The same can be said of EU exports to Russia. But Russia cannot afford to be unaware that it is not as wealthy as, say, China. Its GDP in 2018 was \$165,290-million (€148,761-million); China's was \$13,368,073-million (€12,031,265-million). Russia is rich in natural resources and its people could be better off, enjoying the advantages

nature has generously provided to their country, as Anton Chekhov wrote in the *Cherry Orchard*, from which the title of this article is a quote: "The Lord God has given us vast forests, immense fields, wide horizons; surely we ought to be giants, living in such a country as this." Indeed so, but not, perhaps, if you spend it all on weapons.

*T. Kingsley Brooks*



# THE SIM HIGHJACKERS:

*How criminals are stealing millions by hijacking phone numbers*

**S**IM swappers arrested by Spain, Austria and Romania as police gears up against this growing threat

It is a common story: the signal bars disappears from their mobile phones, they call the phone number – it rings, but it's not their phone ringing. They try to log into their bank account, but the password fails. They have become the newest victim of SIM swap fraud and their phone number is now in the control of a criminal.

SIM swap fraud is committed when a fraudster dupes the victim's mobile phone operator into porting the victim's mobile number to a SIM in the possession of the fraudster and so starts receiving any incoming calls and text messages, including banking one-time-passwords which are sent to the victim's phone number.

The fraudster can then perform transactions, using credentials gathered by other techniques such as malware, and when the bank sends a one-time-password via SMS, the fraudster receives it and completes the authorisation of the transaction.

With SIM swapping making the headlines in recent months, police across Europe has been gearing up against

this threat, with two operations targeting SIM highjackers coming recently to fruition.

## OPERATION QUINIENTOS DUSIM

Back in January, investigators from the Spanish National Police (Policía Nacional) together with the Civil Guard (Guardia Civil) and Europol targeted suspects across Spain, believed to be part of a hacking ring which stole over €3 million in a series of SIM swapping attacks. 12 individuals were arrested in Benidorm (5), Granada (6) and Valladolid (1).

Composed of nationals between the ages of 22-52 years from Italy, Romania, Colombia and Spain, this criminal gang struck over 100 times, stealing between €6,000 and €137,000 from bank accounts of unsuspecting victims per attack.

The modus operandi was simple, yet effective. The criminals managed to obtain the online banking credentials from the victims of the different banks by means of hacking techniques such as the use of banking Trojans or other types of malware. Once they had these credentials, the

suspects would apply for a duplicate of the SIM cards of the victims, providing fake documents to the mobile service providers. With these duplicates in their possession, they would receive directly to their phones the second factor authentication codes the banks would send to confirm transfers.

The criminals then proceeded to make fraudulent transfers from the victims' accounts to money mule accounts used to hide their traces. All this was done in a very short period of time – between one or two hours – which is the time it would take for the victim to realise that his/her phone number was no longer working.

## OPERATION SMART CASH

An eight-month long investigation between the Romanian National Police (Poliția Română) and the Austrian Criminal Intelligence Service (Bundeskriminalamt) with the support of Europol has led to the arrest of 14 members of a crime gang who emptied bank accounts in Austria by gaining control over their victims' phone numbers.

The suspects were arrested earlier in February in Romania in simultaneous warrants at their homes in Bucharest (1), Constanta (5), Mures (6), Braila (1) and Sibiu (1).

The thefts, which netted dozens of victims in Austria, were perpetrated by the gang in the spring of 2019 in a series of SIM swapping attacks.

Once having gained control over a victim's phone number, this particular gang would then use stolen banking credentials to log onto a mobile banking application to generate a withdraw transaction which they then validated with a one-time password sent by the bank via SMS allowing them to withdraw money at cardless ATMs.

It is estimated that this gang managed to steal over half a million euros this way from unsuspecting bank account owners.

Both these cases were referred to Europol's European Cybercrime Centre (EC3) due to the demanding investigative measures run across borders. Its dedicated teams of specialists helped the national authorities build an up-to-date intelligence picture of the different criminal groups, facilitating the development of a joint strategy to target the criminals.

*"Fraudsters are always coming up with new ways to steal money from the accounts of unsuspecting victims. Although seemingly innocuous, SIM swapping robs victims of more than just their phones: SIM hijackers can empty your bank account in a matter of hours. Law enforcement is gearing up against this threat, with coordinated actions happening across Europe,"* said Fernando Ruiz, acting Head of Europol's European Cybercrime Centre.

## DON'T BE THE NEXT VICTIM

So how can you prevent SIM swapping? Simplistically put, it all starts with identify theft. Criminals can get hold of your personal data by searching for it on social media, by

attacking your device with malware that will grant them access to your sensitive data or through social engineering attacks such as phishing, vishing or smishing. Here are a few tips to help you stay one step ahead:

- Keep your devices' software up to date
- Do not click on links or download attachments that come with unexpected emails
- Do not reply to suspicious emails or engage over the phone with callers that request your personal information
- Limit the amount of personal data you share online
- Try to use two-factor authentication for your online services, rather than having an authentication code sent over SMS
- When possible, do not associate your phone number with sensitive online accounts
- Set up your own PIN to restrict access to the SIM card. Do not share this PIN with anyone.
- If your phone loses reception suddenly in an area where you should have connectivity:
- Report the situation to your service provider
- If there are suspicious transactions in your bank account, contact the bank
- Immediately change all the passwords for your online accounts
- Keep all evidence, in case you will need to contact the police

Source : Europol





© Wikimedia

European Parliament in Strasbourg

# ALL CHANGE?

## *What the departure of Britain means for the European Parliament's political mix*

I was in Strasbourg at the exact moment Britain ceased to be part of the European Union. I wasn't there because of the EU but because of the Council of Europe, that much-maligned and (in Britain) misunderstood body that pre-dates the Treaties of Rome and of which, to the surprise and incomprehension of many British people, the UK remains a member. It was also responsible for the creation of the European flag, originally as its logo, three decades before the EU (EEC in those days) institutions adopted it. I went to bed that night a citizen of the European Union and awoke the next morning as merely a subject of her Britannic Majesty,

Queen Elizabeth II. On that first day of non-membership, I travelled back to Britain expecting something to seem different, but it didn't. The TGV train from Strasbourg got to Paris on time, after reaching a speed of 299 kilometres per hour, and I passed easily and quickly through electronic passport control at the Gare du Nord to board my Eurostar as if nothing had happened. In London, I boarded a British train homewards (it was much slower than the TGV).

Of course, everything is supposed to stay the same until the end of 2020, even though I have since discovered when renewing car insurance that the time I can spend driving across continental Europe will be, from the end of December 2020, restricted to 180 days a year and that I shall then need a green card for my car insurance to do so. Little changes, for now; more will doubtless follow and I'm sure most of those who voted for Britain 'to boldly go' off into the great unknown will not notice the difference affecting them even then, until they want to book a foreign holiday and discover that they need a visa and health insurance for it. No doubt, egged on by Britain's largely Euro-sceptic (and often untruthful) media, they'll blame the EU for that, too.

The myths perpetrated about the EU and designed to foster scepticism were very common; some of the silliest (such as a claim that all trawlermen would be forced to wear hairnets) were dreamed up by Britain's current Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, when he was a correspondent for the UK newspaper, the Daily Telegraph. He considered it "a terrific jape", he later said in an interview. Other daft claims he made included that "Brussels recruits sniffers to ensure that Euro-manure smells the same", that the EU was saying snails are fish (they never did, of course) and that the EU wanted to standardise the size of condoms. He also claimed credit for making the then Commission President Jacques Delors a bogeyman in the British press. He did it for a joke and because it amused him (and pleased the Daily Telegraph) but it led to Britain leaving the EU.

Quite an achievement, if it was intentional. With Johnson, one can never tell. But because the stories were well-written and colourful (if totally or at least largely untrue) they proved popular with right-wing conservatives and Fleet Street editors, who told their own Brussels correspondents to follow suit. They found most EU stories rather



© Wikimedia

Jacques Delors in Luxemburg in 2009

dull and technical (they were, very often) so why not fill up the pages with nationalist fairy stories? After all, only foreigners were offended, and the British press has long had scant regard for them. Johnson told the BBC that it had been like throwing bricks over his neighbour's wall and listening to the crash as they broke his neighbour's greenhouse. A strange hobby for a prime minister, one might think, and not one likely to have found favour with Harold Macmillan, say, or Margaret Thatcher, nor with Disraeli nor the Viscount Palmerston (in Palmerston's case he'd probably have sent gunboats and lobbed shells over the wall instead). Coincidentally, though, Johnson's Daily Telegraph office in Brussels was in a street named after that notable Whig premier: Palmerstonlaan.

## PLUS ÇA CHANGE

On my last day in Strasbourg I was offered words of consolation by a great many people, including bar staff, waiters and shopkeepers: nobody wanted Britain to leave and invariably found a kind word (even a hug) for anyone British who shared their regret. At least I know I shall return to Strasbourg and be welcome.

So, what of the European Parliament? As a journalist, I covered it from 1986 to 2013, only missing a handful of plenary sessions in all that time. The departure of seventy-three British MEPs has made a difference, not only to the overall membership, which has gone from 751 to 705, but also to the political make-up. Of the seventy-three seats vacated by British MEPs, forty-six are being kept back

for others who will come when more countries join the EU. The other twenty-seven have been shared out among fourteen existing member states which were thought to be under-represented. Of course, all these changes mean that the political groups have changed, too. In the European Parliament, MEPs do not sit according to their country but according to whichever political group they adhere to. The post-Brexit European Parliament would appear to be marginally more right-wing, reflecting, perhaps, the populism and nationalism that is slowly spreading across Europe and much of the rest of the world. Until the corona virus scare, Italy was absorbed with the 5-Star movement's loss of support to far-right candidates. Now, the virus takes precedent.

After Britain's withdrawal, the centre-right European People's Party (EPP) grew from 182 members to 187, the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (S&D) shrank from 154 to 147, as did the Renew Europe group (formerly the Liberal ALDE group), from 108 to 98. They suffered the largest loss. The Greens/European Free Alliance group (G/EFA) went down from 74 to 67, but the far-right Identity and Democracy group went up from 73 to 76. The European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR) dropped from 66 members to 61 and the Group of the European United Left/Nordic Green Left (GUE) went down by one, from 40 to 39. The group of non-aligned members, known as the 'non-inscrit', which had included Britain's disruptive stunt-loving Brexit Party members, dropped from 53 members to 29 with their somewhat noisy departure. The leader of the Renew Europe Group, Belgian Liberal Guy Verhofstadt commented: "No-one will miss them". The other, harder-working British MEPs will be missed, though, according to Seán Kelly, an Irish Fine Gael party member off the EPP group. "The UK will be a huge loss to the European Parliament, particularly for Irish MEPs," he told me, "and it is a pity that they have now departed. UK MEPs were often our natural allies on certain major issues. On the occasions that I was rapporteur on a file, whenever I needed to build support, I would often go to UK MEPs and knew that they would deliver."

A good day for the EPP, then, and bad news for moderates generally? Possibly not. The European Parliament doesn't have a government, nor does any group ever have an overall majority, and the

many issues it debates are decided on a simple vote; no one party has total control, despite the EPP being the largest group. "Although this is a marginal strengthening of the EPP and the far-right," says former Labour Party and S&D member Richard Corbett, who is also an EU constitutional expert, "the fundamentals remain the same: this is a hung parliament where majorities have to be built issue by issue, through explanation, persuasion and negotiation among the mainstream parties, usually with a broad based majority emerging, sometimes with a centre-left one, sometimes a centre-right one, but never normally a right wing one. Remarkably,



Conservatives party slogan

it works." Corbett is right: no single group ever gets everything it wants. Compromise is essential. The Director of the Federal Trust, Brendan Donnelly, another former MEP who left the Conservatives because of their growing Euro-scepticism, highlighted one of changes since his time in the Parliament: "I remember that there was quite an effective centre-right majority made up of the EPP, the Liberals, the EDG and the Gaullists," he told me, "I think it is possible that a new centrist coalition of the EPP, the S&D, the Liberals and some of the Greens may develop over time as a counter-weight to the radical Eurosceptic parties, who are now more numerous than before, but still have nothing like a majority."

That's largely why Nigel Farage's Brexit Party and UKIP before them relied on disruption rather than persuasion and a democratic vote to achieve their ends. But a sense of realism may have to prevail, according to Donnelly: "the need for an absolute majority of the Parliament to make the EP's views count in dealings with the Council will probably be a powerful force for compromise and collaboration between these 'establishment parties.'" If the Council, with its variegated membership,



Boris Johnson, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom



Nigel Farage, Member of the European Parliament for the United Kingdom

can compromise in order to adopt legislative texts, the European Parliament may well find itself obliged to do likewise in order to maintain its relevance in the negotiations.” We shall see.

However, the new make-up of political power inside the European Parliament is reflected, none-the-less, in the reaction of MEPs to the European Commission’s new climate law. This aims to cut carbon emissions by 40% by 2030 but with the option later this year of increasing that target to 50% or even 55%, which is more than the EU signed up to under the Paris Agreement in 2016. It also aims for climate neutrality by 2050, a target described by teenage activist Greta Thunberg, who met the Commission and the Parliament’s Environment Committee, as “surrender”. She told MEPs they had to lead the fight against global warming. “Nature does not bargain,” she reminded them, “and you cannot make deals with physics. We will not allow you to surrender our future”. Her views were echoed by the United Left group, the GUE, whose co-president, France’s Manon Aubry, said “While humanity races against time to save our planet, the European Commission proposes a climate law that postpones setting a binding trajectory towards carbon neutrality and fails to address the root causes of climate chaos such as fossil fuel subsidies and free trade.” The EPP, on the other hand, clearly fears the law goes too far. The group’s environment spokesperson, German MEP Peter Liese, said “Even if we do only 50%, that is 10% more than we have committed to in Paris, and I don’t know any major economy in the world that’s doing such a big step, so we shouldn’t under-estimate the challenge to go from 40 to 50% in

2030 and that’s why it’s not wise to go to 55% without further analysis.” Concerns have also been raised about plans by the Commission to bypass Parliament when it comes to tightening emission targets. What is more, the EPP Group also wants other continents to make similar efforts to tackle global warming. And the EPP outnumber the GUE by 187 to 39, you will recall.

While I was saying a sad farewell to Strasbourg, with its white storks, bateaux-mouches and winstubs (small traditional Alsace restaurants or cafés where you can get wine, beer and local dishes), the leaders of the three main EU institutions were meeting in Brussels to discuss the future. They’d clearly discussed it many times before but Britain’s actual departure somehow concentrated their minds. Before that, a great number of people thought (and many hoped) it would never happen. But it did, of course. The three - European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, European Council President Charles Michel and the President of the European Parliament, David Sassoli - announced their thoughts under the heading ‘A New Dawn for Europe’. Von der Leyen admitted, though, that the sun was setting on more than 45 years of UK



European Council President Charles Michel



European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen



President of the European Parliament, David Sassoli

membership. She spoke of “our fondness for the United Kingdom - something which goes far beyond membership of our Union,” going on to say “We have always deeply regretted the UK’s decision to leave but we have always fully respected it, too.” However, although the UK is leaving the political and economic club that is the EU, it remains part of Europe geographically. And, of course, as always (and as Johnson has personally discovered recently) divorce is never cheap. Britain must pay £33-billion (€38-billion) towards the projects it agreed to during its period of membership; all countries who held membership at that time must pay their share, even if Britain’s more rabid and right-wing newspapers urged the government to refuse to accept the bill. If they do, they know that Britain will not be trusted in any future deals. Eton-educated Johnson will surely know that a gentleman must always pay his tab.

## PACK UP YOUR TROUBLES

In a speech to the London School of Economics (LSE), Ursula von der Leyen said that “without an extension of the transition period beyond 2020, you cannot expect to agree on every single aspect of our new partnership. We will have to prioritise.” However, it’s not at all clear that what Britain wants to prioritise is the same as what the EU might choose. Almost certainly not. For a start, look at Ireland. Throughout the three decades of the so-called ‘Troubles’ (1968 to 1998), the UK media too often took a simplistic ‘us-and-them’ approach to reporting. It was a frequent complaint of Northern Irish politician John Hume, of the Social Democratic and Labour Party.

The story was always far more complicated than those in mainland Britain realised, but the UK media - at

least at its most popular level - doesn't really 'do' nuance and subtlety. This was cowboys-and-Indians stuff, the good guys and the bad. Bang-bang, you're dead, although the reality for those living in the North was less 'Gunfight at the OK Coral' and much more scary, unless you took it in your stride. A Sinn Féin councillor I met, long after the Troubles ended, told me how, as a teenager, he and others - Republican and Loyalist - had gathered in Ormeau Park in Belfast for what he cheerfully referred to as "recreational violence". The British media failed to reflect this aspect of the situation and few commented on the fact that the International Hotel, where most foreign correspondents stayed, was bombed five times, while just across the road, the beautiful and splendid Crown Liquor Saloon wasn't. If you're ever in Belfast, you must visit it: Victorian brass-work, marble and polished mahogany. Oh, and they serve a very good Guinness, too. But it was where the leaders of the principle 'terrorist' organisations met from time to time in closed booths to discuss their differences and divide up the loot from their protection rackets, whilst raising the odd Jameson's to each other. For many, it was a business, albeit a largely criminal one, as much as it was a fight for freedom. When the ceasefire was declared in 1994 (I was in Belfast at the time), serving members of the IRA found themselves no longer able to claim the bounty paid to its soldiers for a 'hit' - a bombing or shooting. It left them short of funds, which is why the numbers of 'punishment beatings' went up. OK, so you could no longer kill someone but the IRA and UDF commanders wanted to help their troops to pay for an upcoming wedding or funeral, or a new hat for the wife, so they looked back through their records to seek out those who may have betrayed them in the past. The killers were sent to break legs and arms, instead, thus earning the extra cash they needed.

Given the way England in particular had treated the Irish, the anger was hardly surprising. With Johnson's plans to avoid a hard border between North and South, expect further fireworks. Already, the Scottish government is seeking clarification from Westminster over who will be responsible for implementing Johnson's proposed 'border in the Irish Sea'. The EU insists that Britain must address this issue before trade talks can begin in earnest. The proposal says that when the rest of the UK stops following EU rules on manufactured goods and



Scottish Parliament Building

agriculture at the end of 2020, Northern Ireland will continue to do so in order to prevent a border between the Republic of Ireland and the north.

What's more, Northern Ireland will remain in the EU Customs Union, enforcing EU rules at its ports, which must mean customs checks between Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK, something Northern Irish politicians totally oppose. Indeed, Northern Ireland's Agriculture Minister, Edwin Poots, has already told the Stormont assembly that Scottish ministers have refused to co-operate. The Scottish people voted to remain in the EU in the 2016 referendum and the Scottish government have said they will not permit infrastructure to be created in Scotland's ports to enforce a border with Northern Ireland. Johnson has said there will be no 'checks and controls' between Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK, but EU negotiator Michel Barnier has said that with Johnson's exit plan they are unavoidable.

According to the Belfast News Letter, MP Sir Jeffrey Donaldson of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) has said that his party "will welcome any measures to ensure Northern Ireland businesses continue to have unfettered access to the UK single market". He went on to say "Great Britain is Northern Ireland's main market with 72% of all goods leaving Belfast port destined for Britain. An Irish Sea border will increase costs and will be bad for trade between Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The prime minister should never have conceded to the EU that a border could be placed in the Irish Sea." Sinn Féin MP Chris Hazzard is afraid that Johnson's government will ignore its promises to Northern

Ireland and impose on it the border that it promised would not exist. He told the Belfast News Letter "While there is no such thing as a good Brexit, the protections secured in the Irish Protocol and Withdrawal Agreement offer some protections to local communities and businesses in the north. It now appears the British government is planning to ride roughshod over what has already been agreed; this would be completely unacceptable." The row is, for now, largely confined to Ireland and Scotland. The last thing the people of the United Kingdom want is a return to headlines full of Brexit. Some may even be relieved that the media now seem preoccupied with the corona virus instead.

## KEEPING IT LEVEL

The EU insists that its future relations with the United Kingdom must be fair, with equivalent rules on things like "social, environmental, tax, state aid, consumer protection and climate matters," according to the European Parliament, whose members voted by 543 votes to 39, with 69 abstentions, for such an arrangement.

The aims are agreed on the EU side, according to German MEP David McAllister. "The European Union is united," he said, "mutual trust and respect should prevail to ensure the best possible outcome for both parties. EU negotiator Michel Barnier and his team can count on the European Parliament's full support". From the EU's standpoint, the interests of the remaining 27 member states are of greater importance than the interests of the one choosing to leave. "As stated in our latest resolution," said McAllister,



German MEP David McAllister

“the EU must do its utmost when negotiating with the UK to guarantee the European Union’s interests. We take note of the UK’s mandate published on 27 February. Members reiterated in their resolution their determination to establish a future relationship with the UK that is as close as possible, noting nonetheless that this will have to be different from that enjoyed by the UK as a member state of the EU.”

The EU says relations must be based on a level playing field, but British government ministers seem to be digging divots out of it and casting doubt on any future trade deal at all. That sort of talk plays well with a British electorate that voted for a populist, right-wing government, just to ensure the UK’s exit from Europe. But right-wing populism is not a single tendency; it has many faces and they are different in each country. Europe’s increasing tendency towards xenophobia has been partly - perhaps even mainly - stoked by fears over immigration. Now, with Turkey having opened its borders towards Greece, there has been a surge; refugees from Idlib are starting to arrive where they are not, by and large, welcome. There have even been reports of shots being fired at life

rafts carrying men, women and children towards the Greek border.

Greek MEP Kostas Arvanitis angrily commented “This is not our Europe! The Europe we know stands firm in solidarity with Greeks and refugees, resolutely in favour of the implementation of International Conventions, active in the protection of fundamental, human rights.” It’s not certain, though, that that is still the case. People are also turning away from political cooperation in other fields, too, in favour of a narrow nationalism that rejects other countries’ points of view. That, perhaps, is what fuelled the vote in Britain’s 2016 referendum, although it was the issue of immigration that seemed to bother the public more. Other far-right movements have sprung up across Europe, from Germany’s *Alternativ für Deutschland* (AfD) to Fidesz in Hungary, Italy’s *Lega Nord* and Poland’s *Law and Justice Party* (PIS). All reject the kind of collegiate thinking that marked the EU in the 1980s and 90s.

## HUDDLED MASSES, GO HOME

America has seen Donald Trump’s rise to power, boosted by right-wing populist Steve Bannon, among others. It has accelerated anti-immigrant rhetoric and during his watch, hate crimes have increased; Trump seldom condemns such actions or else accuses the victims of sharing the blame for it. In India, Narendra Modi has pushed his nationalist Hindu agenda, posing a risk to non-Hindus and threatening to abandon secularism. Twenty or thirty years ago, the voices favouring division in the world were relatively few and isolated; that is no longer the case. According to Reporting Democracy, which is run by the Balkan Investigative Reporting Network, “illiberal populists in Central and Southeast Europe defended their ground or made gains in 2019, undermining democratic norms even in the face of mass protests.” The information comes from the independent human rights group, Freedom House. As Reporting Democracy writes on its website “From Czech Republic and Poland to Montenegro and Serbia, populist regimes defied civic pressure and continued to chip away at principles of liberal democracy,” quoting the latest annual *Freedom in the World* report from the New York-based NGO, Freedom House. Poland is accused of

using tax-payer-funded media to get its message across to voters, denying a platform to opponents while seeking to rid itself of uncooperative judges. And in the Balkans, authoritarian regimes continued to make it hard to hold power to account, it found. “In Montenegro and Serbia,” writes Reporting Democracy, “independent journalists, opposition figures and other perceived foes of the government faced ongoing harassment, intimidation, and sometimes violence. Public frustration with the entrenched ruling parties boiled over into large protests in both countries, but they failed to yield any meaningful change.” Freedom House’s report makes depressing reading for those who hoped Europeans would march smilingly into the future, hand-in-hand.

“The report shows clearly once again, democracy is in decline,” said Mike Abramowitz, president of Freedom House. “Political rights and civil liberties are threatened in free societies and repressive ones alike. It is possible to turn the tide on this trend, but it is going to take concerted efforts from governments, pressure from the people, and partnership from the business community.” Good luck with that, then.

Meanwhile in the European Parliament, following Britain’s referendum, Nigel Farage, then leader of the UK Independence Party, reminded fellow-MEPs that he’d once told them he would lead Britain out of Europe and they had laughed. “I have to say, you’re not laughing now,” he quipped. They weren’t, either. He was right about leaving but not about leading the party that would achieve it; that task fell to an old Etonian who had lived and worked in Brussels, amusing himself and building a reputation by making up anti-EU stories the British media (and sections of the public) liked, and which successive British governments were forced to rebut, even if those rebuttals were seldom printed in the offending newspapers or, indeed, at all.

## MY COUNTRY, RIGHT OR FURTHER RIGHT

According to the Pew Research Centre, although most populist parties in Europe differ on points of detail, most (but not all) share a dislike of the European Union itself. If the parties represented in the European Parliament see that trend



Greek MEP Kostas Arvanitis

as a vote winner, they will inevitably be tempted to reflect that in their voting patterns. Looking at Germany's AfD, for instance, only 42% of its supporters have a positive attitude towards the EU, while 76% do not. With France's right-wing National Rally (formerly the Front National), only 29% favour the EU while 58% are opposed. The trend is fairly universal but not exclusively so. Take Hungary, for instance. It holds up - just - for the ruling Fidesz party, with 62% favourable towards the EU and 73% opposed, but not for the other nationalist party, Jobbik, which used to have a uniformed militant wing and spout xenophobic slogans. With them, 82% now favour the EU and only 66% have a negative view. Much the same is true for Slovakia's OĽaNO, 84% of whose membership likes the EU while 64% don't. Yes, I know the numbers don't add up to 100%; they just give a general idea of attitudes among the parties' supporters. Interestingly, in each case, supporters of far-right and populist parties have confidence in Vladimir Putin to represent their interests on the global stage. In the Czech Republic's Freedom and Direct Democracy party, 61% have faith in Putin and only 24% don't. The PVV party in the Netherlands has a 32% support for Putin against just 19% of doubters. Even in Britain's formerly-influential UK Independence party, 34% had faith in Putin and only 22% didn't. These are people who campaigned to get out of the EU because they didn't trust it, but they trusted a man who ordered the murders of a former spy and his daughter on British soil, accidentally



Winston Churchill who once said: "The best argument against democracy is a five-minute conversation with the average voter" Photo source: Yousuf Karsh. Library and Archives Canada

killing a British citizen in the process. Don't you find that just a little bit odd? It was Winston Churchill who once said: "The best argument against democracy is a five-minute conversation with the average voter." That is, if you can find an average voter.

Winston Churchill who once said: "The best argument against democracy is a five-minute conversation with the average voter" Photo source: Yousuf Karsh. Library and Archives Canada

In January this year, the European Commission set out its ideas for shaping the Conference on the Future of Europe, which should be launched on what Europhiles refer to as Europe Day, 9 May 2020, the anniversary of Robert Schuman's declaration that launched the European Coal and Steel Community that would one day evolve into the EU. The Communication adopted is the Commission's contribution to the already lively debate around the Conference on the Future of Europe – a 2-year project announced by President Ursula von der Leyen in her Political Guidelines, to give Europeans a greater say on what the European Union does and how it works for them. Von der Leyen said "People need to be at the very centre of all our policies. My wish is therefore that all Europeans will actively contribute to the Conference on the Future of Europe and play a leading role in setting the European Union's priorities. It is only together that we can build our Union of tomorrow." That does, of course, rely on a certain amount of cohesion that, seen from some angles, looks rather frail and insubstantial at the moment. Remember, the last European elections, while enjoying a higher-than-sometimes turn-out, returned a lot of Eurosceptic MEPs.

Dubravka Šuica, Vice-President for Democracy and Demography at the European Commission, stated: "We must seize the momentum of the high turnout at the last European elections and the call for action which that brings. The Conference on the Future of Europe is a unique opportunity to reflect with citizens, listen to them, engage, answer and explain. We will strengthen trust and confidence between the EU institutions and the people we serve. This is our chance to show people that their voice counts in Europe." They may take some convincing. On Europe Day, the institutions throw open their doors and invite in the public, but it's noticeable



Dubravka Šuica, Vice-President for Democracy and Demography at the European Commission

(and regrettable, in my view) that nearly all the people who turn up to have a nose around at the European Commission and the Parliament in Brussels are Belgians who don't have to travel far. In Strasbourg, it's mainly the French and a few Germans from just across the Rhein.

It's that ability to cross borders without a thought that British people don't seem to see as important. Many I've spoken to don't think twice about travelling from England into Scotland or Wales but can't understand why somebody in France should want to take a train to Germany or Italy. UK visitors to Brussels are often surprised to see destination boards in Belgian stations showing Moscow or Istanbul. "I can't understand why anyone would want that," commented one Eurosceptic Brexit supporter to me. There's no point in arguing with someone who prefers narrow horizons to wide ones. It's hard to predict how the new European Parliament will shape up, what attitudes it will take. Anyone who has ever sat in on a European Parliament committee meeting will have heard the high level of technical knowledge displayed. It never ceased to impress me. Don't expect miracles from the Conference on the Future of Europe; there are unlikely to be any. But the EU will undoubtedly move forward without its British contingent. It's just hard to know if it will veer right or left. Probably right, on balance.

*Anthony James*

# THE EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS REFUSES TO RAISE THE CASES OF TWO PRO LIFE NURSES IN THEIR APPEAL AGAINST SWEDEN.

Midwives claimed, among other things, being denied employment due to their beliefs against abortion



Ellinor Grimmark and Linda Steen in front of the European Court building

On the 14 June 2017 two Swedish midwives, Ellinor Grimmark and Linda Steen, filed complaints against Sweden for violations of their freedom of conscience and religion to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg. The two nurses claimed, among other things, that their religious freedom was violated and that they were discriminated against for not being able to continue working as midwives when they stated that they did not want to practice abortions for religious and conscience reasons.

Swedish Ellinor Grimmark and Norwegian Linda Steen - worked in health facilities in the Jönköping region and the Sörmland region, respectively.

Ellinor Grimmark has been denied employment as a midwife at the Högländ Hospital women's clinic and at Ryhov women's clinic and her employment at the hospital of Värnamo was terminated. Ellinor Grimmark was granted a job as a midwife, with respect of her freedom of conscience at Värnamo women's clinic, but the County Council of Jönköping terminated the employment because Ellinor Grimmark's opinion on abortion had been made public through a news article in the local media. Linda Steen had a contract with Nyköping Hospital women's clinic within the County of Sörmland, in which they had agreed that she was to work within the clinic for two years after her midwife studies. However, the County broke the contract when she informed them that she was unable to perform abortions due to her faith and her conscience. She has to commute to Norway, where she can work as a midwife with freedom of conscience.

According to the Court of Justice there is nothing to justify all this, and according to Swedish law, the employee is obliged to exercise all his functions. It also mentions "that the restriction of religious freedom is proportionate and necessary in a democratic society".

"The Court is satisfied that the interference thus had a sufficient basis in Swedish law and that it was prescribed by law. It also pursued the legitimate aim of protecting the health of women seeking an abortion.", indicates the Court's decision.

As for the discrimination claim, in its final decision the court

also stated : "The Court considers that the applicant's situation and the situation of other midwives who had agreed to perform abortions are not sufficiently similar to be compared with each other. The applicant cannot therefore claim to be in the same situation as those midwives. In conclusion, the Court finds that this complaint is manifestly ill-founded and must be rejected pursuant to Article 35 §§ 3 (a) and 4 of the Convention."

"We are very disappointed by the Court's decision not to take up the cases of Ms Grimmark and Ms Steen. A positive judgment from the Court would have been an important step in the protection of the right to freedom of conscience. Medical professionals should be able to work without being forced to choose between their deeply held convictions and their careers. Although freedom of conscience is protected as a fundamental right in almost every other European country, the decision today marks a missed opportunity to uphold this important protection in Sweden. In its short written decision, the Court agreed that Sweden had interfered with the rights of these midwives. *"However, in failing to take up the case, the decision marks a dangerous departure from the Court's purpose in protecting fundamental freedoms,"* said Robert Clarke, Deputy Director of ADF International, a faith-based legal advocacy organization.

Rebecca Ahlstrand, a lawyer with Scandinavian Human Rights Lawyers, which represented the women, said: *"It can neither be considered proportionate nor necessary to prohibit a midwife from working on delivery and maternity care while there is such a great shortage on midwives throughout Sweden. It is women in delivery care who will suffer out of patient safety risks due to this shortage."*

J.L.



Rebecca Ahlstrand



# SAVVIVA

Concierge Services

## EFFICIENT PERSONAL SUPPORT IN BUSY TIMES

- Personal assistance
- Private concierge
- Property management



WE ARE AT YOUR SERVICE, 24/7  
CALL NOW

Experience Belgium's leading  
concierge service

SAVVIVA

[www.savviva.be](http://www.savviva.be) | +32 2 669 07 29 | [concierge@savviva.be](mailto:concierge@savviva.be)



© eitraumaterials

Aerial view of an open pit mine

# EIT RAWMATERIALS:

## *Advanced training for mining industry professionals*

### **LIFELONG LEARNING IN REAL MINING CONDITIONS**

**P**ractical training and learning over the mining value chain are among the key components of lifelong knowledge building of mining experts and recognised as a challenge in the development of sustainable mining sector. However, it's not so easy to find meaningful training opportunities, with the possibility of hands-on experiences of the multiple activities taking place in an operating mine.

### **OPEN EDUCATION AND RESEARCH AT PYHÄSALMI MINE**

The EIT RawMaterials-supported MINETRAIN project was launched in 2018 to evaluate the potential of the short-

ly-closing Pyhäsalmi mine in Finland as an educational and training underground facility, and thus, prolong the utility of the existing modern mine site by introducing new business opportunities. One of the major objectives of the project is to produce and test practical training programmes for mining professionals at the Pyhäsalmi mine. Pyhäsalmi facilities enable training in all disciplines related to the overall mine value chain with the opportunity to test both skills and equipment in an authentic environment. Hence, the project has potential in providing education for sustainable management of any phase of mining operations.

In summer 2019, MINETRAIN launched its first pilot course with 45 professionals from all over the globe joining an online course. Fourteen people were then selected for one-week practical training at the Pyhäsalmi mine site in August 2019. The course was developed to cover topics across the whole lifecycle of a mine.



© eitrawmaterials

Practical training at the Pyhäsalmi mine site in August 2019

The course received the highest possible evaluations from the professional learners. Professionals emphasised the significance that the practical onsite training had for them.

MINETRAIN gave meaning to the theory and improved the understanding of the bigger picture of mining at the various phases of the mine life.

It was a great experience to learn different ways of doing mining and know more about the latest technology related to the care of the environment. At the same time thinking of networking, it was really helpful to meet miners from all around the world.

The next MINETRAIN course will focus on new mining technology and will be held in summer 2020. After an online module, professionals will be able to use the latest equipment at Sandvik test mine in Tampere, Finland.

MINETRAIN is a three-year project funded by EIT RawMaterials. The coordinator of the project is Oulu Mining School/ the University of Oulu and TU Freiberg and partners are Pyhäsalmi Mine, Outotec, Sandvik, Normet and Schneider Electric.

## EIT RawMaterials

EIT RawMaterials, initiated and funded by the EIT (European Institute of Innovation and Technology), a body of the European Union, is the largest consortium in the raw materials sector worldwide. Its vision is to develop raw materials into a major strength for Europe. Its mission is to enable sustainable competitiveness of the European minerals, metals and materials sector along the value chain by driving innovation, education and entrepreneurship.

EIT RawMaterials unites more than 120 core and associate partners and 180+ project partners from leading industry, universities and research institutions from more than 20 EU countries. Partners of EIT RawMaterials are active across the entire rawmaterials value chain; from exploration, mining and mineral processing to substitution, recycling and circular economy. They collaborate on finding new, innovative solutions to secure the supplies and improve the raw materials sector in Europe.

There are six regional Innovation Hubs in Belgium, Finland, France, Italy, Poland and Sweden, called Co-Location Centres (CLCs) that represent different regional ecosystems connecting industry, research and education.

EIT RawMaterials aims to significantly enhance innovation in the raw materials sector by sharing knowledge, facilitating matchmaking activities, developing innovative technologies and supporting business creation.

EIT RawMaterials will generate a significant impact on European competitiveness and employment by driving and fostering innovation and empowering students, entrepreneurs and education partners driving towards the circular economy. This will result in the introduction of innovative and sustainable products, processes and services, as well as talented people that will deliver increased economic, environmental and social sustainability to the European society.





# VENTURI MONACO,

## *20 years of innovation*

A former Executive at General Motors in the UK who had trained as an automobile engineer once told me that if he had his time over, he would have trained as an electrician. Malcolm Harbour went on to become a British Conservative member of the European Parliament but always retained a fascination for and an interest in motor vehicles. “The future of motor vehicles is electric,” he said. That was years ago, since when electric vehicles have come on apace and no doubt will be the personal transport of the years ahead. In a few short years from now, people will look back on internal combustion engines in much the same way as we look back at, say, the 1902 Serpolet “H”, a remarkable automobile that actually outperformed many petrol-driven competitors, despite being powered by Steam, just like the popular Stanley Steamer of 1906, which set a speed record of over 205 kilometres per hour (kp/h), which remained unbeaten by a petrol vehicle until four years later. But it never again challenged the upcoming technology. All of which helps to make this a very

special year for Monaco’s Venturi motor manufacturer and its President, Gildo Pastor. Why? Because it marks the company’s 20th anniversary under his leadership. He and his team have devoted the last two decades to developing innovation and excellence in high-performance electric vehicles. They have been involved all the way from their first GT to the first polar exploration vehicle, leading the field in electro-mobility. And this, they’re convinced, is only the start.

### **WILL IT CATCH ON?**

It was back in 2000 that Monegasque entrepreneur and automobile-lover Gildo Pastor acquired Venturi, a French maker of motor cars. People scoffed at his prospects of success. He moved the brand to Monaco and took the bold decision to devote the company to making electric vehicles. Gildo Pastor was already convinced that this fast-developing new technology would be the key to the future, a decade before the automotive industry at large began its slow switch towards electric power.

### **PROVING THE DOUBTERS WRONG...**

Since 2004, the Monaco firm’s workshops and test facilities have produced no less than ten different vehicles, with names such as Fétish, Astrolab, Eclectic, Antarctica, Volage, America, VBB 2.0, VBB 2.5, VBB-3, and Voxan Wattman. Each of them has made its mark on automotive history with unique design, ground-breaking new technology and exceptional performance.

Each vehicle has made its own mark on history, with unique design, ground-breaking technology and outstanding performance. Take, for instance, the Venturi Buckeye Bullet (VBB), the fastest and most powerful electric cars with speed records that remain unbeaten:

In 2009, the VBB-2.0 (Venturi’s hydrogen-powered exception) reached 487 km/h and in 2016, the VBB-3 reached a stunning, eye-watering 549 km/h. Venturi also worked with Citroën to transform the Berlingo range of vehicles. The firm has built some 1,000 motorised units for eleven European



Venturi VBB-3, world speed record holder – 549 km/h (2016)

markets as well as the Principality of Monaco. French and Monegasque postal services vehicle parks also include 250 of their products.

Meanwhile, Venturi has been building up a well-earned reputation in the world of motor sport. ROKiT Venturi Racing (formerly the Venturi Formula-E Team) was the first Formula E team to enter the world championships and it's now one of the category leaders. For the last six years, the Made In Monaco team has been duelling with the world's biggest automotive constructors.

## 2020, A YEAR OF EXTREMES

Venturi's twentieth anniversary this year will be marked by two major, yet very different events: the world electric motorcycle speed record attempt by Voxan (part of the group), and the delivery to the South Pole of the appropriately named Antarctica exploration vehicle. The aim of Gildo Pastor and his team is to prove yet again the unrivalled superiority of their electromobility solutions, all the way from 25 km/h to 330 km/h, and from -50°C to +30°C. Antarctica will set off for the South Pole shortly after the Voxan Wattman returns from the Salar de Uyuni in Bolivia, the world's largest salt flat: from baking desert heat to icy, sub-zero cold. There, the caterpillar-tracked vehicle will assist the scientific community with their day-to-day work.

This very special year will also see ROKiT Venturi Racing aim for further glory on the race track. Gildo Pastor and Team Principal Susie Wolff will join forces with

Mercedes as they lead the team into the Formula E Championship, with drivers Edoardo Mortara and Felipe Massa on board for the second consecutive season.

The cherry on top of the 2020 anniversary cake, will be the move to the new offices and workshops on the ground floor of the Gildo Pastor Center in the Fontvieille district of Monaco.

## INDUSTRY PIONEERS

As a child, Gildo Pastor was entranced by stories of the great pre-war expeditions and explorations. It's not surprising, then, that he has demonstrated a similar taste for adventure in his own career.

Along the way, he met Sacha Lakic. From day one, the Frenchman has designed every Venturi car project ever built, down to the last square centimetre, the last nut and bolt. Sacha Lakic's talents have proved crucial to the brand's success, thanks to his uncanny ability to design

sleek, stylish vehicles, despite the size of the batteries needed to power them. This year will see the unveiling of his two newest creations: the Voxan Wattman and the final version of Antarctica (see above).

The third leading light behind the brand is Xavier Chevrin. Xavier is Venturi's very own adventurer, in the strictest sense of the word. The Frenchman has already demonstrated the efficiency and solidity of the Monegasque firm's electric engines on two international long-distance rallies: Shanghai to Paris in 2010 and, two years later, Mission Africa. Now President of Venturi North America, Xavier will be overseeing the organisation of the motorcycle world speed record this year.

## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

"Twenty years on, I'm still focused on the road ahead," says Gildo Pastor, President of Venturi, "I'm as eager to learn, discover and be enterprising, as if I were just starting out. This 20th anniversary is an opportunity to glance in the rear-view mirror. On our own level, we have helped to accelerate development in the electric vehicle sector, by offering our expertise to some big names. With them, my approach has always been to extend the hand of collaboration in the service of innovation. In the history of Venturi, the victories, the moments of joy and immense pride also stand out for me. I'm already looking forward to the next twenty years."

KJV



Gildo Pastor and Sacha Lakic (2008)

# NEWS IN BRIEF

## *From around Europe*

### FOUR METRES UNDERGROUND: ILLEGAL CIGARETTE FACTORY UNCOVERED IN A BUNKER IN SPAIN

On 13 and 14 February 2020, the Spanish Civil Guard (Guardia Civil) dismantled an organised crime group involved in illegal cigarette manufacturing and drug trafficking. Europol supported the operation, which also involved the Lithuanian Customs Criminal Service (Muitinės kriminalinė tarnyba), Polish Police Central Bureau of Investigation (Centralne Biuro Śledcze Policji) and law enforcement authorities from the United Kingdom.

#### Tobacco, beds and pillows

The operation uncovered a full range of production facilities operated by the criminal group. Law enforcement authorities raided the primary production facility where the raw tobacco was cut and prepared for the second production phase. The Spanish law enforcement officers uncovered the manufacturing facility hidden in a bunker four metres underground. In the facility, believed to have been operating since 2019, workers made and packed the counterfeit cigarettes; a complete production line under one roof. Beds and living quarters for the workers were also found underground. This is the first underground factory to be discovered in the EU. Workers there were forced to work in extremely dangerous and toxic conditions. Locked up four metres underground, they were not allowed to leave the facility on their own, and no emergency security was in place. Similar cases uncovered that criminals blindfold the workers when taking them to and from the factory. Although paid for their work in the facility, workers are usually not allowed to leave or make contact with others while working. Criminals often even seal the premises to enforce this. These illegal activities are estimated to bring in about €625 000 per week in criminal profits.

### Cannabis plantation also dismantled

During the raids, law enforcement officers searched 13 locations and arrested 20 people, suspected of being members of the criminal group. One of them is believed to be the leader of the organisation.

The production line and the criminal group has been dismantled with seizures including:

- over 3 million counterfeit cigarettes;
- 20kg of hashish;
- 144kg of marijuana;
- 3 weapons;
- 8 GPS tracking devices;
- 1 jamming device.

The cigarettes were made in unsanitary conditions and of low-quality components. The criminal group distributed the cigarettes on the European black market, estimated to represent about 46.3 billion cigarettes in 2018. The same studies mention that this costs EU governments about €10 billion a year in lost revenue.

Europol facilitated the information exchange between the participating countries, provided coordination support and analysed operational information against Europol's databases



to give leads to investigators. Europol also provided on-the-spot operational support by deploying two analysts to Malaga, Spain, to provide real-time analytical support.

### RPAS SURVEILLANCE FLIGHTS BEING USED TO ENHANCE FISHERIES CONTROL

The European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) has been closely cooperating with the European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA) to support enhanced fisheries control by providing additional surveillance capacity from a remotely piloted aircraft system (RPAS). EMSA has made available a quadcopter for flights taking off from EFCA's chartered offshore patrol vessel, the Lundy Sentinel, and operating over areas of interest in the Mediterranean Sea, western waters of the North-East Atlantic Ocean, North Sea and Baltic Sea.

The RPAS service provided by EMSA offers complementary support to EFCA which has been exploring new and innovative solutions to enhance fisheries control. More specifically, the RPAS service enables pre-boarding assessments, surveillance during boarding and post-boarding analysis to be carried out remotely and thereby



© emsa.europa.eu

benefiting fisheries inspections and control. This concept can also be applied to other coast guard functions.

By flying in the vicinity of a vessel, the RPAS can collect data relating to the ongoing activity. This data can then be transmitted in real time to EFCA's liaison officer deployed on board the Lundy Sentinel, as well as to EFCA's coordination centre in Vigo, and EMSA's headquarters in Lisbon via secure Satcom links.

These RPAS services take place within the context of European cooperation on coast guard functions, in which EFCA, EMSA and Frontex provide support to member states' national competent authorities ensuring cost effective and coordinated action.

### **TURKISH AUTHORITIES MUST RESTORE JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE AND STOP TARGETING AND SILENCING HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS**

The Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Dunja Mijatović, calls on the Turkish authorities to restore judicial independence and stop the practice of targeting human rights defenders, lawyers and journalists and silencing them by using administrative and judicial actions. The report is based on the Commissioner's visit to Turkey carried out in July 2019.

The Commissioner considers that the measures that the authorities took in the aftermath of the state of emergency had devastating consequences on judicial independence and impartiality and threaten the rule of law and human rights in Turkey. Numerous long-standing problems, such as the misuse of detentions on remand, have been exacerbated and compounded by new shortcomings. The Commissioner is alarmed by the fact that the Turkish judiciary displays, especially in terrorism-related cases, unprecedented levels of disregard for even the most basic principles of law, such as presumption of innocence, no punishment without crime and non-retroactivity of offences, or not being judged for the same facts again. At the same time, procedural guarantees such as adversarial proceedings, equality of arms and the right to a lawyer, were significantly and permanently eroded during the state of emergency, resulting

in a level of legal uncertainty and arbitrariness which threatens the very essence of the rule of law.

*"I am aware of the extraordinary challenges faced by Turkey in fighting many terrorist organisations on many fronts, as it is its right and duty. However, disregarding human rights in this process would only discredit and undermine this fight in the long run, while eroding the rule of law and trust in the justice system at the same time."*

The emergency decrees have also had a negative effect on access to justice and to an effective remedy. "The current system, including the Inquiry Commission, is unlikely to satisfy the criteria enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights, unless the administrative courts display a much higher level of respect for the individuals' human rights," says the Commissioner. She also raises concerns about recent developments jeopardising the effectiveness of individual applications to the Constitutional Court as a domestic remedy for human rights violations.

The Commissioner calls on the Turkish authorities to revert to the situation before the state of emergency in terms of constitutional and structural guarantees for the independence of judges, as well as procedural fair-trial guarantees, and then to reinforce them progressively. She also recommends a complete review of criminal legislation in the light of the clear guidance already provided to Turkey by Council of Europe bodies over the years. Considering that the prevailing attitude within the judiciary represents one of the main problems concerning the administration of justice today, she urges the Turkish authorities to change course and start respecting scrupulously the independence of the judiciary. While welcoming the authorities' Judicial Reform Strategy, the Commissioner considers that the measures taken so far do not correspond to current and future needs, which require a more comprehensive and resolute response.

Stressing the importance of civil society organisations and human rights defenders in a democratic society, the Commissioner is alarmed by the hostile environment against them and by a virulent and negative political discourse that frequently leads to biased actions by administrative authorities and the judiciary, and calls on the authorities to address this problem. The Commissioner

considers that the misuse of criminal investigations, proceedings, detentions and sentences to silence human rights defenders and to discourage civil society engagement is the most acute symptom of the mounting pressure they are facing in Turkey. The Commissioner urges the authorities to acknowledge this situation and rectify it through all available means.



OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Dunja Mijatović

*"The authorities should also establish transparent and objective criteria and procedures regarding public funding, consultation of and collaboration with civil society organisations active in the field of human rights. They should revoke the obligation to register all members of NGOs in a centralised database of the Ministry of the Interior and lift open-ended and indiscriminate bans, such as the ban on LGBTI-related activities in Ankara."*

Lastly, Commissioner Mijatović underscores that lawyers have been affected both as human rights defenders and as an integral part of the judicial process guaranteeing the right to a fair trial. She calls on the authorities to lift the restrictions to procedural defence rights adopted during the state of emergency, and to allow lawyers to work freely and safely.

## SUSTAINABILITY IN AVIATION: TU DELFT AND TU BRAUNSCHWEIG JOIN FORCES

Two leading Institutes of Technology in aerospace research in Europe agree on common objectives

The Faculty of Aerospace Engineering at TU Delft in the Netherlands is considered the largest faculty of its kind in Europe. The Aeronautics Research Centre Niedersachsen (NFL) in Braunschweig is an alliance of the aerospace engineering institutes of the TU Braunschweig, the German Aerospace Center (DLR) and the Leibniz University Hannover (LUH). Both universities, TU Delft and TU Braunschweig, carry out excellent research in aeronautics with a focus on sustainable flying. The agreement on a strategic partnership adds a new, far-reaching dimension to the existing cooperation.

On 7 February 2020, Professor Henri Werij, Dean of the Faculty of Aerospace Engineering at TU Delft, and Professor Rolf Radespiel, Chairman of the NFL, signed a joint declaration in Braunschweig. This defines common goals for their basic research, geared towards sustainability in aviation.

What is special about the agreement between the two universities is its quality: It goes far beyond customary university agreements, and establishes a particularly close cooperation. Both universities have agreed to share their research facilities and unpublished research data. The Memorandum of Understanding also introduces so-called cross-supervising, i.e. the scientific lead of research projects and the supervision of doctoral students at the partner university. In addition, the two parties will work together on student exchange, aimed in particular at Honours Students and interns.

*"This is a special alliance of international partners at eye level: TU Delft has one*

*of Europe's leading faculties in aviation research. At TU Braunschweig, we are internationally visible and recognised with our top-level research in the Cluster of Excellence "Sustainable and Energy-efficient Aviation" (SE2A) and our collaborative research with DLR and LUH", says Professor Radespiel.*

Professor Werij: "These two universities are partners, because they both have a very strong drive to make aviation truly sustainable and recognize the need for collaboration to reach extremely ambitious goals. The fact that we have the same vision and speak the same language will make our partnership extremely powerful and fun at the same time."

## WORLD WILDLIFE DAY 2020: DECODING THE SECRETS OF ANIMAL MIGRATION WITH ISOTOPES AND IAEA DATA

Migratory animals, their large distance movements and life cycles have eluded scientists for centuries, particularly for hard-to-track and tiny species like the iconic monarch butterfly. But thanks to the help of isotopic techniques, experts worldwide can better understand the flows and patterns of animal migration where traditional techniques have shown their limits.

World Wildlife Day 2020 celebrates "sustaining all life on earth" at a time when, more than ever, conservation plans are needed all around the world. Climate change, destruction of habitats for agriculture, illegal poaching and logging, pollution and use of pesticides are threats to animal species around the globe.

*"The rate of species loss is exponentially higher than at any time in the past 10 million years. [...] One million species are in near-term danger of extinction,"* said Antonio Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General, to the General Assembly on 22 January 2020, urging



Monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*)

© Bernardo Roca-Rey Ross

for the adoption of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

To preserve the lives of migratory animals, isotopic techniques significantly contribute to identifying these animals' origin, their breeding grounds, and wintering and intermediate stopover sites. Based on this scientific data, policy makers can develop better conservation methods for all sorts of animals, such as fish, birds, mammals or insects.

*"Isotopic techniques offer an incomparable advantage over the traditional tracking methods, as they are non-invasive and do not necessitate the recapture of the same animals,"* said Leonard Wassenaar, Head of the IAEA's Isotope Hydrology Laboratory.

For over a century, conventional mark-and-recapture approaches used to track animal movement have relied on external markers, such as tags and radio and satellite tracking, which are inappropriate for small and short-lived animals. Then, in 1996, research by Leonard Wassenaar and Keith Hobson, who at the time were isotope scientists for Environment Canada, demonstrated that isotopic techniques can be used to determine the origin of individual animals.

Their research is based on measuring deuterium — a rare isotope of hydrogen — in rainwater, which is directly absorbed by plants or ingested by animals and humans. As rainwater and its deuterium composition are unique to the area where the rain comes from, rainwater deuterium content serves as a marker that scientists can use to identify the origin of individual animals by measuring the amount of deuterium in hair, wings, claws, feathers or bones.

Source IAEA



# JOAQUIN SOROLLA

## *Spanish Master of light*

**Hôtel de Caumont**  
**Centre d'Art, Aix-en-Provence, France**  
**30 April - 11 October 2020**

In 2020, the Hôtel de Caumont Art Centre will focus on the work of Joaquín Sorolla (1863-1923), one of the greatest Spanish painters of the twentieth century. He produced one of the most outstanding and vibrant representations of a luminous, Mediterranean, optimistic, and modern Spain.

The international exhibitions devoted to Sorolla's work, held during the last ten years, have already highlighted the painter's international fame, his success in major European artistic competitions, such as the Salon de Paris and the Secession exhibitions in Munich, Vienna, and Berlin, as well as the importance of his solo exhibitions in major European and North American cities. His artistic affinities with the European and American masters of his generation, such as Sargent, Zorn, Degas, and Monet, made him one of the most important and influential artists of his time.

Based on naturalism, under the influence of Bastien-Lepage, his painting was strongly influenced by Velázquez, whom Sorolla considered his great master. This influence was enriched by luminous, loose brushstrokes, similar to Impressionism, and an incredibly vitalistic and innovative interpretation of light and colour. His masterful compositions, shaped by the new possibilities provided by photographic framing, and the influence of Japanese prints, captivate us with their spontaneity, immediacy, and modernity.

The exhibition at the Hôtel de Caumont Art Centre is based on several studies in order to address the way in which Sorolla

created his works, by focusing on three important elements: the artist's creative process, the sources of the main themes in his work, and the way in which these themes evolved in his work.

Alongside ambitious large-format works will be exhibited small drawings and sketches in oils, which shed new light on his approach to art, whose main characteristics are luminosity and spontaneity. An important part of his work process, these small-format sketches enabled him to focus on the subjects he was exploring, and experiment with compositions and colour combinations.

The exhibition will also provide an opportunity to shed light - through the artist's copious correspondence and several photographs of the artist and his entourage - on the tireless and almost obsessive nature of his work, and will make it possible to analyse the way in which Sorolla developed his own personal style.

Curatorship: María López Fernández.

A Doctor of Art History and a specialist in nineteenth- and twentieth-century painting, María López Fernández has curated several exhibitions on Sorolla, such as 'Sorolla. Jardins de Lumière' (Ferrara, Granada, and Madrid, 2012-2013); 'Sorolla à Paris' (Munich, Giverny, and Madrid, 2016-2017); 'Sorolla. Un Jardin à Peindre' (Seville, Valencia, and Madrid, 2017-2018), and 'À la Chasse aux Impressions. Sorolla en Petit Format' (Madrid, 2019). She has also written scientific articles for the catalogues of these exhibitions, and for the exhibitions 'Clotilde de Sorolla' (Madrid, 2012) and 'Sorolla et les Etats-Unis' (Dallas, San Diego, Madrid 2013-2014).

### ADDRESS

**Hôtel de Caumont**  
**Centre d'Art**  
**3, rue Joseph**  
**Cabassol - 13100**  
**Aix-en-Provence**  
**Tél. : 04 42 20 70 01**



Joaquín Sorolla, Clotilde in a Grey Dress, 1900, oil on canvas, 178.5 x 93 cm, Museo Sorolla



Joaquín Sorolla, Return from Fishing, 1904, oil on canvas, 75 x 105 cm, Musei di Nervi - Raccolte Frugone

# TIMELESS CHIC

## Standout Fashion and Beauty trends

By Clara Bauman

### 50 shades of Denim Or the all-Denim look

It had been announced...now it's here: the "Double Denim" trend.

What this means is: wearing denim from top to bottom. The advantage is that all the items are relatively easy to match. The downside is choosing among all this season's tempting models.

Here are 9 of our favourite pieces in a mixture of shades and styles.

#### The top half



①

© Other Stories



Shirt with oversized sleeves  
(one of this year's biggest trends)  
([stories.com](https://www.stories.com))

③

© Liu Jo



Ruffle detail shirt  
([liujo.com](https://www.liujo.com))

②

© Twinset



Cropped jacket with patchwork effect  
([twinset.com](https://www.twinset.com))

#### The bottom half

④

© Tommy Hilfiger



Lightly-frayed hem jeans with the detail that gives it that vintage, nineties look. More than ever, Tommy Hilfiger  
([tommy.com](https://www.tommy.com))

⑤

© levi's



The "Balloon Leg", the new iconic model by Levi's.  
([levi.com](https://www.levi.com))

⑥

© ikks



The overstitched seams at the bottom of the legs ; the detail that makes all the difference. By IKKS  
([ikks.com](https://www.ikks.com))

#### The "don't know what to wear" saviours

⑦

© American Vintage



Belted Jumpsuit in dark blue denim, by American Vintage  
([americanvintage-store.com](https://www.americanvintage-store.com))

⑧

© cks



Belted Jumpsuit in light blue denim, by CKS  
([cks-fashion.com](https://www.cks-fashion.com))

⑨

© Arket

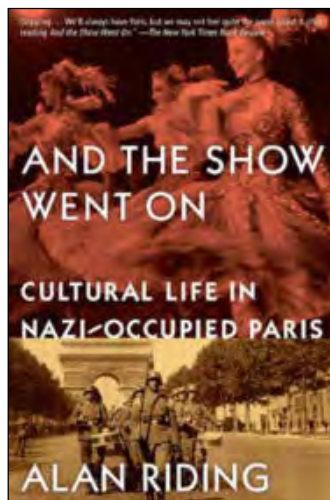


Belted and buttoned dress, by Arket  
([arket.com](https://www.arket.com))



© Pepe Jeans - pepejeans.com

# BOOKS



## AND THE SHOW WENT ON

*By Alan Riding*

CULTURAL LIFE IN NAZI-OCCUPIED PARIS

Taking in everything from the Kingdom of David to the Oslo Accords, Ruth Wisse offers a radical new way to think about the Jewish relationship to power. Traditional Jews believed that upholding the covenant with God constituted a treaty with the most powerful force in the universe; this later transformed itself into a belief that, unburdened by a military, Jews could pursue their religious mission on a purely moral plain. Wisse, an eminent professor of comparative literature at Harvard, demonstrates how Jewish political weakness both increased Jewish vulnerability to scapegoating and violence, and unwittingly goaded power-seeking nations to cast Jews as perpetual targets.

Although she sees hope in the State of Israel, Wisse questions the way the strategies of the Diaspora continue to drive the Jewish state, echoing Abba Eban's observation that Israel was the only nation to win a war and then sue for peace. And then she draws a persuasive parallel to the United States today, as it struggles to figure out how a liberal democracy can face off against enemies who view Western morality as weakness. This deeply provocative book is sure to stir debate both inside and outside the Jewish world. Wisse's narrative offers a compelling argument that is rich with history and bristling with contemporary urgency.

### About *And the Show Went On*

On June 14, 1940, German tanks rolled into a silent and deserted Paris. Eight days later, a humbled France accepted defeat along with foreign occupation. While the swastika now flew over Paris, the City of Light was undamaged, and soon a peculiar kind of normalcy returned as theaters, opera houses, movie theaters, and nightclubs reopened for business. Shedding light on this critical moment of twentieth-century European cultural history, *And the Show Went On* focuses anew on whether artists and writers have a special duty to show moral leadership in moments of national trauma.

### Praise

*"Gripping. . . . We'll always have Paris, but we may not feel quite the same about it after reading *And the Show Went On*."*  
—*The New York Times Book Review*

*"Riding paints a riveting portrait of how Paris's glittering, politically diverse cultural elite . . . worked and played during the dark days of the Nazis' occupation."*  
—*Vanity Fair*

*"Meticulously researched. . . . Riding's book is an impressively comprehensive survey of the occupation years."*  
—*The Economist*



## ANNA OF KLEVE, THE PRINCESS IN THE PORTRAIT

*By Alison Weir*

A NOVEL

*About Anna of Kleve, *The Princess in the Portrait**

**The surprising and dramatic life of the least known of King Henry VIII's wives is illuminated in the fourth volume in the *Six Tudor Queens* series—for fans of Philippa Gregory, Hilary Mantel, and *The Crown*.**

Newly widowed and the father of an infant son, Henry VIII realizes he must marry again to ensure the royal succession. Forty-six, overweight, and suffering from gout, Henry is soundly rejected by some of Europe's most eligible princesses. Anna of Kleve, from a small German duchy, is twenty-four, and has a secret she is desperate to keep hidden. Henry commissions her portrait from his court painter, who depicts her from the most flattering perspective. Entranced by the lovely image, Henry is bitterly surprised when Anna arrives in England and he sees her in the flesh. Some think her attractive, but Henry knows he can never love her.

What follows is the fascinating story of an awkward royal union that somehow had to be terminated. Even as Henry begins to warm to his new wife and share her bed, his attention is captivated by one of her maids-of-honor. Will he accuse Anna of adultery as he did Queen Anne Boleyn, and send her to the scaffold? Or will he divorce her and send her home in disgrace? Alison Weir takes a fresh and astonishing look at this remarkable royal marriage by describing it from the point of view of Queen Anna, a young woman with hopes and dreams of her own, alone and fearing for her life in a royal court that rejected her almost from the day she set foot on England's shore.

# BOOKS



## JANE SEYMOUR, THE HAUNTED QUEEN

*By Alison Weir*

A NOVEL

*About Anna of Kleve, The Princess in the Portrait*

**The surprising and dramatic life of the least known of King Henry VIII's wives is illuminated in the fourth volume in the Six Tudor Queens series—for fans of Philippa Gregory, Hilary Mantel, and The Crown.**

Newly widowed and the father of an infant son, Henry VIII realizes he must marry again to ensure the royal succession. Forty-six, overweight, and suffering from gout, Henry is soundly rejected by some of Europe's most eligible princesses. Anna of Kleve, from a small German duchy, is twenty-four, and has a secret she is desperate to keep hidden. Henry commissions her portrait from his court painter, who depicts her from the most flattering perspective. Entranced by the lovely image, Henry is bitterly surprised when Anna arrives in England and he sees her in the flesh. Some think her attractive, but Henry knows he can never love her.

What follows is the fascinating story of an awkward royal union that somehow had to be terminated.

Even as Henry begins to warm to his new wife and share her bed, his attention is captivated by one of her maids-of-honor. Will he accuse Anna of adultery as he did Queen Anne Boleyn, and send her to the scaffold? Or will he divorce her and send her home in disgrace? Alison Weir takes a fresh and astonishing look at this remarkable royal marriage by describing it from the point of view of Queen Anna, a young woman with hopes and dreams of her own, alone and fearing for her life in a royal court that rejected her almost from the day she set foot on England's shore.

*About Jane Seymour, The Haunted Queen*

**"A sumptuous historical novel anchored by its excellent depiction of Jane Seymour, Henry the VIII's third queen . . . This is a must for all fans of Tudor fiction and history."—Publishers Weekly**

Ever since she was a child, Jane has longed for a cloistered life as a nun. But her large noble family has other plans, and as an adult, Jane is invited to the King's court to serve as lady-in-waiting to Queen Katherine of Aragon. The devout Katherine shows kindness to all her ladies, almost like a second mother, which makes rumors of Henry's lustful pursuit of Anne Boleyn—also lady-in-waiting to the queen—all the more shocking. For Jane, the betrayal triggers memories of a haunting incident that shaped her beliefs about marriage.

But once Henry disavows Katherine and secures Anne as his new queen—forever altering the religious landscape of England—he turns his eye to another: Jane herself. Urged to return the King's affection and earn favor for her family, Jane is drawn into a dangerous political game that pits her conscience against her desires. Can Jane be the one to give the King his long-sought-after son, or will she be cast aside like the women who came before her?

Bringing new insight to this compelling story, Alison Weir marries meticulous research with gripping historical fiction to re-create the dramas and intrigues of the most renowned court in English history. At its center is a loving and compassionate woman who captures the heart of a king, and whose life will hang in the balance for it.



## YOUNG HEROES OF THE SOVIET UNION

*By Alex Halberstadt*

A MEMOIR AND A RECKONING

Taking in everything from the Kingdom of David to the Oslo Accords, Ruth Wisse offers a radical new way to think about the Jewish relationship to power. Traditional Jews believed that upholding the covenant with God constituted a treaty with the most powerful force in the universe; this later transformed itself into a belief that, unburdened by a military, Jews could pursue their religious mission on a purely moral plain. Wisse, an eminent professor of comparative literature at Harvard, demonstrates how Jewish political weakness both increased Jewish vulnerability to scapegoating and violence, and unwittingly goaded power-seeking nations to cast Jews as perpetual targets.

Although she sees hope in the State of Israel, Wisse questions the way the strategies of the Diaspora continue to drive the Jewish state, echoing Abba Eban's observation that Israel was the only nation to win a war and then sue for peace. And then she draws a persuasive parallel to the United States today, as it struggles to figure out how a liberal democracy can face off against enemies who view Western morality as weakness. This deeply provocative book is sure to stir debate both inside and outside the Jewish world. Wisse's narrative offers a compelling argument that is rich with history and bristling with contemporary urgency.

# BY YOUR SIDE IN MONACO FOR MORE THAN 100 YEARS

---

Discover our solutions in Private Banking,  
Retail Banking and Corporate Banking.

[privatebanking.societegenerale.mc](http://privatebanking.societegenerale.mc)

**THE FUTURE  
IS YOU**



**SOCIÉTÉ  
GÉNÉRALE**

The present document has been distributed in Monaco by Société Générale Private Banking (Monaco) S.A.M., located 13/15, bd. des Moulins – 98000 Monaco – Principality of Monaco, governed by the *Autorité de Contrôle Prudentiel et de Résolution* and the *Commission de Contrôle des Activités Financières*. The financial products marketed in Monaco can be reserved for qualified investors in accordance with the Law No. 1339 of 07/09/2007 and Sovereign Ordinance No 1.285 of 10/09/2007. Further details are available upon request or on [www.privatebanking.societegenerale.mc](http://www.privatebanking.societegenerale.mc). © Getty Images.

# ***Fly with Royal Jordanian to Brussels and Back!***

***At least two indirect flights daily***

*We also provide rail & fly solutions to/from Brussels – Midi station via Schipol & CDG. Enjoy your stay at a city known for its delicacies, history and life. What more could you ask for?*

*For more information and to reserve, please call us on +32 2 512.70.70, email [brutrrj@rj.com](mailto:brutrrj@rj.com) or visit your preferred travel agent, our website [rj.com](http://rj.com) or our RJ app.*



[rj.com](http://rj.com)



ROYAL JORDANIAN

الملكية الأردنية

