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SALOMÉ ZOURABICHVILI

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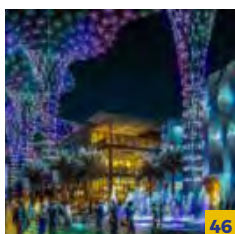
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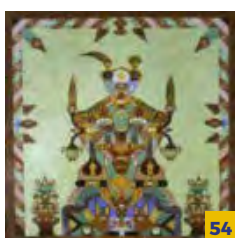
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SALOMÉ ZOURABICHVILI

A Portrait and Exclusive Interview

“In negotiating, the main force is to know which interests you are serving, that of the country and not a political line or personal career interests.” So says Salomé Zourabichvili, former French citizen and now President of Georgia, but who had joined the French diplomatic service in 1974 at the age of 22. Born in Paris of Georgian parents who had left their home country to escape Soviet Communism, she had wanted to serve Georgia’s best interests since her youth. So why through diplomacy? “I did not have an early vocation and cannot pretend that I from my early childhood had dreamt of becoming a diplomat,” she told me, “though when the time to choose the orientation of my studies came, I was thinking both in terms of which fields were attractive to me – history, journal-

ism, writing – and what would be useful to the country which my family had left.” She and her parents had always believed that Georgia would regain its independence. “We firmly believed that the question indeed was ‘when’ and not ‘if’.” So, French was her first language, the Georgian came later and some commentators note that she still makes occasional linguistic errors in what is, after all, her native tongue (and a notably difficult one), but they hardly matter. “It gradually became clear that diplomacy was the answer to what would be the most immediate need for a country in order to reoccupy its place in the world community,” she said.

Zourabichvili’s father, an engineer who died in 1975, had been a prominent figure in the Georgian diaspora then living

in Paris. Both of her parents had been descended from prominent political figures of the past, such as her paternal great-grandfather, Niko Nikoladze, a late nineteenth century social democrat, while her mother was related by marriage to Noe Ramishvili, the Democratic Republic of Georgia’s first prime minister. Zourabichvili was educated at some of the top schools in France, including the prestigious Institute d’Études Politiques de Paris, and started reading for a Master’s degree at Columbia University in New York, where she studied under various luminaries including Zbigniew Brzezinski, who had been a counsellor to US President Lyndon B. Johnson and who later became National Security Advisor to President Jimmy Carter. There is a further link to academia: Zourabichvili’s cousin, Hélène Carrère

ZOURABICHVILI SALOME
 NE BIEN ÉCRIRE DANS CE CADRE

NOM **ZOURABICHVILI**
 PRÉNOMS **SALOME NINO**
 NÉE LE **18 mars 1958**
 A **Paris (15^e)**
 NATIONALITÉ **Française**

SITUATION MILITAIRE
 ADRESSE
 DES PARENTS
 EMPLOI DU CHEF DE FAMILLE **ingénieur civil des Mines**

TÉL.
 TÉL.
 TÉL.

ADRESSE A PARIS (N'UTILISER QU'UNE LIGNE)
 TÉL.
 TÉL.
 TÉL.

TITRES **BACCALAURÉAT** MENTION **Bien** ACADÉMIE de **Paris**

UNIVERSITAIRES

N° D'IMMATRICULATION A LA SÉCURITÉ SOCIALE

AVEZ-VOUS DÉPOSÉ UN DOSSIER DE DEMANDE DE BOURSE À L'INSTITUT ☐ NON UN DOSSIER DE DEMANDE D'ÉTRANGÈRE ☒ OUI

French Sciences Po

d'Encausse, is a Franco-Georgian historian who heads the Académie française. Zorabichvili was married to Georgian journalist Janri Kashia, who died in 2012, and has two children from her first marriage, to the Iranian-American economist, Nicolas Gorjestani. Zourabichvili has some distinguished antecedents. "Later on, I learned that I had an ambassador among my ancestors and that at the beginning of the 20th century, my great-grandfather had been leading the peace negotiations with Turkey at the time of the first Georgian Independence." Even so, diplomacy was not an inevitable career choice for Zourabichvili. She faced a range of options. "The decision to turn to diplomacy came later when during an internship in the UN in New York, I came in contact with some diplomats of the French Permanent Representation, in which I would work years later, and was told that the French diplomatic career was finally opening up to women and that the time was right to enter this career." So she did.

A LONG ROAD HOME?

During her years as a French diplomat she had postings to Rome, the United Nations, Brussels and Washington. She only visited Georgia for the first time in 1986, during a holiday from the French mission in Washington. That was to prove the beginning of a big career change for Zourabichvili. "I started as a French diplomat in 1974, 30 years later I was the French Ambassador to Georgia, which marked the end of my French diplomatic career and the beginning of a new Georgian life, when I accepted the offer to become the Foreign Minister of

Georgia." To do that, she had to change her official nationality in an agreement between Paris and Tbilisi, the capital of Georgia, signed in 2004.

She became known as a tough negotiator. During her time in Georgia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, she successfully negotiated a treaty that led to the withdrawal of Russian forces from those parts of Georgia that - unlike Abkhazia and South Ossetia - are not in dispute. "A strong national consensus is a must for a successful negotiation," she said. But having the Georgian people on her side was just part of it. "Also important in that specific negotiation, was my French background, which meant that my Russian counterpart, rather than looking at me with the old neo-colonial condescending attitude, had to accept me as an equal that he spoke to in English rather than in Russian, as was the practice with all old ex-Soviet sphere countries." Zourabichvili is not a person one should talk down to. So, what was it that persuaded the Russian negotiator to give ground? "In the end, the most important was probably clarity in the objectives, and the right tone - neither confrontation nor subordi-



Salome Zourabichvili and US Secretary of States Colin Powell in 2004

nation. However difficult the object of the negotiation and its context, however uneven the 'rapport de forces', there has to be some form of minimal trust between the negotiators, for the words and the written agreements to have a meaning. I think we managed that."



Russian Airborne Troops Commander-in-Chief, Lt. Gen. Valery Yevtukhovich examining the battle map, during the South Ossetia war, August 2008

That being said, Russia still holds sway over the breakaway, pro-Moscow regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, and tensions remain with troop build-ups and occasional sabre-rattling. Abkhazia is a large territory in the far west of Georgia, bordered by Georgia to the east, Russia to the north and the Black Sea to its south and west. South Ossetia, half way along Georgia's northern border with Russia, was a gift to Georgia by that well-known Georgian, Yosif Visarionovich Stalin, and its people never really wanted to be part of the country in the first place. "This is a great and avoidable tragedy, as for centuries Georgians and Ossetians have lived together and there are still many mixed marriages," said Thomas de Waal, a senior fellow with Carnegie Europe, specializing in Eastern Europe and the Caucasus region, writing in the Moscow Times in 2019. "Present-day South Ossetia holds almost no value for Moscow, except as a military base close to the heart of Georgia." But that is all it needs to be, perhaps, for a Russian government that can't afford to be seen to lose face. Georgians living in Abkhazia's Gali region used to travel backwards and forwards across the border into areas under Tbilisi's control but it's not a very secure existence. Last year, what pass for authorities in Abkhazia closed the bridge over the Inguria River, effectively preventing locals from visiting relatives or going to work. According to de Waal, "In normal times, around 3,000 people a day cross back and forth. Foreigners were also forbidden to cross into Abkhaz territory." This, it's suggested, is

just the politics of bullying and nothing to do with security as some Abkhazians claim. “The pretext — alleged security concerns due to the recent opposition protests in Georgian cities — makes no sense. The de facto border is heavily guarded by both Russian and Abkhaz military personnel. This was a political move, a gesture of support for Moscow in its row with Tbilisi.”



© Wikipedia

CaA Russian BMP-2 of the 58th Army of the North Caucasus Military District in South Ossetia during the 2008 Russia-Georgia War

FROZEN CONFLICTS

The two breakaway territories are home to separate indigenous peoples who enjoyed a certain amount of autonomy back in the days when Georgia was part of the Soviet Union. They do not see eye-to-eye on most things but they present a headache to whoever rules Georgia. “One thing is clear,” Zourabichvili told me, “that we do not have any means, nor the will, to try and resolve the conflict other than by peaceful means. That is why Georgia has taken a unilateral stance of renouncing the use of force in order to solve the conflict.” One could uncharitably point out that against an army the size of Russia’s, going to war would be tantamount to suicide anyway. But wars were fought over the territories as the Soviet Union broke up in the 1990s and again in the “5-day war” of 2008. In South Ossetia, it’s estimated that Russian troops, border guards and FSB agents outnumber the few Georgians still living there, and indeed the entire population has shrunk dramatically, while Abkhazians still remember the war of 1992 to 93,

when it’s thought some 5% of them may have lost their lives. They, it seems, still see Moscow as preferable to Tbilisi. But an awful lot of the problem stems from Vladimir Putin’s expansionist policies as he appears to be trying to reassemble the Soviet Union with himself as leader. “Lacking direct diplomatic relations,” says Zourabichvili, “we are counting on our partners and asking them to recall to Russia its commitments of the 2008 cease fire agreement and make her finally understand that she has more to gain by the development of peaceful relations in her neighbourhood rather than through the perpetuation of tensions and occupations, which can only fuel instability.”

As far as Abkhazia is concerned, some outsiders see the risk as not so much annexation by Moscow as likely abandonment. Russia would gain nothing by taking it over. The place needs help with various things, including environmental degradation, and would like international help. However, it wants no help from Georgia. Georgia, however, has just taken over the Presidency of the Council of Europe’s Committee of Ministers for the first time. That is why Salomé Zourabichvili visited the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council in Strasbourg and addressed the members. “This is for us an important responsibility and a wonderful opportunity at the same time,” she told the Assembly, “Yesterday our foreign minister presented our priorities during this presidency: human rights and environmental protection, a very new and important endeavour; civil participation in decision making processes, the next stage of democracy; child-friendly justice, converging experiences on the restorative justice; and strengthening democracy through education, culture and youth engagement. Those four priorities are those we are going to work

on all together. They were selected to reflect the challenges that are faced by all societies today and I intend to launch a comprehensive discussion on possible solutions.”

Zourabichvili sees the creation of the Council of Europe in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War as a vital step towards more harmonized attitudes and standards, when it comes to respecting individual citizens. “The adoption of the European Convention on Human Rights laid the ground for the organisation and became the guideline for each and every member. Democracy, human rights and rule of law became the core principles that we all need to adhere to and to be guided by,” she told the Assembly. “I strongly believe, especially today, even more today, that each and every member of the Council of Europe should abide by the values and principles of the organisation.” It’s true that the Council of Europe has forty-seven member states which try - not always successfully - to get on with one another. It’s worth remembering that the 12-star flag of Europe was originally created as a logo for the Council in 1955, the result of a competition that attracted hundreds of suggestions. It was only thirty years later that it was adopted by the EU institutions and even then, not by all of them at the same time. It is not, and never has been, just the flag of the European Union. You will find it being flown in all of the Council’s member countries, although possibly not in the United Kingdom, where it seems indissolubly linked in the public mind (and the minds of government politicians) with Brussels. In Georgia’s case, though, Council membership remains a matter of national pride, as Zourabichvili mentioned in her speech to the Assembly: “Georgia celebrated 20 years of membership last year. It had recovered inde-



© Wikipedia

In 2017 the government of the Russian Federation approved an agreement between Russia and South Ossetia on integrating some units of the Armed Forces of the Republic of South Ossetia into the structure of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation

pendence from Soviet rule just 12 years before that. Today it is indeed difficult to imagine where we were and how fast what one can call a revolution has happened. We have come a long way.”

MOVING ON

Georgia certainly has. As the Soviet Union began to come apart, a wave of inter-ethnic violence swept through the Caucasus to the west of the Caspian Sea, with conflict flaring up among the wide variety of ethnic groups. Some were Christian, such as the Georgians, Armenians and Ossetians, some, such as the Circassians, Chechens, and various Turkic-speakers, were Muslim. Under Soviet rule, these groups got on reasonably well or else ignored each other. But in Georgia, the election of ultra-nationalist Zviad Gamsakhurdia in 1991 launched suspicion, hatred and conflict. Supported by a very nationalist media, the rhetoric provoked outbreaks of violence, involving rival militias. Eventually, Georgia sent 6,000 troops to Tskhinval, the capital of South Ossetia.



Tskhinvali capital of the de facto independent Republic of South Ossetia (which has been recognised by the Russian Federation and four other UN member states) © Wikipedia

Russia sent troops to keep the peace without taking sides. But tensions continued to worsen when a new Georgian President, Mikhail Saakashvili talked of integrating South Ossetia, an idea Putin has dismissed as ‘Stalinism’. Having promised the South Ossetians that they were safe, Saakashvili sent 1,500 troops to occupy Tskhinval. Russian troops stopped the fighting and Moscow recognized the independence of the Republic of South Ossetia. The region’s border with the rest of Georgia was closed. Even so, with no industry to speak of



Vladimir Putin with President of Georgia Mikhail Saakashvili in 2008

and with most of its agricultural output going to Russia, South Ossetia comfortably relies on Russian financial support, lacking the means to support itself. Unlike their Russian-speaking neighbours in North Ossetia, the South Ossetians speak an ancient east Iranian dialect, supposedly descended from the language of the Scythians. Languages divide so many people in the world who might otherwise be friends. Possibly.

It seems virtually impossible that the Georgians and South Ossetians will ever be reconciled but if South Ossetia were to be swallowed up by an expansionist Russia, a unique culture and ancient language could be lost. So, let’s talk about the politics of the possible. Zourabichvili made it clear in her speech to the Parliamentary Assembly that she wants to tackle some of the problems being increasingly recognised as global. “Environmental rights, more specifically protection of individuals and communities against environmental harm, is a priority that most countries are now learning how to deal with,” she said. “It is a UN Sustainable Development Goal that we all agreed beyond our conti-

ment. I believe that caring about our planet requires joint efforts at every geographical, political or societal level. Therefore, it is no accident that Georgia chose human rights and environmental protection as one of its priorities for our presidency.”

HISTORIC GEORGIAN WOMEN

How difficult is it going to be during the 6-year term as President? Not easy, certainly; Zourabichvili is Georgia’s first woman President and politics in the region can be - how shall I put it? - robust. But she is undaunted, she told the Assembly. “As the first woman president of Georgia I am no exception in Georgian history, for Georgia has been a progressive country in gender equality for centuries,” she said, and with some justification. “We had women governing the country centuries ago and Georgia’s constitution in 1920 already ensured equal political rights for women not only to elect but to be elected. The first constituent assembly of Georgia had five women members, one of them the first Muslim woman to be elected.” Despite her country’s encouraging record on gender issues, I asked her if she had met with obstacles in her election campaign and, if so, how she had dealt with them. “In Georgian history women have had a specific place and have been recognized for their role,” she said, “St Nino came to Georgia and converted the Georgian state and monarchy to Christianity 1,700 years ago. Queen (but called King) Tamar reigned at the time of biggest prosperity and largest expansion of the Georgian Kingdom; martyrs Shushanik and Kethevan are part of the Georgian History of resisting foreign faith and



Sukhumi capital of the breakaway Republic of Abkhazia, which has controlled it since the 1992-93 war in Abkhazia, although most of the international community considers it legally part of Georgia



President Zourabichvili during a joint press conference with H.E. Frank-Walter Steinmeier, Federal President of Germany "It is essential that Georgia not be forgotten because of the conflict in Ukraine"

occupation. In our more recent history, Georgian women were fully party to the national emancipation movement that led to the independence in 1918 and they gained naturally the right to elect and be elected, recognized in the first constitution.



Georgia's Salome Zourabichvili won the runoff election in november 2018 with 59.52 percent of votes

So, the election of a woman as President, unusual in the region is not such an exceptional event for the Georgian society and was not opposed so much on gender grounds." In fact, the election campaign was at times quite vicious and some of the attacks made on Zourabichvili were undoubtedly gender-based. They certainly didn't put her off or lead to her defeat, however. She believes the Georgian people are proud to have a woman president. After all, they still remember Shushanik (a Christian Armenian woman tortured to death in Georgia by her husband in the 5th century) and Kethevan (a queen of Kakheti in eastern Georgia, killed after torture for refusing to convert to Islam). Georgian women have had a tough time down the years. Zourabichvili is determined that things will be fairer for them in the future. In her speech in Strasbourg she said: "My personal duty is to promote and encourage equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women at every level of society in every part of Georgia. Unfortunately, the need

to safeguard women from violence at home or elsewhere has appeared in recent years, even in Georgia, which seemed immune to such excesses. But drastic social changes and economic hardship have taken their toll, and families have been giving in to the spiral of domestic abuse and violence." She stressed the importance of the Council of Europe's Convention against gender violence: "The Istanbul Convention sets high standards for preventing violence, protection of victims and most importantly, prosecuting accused offenders. This will be at the centre of my attention to see that it is implemented without complacency or hesitation."

The path to power wasn't an easy one, and of its type, it will be the last. In future, presidents will be chosen by an electoral college and not by universal suffrage. Zourabichvili is the first woman president and the last to be directly elected. She is, incidentally, the fifth president of an independent Georgia. Not long after accepting Georgian citizenship and becoming Minis-

ter of Foreign Affairs, she fell out with the country's then president, Mikheil Saakashvili. Zourabichvili was sacked by the then Prime Minister, Zurab Nogaideli in October 2005 after rows with some members of Parliament and after coming in for criticism from certain Georgian ambassadors. Just before her sacking, she finally resigned from the French diplomatic service which had continued to pay her salary. She said she would go into politics and she did. In 2006, she founded a new political party, called 'The Way of Georgia', which she led until 2010. In 2016, she was elected to the Georgian parliament as an independent. It was never likely to be plain sailing. In the 2018 campaign for the Presidency, Zourabichvili ran as an independent, but with the support of the Georgian Dream party, which was in power. She failed to win outright, getting just 38.7% of the vote in the first round, but secured the Presidency in a run-off against Grigol Vashadze, who had the backing of Mikheil Saakashvili.

IT ALL COMES DOWN TO DIPLOMACY

And what about that diplomatic background? I asked her if had been helpful in her political career. "I think that the diplomatic background has definitely served and enlightened my political career," she said. "In the three stages of my political life – as Foreign Minister, Member of Parliament and now President – the diplomatic experience, the knowledge of the outside world and its rules and practices, as well as my European background, have helped



Map of the Russo-Georgian War 2008



me in better representing Georgia, better defending its interests, better understanding the regional or international challenges, better deciphering the objectives of our partners.” She has also had the benefit of having worked within a lot of major international organisations, such as the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), NATO and the United Nations, not to mention the fifteen years she spent working in the United States. It has proved invaluable experience; wherever she goes in the world on Georgia’s behalf, many of the people in power know her.

Zourabichvili sees herself as being in a position to provide a platform to help reduce tensions between faiths, although that’s more an accident of Georgian history than a personal achievement. As she told the Parliamentary Assembly, “We have districts, not only in the capital Tbilisi, but also in Kutaisi and many other cities, where Orthodox, Catholic, Armenian Gregorian churches, synagogues and mosques are built next to each other and where people continue to practice their religion in pure coexistence.” She pointed out one unexpected example of inter-faith tolerance, unique to Georgia: “The Tbilisi mosque is quite exceptional since it is the only one today where Shia and Sunni Muslims pray together. This traditional tolerance and coexistence are still very much a reality and have not been overshadowed or limited by the distressed isolation or aggression that we see today in the outside world.”

She hopes that this peace-making role can be extended beyond religion, based on Georgia’s long tradition

of being home to so many different races and ethnic groups. “Georgia is among the countries that grant full linguistic, cultural and religious rights to the national minorities living on our territory,” she told the Assembly. “We have coexisted for centuries. This diversity is an integral part of Georgia’s socio-economic development. These minorities enjoy full rights to their language, to their culture, to their traditions. To such an extent, and that is maybe part of the problem, that a majority of these national minorities do not speak the state language, and that is an obstacle to promotion. That is an issue that I consider to be my personal competence and duty, to ameliorate and to promote these efforts towards better and fuller

own history. Georgia seems determined to avoid such an outcome; I wish it luck.

Zourabichvili hopes her long career as a diplomat will help her to achieve the sort of future she wants for Georgia, although in politics nothing is ever certain. “Diplomacy can help resolve issues not only in international relations but also within countries,” she said. “Today when we are all confronted with increased polarization, distrust, extremism and populism, all in the end reducing our freedom, it is urgent to reconstruct our societies around some elements of unity. Diplomacy can help find these common elements, can help to create the channels for discussion and avoid isolation and lack of communication that are more and more characterizing our contemporary societies.



President Emmanuel Macron and President Salomé Zourabichvili, during a press conference at the Elysée Palace in 2019

integration.” If anyone ever wants to see the damage that ethnic, linguistic and religious divisions can cause, they should have a stroll around Belfast in Northern Ireland, where the streets are disfigured by so-called ‘peace walls’ to keep republicans and loyalists apart and to discourage violence. One Sinn Féin councilor happily related to me tales of “recreational violence” in his youth. And he was a good, pleasant man. Yet still the groups disagree over religion, the use of the Irish language and their

Diplomacy is not a panacea, but can be a useful instrument if we know what we want in the end and in what direction we are going.”

IMPROVING CITIZENS’ RIGHTS

Zourabichvili hopes that the direction is the right one, although in her speech to the Assembly she conceded that there is still more to be done. She cited the example of a national human rights strategy and action plan, which was launched in 2014 and is due to reach its conclusion this year. A recent evaluation by EU and UN officials welcomes, as she put it, “the significant progress, to greater or lesser degrees, in almost all of the specific subject areas addressed in the strategy.” So, there is still a way to go. “Though the number of implemented recommendations is growing there is certainly room for improvement and more implementation of these recommendations. From its own monitoring perspective, the parlia-



President Salome Zourabichvili’s annual address to the Parliament in 2019



Nato Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg and President of Georgia Salome Zourabichvili

ment has gained expanded oversight functions under the new constitution that should be and are partly actively applied."

Certainly, we live in strange times. Not so long ago, Europe seemed to be heading for further integration to make conflict less likely and peoples more comfortable with each other, just as Georgia is doing. Then along came the populists with their own agendas aimed at furthering their personal ambitions without regard to others and seemingly without regard to relations with their neighbours. Take Poland, for example, whose reforms to its justice system have brought heavy criticism from the Venice Commission, the European Court of Human Rights and the European Commission. Effectively, Poland's government wants to appoint justices, have the right to move them to other courts and even re-open closed cases, opening the way for what are called "double jeopardy" prosecutions. They are also combining the roles of Minister of Justice and Chief Prosecutor, in clear breach of their obligations under the European Convention of Human Rights and of their membership of the European Union. The concern over Poland's judicial reforms was raised at the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly by Dutch Christian Democrat MP Pieter Omtzigt, who admitted that Poland's ruling party has friends, or at least one friend: Hungary. Populists stick together. "The European Commission has opened Article 7 proceedings," he told me, "but they can be defeated by one other country, so they will not go much further." The

rules were not designed to cope with rebels nobody expected but who back each other's excesses and misdeeds.

In the end, sorting out all these sorts of problems comes down to diplomacy; you could say that there was never a time in Europe's post-war history when diplomacy was more necessary. Certainly, Salomé Zourabichvili thinks it could provide a future for young people wanting to

ment the European Union has long stood for and the Council of Europe espouses.

"Global challenges will be confronted only if we find a common language and some common interests. And in the end the only known alternative to diplomacy being war, diplomacy still has a good future, even if today's diplomacy does not have much in common with what it was a few decades ago, when I started my career. It is a much more demanding profession, which needs a good knowledge of all the new fields that make today's world - economy, technology, science, communications together with culture, history and geography - a diplomat has to understand them all in order to be effective." That's a pretty tall order by any standard. And diplomats will be increasingly in demand in this difficult and divided world. As the American journalist and writer Isaac Goldberg wrote: "Diplomacy is to do and say The nastiest thing in the nicest way." Or how about another American writer, Caskie Stinnet?: "A diplomat... is a person who can tell



Salome Zourabichvili

be at the heart of things. "It is certainly a very attractive career," she said, "especially in a world that is changing very fast, where challenges are multiplying, and trying to fight them and limit their effects is a noble task. Understanding the differences and the other in a world where people tend to want to ignore others and are more tempted to close in rather than open up is vital." We are entering a time of more closed borders, a rejection of the freedom of move-

you to go to hell in such a way that you actually look forward to the trip." But I leave the last word to Salomé Zourabichvili, despite the cynicism often expressed about the profession: the "qualities needed though have not changed: curiosity, interest towards others, sense of initiative, discretion and last but not least - a deep love for one's own country." You can't argue with that, although in diplomatic circles someone undoubtedly will.

Jim Gibbons



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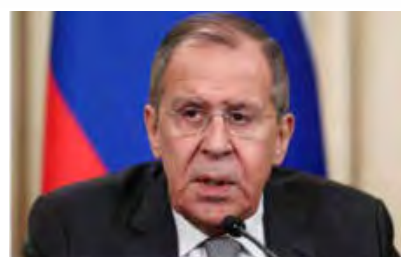
DEFENDER EUROPE 2020

Russia and the massive military exercise on its doorstep

On the one hand it's easy to see why the United States and its NATO allies in Europe would want to get together from time to time to check that their military forces can work cooperatively. On the other hand, of course, one can understand why Russia is uneasy and somewhat annoyed about such activity on its very doorstep. But, let's face it, neither side trusts the other, and if you're going to gather together troops and matériel, it makes sense to do so close to where any hostilities are most likely to take place: the continent of Europe, from the Baltic to the Black Sea. The actual event, codenamed Defender Europe 2020, is said to be the largest military exercise for a quarter of a century. Even so, it's only the third largest military exercise to be held in Europe since the end of the Cold War, according to Lt. Gen. Chris Cavoli, the United States Army Europe commander. According to Defence News, Lt. Gen. Cavoli said "it will test the US Army's ability to deliver a force from 'fort in the United States to port in the United States', and then onward to ports in Europe and from there to operational areas throughout Europe from Germany to Poland, to the Baltic States and other Eastern Euro-

pean nations, Nordic countries and even Georgia."

But nobody in the West can be really surprised that the plan has not brought a warm smile to the face of Vladimir Putin, nor to the faces of other Kremlin insiders and Russian military leaders. Russia's Foreign Minister, Sergey Lavrov, quoted in Rossiyskaya Gazeta, described the exercise as "greatly concerning" to Smolenskaya Square in Moscow, where the Russian Foreign Ministry is based. Despite his clear annoyance, though, Lavrov seems to be keen to play down the danger of confrontation. "Naturally, we will react," he said. "We cannot ignore processes that arouse very great concerns. But we will react in a way that will not create unnecessary risks." He added: "It is noteworthy that everything that we do in response to NATO's threats to our security we do exclusively in our own territory." Western leaders may note that in his view "our own territory" includes Crimea and Eastern Ukraine, not an opinion shared in Kyiv. Most would agree that the Defender Europe 2020 exercise is intended as a warning to Moscow not to repeat its expansionist activities elsewhere on the continent. Or anywhere else at all, for that matter.



Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov

THIS, THAT, AND THE EXPENSIVE OTHER

So, Defender Europe 2020 is a big, division-scale exercise: 20,000 soldiers, from bases right across the United States board planes and load equipment onto ships, all headed for Europe.

Once there, they work side-by-side with 17,000 troops from a number of European armies. The logistics trains and communication lines will stretch from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea. The exercise will involve "a little bit of everything," Chief of the Polish armed forces, Gen. Rajmund Andrzejczak told Breaking Defence, "a little bit of national regulation, a little bit of crisis, a little bit of high intensity, cyber, conventional, national, bilateral, NATO, everything. We have



to accept we're living in a complex security environment." No-one would argue on that score. And, of course, it comes with a heavy price tag. Moving and sustaining thousands of troops for months at a time, along with tanks, artillery and armoured vehicles, not to mention ships and aircraft, will cost the United States a hefty \$340-million (€310-million), although the NATO allies are paying for their participation in the multinational drills. According to Breaking Defence, US Army Europe is defending the cost, saying in a statement: "We make every effort to prudently use taxpayer dollars to ensure that this event supports the U.S. government's goals and interests," Breaking Defence adds that a spokesperson had also pointed out that planning for Defender "is already spurring strategic investments in host countries. For example, Lithuania is improving their rail system and Deutsche Bahn has invested in additional heavy rail cars ahead of the exercise."

It's not the only example of European-US cooperation over transportation issues. According to defence blogger Eddy Verhaeghe, Lavrov said that "in the context of NATO's cooperation with the EU in the military sphere, they invented the term 'Military Schengen', which envisages the upgrading of all transport arteries up to NATO's eastern border in such a way that any military vehicles, even the largest, can move without hindrance to the east. I think that this fact alone is enough to understand the danger of such games. Of course, we have to respond to it." However, as Verhaeghe points out, "Russia has been upgrading its transport arteries to its western border for many, many years and when the West belatedly reacts, this becomes a danger." Of course, it's worth remembering that the number of troops involved

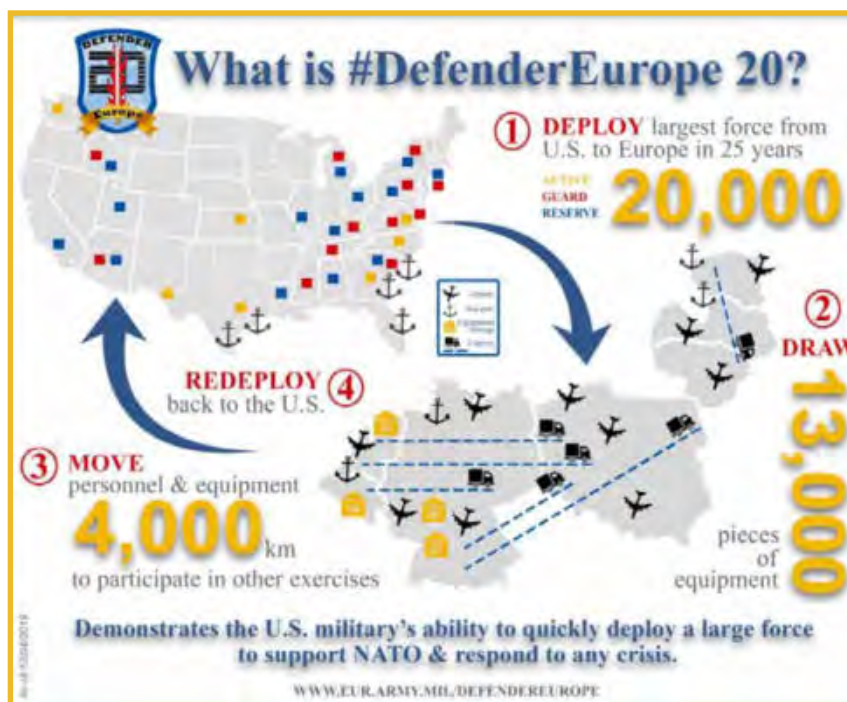
in Defender Europe 2020 is dwarfed by the numbers Russia has deployed in its own exercises on NATO's border. Moscow knew that it was engaged in an act of intimidation, so it's not surprising that it views Defender Europe 2020 as a "cold siege" of Kaliningrad, the Russian province on the Baltic Sea, squeezed between Poland and Lithuania.

WHO'S THE ENEMY?

The Russian news agency TASS quotes Lavrov as saying "The United States and NATO have claimed that this exercise is not aimed at Russia, merely at preparing the forces to cooperate against a common enemy. Whoever that might be." He is clearly doubtful of the claim that it's all about defence. "Who are they going to defend themselves from? They claim that they have to defend themselves, not from Russia, but from an adversary whose potential is identical to that of NATO," Lavrov said. "Here it will be very hard to find the correct target for these efforts, matching the comparability criteria. One look at the official statistics - not ours but foreign - concerning military spending, military equipment

and all types of armaments without any exception will be enough to see that NATO's European members alone, the US component excluded, surpasses our armed forces more than by half. I have no idea where they have found a comparable opponent." According to TASS, Lavrov says it is not Russia but NATO that is the dominant military force in this particular theatre. "Although the entire space there is oversaturated by military facilities and weapons, although NATO's eastward expansion has already created serious problems in the field of strategic stability in Europe, the merger of NATO and the EU is continuing," he told TASS. "NATO members have been trying to hold joint exercises and trying to plug in neutral EU members, such as Finland and Sweden." He added, with a certain amount of (probably unintentional) irony: "I believe that this is enough to realize how dangerous such games are." Yes, I think everyone agree, but if it takes two to tango, it also takes two to stop tangoing.

Lavrov is also concerned because Defender Europe 2020 is not really a joint US-NATO operation, he argues, but a US operation in which NATO



Defender Graphic



forces are co-operating. “One remarkable detail. I’m really curious about the reason,” he said. “One of the possible ones is the Americans find it far easier to do all the planning themselves and to carry out everything on their own, with no regard for NATO discipline. Although in NATO the US commander in Europe is also the commander of NATO forces in Europe.” You have to admit, that’s a fair point.

Russia Today (RT) is Russia’s equivalent of Fox News: it faithfully publishes the views of its country’s leadership without thinking of questioning it much. Just as Fox is unwaveringly pro-Trump, pro-Republican, so RT is equally unwaveringly pro-Putin, and, as such, perhaps more accurately reflects the views of a great many Russians than does the more cautious and diplomatic TASS. RT’s military commentator is Mikhail Khodarenok, a retired colonel who served as an officer at the main operational directorate of the General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces. “Despite NATO officials’ claims about Defender Europe 2020 not being aimed against any particular country, the exercises are clearly just another anti-Russian provocation,” he told RT. “The main objective of the exercise — NATO’s largest in over 25 years — is to practise deploying US troops to Poland and the Baltic states. As part of the drill, up to 20,000 US troops will be deployed to Europe by air and sea, as well as 13,000 vehicles and equipment. 37,000 soldiers from 18 countries will take part in Defender-Europe 2020 altogether. These exercises will last about five months, and will take place mostly in Germany, Poland, and the Baltic states, with the bulk of the activities scheduled for April and May.”

MIND HOW YOU GO

If this is simply Washington sabre-rattling, then it’s using a long sabre, because the US is also organising Defender

Pacific later this year. This will be a smaller exercise than the European version and comes a few months later, “but it will still be one of the largest exercises conducted by the U.S. Army and its partners and allies in the region since Team Spirit drills in South Korea ended in the early 1990s”, according to acting U.S. Army Pacific Commander Lt. Gen. John “Pete” Johnson, as reported in Defense News. The Army will send roughly 12,000 soldiers into the region this September for the exercise, which is fuelled by a rising China, characterized in the National Defense Strategy (NDS) as a ‘long-term, strategic competitor of the United States’. The NDS lays out a world where great power competition rather than counterterrorism will drive the Defense Department’s decision-making and force structure. So, this is Washington raising a cautionary finger to both Moscow and Beijing in a single year. Perhaps it’s just coincidence that it’s a presidential election year.



Chief of the Polish armed forces, General Rajmund Andrzejczak

“Defender Europe 2020 is not aimed at any particular country.” It’s a view with which RT has little sympathy: “Needless to say, NATO has only one potential enemy in the European strategic region that is somewhat equal to the alliance in terms of military capabilities. No matter what NATO’s political and military leaders say, it’s Russia.” It’s hard to argue that RT is wrong in this conclusion but given Russia’s own military aggression in the



Russian Joint exercises of Northern and Black Sea fleets Russian Joint exercises of Northern and Black Sea fleets

NATO and the US seem desperately keen to suggest that neither exercise has a particular enemy in mind. RT quotes General Andrew Rohling, Deputy Commander of US Armed Forces in Europe, as saying “the military manoeuvre is not related to any particular country. It aims to respond quickly to any crisis.” This view was echoed by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, who said (as a great many others seem to have done)

region, its various shows of strength and its acquisition of territory that formerly belonged to other countries, Moscow can hardly be surprised, nor should it react with mock surprise and horror, like a prim elderly aunt finding her upstairs maid and the butler in a compromising embrace.

Indeed, in the military website Tasks and Purpose, there is no pussy-footing around. The two giant exercises have a clear purpose: “The first ‘Defender Pacific’ — the Pentagon’s most significant exercise for the region in 2020 — is expected to be followed by an even bigger version involving more than 10,000 mainland soldiers,” says the website. It goes on to quote Gen. Robert Brown, former commander of U.S. Army Pacific at Fort Shafter, who “likes to point out that the United States is in a state of strategic ‘hyper-competition’ with China and Russia.” The US argues that weapons development and deployment as well as



Joint exercises of the Northern and Black Sea fleets. Vladimir Putin with Commander-in-Chief of the Navy Nikolai Yevmenov, centre, and Commander of the Southern Military District Forces Alexander Dvornikov

on-the-ground ambitions, have forced a change in the game plan. “Advanced missile systems — particularly those of China — have ‘changed the equation out here in the Pacific’ and made it more difficult for U.S. forces to gain access to potentially contested environments in what’s called anti-access/area denial,” said the four-star general in an interview with the Honolulu Star-Advertiser. “China’s road-mobile DF-21D ‘carrier killer’ missile, for example, has a manoeuvrable warhead, a range exceeding 930 miles and the ability to target aircraft carrier strike groups in the Western Pacific.” In addition, of course, China has been claiming large areas of the South China Sea where it has been constructing artificial islands and arming them with the latest weaponry. To counter it, the US is developing long-range firepower, improving the range and lethality of its missiles and artillery. In its 2015 Defence White Paper, China set out its ‘military strategic guideline’, recommending changes to the security environment that included “accelerated worldwide use of ‘long-range, precise, smart, stealthy, unmanned weapons,’” going on to say that the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) must prepare to fight and win, including preparations for a ‘maritime military struggle’. And if that didn’t worry Western navy chiefs, they may be concerned that the policy also stated: “the traditional mentality that land outweighs sea must be abandoned”. Jules Verne’s fictional Captain Nemo rides again.

BIGGER AND DEADLIER

Tasks and Purpose reports that the US “Army, Navy and Air Force are developing hypersonic weapons that attain speeds of more than Mach 5, or five times the speed of sound — at least 3,800 mph — and have a range of 1,400 miles. The Army is expected to field a prototype by fiscal year 2023.” Brown reminds readers: “If you can kill a ship from land, you can influence a lot of things,” including securing key choke-points in the South China Sea. Chinese advances in the region, coupled with aggressive rhetoric, have worried Washington for some time. The US website National Interest, reports a speech last July by Admiral Phil Davidson, Commander of the US Indo-Pacific Command, who described comments by China’s Defence Minister, General Wei Fenghe, as “quite chilling”.



Chinese submarine-launched ballistic missile, the JL-3

“Not only did [Wei] make it clear that he didn’t think Asia and the Western Pacific was any place for America, he said Asia wasn’t even for Asians—it was for the Chinese.” Then, “within 24 hours of that they tested a new nuclear ballistic missile,” the submarine-launched JL-3. It’s a bit unfair to react with shock to the missile. It was only in December that the United States test-fired a missile that would have been banned under the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF), signed in 1987 by Reagan and Gorbachev and abandoned by Trump last year, following claims that Russia had reneged on it by firing an SSC-8/9M729 missile of its own. Moscow denies breaching the Treaty.

So, we’re now into a fairly typical - Cold War scenario that sounds more like a script for a British children’s Christmas pantomime, if you are familiar with the concept: accusations, clownish denials and counterclaims with a lot of outraged huffing. The thing is, everyone involved knows the script backwards and nobody is being fooled for a moment. It’s a game of “I’ve got bigger, scarier weap-



Russian missile launcher

ons than you and I’m not afraid to use them!” There can be no real winners, of course. Schoolboys may recall playing similar games in the boys’ toilets; it was pretty disgusting then and it still is, and yet we continue to play. These days, what started out as a game of ‘brag’ has become a game of ‘chicken’, with the added risk that the chicken itself could be slaughtered, plucked, stuffed and vacuum-packed at any moment. Possibly chlorinated, too.

RT’s Mikhail Khodarenok muses on what SHAPE (Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe) might say to describe Defender Europe 2020. Is it, he asks, “to prevent Russian forces from reaching the Baltic Sea near Liepaja and Klaipeda thus isolating NATO’s units in Latvia and Estonia? Or maybe to prevent Russians from crossing the middle reaches of the Vistula river in Poland on a wide front? Possibly both, I suppose, but then given how many Poles are aware of their history, especially September 1939 when between 500,000 and a million Red Army soldiers swept into Eastern Poland, perhaps they feel the need to practise armed resistance. After all, Stalin didn’t properly declare war back then; he just acted upon the secret protocol to the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact that gave him and Hitler an equal share of Poland. Nobody asked the Poles, who were putting up spirited resistance to the Wehrmacht at the time, and could have held up the German advance for longer if the Russians hadn’t invaded sixteen days after the Germans. Stalin said it was to protect Western Ukraine and Belorussia, a view that was even backed by the exiled Leon Trotsky, no lover of Stalin. Trotsky believed it was necessary for the defence of the Soviet Union. His many supporters in the West found that disturbing and alarming. He changed his mind later, blaming Germany’s victory in Poland on “the sinister and criminal rôle played by the Kremlin”, according to Joshua Rubenstein’s book, *Leon Trotsky, a Revolutionary’s Life*.

PLUS ÇA CHANGE

That was then and this is now and you’d be forgiven for thinking that attitudes seem oddly familiar. It’s largely a blame game, citing the aggression of the other side as an excuse for stepping up your defensive capability. This, in turn, is the excuse for the other side to step up theirs. Lt. Gen. J.T. Thomson, head of NATO Allied Land Command, told Defense

News that the Defender Europe 2020 exercise will involve at least 15 NATO countries, plus two partner nations, and NATO specifically will participate at the corps level down to tactical level. "From a land forces standpoint, the demonstration of collective defence is our best deterrent," he said. "We're actually doing collective defence, and I stress collective, just not one or two nations. This is from fort to port. This isn't just a river crossing or a specific fight, it's very comprehensive in nature." This is really the West responding to a series of Russian moves that look suspiciously imperialist to outsiders.

The United States and Europe believe a show of strength will also test their ability to work together against a common enemy, even if they deny that the enemy they have in mind is Russia. "For NATO, its ability to receive forces and equipment from the U.S., stage them, move them forward onto the battlefield and integrate them will be the focus throughout the exercise," writes Defense



Lt. Gen. J.T. Thomson, head of NATO Allied Land Command

News, which notes that although there have been previous simulations, "in this case, we're not simulating it, we are doing it," said Thomson. "Once those forces get integrated, we're actually going to conduct defensive operations collectively." The aim is to evaluate two things: the state of military mobility, and ensuring that countries can operate seamlessly together, which Thomson said were "also the biggest challenges".

Russia, meanwhile, has worked closely with its own allies in preparing for war. Radio Free Europe described the massive exercise launched last September, codenamed Tsentr-2019. "Forces from China, India, Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan joined Russia's Central Joint Strategic Command

(JSC) for exercises running through September 21," the on-line article said. "The annual exercises rotate and this year's mainly focus on the Central JSC. The other JSCs are West, East, and Caucasus." Russia claimed that these were anti-terrorism exercises, although outside observers were not convinced. For such exercises, would Russia really need "128,000 personnel, 20,000 pieces of equipment and weapons, 600 aircraft and helicopters, and 15 warships," as the Jamestown Foundation has estimated? Radio Free Europe also notes that "In the 2015 exercises, for example, 95,000 personnel took part and they were used as a preparation for Russian operations in Syria, according to the Russian-language Military and Industrial Courier." The Jamestown Foundation claims that last year's exercises "look less like preparing for counterterrorist actions, than for inter-state war; this has been a feature of all Russian strategic exercises in recent years." Estonia's International Centre for Defence and Security is sceptical but concerned. "According to information officially released by the Russian side (the actual strength may have been exaggerated, as is traditional)," says its website, "in total the exercises assembled the following forces: 128,000 military personnel, more than 20,000 pieces of special military equipment, over 600 aircraft of various types (jets, helicopters and drones) and 15 warships. The geographical scope of the exercises was also impressive, involving six different areas located on Russian territory stretching from the North Caucasus to Western Siberia, while some elements took place in the partner countries." And yet Russia claims to be disturbed by Defender Europe 2020, which is not as massive. I suppose they have to appear annoyed, but never actually worried by such things.

For the US forces, working in Europe has its drawbacks. Defense News reports that in 2017, during the exercise Saber Guardian, the US Army Supreme Commander Europe of the time, Lt. Gen. Ben Hodges, flew on a Black Hawk from Bulgaria to Romania when he and the crew were warned that they may have to land for an 'unanticipated customs check'. This sounds more like deliberate puerile pettiness than a genuine attempt to ensure the general wasn't smuggling vodka and cigars. The delay would have meant that the General, who was leading the entire exercise, would miss a live-firing demonstration on the



Romanian Land Vehicles cross a ribbon bridge during a showcase of interoperability between NATO Allies

Black Sea. According to Defense News, it took a few emails and phone calls to get the matter cleared up. It was then that Hodges called for the creation of a "military Schengen Zone" to ensure military mobility across Europe. Even so, according to Thomson, obstacles persist. "During Defender, participants must move massive amounts of equipment and troops across countries in the northeast of the continent. The effort will test infrastructure and border policies. Forces will have to cross through EU member countries and nations that are not part of the organization, such as Norway, and each nation has its own set of rules, policies and procedures." Defender Europe 2020 is designed to uncover all these wrinkles in defence planning and, hopefully, iron them out. Thomson admits that interoperability has long been a challenge for NATO, even within single member states. "I'm fond of saying there's no such thing as 100 percent interoperability, not even within nations," Thomson told Defense News, but "we are headed in the right direction on interoperability. We test it and train on it daily across NATO through work with the enhanced forward presence units in Poland, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia and at other episodic exercises."

THIS FAR, NO FURTHER

The gradual build-up of US military presence in Europe followed Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014. Washington wanted to deter Moscow from trying the same thing elsewhere. But Defender Europe 2020 is a massive and complicated exercise. As reported in Breaking Defense, Brig. Gen. Sean Bernabe, deputy chief of operations at US Army Europe, recently told reporters on a conference call that during the exercises, they'll loop in key headquarters from NATO like the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps and Multinational Corps Northeast to "allow them to practise



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Soldiers assist in the movement and staging of various armored track vehicles in Savannah, GA in preparation for the DEFENDER-Europe 20 exercise which takes place in multiple European countries

commanding and controlling large-scale ground combat operations in simulation or in microcosm live exercises,” in order to build readiness for NATO as a whole.

But even reaching that stage sounds like a coordination nightmare. “Some US units, like the 116th Armored Brigade Combat Team of the Idaho Army National Guard will fall in on prepositioned stocks already in Europe, while others, like the 2nd Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division will load their Abrams tanks, Bradley Fighting Vehicles, and howitzers on ships bound for Bremerhaven, Germany. From there, the sol-



© Nato

NATO Secretary General, Jens Stoltenberg and the Chairman of the NATO Military Committee, Air Chief Marshal Sir Stuart Peach

diers will link up with their gear and then continue to move that equipment across the continent,” Bernabe said. Much of the heavy equipment will be moved along civilian roads at night to minimise interference with ordinary traffic. One supposes that a lot of this expensive hardware will then have to be shipped home, although it's possible that some may remain in or near the Baltic states as an insurance policy.

There is a close relationship these days between the US and Poland, partially because the Law and Justice Party shares with Trump a fairly right-wing view

of the world that disregards conventions. According to Breaking Defense, “Under Defender, the 1st Cavalry Division will lead a division-sized exercise at Poland’s Drawsko Pomorskie Training Area in north-western Poland, a key part of Warsaw’s increasingly close relationship with Washington. As part of a recent deal with the Trump administration, Poland eagerly agreed to host another 1,000 US troops on a rotational basis in the coming years on top of the 4,500 who already operate in the country.” Meanwhile, Defender Europe 2020 will look for ‘bugs’ in European logistics networks, ranging from possible hold-ups on the railway network to problems that could arise from Chinese ownership of some European ports. IT experts will also be on the look-out for Russian disinformation activity and hacks, together with possible acts of electronic warfare, such as the jamming of GPS, which happened during a previous exercise.

British army vehicles were disembarked at the Belgian Port of Antwerp in early February in readiness for the exercise. “The planning in itself is deterrence because it teaches our [troops] what’s involved when you start to embrace an activity of this magnitude and what you

exercise proper.” NATO says that “the focus of the purely defensive exercise is to practice the rapid deployment of large-scale forces across the Atlantic into Europe where they are then supported by participating Allied and Partner nations. During the initial phases of the exercise, nations will stage equipment in 14 air and seaports across 8 European countries in preparation for the exercise proper to begin.”

Needless to say, Russia’s political-military leadership will continue to criticise NATO for accepting former Soviet bloc members (enlargement) and for staging military exercises close to Russia’s borders, but its own exercises and its annexation of Crimea are what lie behind western attitudes. There was a time, when Reagan and Gorbachev seemed to be getting pallier and Margaret Thatcher described Gorbachev as someone she “could do business with”, when the prospects of an end to the threat of war seemed feasible. But how few now remember the speech of President Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1953: “Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies,



A face-to-face meeting with General Wolters and General Gerasimov during which it was agreed to continue using the military lines of communication in the future.

have to be prepared to do to successfully pull it off,” said Supreme Allied Commander Europe, General Tod D. Wolters. “The overarching goal of the event is to demonstrate the ability of the U.S. to lift and shift a division-size force over long distances.” According to SHAPE, “In total more than 20,000 pieces of equipment will be moved to continental Europe.

The arrival of British Forces and equipment in Antwerp, just one of the dropping points in the build-up to the exercise, will allow for convoys to travel across the continent to preposition equipment and other resources. The convoys will travel a total of approximately 4,000 kilometres to stage for the

in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and not clothed. This world in arms is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat of its labourers, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children.” Of course, today’s political leaders don’t see it that way, and nor does the military-industrial complex Eisenhower distrusted so much. I hope one of his other comments is correct: “I think that people want peace so much that one of these days governments had better get out of the way and let them have it.” Don’t hold your breath.

Tobias Bowman-Grant



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YOUR FLIGHT HAS BEEN DELAYED

Berlin waits for its airport to take off

The author Douglas Adams once wrote in one of his comic science fiction books that in no language in the universe (his universe was full of weird civilisations and even weirder aliens) will you find the expression “as beautiful as an airport”. That’s because they never are. They are necessary structures, like public conveniences, recycling depots and sewage farms: essential but seldom what you’d call pretty. The best their designers, operators and customers can hope for is efficiency and the chance for travellers to get through them and out the other side as quickly and with as little difficulty as possible. I’m sure you’ve been through a few. About the most comfortable and pleasant I can recall from recent years, ironically, is Baku airport in Azerbaijan: clean, spacious and wholesome, with good coffee. The oddest (although this was many years ago) was Lomé Airport in Togo, where flight announcements were made by somebody walking around the sweltering, overcrowded warehouse-like departure lounge (no seats, as I recall) wielding a megaphone. There were no skyways, either, and it’s a long climb up the metal

steps to a jumbo-jet. It’s probably been developed since then and is very nice by now. I look forward to finding out one day. Togo, after all, is something of a hidden gem in Africa.

Somehow, you might expect the snazziest, most up-to-date and fully functional airport to be the one serving Germany’s capital city, Berlin. Alas, no. Although

it may be someday, perhaps next year? Who knows? Its record of perpetual delays, however, is not promising. At present, plans are afoot to open it for business this October. After all, with its projected annual passenger numbers in the millions, it’s not as if it’s going to be underused. But this airport, named after the former West Berlin mayor and Nobel Prize-winning Chancellor of West Ger-



Terminal in September 2013

© Wikimedia

many, Willy Brandt, has been subject to an amazingly long series of costly delays. When it was announced, back in 2006, its outturn cost rose from the €1-billion, mentioned in 1995 before plans were approved, to an estimated €2.4-billion. It has already exceeded €7-billion and looks set to climb higher (€8-billion is being touted) before the scream of a jet engine disturbs the peace above the tarmac. In fact, at the moment it's the only thing that is climbing higher. The airport was supposed to open in 2011 and a lavish party was planned for 2012, at which Angela Merkel would cut the ribbon in front of 40,000 invited guests. However, a long list of faults in the construction, some very minor, some quite worrying, has cast some doubt on Germany's so far justified reputation for engineering excellence. The people of Berlin thought they were getting a BMW 7 series of an airport and so far, have been struggling with a 2-stroke Trabant.

OFF THE RAILS

Of course, cost overruns and unexpected obstacles are par for the course with any large construction project. The United Kingdom, for instance, can look with no pride whatsoever at the High Speed 2 (HS2) rail project that was supposed to link London with the under-represented north of England. The ambition of its initial plan has shrunk just as its estimated cost has soared. It was originally estimated to cost £56-billion (€66-billion) but a government-commissioned review by the former Chairman of HS2, Doug Oakervee, recently suggested the cost would be more likely to reach £106-billion (€125-billion). This must have come as an unwelcome surprise for the current chairman, Allan Cook, who just four months ago set the estimated cost at between £81-billion (€95-bil-



Berlin Brandenburg Airport in 2019

lion) and £88-billion (€104-billion). Meanwhile, groups opposed to its construction as a vast, destructive waste of money, like Britain's Tax Payers' Alliance, say it's more likely to cost £150-billion (€177-billion) while other protestors say the cost could be as much as £237-billion (€280-billion).

And most (but not all) people - apart from politicians and London-based chief executives - don't seem to want it. It may never fulfil its initial goals, either: it was supposed to come in three phases, the first from London to Birmingham and with later stages to Manchester and Leeds, cutting journey times by half but missing out, for instance, Nottingham and Derby along the way and leaving out two key city destinations, Newcastle and Liverpool, altogether. It is currently quicker to travel from London to Paris on the Eurostar than it is to take an express train to Liverpool. However, it now seems more likely that Phase One of HS2 stop at Birmingham, anyway, and get no further.

The idea is to start from London's Euston Station, where work has already begun, link with the new Crossrail line across London and then tunnel its way under the rest of London and cut through rural Buckinghamshire and the Midlands before it gets to Birmingham. Eventually. And nature conservancy groups, such as the Woodland Trust, say the first two phases - if they go ahead - would mean cutting through 104 ancient woods, destroying historic landscapes and killing wildlife. Even if only the first phase goes ahead (as seems likely) it will mean the destruction of 34 ancient woods. Oh, and there are allegations of corruption and embezzlement by some as well as of home-owners and land-owners being swindled over compensation. At least Brandenburg Airport doesn't have that

lot to contend with. Well, not in quite the same way, anyway.

The fact that the Brandenburg Airport is going to cost more than expected hardly counts as news. Every big project ends up costing more and, strangely, some people connected with it seem to benefit financially from the mess. Meanwhile, many Berliners, whilst chafing at delays to a project to make them better connected, are treating the whole project as a bit of a joke. Some have called the airport a 'white elephant'. It has certainly embarrassed politicians, planners and business leaders. Among the things that have contributed to the delay, a BBC report lists more than 550,000 faults during construction. They will, of course, be put right: the new European Parliament building in Strasbourg was plagued with faults when it opened in 1999, much to the amusement of Euro-sceptics. The first few months saw 'condemned doors' that couldn't be opened and uneven floors that the public (and MEPs) never saw. On one upper level, a section of floor had been cleaned only after everyone had gone because an unnoticed part of the design meant that one room overhung the floor of a corridor to a height of just over a metre. Cleaners had to go along it on their hands and knees, as I witnessed myself. Security people seemed keen for me to leave that area. But everything was put right (more or less) and few can now recall the inconveniences of sharing the older Palais de Europe building with the Council of Europe.

THE AIRPORT AT THE END OF THE WORLD

German media has had fun mocking the planners, politicians and construction companies involved. After all, Germany was famous for punctuality. As



Angela Merkel

one commentator noted, the length of the delay spans Angela Merkel's entire time as Chancellor (although nobody is blaming her for it). Germany is also famous for bureaucracy, of course, and some are blaming that for the problem, even if the bureaucrats were mainly concerned with meeting safety and environmental standards. "The number of building regulations has quadrupled in the last 20 years," Engelbert Lütke Daldrup, the fourth manager of the project told Switzerland's New Zurich Times, "They (the German authorities) only want the best for every area, in fire protection, in impact sound absorption, in energy efficiency, in accessibility, in environmental protections, etc."

Quoted in TRT World, Professor Patrick Schwerdtner, a construction expert at Braunschweig Technical University, said the culture of bureaucracy amongst officials and the population at large bears much of the responsibility. "Compared to the rest of Europe," he said, "the German population is inclined to (bureaucratic) conflicts. According to TRT World, he cited the example of the Fehmarnbelt Tunnel, an 18-kilometre-long underwater tunnel linking Denmark's Lolland island with northern Schleswig-Holstein in Germany. At the current rate, it is not due for completion until 2028. Schwerdtner explained that "on the German side there were 12,600 objections to the project (from members of the public), on the Danish side only a few dozen with mostly constructive proposals." By comparison, the Brandenburg airport project provoked 133,000 objections during the planning phase alone.

The bureaucracy problems don't end there, either. Schwerdtner is also critical of management techniques and Germany's public procurement laws, which state that projects require separate approvals for their planning and execution stages. A project the size of the Willy Brandt-Brandenburg airport



Berlin Brandenburg Airport BER 2019

has to be divided up into a great number of sub-projects which can only be begun when the preceding project has been satisfactorily completed. By 2009, the airport project was already made up of 45 sub-projects. Schwerdtner says there were mistakes, too, that cost time and money, such as the use of plastic dowels in the construction. Under German building law, dowels must be made of metal, so each and every one had to be located and replaced. There have been accusation of corruption, too. TRT World reports that Jochen Grossmann, whose job it was to oversee the installation of smoke extraction systems, was suspended for taking bribes and later received a one year suspended prison sentence for it. Prosecutors also investigated when a whistle-blower who had reported corruption was allegedly poisoned by somebody who put something put in his coffee, suggesting the involvement of organised crime. He was off work for three months.

The problems with the airport have been dragging on for years. In June 2010 the airport corporation, FBB, announced that the October 2011 deadline - which it described as 'ambitious' - would not be met for a variety of reasons, including the bankruptcy of the construction planning company, Planungsgemeinschaft Berlin-Brandenburg International. They postponed the opening date to June 2012. They were, of course, wrong, although the city's Mayor said at the time that the project was "on schedule", leading airlines to amend their timetables in expectation of a move to the new site from Tegel and from Schönefeld, the low-cost airport. But in 2015, it was discovered that 600 fire-resistant walls had been installed wrongly and would need to be reinforced or demolished

and replaced. Imtech, a Dutch company that had built the fire protection system, filed for bankruptcy. A spokesman for the airport, Daniel Abbou, was sacked after giving an interview to PR magazine in which he wandered off-message, saying there was a "chance" that the airport would open in 2017, unfortunately adding "no politician, no airport director and no person who is not dependent on medication will give you solid guarantees for this airport." He then spoke a little too truthfully for some: "Earlier, they would mostly say: No, it's all good. That is bullshit." His use of an English expression in an interview in German was noted and not favourably.

FLIGHTS OF FANCY?

Meanwhile, the whole fiasco is costing German taxpayers some €10-million each month, and they have been getting cross about it. They were demanding that the project should draw to a conclusion. However, in 2017 Daldrup told politicians in Berlin that the sprinkler system still didn't work and neither did half of the automatic doors. Later that year he suggested that the airport could open in October 2020, although he admitted it might be necessary to use metal shipping containers to house passengers awaiting their flights, at least until work on the new terminal building has been completed. Meanwhile, it was still necessary to maintain the empty building (empty except for various construction workers, that is). It still had to be cleaned and aired while an empty train trundled through the specially-built railway station every day to ensure the tunnels stayed free of mould and the rails remained rust-free. Staff air its empty and guest-free hotel bedrooms and change the sheets.



Professor Patrick Schwerdtner construction expert at Braunschweig Technical University

Other parts of the building also had to be kept fit for purpose, however distant that purpose. All of the flight information monitors - 750 of them in all - reached the end of their life expectancy in 2018 and had to be replaced at a cost of €500,000. No passenger had ever looked at one since their original installation.

It was in November last year that Daldrop announced the currently-anticipated opening at the end of this October, although he admits there's still a lot of work to do. That includes a final safety check by Technischer Überwachungsverein (TÜV), followed by the deployment of some 20,000 volunteers in live tests. Flughafen Berlin Brandenburg (FBB) advertised at the end of January for people to take part in the tests. Daldrop is still confident the date is feasible and the premier of Brandenburg, Dietmar Woidke, added his vote of confidence by saying that "This time it would happen".

Those involved must be keeping their fingers crossed: the many delays have already claimed a number of political scalps, such as the airport's former



Berlin Brandenburg Airport BER 2016

Chief Executive, Hartmut Mehdorn and the long-serving mayor of Berlin, Klaus Wowereit. There have been some inexplicable slip-ups, too. In 2014, it was revealed that the chief planner for the new airport's fire protection system, Alfredo di Mauro, was an engineering draughtsman and not - as had been assumed by the organisers - a qualified engineer. He didn't bother to correct them as to his suitability and qualifications and the mistake ended up costing hundreds of millions of euros to put right.

Anti-corruption bodies are not surprised by what's been going on. The concluding chapter of The Anticorruption Report Volume 1, Controlling



The future Berlin Brandenburg airport

Corruption in Europe stated: "Spending on new infrastructure projects, for example, allows the channelling of government resources to favourite companies either directly or through local or regional governments producing unnecessary outputs with high costs." According to the European Research Centre for Anti-corruption and State Building (ERCAS), Germany had long been considered a country at 'low risk' of corruption. "The FBB signed an Integrity Pact with Transparency Germany in 2005," says the ERCAS website, "and engaged local public procurement expert Professor Peter Oettel, (Oettel is honorary professor at the Technical University Berlin and was former Head of the Department of Structural Policy for the city where he was responsible for overseeing public procurement) to work with TI in monitoring the awarding of contracts for the airport. According to the FBB, this was the first time a German company took such a step, however, according to Transparency Germany; it took nearly a decade to convince the company to sign the pact." A bit of a mouthful, that sentence, but it's how ERCAS reported it. FBB did sign in the end, of course, and took further steps to protect against wrongdoing. "The FBB also has an ombuds-woman, an anti-corruption officer and an anti-corruption task force" writes ERCAS. "The FBB reported the suspected corruption to (the) public prosecutor in Neuruppin who then conducted a search of the office of two accused associates as well as the private premises of the chief suspect. The public prosecutor has described the situation as a 'classic model of corruption in business dealings'."

While there has been pressure to retain Tegel as a smaller 'city airport' to serve business people in a hurry who don't want to face the long trek out to Brandenburg, some people are already questioning whether the new airport will be sufficiently capacious. There is even talk of starting expansion work as soon as it opens; Germans are inveterate travellers and fly more than any other Europeans: 47.1-million took to the skies last year, a fall of 0.8%, while 244.3-million passengers made international connections in Germany. The slight fall in the number of Germans flying is being put down to concerns about climate change, although trade conflicts and the state of global trade played a part.

It's not so long since Elon Musk purchased a 300-hectare site at Grüneheide, just to the east of Berlin, for a price of €40.9-million, where he plans to build - eventually - some 500,000 of his Model Y SUVs and Model 3 saloon cars. He is already nervous that his planned factory could face the sorts of delays that have plagued the airport. He also knows how important that airport will be for his factory and its future success. He is not known to be a patient man, but he may not have to be. The opening date has been set and services from the existing Berlin Tegel airport are due to end one week later, on 8 November. The move, according to the Flight Global website will take place in three stages. The new Brandenburg airport's north runway will become operational on 31 October. The southern runway will open on 4 November. All existing services will transfer there by 8 November, at which point Tegel airport will close to scheduled flights, according to the new airport's operating company, FBB.

NOT CLEARED FOR TAKEOFF

Willy Brandt Brandenburg was supposed to meet future needs and the expected growth in passenger numbers, as well as providing a hub for the regional airline, Air Berlin. Unfortunately, the project hit another snag when Air Berlin filed for insolvency in 2017, leaving the new airport without a hub airline. This meant that FBB had lost its biggest tenant before the place had even opened. Lufthansa promised to take over some of Air Berlin's routes but said they would retain their major hubs at Frankfurt and Munich, rather than build a new one at Brandenburg. In the same year, the new airport failed to get safety certification for its underground railway station. Brandenburg was intended also to replace Berlin's ageing existing airports, Schönefeld, which was the main airport

for East Berlin, Tegel, built to handle the Berlin Airlift of 1948-49 at the start of the Cold War, and the famous Tempelhof, which was built in 1927, expanded during the 1930s and used as the main base for the Berlin Airlift. The Tempelhof name originated from the fact that that land on which it stood had once belonged to the Knights Templar. It closed, somewhat controversially, in 2008, and there remains some pressure to retain the airport buildings for historic reasons. Tegel Airport was constructed to handle flights during the Berlin Airlift and is scheduled to close as soon as the new airport is up and running.

The new airport has already grown. It was decided to double its capacity after construction had already begun, which probably accounts for quite a few of its ongoing problems. The team of politicians managing the project had no experience of what they were trying to do so

awarded a lot of contracts to small companies instead of a few to large, experienced companies, believing they'd be easier to control and haggle with over price. It didn't work. Then they discovered something unexpected: the airport's architect, Meinhard von Gerkan had a peculiar dislike of airport shops that he hadn't mentioned, commenting that he disliked seeing passengers traipsing around with bags containing alcohol and luxury goods, so failed to provide any space for them. The politicians could see this would be a bad thing and could prevent Berlin developing into a popular hub, so they insisted on an extra floor being built, just to house shops and other facilities. Suddenly, the airport was being changed as it was being built with the result that nobody knew where everything was any more. It had, for instance, been built without any gates for low cost flight operators, only the huge, costly sky-bridges for large

SOME KEY FIGURES IN THE BERLIN BRANDENBURG AIRPORT PROJECT



Professor Patrick Schwerdtner construction expert at Braunschweig Technical University



Hartmut Mehdorn CEO of Berlin Brandenburg Flughafen GmbH from 2013 to 2015



Jochen Grossmann appointed as technical head by Hartmut Mehdorn was fired in 2014 and subsequently accused and found guilty of corruption and fraud



Matthias Platzeck, Prime Minister of the State of Brandenburg became Chairman of the FBB Supervisory Board in 2013



Klaus Wowereit, the then Berlin mayor became chairman of the FBB supervisory board in 2001 and stepped down from his post and was subsequently replaced by Matthias Platzeck, the Minister-President of Brandenburg in 2013



Berlin's Secretary for Housing and Construction Engelbert Lütke Daldrup manager of the project since 2017



Karsten Mühlenfeld (right) and Angela Merkel (Mühlenfeld replaced Hartmut Mehdorn in 2015 and resigned in 2017)

jets. The project descended into chaos, although to be honest it had been pretty chaotic from the outset. And underlying the construction were hundreds of kilometres of cabling, much of it tangled and with no-one having any clear knowledge of what connected to which. It had had been so poorly installed that it had to be replaced, another complicated and costly job and it is the cabling and fire safety systems that are most to blame for the delays. Since these were caused by politicians trying to do something at which they lacked experience, blame for the delays could (and perhaps should) be laid at their door. To be honest, the German media and ordinary Berliners don't know who to blame; they're just fed up with the whole sorry debacle.

The story isn't over, either. According to CAPA, the operating company, FBB still needs additional funds of some €300-million, which includes €200-million just to complete work on the main terminal. Oh, and it also needs two hundred extra staff to operate the airport safely. The Chief Finance officer for FBB has said the company is currently setting up a new business plan that takes the finance issue into account. "The previous business plan for the years 2018 to 2037," writes CAPA, "identified additional funding requirements of €770-million for the period after the opening of BER in Oct-2020, due to loss of revenue from the unfinished main terminal. It took into account the expectation of an increase in revenues based on the increase in passenger numbers from 2021 and improved revenue opportunities in non-aeronautical activities. The board discussed different options for covering financial needs – including even a hire purchase model at the expense of long-term revenue while also committing to raise €400-millions of necessary funds on the capital market." The saga just goes on and on.



New site of Airport Berlin Brandenburg International (BER), Germany under construction. Old Schönefeld (SXF) facilities on bottom right side. Shot from jetliner

BIGGER AND BETTER

With the UK now having left, Berlin is the European Union's largest city and most right-thinking people would imagine it would have one of the most efficient airports. Perhaps it will, one day, but it will still face pressure from low-cost carriers and charter flight operators, currently flying out of Schönefeld next door (the existing Schönefeld will become Terminal 5 of the new airport), for lower airport charges. The operators are unhappy because taxi distances to the new airport will be several times as great and they want their charges cut to compensate. FBB would do well to listen carefully to their appeals: low cost and charter flights account for more than 90% of the seats on flights from Schönefeld. Other new airports sited too far from the cities they serve, such as at Kuala Lumpur, have failed and had to be replaced. And the charges at Tegel, currently Berlin's main airport, are higher than those at Frankfurt, Hamburg and Munich.

But let's just take a look at some of the strange problems that have afflicted construction at Brandenburg, as cited in an on-line report by the blog, One Mile at a Time: 90,000 metres of cable incorrectly installed; 4,000 doors incorrectly numbered (although that number has been questioned - why would an airport need 4,000 doors?); some escalators were too short (does that mean they stopped before reaching the next floor?); there are not enough check-in desks; FBB had to consider employing hundreds of nightclub bouncers policing the airport 24 hours a day to sound alarms and open doors because the smoke alarm system didn't work; 3,000 smoke detectors went missing; thousands of lightbulbs shine around the clock because officials can't work out how to switch them off; hundreds of newly-planted trees had to be cut down because they were the wrong species; the Willy Brandt Foundation is considering revoking the airport's permission to use his name because the whole project is so embarrassing and could be considered disrespectful to his legacy; flight paths and sound protection zones were incorrectly calculated; the emergency line to the fire department didn't work; the airport's roof was twice the permitted height.

COUNTING THE COSTS

It really is hard to imagine how such a prestigious project in such a well-organised city could have descended into something more reminiscent of a sketch from Monty Python. You (and most Berliners) will be relieved at reports in Airports International that testing so far has produced positive results. Daldrop is optimistic that this time the airport really will begin operations in October, even if not quite everything is in full working order. "The results of the operating principle test show that the meticulous work we performed with extensive upstream functional tests has paid off" he said to the magazine. "The fact that the interaction of the fire protection systems works at this level of quality is an essential step on the road to commissioning in October 2020. In particular, I extend our thanks to the staff of the construction and operating section for their commitment. They have achieved a level of success that seemed unattainable to many just a year ago."

So, what of the specifications, if all goes to plan? Two runways, one of asphalt and 3,600 metres long, the other of concrete and 4,000 metres long, so it can handle the largest aircraft. Projected passenger numbers are around 34-million a year, making it the third busiest airport in Germany and one of the fifteen biggest in Europe. Admittedly, it should have opened years ago but instead it fell victim to poor construction planning, execution, management and corruption. To make way for the new airport, two villages had to be removed. The 335 inhabitants of Diepensee received compensation and were offered new homes in Königs Wusterhausen in 2004, while the 35 villagers of Selchow were resettled in Großziethen the following year.

The mess puts me in mind of a Limerick, one of those short allegedly Irish forms of poetry, often obscene or at least quite rude:

There once was a lady called Jane
Who wanted to ride in a 'plane
But the airport nearby
Said she still couldn't fly
So she left it and went on a train.

Will Berlin ever live it down? At least the people wanting to build Britain's HS2 railway will know they're not alone in their planning and construction nightmare.

Anthony James

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EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS

France condemned in historic judgment



© Lionel Allorge

Fresnes Prison, France

France has a prison problem...its jails are overcrowded. In total, 70,818 people were incarcerated on October 1, 2019. It's the fifth largest prison population in Europe.

Thousands of prisoners share cells with at least 3 other people, and over 60% of those released end up back in jail within five years. It's now become a safety issue.

A string of recent knife attacks by inmates have sparked weeks of strikes by prison warders. They say around 4,000 assaults take place in French prisons every year. The French government had said in 2018 that it was time for an overhaul.

However, on 30 January 2020, in a judgment described as historic, the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) issued recommendations and ordered France to pay nearly 500,000 euros to 32 detainees who had brought a court action against it. The applications were lodged with the ECHR between February 2015 and November 2017.

Relying on Article 3 (prohibition of inhuman and degrading treatment), Article 8 (right to private and family life) and Article 13 (right to an effective remedy), the applicants alleged that their conditions of detention were or had been inhuman and degrading and that they had no effective remedy in that regard.

The Court declared admissible the applicants' complaints concerning their conditions of detention, with the exception of three applicants who were no longer in detention when their applications were lodged, who should have submitted a claim for compensation to the domestic courts, and two applicants who had obtained recognition of the demeaning nature of their conditions of detention and obtained redress for the alleged violation of Article 3. The Court likewise declared admissible the complaint submitted by all the applicants concerning the lack of an effective preventive remedy in domestic law.

The 32 applicants in this case are 29 French nationals, one Cape Verde national, one Polish national and one Moroccan national. The 32 cases concerned the poor conditions of detention in the following prisons: Ducos (Martinique), Faa'a Nuutania (French Polynesia), Baie-Mahault (Guadeloupe), Nîmes, Nice and Fresnes, as well as the issue of overcrowding in prisons and the effectiveness of the preventive remedies available to the prisoners concerned.

The Court considered that the personal space allocated to most of the applicants had fallen below the required minimum standard of 3 sq. m throughout their period of detention; that situation had

been aggravated by the lack of privacy in using the toilets. With regard to the applicants who had more than 3 sq. m of personal space, the Court held that the prisons in which they had been or continued to be held did not, generally speaking, provide decent conditions of detention or sufficient freedom of movement and activities outside the cell.

The Court further held that the preventive remedies in place were ineffective in practice, and found that the powers of the administrative judges to make orders were limited in scope. Furthermore, despite a positive change in the case-law, overcrowding in prisons and the dilapidated state of some prisons acted as a bar to the full and immediate cessation of serious breaches of fundamental rights by means of the remedies available to persons in detention.

The Court recommended to the respondent State that it should consider the adoption of general measures in order to ensure that prisoners' conditions of detention were compatible with Article 3 of the Convention. The measures taken to that end should include putting a permanent end to overcrowding in prisons.

Furthermore, an effective preventive remedy should be put in place, which, together with the compensatory remedy, would enable prisoners to obtain redress for the situation of which they were victims and prevent the continuation of alleged violations.

The Court held that France was to pay the applicants sums ranging from 4,000 euros to 25,000 euros in respect of non-pecuniary damage.

France now has three months to contest this decision. A period of around six months will then follow before an initial assessment is made by the ECHR, which will verify whether the French State has properly applied the two recommendations announced in the final judgment.

James Lookwood



DRUGS

A new report highlights wide-ranging impacts of EU drug markets on health and security

Europeans are spending at least EUR 30 billion on drugs each year at retail level, making the drug market a major source of income for organised crime groups in the European Union according to the newly released EU drugs agency (EMCDDA) and Europol 2019 EU Drug Markets Report. Around two-fifths of this total (39%) is spent on cannabis, 31% on cocaine, 25% on heroin and 5% on amphetamines and MDMA.

The two agencies have joined forces to provide their third state-of-the-art overview of the European illicit drug market. The report covers trends along the supply chain from production and trafficking to distribution and sales. It describes how the drug market has wide-ranging impacts on both health and security and how a holistic approach is crucial for effective drug control policies.

Presenting the report's findings, Dimitris Avramopoulos, European Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship said: 'Organised crime groups are quick to seize new opportunities for financial gain and are increas-

ingly exploiting technological and logistical innovations to expand their activities across international borders. At the same time, drugs are now more accessible to European consumers, often via social media and the internet. Today's report proves once again that the illicit drug market remains a threat to the health and security of our citizens. We will continue working relentlessly with our Member States and international partners on strengthening our fight against drugs in all its aspects; for our youth, our citizens, our society.'

The strategic and action-oriented analysis combines data from the EMCDDA's drug monitoring system with Europol's operational intelligence on organised crime. The latest data show that overall drug availability within Europe remains 'very high' and that consumers have access to a wide variety of high-purity and high-potency products at steady, or falling, prices. An important cross-cutting theme in the report is the environmental impact of drug production, including deforestation and the dumping of chemical waste, which can result in ecological damage, safety risks and high clean-up costs.

RIISING VIOLENCE AND CORRUPTION LINKED TO EU DRUG MARKET ACTIVITY

The report highlights the increasing importance of Europe, both as a target and drug-producing region, and shows how the violence and corruption, long seen in traditional drug-producing countries, are now increasingly evident within the EU. Among the wide-ranging consequences of the drug market presented in the analysis are its negative impacts on society (e.g. gang violence, drug-related homicide) and the strain on public institutions and governance. The drug market's links to wider criminal activity (e.g. human trafficking, terrorism) are also explored, along with its negative repercussions on the legal economy (e.g. how money laundering associated with the drug trade undermines legitimate businesses).

TRADE, TECH AND CRIMINAL TOOLS – DRIVING AND FACILITATING THE MARKET



Alexis Goosdeel Director of the Lisbon-based European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA)

According to the report, globalisation, technology and innovation and criminal tools are three forces driving and facilitating drug market developments. In a ‘more globally connected and technologically enabled’ market, organised crime groups are exploiting opportunities arising from expanding commercial markets, associated logistical developments and digitalisation. The report raises concerns over the greater diversification of maritime drug trafficking and the misuse of general aviation (e.g. private aircraft, drones) for criminal purposes. The use of post and parcel services to transport drugs is also expanding rapidly, following the rising trend of online shopping in Europe and the movement of larger volumes of goods.

Surface web and darknet markets, as well as social media, messaging services and mobile apps provide avenues for online drug sales. While darknet markets remain resilient (around 10 are still operating today — Figure 2.8), online vendor shops and markets targeting specific nationalities and language groups have also appeared. Illegal firearms, encrypted smartphones and fraudulent documents are among the key criminal tools increasingly used by drug dealers.

EMCDDA Director Alexis Goosdeel says: ‘This report is a clear wake-up call for policymakers to address the rapidly growing drug market, which is increasingly global, joined-up and digitally enabled. Hyper production of drugs, within and beyond EU borders, is leading to high availability of natural and synthetic substances. This means that consumers now have access to a diverse range of highly potent and pure products at affordable prices. A mounting concern is the rise in drug-related violence and corruption within the EU. Acting

on the far-reaching consequences of the drug market for health and for security must now be an urgent priority.’

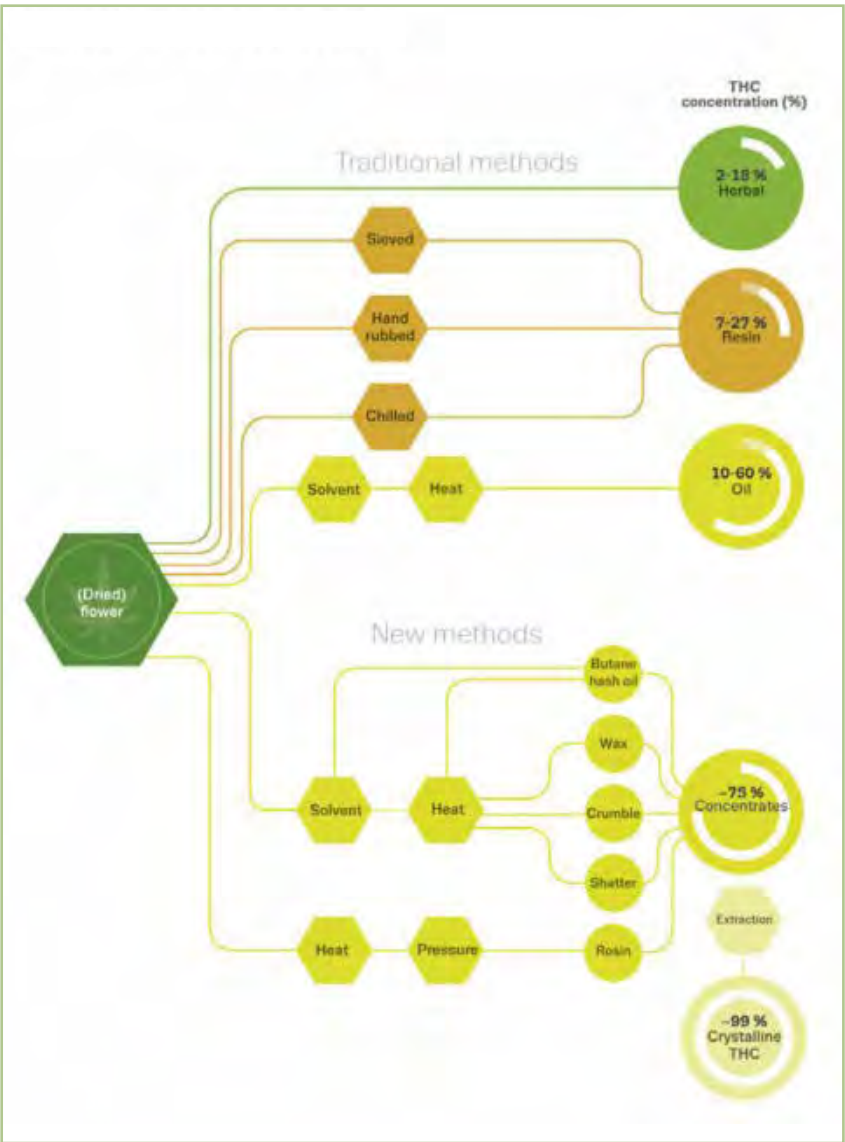
Europol’s Executive Director Catherine De Bolle stresses: ‘Europol sees a clear increase in trafficking activity through our operational work and the intelligence contributions we receive from EU Member States. Law enforcement needs to tackle this development and that is why we are investing heavily in supporting drug-related investigations in Europe. Europol is targeting in particular top-level organised crime groups which are making a lot of money for themselves on the back of their many victims.’

KEY DRUG MARKETS UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

The report takes an in-depth look at the markets for the main drugs used in Europe, following the flow from production to use.

CANNABIS – PRODUCTS INCREASINGLY DIVERSE:

Estimated to be worth at least EUR 11.6 billion, this is the largest drug market in Europe, with some 25 million Europeans (15–64 years) having used the drug in the past year. The report illustrates that, while cannabis herb and resin still dominate, cannabis products are increasingly diverse in Europe. High-potency extracts, cannabis-based medicinal and health-orientated products and an increasing number of cannabidiol (CBD) or low-THC products are being sold in a range of forms (Figure 3.1). This makes close monitoring of their potency and potential health effects essential. Increased violence between organised crime groups dealing in cannabis is putting an added strain on law enforcement.



Taxonomy of cannabis products old and new



© Edm

Afghan anti drug force

HEROIN AND OTHER OPIOIDS – SEVERE HEALTH RISKS AND PRECURSOR CONCERNS:

Opioid use still accounts for the largest proportion of harms, including deaths, associated with illicit drug consumption in the EU. With some 1.3 million problem opioid users (mainly of heroin) in the EU, the estimated retail value of the heroin market is at least EUR 7.4 billion per year. The Balkan route remains the key corridor for heroin into the EU, but there are signs of increased heroin trafficking along the Southern route, particularly through the Suez Canal (Figure 4.8). There is also evidence of diversion and trafficking of the heroin precursor acetic anhydride from the EU to heroin producing areas. Highly potent synthetic opioids (e.g. fentanyl derivatives) represent a growing health risk. These are increasingly traded online and dispatched by post, often in small packages containing large numbers of potential user doses.

COCAINE – RECORD PRODUCTION AND EXPANDING MARKETS:

This is the second most commonly consumed illicit drug in the EU, with a market retail value estimated at EUR 9.1 billion. Around 4 million Europeans (15–64 years) report having used the drug in the past year. Use is still concentrated in the south and west of Europe but the market appears to be spreading. Record production in Latin America has intensified trafficking to the EU (mainly in maritime containers), where record seizures have been recorded. The presence of European organised crime groups in Latin America allows them to manage the supply chain 'end-to-end'. This may be driving competition within the cocaine market,

which is linked to violence within the EU. The EU appears to be emerging as a transit area for cocaine destined for other markets (e.g. Middle East, Asia).

AMPHETAMINE, METHAMPHETAMINE AND MDMA – LARGE-SCALE PRODUCTION IN EUROPE FOR DOMESTIC CONSUMPTION AND EXPORT:

These make up around 5% of the total EU drug market, with an estimated EU retail market value of at least EUR 1 billion for amphetamine and methamphetamine and EUR 0.5 billion for MDMA. Around 1.7 million Europeans (15–64 years) have tried amphetamine or methamphetamine in the past year and some 2.6 million have tried MDMA ('ecstasy'). Production of these substances takes place sometimes on an 'industrial scale' within the EU for domestic consumption and for export. New production methods yield purer and cheaper products, with organised crime groups controlling the whole logistics chain.

NEW PSYCHOACTIVE SUBSTANCES (NPS) – FEWER NEW DETECTIONS BUT POTENT SUBSTANCES POSE SERIOUS HEALTH THREATS:

These are diverse substances which are not subject to international drug controls. The value of the NPS market is unknown, however 55 NPS were reported to the EU Early Warning System in 2018, bringing the total number of NPS monitored to 731. The main source countries are China and, to a lesser extent, India. Policy responses and law enforcement activity in source

countries are thought to have contributed to the slow-down in appearance of NPS (101 were reported in 2014). But NPS continue to pose serious cross-border threats to health, with potent synthetic opioids, cannabinoids and 'fake' benzodiazepines appearing on the market, associated with reports of health emergencies and deaths.



© Malta Police Force



© Romanian National Police, Antidrug Unit

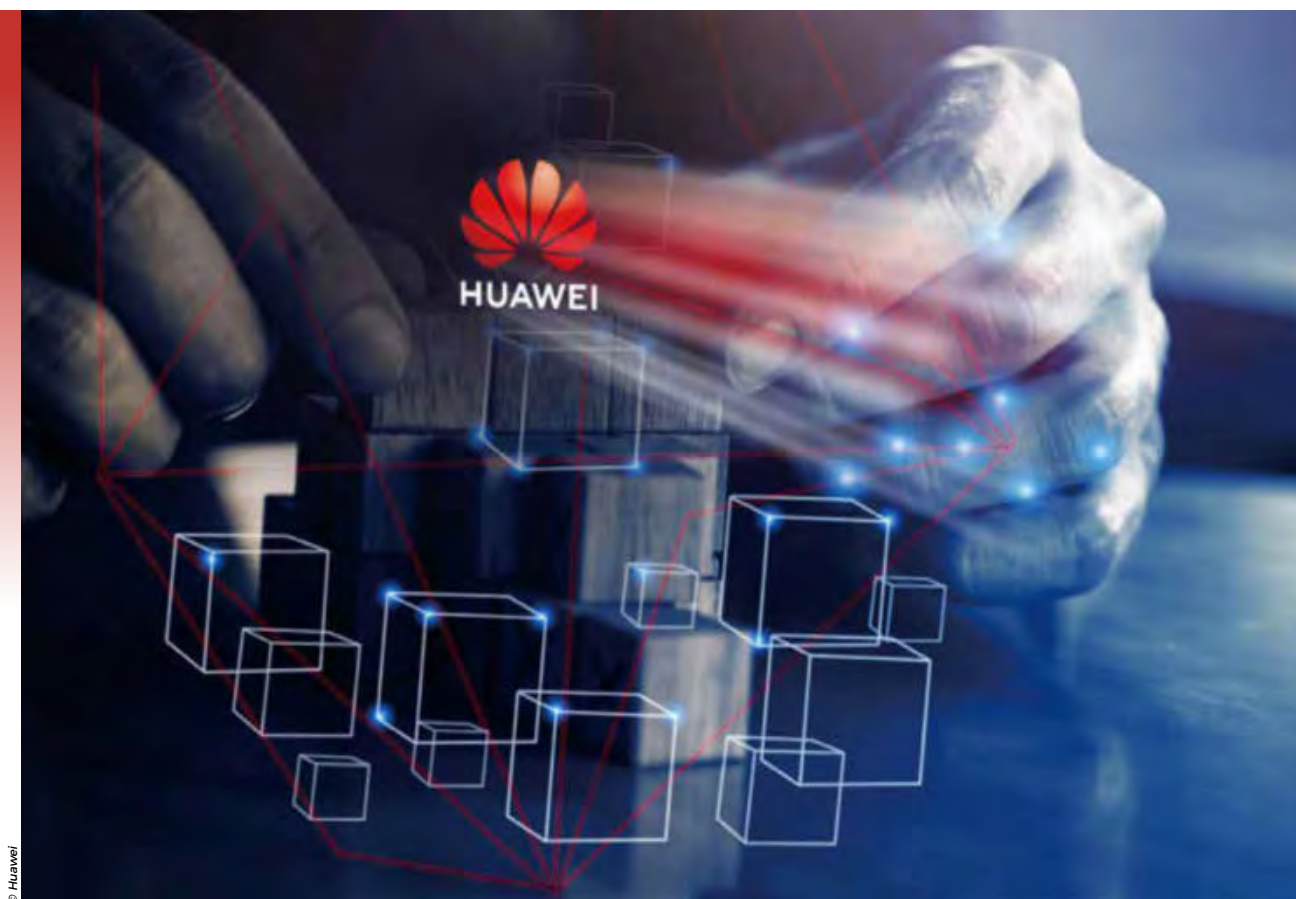
Seized drugs

TACKLING DRUG MARKETS: ACTIONS FOR CURRENT AND FUTURE SCENARIOS

In a drug market which is 'increasingly complex, adaptive and dynamic', the report stresses that 'EU policies and responses need to be equally agile, adaptive and joined-up'. The report presents a wide array of ongoing actions to target the illicit drug supply chain, from operational measures to tackle corruption at ports to training for officials in dismantling illicit drug laboratories. It also describes a full range of policy tools available (e.g. coordination structures, legislation, cooperation programmes and financial instruments).

Among the key areas for action identified in the report are: tackling the business models of top-level organised crime groups active in the global drug market; reducing vulnerabilities at external borders; and investing in forensic and toxicological capacity to keep pace with innovations in drug production.

The agencies stress that taking a future-oriented approach will boost preparedness to respond to potential future challenges, such as virtual currencies, drone technology, automation in supply chain logistics and artificial intelligence.



HUAWEI'S LONG MARCH

How 5G is taking over the world

When I was a younger journalist in North East England, there was a joke going the rounds that Nissan had decided to set up on Wearside because one of the company executives thought he'd heard a shipyard worker speak Japanese. His hosts at North East Shipbuilders - the last remaining - shipyard of the once-many on the River Wear were astonished. "What did he say?" he asked. The Nissan executive told him he'd clearly heard the man say "Hiyeh, Marah, hoyah hammah ower heyah." In North-East dialect, that translates as "Hey, my friend, throw your hammer over here." A silly story that reflects an age when far eastern languages were seldom if ever heard in the United Kingdom. In fact, few foreign languages of any kind were heard up there in the North East. My school French teacher once told the class in exasperation, when we were being especially dense, "you'll probably never

meet a Frenchman but you need to learn this to pass your exam". The British have always been suspicious of foreigners and that may account for the UK's seemingly suicidal decision to break links with its largest trading partner, the European Union. So where does that leave us with the Chinese tech giant, Huawei?

That rather depends, at least in part, on how close the UK remains to the European Union. "Huawei is more committed to Europe than ever before," said Abraham Liu, Huawei's Chief Representative to the EU Institutions. "We are looking forward to our next 20 years here. That's why we have decided we want to set up manufacturing bases in Europe - so that we can truly have 5G for Europe made in Europe." This was said at a big event at the Concert Noble in Brussels to mark Chinese New Year, in front of 450 invited guests. The future belongs, for now, to 5G (5th Generation),



Huawei Chief Representative to the EU Institutions and Vice-President European Region



European Union Agency for Cybersecurity's headquarters in Heraklion, Greece (ENISA)

the latest technology. "5G will have a big impact on European societies," said one of the guests, former EU Commission Vice-President Viviane Reding, "This impact needs to be understood properly so that the right policy responses can be formulated in good time."

First of all, then, the all-important question: what exactly IS 5G? Here is the rather concise and helpful answer on the Qualcomm website: "5G is the 5th generation mobile network. It will take a much larger role than previous generations. 5G will elevate the mobile network to not only interconnect people, but also interconnect and control machines, objects and devices. It will deliver new levels of performance and efficiency that will empower new user experiences and connect new industries. 5G will deliver multi-Gbps peak rates, ultra-low latency, massive capacity, and more uniform user experience." No, I don't understand all of that, either. In other words, it can do a lot more than your present smartphone and possibly (in my case certainly) more than you'll ever want it to. It will be part of the much-heralded "Internet of things", in which everything is controlled remotely, even if it takes a stretch of the imagination to speculate why it would need to be controlled at all, from anywhere. But even the European Commission is deeply involved with the idea and has an advisor to keep them abreast of new ideas and developments.

STEP BY STEP

While everyone gets excited about 5G, it's worth recalling its predecessors, each hailed as a breakthrough in its time: 2G introduced digital voice

transmission, 3G made it possible to send data digitally and 4G brought the mobile Internet to the public. Exciting stuff! 5G promises so much more. Here's what Qualcomm has to say again: "5G is a new kind of network: a platform for innovations that will not only enhance today's mobile broadband services, but will also expand mobile networks to support a vast diversity of devices and services and connect new industries with improved performance, efficiency, and cost. 5G will redefine a broad range of industries with connected services from retail to education, transportation to entertainment, and everything in between. We see 5G as technology as transformative as the automobile and electricity." That's a lot to look forward to, unless you're a technophobe, in which case it's probably a source of dread. However, it is as certain as anything can be that it's going to play a massive rôle in almost every aspect of our lives. And, like it or not (President Trump certainly doesn't), Chinese companies are at the forefront of the revolution.

Certainly, Huawei has a long track record of European involvement. Huawei opened its first research facility in Europe in 2000, with a handful of employees in Stockholm. Now it employs over 13,300 staff and runs two regional centres and 23 research establishments in 12 EU countries. It also has R&D&I (research, development and innovation) partnerships with 150 European universities. The US government say they fear Huawei could provide a back door into state secrets that the Chinese government could exploit. But for the UK, for instance, keen to get all the advantages

of the 5G revolution as quickly as possible, Huawei offers by far the fastest solution. Despite threats that having Huawei develop the network could compromise intelligence sharing, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson has given it the go-ahead, at least for what are called the 'non-core' (less security sensitive) parts of the 5G network, an idea that has been heavily criticised, as you will discover. The US and Australia have already banned Huawei from involvement in their 5G networks and the other partners in the "five eyes" security network - New Zealand and Canada - remain undecided. The US attitude seems the most extreme, with National Security Advisor Robert O'Brien being quoted as saying: "They are just going to steal wholesale state secrets, whether they are the UK's nuclear secrets or secrets from MI6 or MI5." If that sounds vaguely hysterical, O'Brien went on to say: "It is somewhat shocking to us that folks in the UK would look at Huawei as some sort of a commercial decision. 5G is a national security decision." In May last year Trump signed an executive order, barring US companies from using telecom equipment made by companies that, in his view (and that of O'Brien, one assumes) pose a national security risk. In other words, Chinese companies. It's a view dismissed by Huawei's Liu as: "politically motivated suspicion". Huawei's own reaction to the UK decision is, of course, one of considerable relief. "Huawei is reassured by the UK government's confirmation that we can continue working with our customers to keep the 5G roll-out on track," says the company's media service. "This evidence-based decision will result in a more advanced, more secure and more cost-effective telecoms infrastructure that is fit for the future. It gives the UK access to world-leading technology and ensures a competitive market." The statement includes a little bit of further reassurance: "We have supplied cutting-edge technology to telecoms operators in the UK for more than 15 years."

The problem for most people (myself included) in making decisions regarding 5G and its inherent risks is that its benefits are told in the language of jargon. Consider this list of its advantages over 4G from Qualcomm's website: "Scalable OFDM numerology with 2n scaling of subcarrier spacing; Flexible, dynamic, self-contained TDD subframe design; Advanced, flexible LDPC channel coding; Advanced massive MIMO antenna technologies;



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Sir Andrew Parker, Director General MI5

Advanced spectrum sharing techniques.” I’m sure it means lots to the techies but it rather leaves the rest of us more confused than before. And as for Britain’s decision to go ahead with Huawei, Johnson has said that the British people deserve access to the latest technology and there’s really no viable alternative to Huawei. He told the Guardian newspaper “We want to put in gigabit broadband for everybody. Now if people oppose one brand or another then they have to tell us what’s the alternative.” Huawei currently controls around 28% of the infrastructure market, so he has a point. PC Mag also quotes the head of MI5, Sir Andrew Parker, who, in an interview with the Financial Times, said there is “no risk” that the decision to use Huawei would compromise US-UK relations. Intelligence sharing, he said, “is, of course, of great importance to us. And, I dare say, to the US, too, though that’s for them to say. It’s a two-way street.”

TALKING TOUGH, THINKING COMPROMISE

The EU has also been agonising over involving Huawei in its 5G plans, with the European Commission opting for compromise. According to the South China Morning Post, “the EU plan, which closely mirrored rules set out by Britain allowing a limited role for Huawei, stopped short of barring the company from the next-generation communications network designed for near-instantaneous data transfers.” Which will probably come as a relief in European capitals, if not in Washington. “Those guidelines were the fruit of months of agonising within the EU,

which has struggled to find a middle way to balance Huawei’s huge dominance in the 5G sector with security concerns pressed by Washington. A ban on Huawei will now ultimately be up to member states, but the European Commission’s middle road recommendations give cover to European capitals to resist pleas from Washington.” The controversy was addressed at that Chinese New Year event, of course. “Huawei welcomes that the EU has added clarity to the process. Now we can jointly plan ahead to make sure 5G deployment in Europe will happen according to the highest Cybersecurity standards,” said Sophie Batas, Huawei Director for Cybersecurity and Data Privacy.

Tamara Tafra, Counsellor for Cyber Issues at the Permanent Representation of Croatia to the EU, noted that “2020 is an important year for rolling out 5G in the EU and the Croatian Presidency of the Council of the European Union fully supports this objective”. Croatia, of course, had just taken over the rotating EU presidency.

Huawei’s Abraham Liu told the Concert Noble gathering: “The global supply chain depends on collaboration and building mutual trust. Companies should be treated fairly and equally. A competitive market benefits everyone.” Few would disagree with that, but overcoming the obstacles, mainly raised by Trump and his team, has posed a few problems along the way, admits Liu: “The recent decisions by the UK Government and the EU with the toolbox enabling Huawei to continue to be a major participant in the 5G roll-out,

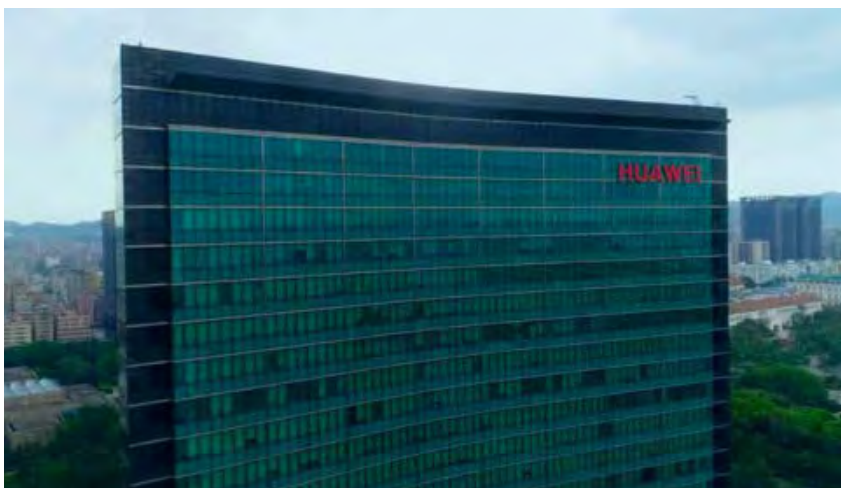


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Thierry Breton, European Commissioner for Internal Market

support this. Their emphasis on a fact-based, fair approach to a multi-vendor model, founded on verification as well as trust is what we believe should be the standard globally.” However, the European Commission, not untypically, has left a final decision on using Huawei to individual member state governments. It has recommended merely that they “limit” the use of “high risk” companies, not ban them as the Trump administration had demanded during a lengthy campaign. “The recommendations are as far as the European Union can go in dictating policy to its member nations,” reported the New York Times, “whose governments will have the final word on whether and how they want to let Huawei help build their next generation of wireless telecommunications networks.”

What the EU has agreed to is what they call, to which Liu referred and in typical Euro-speak, “the 5G Toolbox”, whose objectives are to identify a possible common set of measures capable of mitigating the main cybersecurity risks of 5G networks. They are also supposed to provide guidance for the selection of measures which “should be prioritised in mitigation plans at national and at Union level,” says the Commission. Margrethe Vestager, Executive Vice-President for a Europe Fit for the Digital Age, said: “We can do great things with 5G. The technology supports personalised medicines, precision agriculture and energy grids that can integrate all kinds of renewable energy. This will make a positive difference. But only if we can make our networks secure. Only then will the digital changes benefit all citizens.” Meanwhile, Thierry Breton, Commissioner for the Internal Market, said: “Europe has everything it takes to lead the technology race,” except, we must assume, huge tech companies capable of building the systems adequately and in time. He continued: “Be it developing or deploying 5G technology – our industry is already well off the starting blocks. Today we are equipping EU Member States, telecoms operators and users with the tools to build and protect a European infrastructure with the highest security standards so we all fully benefit from the potential that 5G has to offer.” The Commission stresses that “While market players are largely responsible for the secure rollout of 5G, and Member States are responsible for national security, 5G network security is an issue of strategic importance for the entire Single Market and the EU’s technological sovereignty. Closely



coordinated implementation of the toolbox is indispensable to ensure EU businesses and citizens can make full use of all the benefits of the new technology in a secure way.”

OVER THE MOON

We shouldn't forget the massive advances made by China in technological terms over recent years. In January this year, China managed a technological first by successfully landing a spacecraft, the Chang'e-4, on the far side of the Moon. No other nation has tried that and it presents particular challenges, all of which they have overcome: the landing site can neither be seen nor contacted by scientists back on Earth; data must be self-generated by an intelligent lander and bounced off a satellite circling the Moon. It's an achievement that reflects the ambitions of Chinese leader Xi Jinping and explains why scientific companies in China are getting lots of investment. The country has spent and continues to spend billions on developing machines deep underground to track down neutrinos and dark matter. It has also invested heavily in a variety of institutes set up to investigate such arcane scientific fields as quantum communications, genomics and renewable energy. China is - and wants everyone to know it is - a leading player in the field of technology. Its spending on research and technology expanded ten-fold between 2000 and 2016, and it now plans to build the world's largest particle accelerator, built within a shielded loop with almost four times the circumference of the Large Hardon Collider on the French-Swiss border. It will require outside investment; even China isn't that rich. But it continues its work on quantum mechanics and its possible uses in computers and

cryptography. In fact, China is a world leader in the field. Chinese scientists are well to the forefront in gene editing techniques and stem-cell research, too, and they are working on new types of compact nuclear reactors that will be cheap and yet still able to generate vast quantities of electricity. It's all laudable stuff made possible by China's wealth and facilitated by Xi's global ambitions.

Germany has yet to make a final decision on getting Huawei involved in its 5G network. Its position is complicated by the fact that German car makers such as Daimler, Audi, BMW and VW export a lot of vehicles to China; it is a very major market for German-made vehicles. But to gain that access, the automobile companies are having to work closely with Chinese tech companies, including Huawei, and Germany fears losing its control. Germany has come under enormous pressure from the Trump administration, which



Margrethe Vestager, Executive Vice President of the European Commission for a Europe Fit for the Digital Age since 1 December 2019 and European Commissioner for Competition from 2014

sees Huawei as a potential 'Trojan horse', opening a back door to espionage. Washington is also suspicious of Europe's commitment on security. On the other hand, China is also prepared to turn the screws, as the New York Times reported: "If Germany were to make a decision that led to Huawei's exclusion from the German market, there will be consequences," Wu Ken, China's ambassador to Germany warned last month. "The Chinese government will not stand idly by." Does that sound like a threat to you? That is how it is being interpreted in Germany: exclude Huawei and your access to the massive Chinese market could suffer. Caught between Beijing and Washington, what is Germany to do? The signs are that Angela Merkel will choose Huawei over Trump. Her carmakers have too much to lose otherwise and Germany has a lot to gain from 5G.

The potential for software to have weak spots is clearly greater in 5G, as the European Commission acknowledges. "With 5G networks increasingly based on software," says its website, "risks related to major security flaws, such as those deriving from poor software development processes within suppliers are gaining in importance. They could also make it easier for threat actors to maliciously insert backdoors into products and make them harder to detect." "Threat actors," I suppose, are simply potential participants who may pose a threat. It's worth noting, however, that when Huawei equipment was given a close examination by Britain's GCHQ intelligence centre, no such loop-holes were found. GCHQ's only criticism concerned poor build quality, which Huawei said it would address. Hardly a ringing endorsement but nor is it likely to generate fears about disrupting nuclear power stations or stealing state secrets. The Commission's assessment does look at other kinds of potential threat, however, such as "an increased exposure to risks related to the reliance of mobile network operators on suppliers. This will also lead to a higher number of attack paths that might be exploited by threat actors and increase the potential severity of the impact of such attacks. Among the various potential actors, non-EU States or State-backed, are considered as the most serious ones and the most likely to target 5G networks." Certainly, we have seen weaknesses exploited by state-sponsored operators to disrupt or destroy important on-line services, usually to extract

money but sometimes just to annoy or inconvenience the country concerned. In the past however, the weakness has often come down to a failure in basic maintenance or a failure to update to a more modern operating system. The Commission suggests this stems in part from an over-reliance on a particular supplier. “A major dependency on a single supplier increases the exposure to a potential supply interruption,” says the Commission, “resulting for instance from a commercial failure, and its consequences. It also aggravates the potential impact of weaknesses or vulnerabilities, and of their possible exploitation by threat actors, in particular where the dependency concerns a supplier presenting a high degree of risk.”

The European Union Agency for Cyber Security, ENISA, says that as networks have developed and moved on through the various levels of com-

plexity and application, so, too, have the threats. It provides a useful synopsis: “In the first generation (1G) of mobile networks, mobile phones and wireless channels became a target for illegal cloning and masquerading. In the second generation (2G), message spamming became common, not only for pervasive attacks but also for injecting false information or broadcasting unwanted marketing information. In the third generation (3G), IP-based communication enabled the migration of Internet security vulnerabilities and threats into the wireless domain. With a growing demand for IP based communications, the fourth generation (4G) enabled the proliferation of smart devices, multimedia traffic, and new services into the mobile domain. This development led to a more complex and dynamic threat landscape 4,5 (an intermediate step between 4G and 5G). With the advent of the fifth generation (5G) of mobile networks, security threat vectors will expand, in particular with the exposure of new connected industries (Industry4.0) and critical services (connected vehicular, smart cities etc.).” Yes, quite: nobody wants to see their self-driving vehicle hijacked by a homicidal lunatic, or a simple instruction to turn on your heating at home in your absence being changed into an instruction to unlock the cat flap or turn on the washing machine.

Again, the Commission has been considering all of this and issued a communication that includes this paragraph: “The dependence of many critical services on 5G networks would make the consequences of systemic and widespread disruption particularly serious and, given the interconnected nature of the digital ecosystems, could have significant impacts beyond national borders. As a result, ensuring the cybersecurity of 5G networks is an issue of strategic importance for the Union, at a time when cyber-attacks are on the rise, more sophisticated than ever and coming from a wide range of threat actors, in particular non-EU state or state-backed actors. Regarding the security of critical infrastructures as 5G, the approach chosen is to define, for the first time, a common European approach. This approach is in full respect of the openness of the EU internal market as long as the risk-based EU security requirements are respected.”

Reading all of these carefully couched statements, larded with caveats galore, one gets the impression that no-one,

not even the Commission or ENISA, really knows what to expect and just what the risks may be. While teams of experts have been busily working out what they think COULD go wrong, groups of hostile foreign countries and cyber criminals have been sitting down and, with more definite focus, working out what really WILL go wrong (with their help) and how best to achieve it. If I may quote here what is known as Murphy’s Law: “Anything that can go wrong will go wrong.” The law is named after Captain Edward A. Murphy, incidentally, who worked on an US Air Force project to see how much deceleration a human can survive in a crash. I dread to think what caused him to utter those discouraging words.

SHOPPING AROUND

In the Commission’s official response to the 5G question, there is no mention of Chinese companies in general, nor of Huawei or ZTE, the other front-runner, in particular. Indeed, the proposal is very general but member states would do well to note it. As the European Council on Foreign Relations points out: “The competencies of the commission in the area of network security are limited, and the suggestions in the toolbox are non-binding. But, there is a strong case for member states to implement the measures, given that they were devised by the NIS Cooperation Group, the entity tasked with drafting an EU response, which is composed of representatives of member states, the commission, and the EU Agency for Cybersecurity and where they all work jointly on the group’s proposals. In other words, when drawing up new national rules on network security, it is virtually not an option for member states to fail to take account of the risk-mitigation measures that the NIS Cooperation Group has devised.” The document stresses the very problems highlighted by Boris Johnson when he agreed to accept Huawei as a supplier of “non-core” facilities: there are too few alternatives, although this is no excuse for not taking action to put that right, perhaps by encouraging European competitors to the Chinese. “Contrary to the often-repeated assumption that this limited supply implicitly calls for a role for Chinese vendors, the opposite holds true: the current dominant role of Chinese kit in European existing 3G/4G infrastructure in many member states is a problem and this situation should, according to the EU recommendation in the



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President Donald J. Trump and British Prime Minister Boris Johnson Sunday, Aug. 25, 2019, at Hotel du Palais Biarritz in Biarritz, France, site of the G7 Summit.

toolbox, be mitigated in 5G networks. At the same time, the diversity of the supply should be guaranteed by targeting subsidised vendors directly with anti-dumping/anti-subsidy measures,” says the ECFR, which also sees an opportunity to give a welcome boost to EU-based tech firms: “The EU appears set to use the tools it has available to enhance European technological sovereignty. This includes EU Research & Innovation Funding programmes as well as industrial policy tools and the foreign direct investment screening mechanism, which was one of the key achievements of 2018-19, designed in light of Beijing’s market-distorting practices and demonstrating the possibilities of united European action.” This does not mean, of course, that in the longer term the EU will turn away from Chinese suppliers: “An outright ban on high-risk vendors will unlikely lead to the best and most favourable economic results. Its reasonable suggestion is that each member state, depending on its specific timeframe of deployment, should devise a plan for reducing dependencies.” It would seem Huawei has little to worry about in the short to medium term, anyway.

Johnson’s announcement of allowing Huawei only into ‘non-core’ areas of 5G has been dismissed as unfeasible by Janka Oertel, a senior policy fellow at the ECFR and Director of its Asia Programme: “While politically this sounds like a nice compromise, from a technological perspective the distinction makes limited sense in the new generation of networks,” she says in a report



Janka Oertel, a senior policy fellow at the European Council on Foreign Relations and Director of its Asia Programme



Sophie Batas Director for Cybersecurity and Data Privacy, Huawei

posted in December. “To achieve the desired combination of high speed and ‘low latency’ – which is necessary for advanced 5G applications, from autonomous driving to industrial applications in manufacturing – base stations are now more than the mere antennae they were in the past. They are becoming smart, as core functions are moved to the edge of the network and computing can take place closer to the end user in the base station. Pretending that there would be a clear-cut distinction – between a core network that can be secured and the radio access network – is an illusion.” Smoke and mirrors, then, or an attempt to get on with 5G without upsetting Washington too much? It seems unlikely that tech experts in the US will not have spotted this flaw, too.

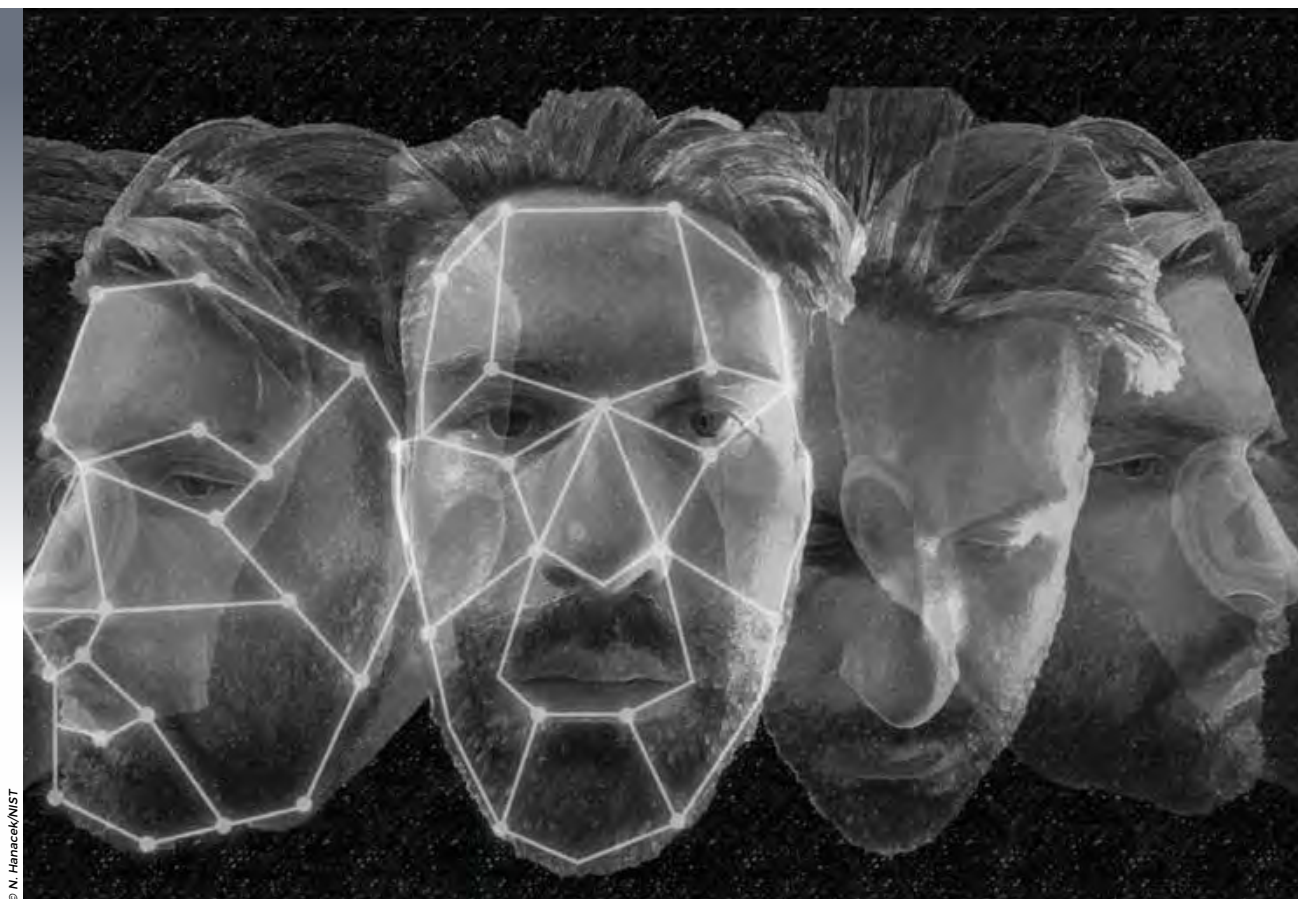
Meanwhile, Vodafone have announced that they plan to remove Huawei equipment from core parts of its mobile network across Europe at a cost of €200-million, even though Oertel has said the move would, in all probability, be technically pointless. The company has warned, however, that if other EU countries choose to follow the UK’s lead with a 35% cap on using Huawei equipment in non-core parts of the network, it could delay the roll-out of 5G in those countries by between two and five years. That doesn’t seem likely to be a price any of them would choose to pay. Other providers have already made clear that restricting the use of Huawei material in creating 5G networks, while new Europe-based suppliers are brought up to speed, would cost hundreds of millions of euros. It’s all about trust. Do you trust Huawei? Do you trust China?

Do you trust Trump? Looking at the facts through the eyes of European media, the answers would seem to be a reluctant ‘yes’ and two definitive ‘no’s.

As for Huawei itself, its position regarding the UK decision and the European Commission’s 5G toolbox was made clear at the end of January in Brussels. “Huawei welcomes that the EU has added clarity to the process,” said Sophie Batas, Huawei Director for Cybersecurity and Data Privacy. “Now we can jointly plan ahead to make sure 5G deployment in Europe will happen according to the highest Cybersecurity standards.” In its own list of cyber security measures, Huawei points out that 5G will allow the almost 50% of the global population access to the Internet they cannot currently enjoy. It’s got to mean more than just a few extra friends you really don’t know on social media. As to US fears of espionage and access being gained to sensitive facilities, Huawei has an answer to that, too. “No matter whether it is a technical risk or a non-technical risk, we must make judgments and decisions based on facts. Just like this quotation from the former President of the United States, Abraham Lincoln, which is now written on the walls of the Chicago Tribune Hall: ‘Let the people know the facts, the country will be safe.’”

Donald Trump won’t agree and in this most difficult of judgements, it’s truly hard to know truth from fiction (or faction?). Here’s my prediction: 5G will bring undoubted benefits, mainly for industry and commerce but also a little for us. We’ll have street lighting that only lights up when a person or vehicle approaches and ground-level glow for cyclists; a visit to the doctor will mean accessing his/her/its avatar on your laptop; banking transactions will be done – literally – in the blink of an eye; personalised animated advertisements will address you by name as you walk around a supermarket, trying to persuade you to buy something you had never thought of and don’t want. Some sly financial companies will find ways to use 5G to extract more money from you and me by newly-discovered semi-illicit means. It will save a life here, it may cost one there. In fact, it will be like every other new innovation about which everyone is unsure and nervous before it arrives. And after somebody cracks quantum computing and 6G is introduced in a few years’ time, it’ll be old hat.

T. Kingsley Brooks



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Computerized image of a bearded face shown from several angles

HERE'S LOOKING AT YOU

The spread of face-recognition software

Visit any public place in the West, especially in places popular with tourists, and you'll see lots of people taking "selfies" - photographs of themselves, with or without their friends or colleagues. Often they have "selfie sticks" that allow their smartphones to be far enough away to allow a photograph that isn't just a distorted and over-large nose with a face dropping away in perspective around it. It's a trend I've never understood: yes, I take photographs of places I visit, but I don't want my face or body blocking the view. I already know what I look like, thank you very much; I see myself in the mirror when I shave or comb my hair. I don't want to see myself grinning against an attractive scene when the attractive scene will be all the more attractive if I'm not in it. But then, I've never understood why people take photographs of restaurant meals. Food

is for eating, in my book, not for gazing at or showing to social media 'friends' you've never actually met.

But if these inexplicable trends seem strange to those of us brought up in the age of the Brownie box camera, mechanical typewriters and large Bakelite telephones attached by cloth-covered cables, then the spread of surveillance cameras is a bit of a shock. Yes, I know they help the police to catch thieves, but they do seem reminiscent of the sort of dystopian world George Orwell described in his book, 1984. You may like to take pictures of yourself but how many are being taken by official bodies or the police without you realising? Or by your neighbours, for that matter? In Britain, the use of closed-circuit video cameras (CCTV) is growing fast but it is regulated by the General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act (DPA).

In simple terms, you can set up cameras that capture anything on your own property but not beyond it. No spying on your neighbours' garden or yard, for instance, however annoying (or suspicious) they may be. No invading people's privacy or filming where people might assume they're entitled to



Wojciech Wiewiórowski Data Protection Supervisor (EDPS)

privacy. In the United States, it's legal to record surveillance video with a hidden camera inside your home without the consent of the person being recorded but in most states (not all) it's illegal to use a hidden camera where the subjects 'have a reasonable expectation of privacy'. So no aiming through your neighbours' bedroom window, either.

You will not be surprised to learn that a number of EU institutions use surveillance cameras to enhance their security, but they have to follow certain rules. In the words of the European Data Protection Supervisor's own website "Video-surveillance footage often contains images of people. As this information can be used to identify these people either directly or indirectly (i.e. combined with other pieces of information), it qualifies as personal data (also known as personal information)." The EDPS says staff and visitors must be kept informed and that the use of CCTV must be controlled. For instance, "cameras can and should be used intelligently and should only target specifically identified security problems thus minimising the gathering of irrelevant footage." Furthermore, the retention of recorded material is time-limited, says the EDPS: "Although the installation of cameras might be justified for security purposes, the timely and automatic deletion of footage is essential. The EDPS requires all EU institutions to have clear policies regarding the use of video surveillance on their premises including on potential storage." It doesn't actually set a time limit, you may have noticed.



Edward Santow, Human Rights Commissioner at the Australian Human Rights Commission



Facial recognition faregate at Beijing West Railway Station

PROGRESS - OR IS IT?

Technology moves on, of course. Now, surveillance cameras can also identify the people being filmed, or most of them; some of them, anyway. Face recognition technology allows for people in crowds to be identified by computer algorithms that take a vast number of measurements of the faces recorded: width of mouth, distance to chin and across cheeks, width of eyes, height of forehead and so on. It will undoubtedly help the police and security services. Except that it doesn't always work.

According to Australia's Human Rights Commissioner, Edward Santow, facial recognition software is less reliable when used on people of African or Aboriginal Australian ethnicity. It can also be deceived by anyone wishing deliberately to do so. A group calling themselves the Dazzle Club have found that by applying make-up to their faces to create similar sorts of asymmetric camouflage to that used on warships in the First World War, cameras could not identify them. You can see an example of this type of camouflage on HMS Belfast, moored in the River Thames. She is painted in what the Imperial War Museum describes as "Admiralty Pattern Disruptive Camouflage", and very smart she looks, too, even if you would probably not want to paint your face in a similar way. The startling patterns make the wearers stand out from any crowd but they are virtually invisible to artificial intelligence, which, of course, is not very intelligent. One of the founding fathers of AI, Yoshua Bengio, told the science magazine *New Scientist* he has no fear of AI taking



NYPD wanted poster using photos of Woody Harrelson to help its facial recognition systems track down suspects who look like him

over our lives any time soon: "AIs are really dumb. They don't understand the world. They don't understand humans. They don't even have the intelligence of a 6-month-old." It's reassuring to note how much the part they play in our lives is growing, isn't it? Bengio does note, though, that the only real danger lies in AI getting into dangerous hands. "It isn't that the AI is malevolent, it is the humans that are stupid and/or greedy." But I guess we knew that.

There are two main concerns about face recognition technology: its accuracy (or perceived lack of it) and its misuse. That is a big problem in China, where some 300 tourist sites use facial recognition to admit visitors. People running the sites argue that it can shorten queues, which is dubious; a season ticket holder at a Chinese safari park sued it to get a refund over the issue. But many office workers in Beijing's financial district are subjected to facial recognition to

check in and out, too. The government in Beijing is not keen to discuss facial recognition or its proliferation and especially not its widespread use of the technology to keep an eye on millions of Uighurs in the western region of Xinjiang. There is a growing concern, even among Chinese officials, that the poor protection of personal data could hamper the expansion of Chinese technology firms. Some people may be surprised to learn that under China's consumer protection laws, consumers must give their consent before their personal information can be collected and stored, and there are fears that the widespread use of facial recognition ignores that law.

The European Union introduced the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in May, 2018, bringing in new obligations and requirements where the processing of personal data is concerned. The GDPR has a very wide definition of personal data, covering any information relating to an identified or potentially identifiable person. In other words, any data that identifies an individual or which can



Samsung's Facial recognition ad for the Galaxy Note10

be combined with other data to identify an individual counts as 'personal data'. According to EU rules, much facial recognition data will also be sensitive data to which stricter rules apply. Biometric data for the purpose of uniquely identifying someone, and data revealing racial or ethnic origin, fall into this category. Processing this kind of data is prohibited within the EU unless specific conditions are met. The EU has been considering a 5-year ban on facial recognition in public spaces until the risks it presents are better understood and legal protection is put in place, although this idea looks set to be scrapped. The technology itself is progressing too fast for a 5-year ban to work. The idea, however, has been causing dissent among the big tech companies, with Google largely in favour of the ban and Microsoft



Joy Buolamwini, computer scientist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Media Lab

against. Microsoft's chief legal officer, Brad Smith, is adamant however that development must continue in order to overcome its shortcomings. One of those shortcomings, presumably, is that it is being used not only by law enforcement agencies but also by private enterprises that could misuse it. Although the EU ban seems unlikely to go ahead at the time of writing, the Fundamental Rights Agency of the European Union (FRA) has published a paper recognizing that "given the novelty of the technology as well as the lack of experience and detailed studies on the impact of facial recognition technologies, multiple aspects are key to consider before deploying such a system in real-life applications" The Govinfosecurity website quotes a French scientist, Félicien Vallet, a privacy technologist at CNIL (Commission Nationale de l'In-

formatique et des Libertés), France's data protection authority, "Focusing on one particular identification method gives a very skewed picture of the nature of surveillance we as a society are subjected to," he says. "At CNIL, we are not in favour of government using facial recognition anywhere and everywhere. However, we understand that the technology has its pros, and hence we are not looking at a complete ban on this. It certainly depends on the application of facial recognition." Germany has announced that it is dropping plans to deploy facial recognition systems at 134 German railway stations and 14 airports. Last year, the U.S. cities of San Francisco and San Diego banned the use of facial recognition software by law enforcement in public places. And many U.S. Democratic presidential candidates support at least a partial ban on the technology.

DRAWBACKS IN COLOUR

Undoubtedly its use has helped solve - or even prevent - certain crimes, but others see it as an infringement of civil liberties and a potential risk because the algorithms used can be subject to bias. For instance, racial bias. "These errors are not evenly distributed across the community," Edward Santow, Australia's Human Rights Commissioner, told the ABC network, "So, in particular, if you happen to have darker skin, that facial recognition technology is much, much less accurate." Darker-skinned women are especially prone to error, according to research by Joy Buolamwini, a computer scientist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Media Lab, quoted by ABC's



Scotland Yard headquarters



© Wikimedia

Swiss facial recognition and vehicle make, model, color and license plate reader

Fact Check. They had an error rate of 35% in one test. The problem is that facial recognition systems have to rely on machine-learning algorithms that are trained on sample sets of data, so if dark-skinned people are under-represented in the data sets, the system will have problems identifying black faces.

But the ABC Fact Check also found other problem groups for facial recognition: not only black people but also all females and all people aged between 18 and 30. The concern over data bias and inaccuracy has recently led to Australia's Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security calling for the Identity-matching Services Bill to be amended to improve privacy protection and safeguards against misuse. Even so, people in Australia are not being warned when facial recognition technology (FRT) is in use, unlike those in London and South Wales in the UK, where warning notices are deployed. In Australia, it has been admitted that FRT is being used in petrol stations and supermarkets to judge the mood of the customer so that targeted advertising can make use of their displayed emotions. Systems that can identify emotions have been developed by Affectiva/iMotions, Microsoft and Amazon, but there may be other companies conducting similar research. Those who favour unbridled capitalism that uses every available technique to part customers from their money may think that's a good idea. Those who believe in civil liberties may not.

Surveillance is in widespread use in Israel, especially in Tel Aviv where it's claimed that the installation of surveillance cameras comes in response to public demand. The Municipality claim that use of the cameras has helped solve 520 crimes between January 2018 and September last year. The police have

to apply to the Municipality to view it within thirty days of the incident they want to see, otherwise it is automatically erased. But Tel Aviv's cameras do not have facial recognition capabilities and senior officials say the idea is not even being considered at present, according to Haaretz Israel News.

YOU LOOKING AT ME, PAL?

It's easy to understand why police forces are interested in using the technology. It has been trialled in parts of London and across the United Kingdom since 2016 but has come in for criticism over the high instances of false positives, incorrectly flagging up innocent passers-by as known criminals. It has been used at London's famous Notting Hill Carnival and at the Remembrance Day services in 2017. Despite the continuing problems, the Metropolitan Police say they will roll out Live Facial Recognition (LFR) to see if it helps them to catch serious criminals. The special cameras will be set up, the force says, in areas they consider they are most likely to spot people on known 'watch lists' of criminals wanted for serious or violent offences. However, the cameras will be clearly marked, while foot patrol officers nearby will hand out leaflets explaining what the cameras are and how they are being used. In a statement, the force said: "Every day, our police officers are briefed about suspects they should look out for; LFR improves the effectiveness of this tactic."

On the Metropolitan Police website, the system is explained and defended: "The Met currently uses NEC's Neo-Face Live Facial Recognition technology to take images and compare them to images of people on the watchlist. It measures the structure of each face, including distance between eyes, nose, mouth and jaw to create a facial template. Where it finds a match it sends an alert to officers on the scene. An officer then compares the camera image to the person they see and decides whether to speak to the person or not." The system will only keep images that have generated an alert, and only for up to 31 days unless an arrest is made, in which case it is retained until any investigation or judicial process is concluded. The biometric data of those who don't cause an alert is automatically and immediately deleted." Anyone seeing the warning notices about LFR may fear that deliberately walking away and avoiding the cameras could arouse suspicion, but the Police say not. "Anyone can decide not to walk past the LFR system; it's not

an offence or considered 'obstruction' to avoid it," the force website proclaims.

Elsewhere in the UK, Police in South Wales have adopted the same technology. Assistant Chief Constable Richard Lewis explained in a statement: "This facial recognition technology will enable us to search, scan and monitor images and video of suspects against offender databases, leading to the faster and more accurate identification of persons of interest." The technology is being deployed at Cardiff Airport and at major Welsh sports stadia, where the police hope it will help them prevent violence by identifying known trouble-makers. "The technology can also enhance our existing CCTV network in the future by extracting faces in real time and instantaneously matching them against a watch list of individuals, including missing people," says Lewis, "We are very cognisant of concerns about privacy and we are building in checks and balances into our methodology to reassure the public that the approach we take is justified and proportionate." South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner, Alun Michael, said: "Our approach to policing is very much centred upon early intervention and prompt, positive action." He accepts that the deployment will not be welcomed by civil liberties groups. "The introduction of a system such as this will invariably raise certain questions around privacy and whilst I appreciate these concerns, I am reassured by the protocols and processes that have been established by the Chief Constable and operational colleagues to ensure the integrity and legitimacy of its use."



© Wikimedia

Russian civil rights activist Alyona Popova

In Russia, there is growing concern over the use of FRT at public gatherings and rallies, threatening the anonymity of those attending. According to Planet Biometrics, “Tverskoy District Court of Moscow is hearing a complaint submitted by the civil rights activist Alyona Popova and the politician Vladimir Milov, who argue that data collection about participants at lawful public gatherings results in the violation of their right to freedom of peaceful assembly.” Popova and Milov are asking the court to “prohibit the use of facial recognition technology at rallies and to delete all stored personal data already collected.”

So far, Russian judges have been less than sympathetic to the complaints. Last November, the Savelovsky District Court of Moscow refused to examine Popova’s claims that her right to privacy were undermined by the establishment of Moscow’s video surveillance system. It’s very different from the claimed adherence to civil liberty norms of the UK police. Natalia Zviagina, Amnesty International’s Director in Russia, is very worried. She says the use of face recognition technology is “deeply intrusive” and should not be used by her country’s security forces. “In the hands of Russia’s already very abusive authorities, and in the total absence

sight of such powerful technologies.” She fears that the way the authorities responded to peaceful protests last year has already shown that the technology will be used for profiling and surveillance of the government’s critics. “The deployment of facial recognition systems during public assemblies - which all available evidence suggests is its primary purpose - will inevitably have a chilling effect on protesters.” Interestingly, in Russia, Roskomsvoboda, a Russian non-governmental organization that supports open self-regulatory networks and protection of digital rights of Internet users, launched a campaign calling for a moratorium on government mass use of face recognition until the technology’s effects are studied and the government adopts legal safeguards that protect sensitive data. My advice would be: don’t hold your breath on that one.

CHINA’S WATCHFULNESS

However, the widest and seemingly most indiscriminate use of FRT has been in China. This may not come as much of a surprise: China is not famed for its belief in civil liberties. To prevent illegal subletting, for instance, many housing developments have facial-recognition systems that allow entry only

It’s probably quite a sensible line to take; the Chinese government wants to see its companies as world leaders in AI. The on-line journal Wired quotes Freedom House, a US-government-backed non-profit organisation, which warned in a report last October that “Chinese surveillance deals also export the country’s attitudes to privacy and could encourage companies and governments to collect and expose sensitive data. It argues that companies and products built to serve government agencies unconcerned about privacy are unlikely to become trustworthy defenders of human rights elsewhere, and can be forced to serve Chinese government interests.” This could, of course, be a kind of re-run of the sort of anti-Huawei hysteria that gripped the United States, whose government wants no rivals to its own high-tech companies. On the other hand, a commercial approach based on the attitudes of its government (and maybe biggest customer) could easily be perceived as an acceptable norm, the breaching of which would be unimportant.

According to Wired, Megvii says “it has raised more than US\$1.3-billion (€1.18-billion), primarily from Chinese investment funds and companies, including e-commerce giant Alibaba. One of China’s state-owned VC funds also has a stake and a seat on the start-up’s board. Other backers include US-based venture firm GGV and the sovereign wealth funds of Abu Dhabi and Kuwait.” Certainly, the arrival and application of face recognition technology has helped the company to grow. Together with its AI rivals SenseTime, CloudWalk and Yitu, it has made facial recognition commonplace in China.

The police routinely scan concert crowds for suspects, pulling people from the throng. There are even Google Glass-type devices that police officers can wear to scan whoever is in front of them. Citizens can even pay in shops and pay their taxes by showing their faces to the camera. The New York Times reported that Megvii, SenseTime and CloudWalk had developed software to identify Uighur faces but Megvii’s PR spokespeople deny that the software can be used to target particular racial types. Even so, the company’s FRT has been used as part of the enormous security apparatus set up to watch over the Xinjiang region, where some one million Uighur Muslims have been interned in so-called “re-education” camps.



Chinese police with facial recognition glasses

of transparency and accountability for such systems, it is a tool which is likely to take reprisals against peaceful protest to an entirely new level,” she says. “It is telling that the Russian government has provided no explanation as to how it will ensure the right to privacy and other human rights, nor has it addressed the need for public over-

to residents and certain delivery staff, according to state news agency Xinhua, which writes of Beijing that “Each of the city’s 59 public housing sites is due to have the technology by year’s end.” Chinese start-up company Megvii touts the use of its facial recognition software in public housing security schemes as a selling point for future investors.

Despite having a research laboratory not far from Microsoft on the outskirts of Seattle, Megvii accepts it's unlikely to sell much of its technology in the United States. Ironically, the outbreak of corona virus infections is adversely affecting face recognition because so many people are now wearing face masks. Many mobile phones in China are unlocked by face recognition and some users are now asking Apple and others to reintroduce fingerprint identification. The face masks only come off when the wearers are in bed. The wearing of masks for protection against the corona virus is also complicating things at railway stations, hotels, airports and shops that employ face recognition. The technology giant Huawei tried to come up with a way for it to work despite a mask but took the decision that it simply wasn't possible.

BEING WATCHED

The use of facial recognition technology has led to much concern by civil liberties organisations such as Liberty. On its website it calls for FRT to be banned as an unacceptable intrusion. "The cameras scan everyone in sight – adults and children – snatching our deeply personal biometric data without our consent. This is a gross violation of our privacy," Liberty says the fear of constant supervision could cause people to change their behaviour (which may, of course, be the intention). "We may choose not to express our views in public or risk going to a peaceful protest. We shouldn't have to change how we live our lives to protect ourselves from unwarranted surveillance. In short, facial recognition tech makes us less free." That's not all; Liberty thinks it plays into the area of racism, despite the fact that the technology is not very good at identifying people with darker skin.

"Disproportionate surveillance is most keenly felt by people of colour – the Met used facial recognition at Notting Hill Carnival for two years running, and twice in the London Borough of Newham, one of the UK's most ethnically diverse areas." It would be interesting to know how successful the operation proved, given the known drawbacks.

Similar concerns have been raised by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU): "The biggest danger is that this technology will be used for general, suspicionless surveillance systems. State motor vehicles agencies possess



high-quality photographs of most citizens that are a natural source for face recognition programs and could easily be combined with public surveillance or other cameras in the construction of a comprehensive system of identification and tracking." The ACLU, having failed to get answers to a freedom of information request about how widely-used the biometric technology is, has now taken to the courts: "Separate lawsuits have been filed by the ACLU and its Massachusetts branch against the US Department of Justice, the FBI and the Drug Enforcement Agency in the US District Court for the District of Massachusetts," says Engineering and Technology Magazine.

The UK campaign group Big Brother Watch (citing George Orwell again, of course) is even more outspoken in its condemnation of facial recognition technology. Its Director, Dr. Silkie Carlo, wrote about the group's objections in TIME magazine: "The U.K. is certainly adopting surveillance technologies in a style more typical of China than of the West. For centuries, the U.K. and U.S. have entrenched protections for citizens from arbitrary state interference – we expect the state to identify itself to us, not us to them. We expect state agencies to show a warrant if our privacy is to be invaded. But with live facial recognition, these standards are being surreptitiously occluded under the banner of technological 'innovation.'" She has condemned the deployment of the technology at five London locations by the Metropolitan Police and told the Law Society Gazette that the decision "flies in the face of the independent review showing the Met's use of facial recognition was likely unlawful, risked harming public rights and was 81% inaccurate." In October last year, more

than 90 civil liberties NGOs gathered in Albania at the International Conference of Data Protection and Privacy Commissioners. They called for a global moratorium on the use of the technology.

Meanwhile, facial recognition systems can be bought on-line, should you wish to spot people whilst serious upsetting any number of civil liberties campaigners. It would seem that, whatever the law may say, now or in the future, the technology is here and readily available. All you need is money, a database and somewhere to mount your camera. You can recognise people who come to call, as long as you restrict your camera to looking only at people on your property. Of course, you could always just open the door and ask them; the Brownie box camera technique, perhaps, but more reliable than software that's often wrong and which doesn't work at all during a virus scare. As Yoshua Bengio said (quoted earlier in this article) AI isn't really very bright. With its use being mainly harnessed by security teams and those trying to sell you things, many of its users may not be very bright, either. But nothing is going to stop the onslaught of facial recognition and AI, now that it has been invented. As Shakespeare put it in Hamlet:

"Why, let the stricken deer go weep,

The hart ungalled play;

For some must watch, while some must sleep:

So runs the world away."

The questions many are asking are: exactly who must watch? And what do they do with whatever it is they see? And should some of us, like the world in Shakespeare's example, run away, just in case?

Robin Crow



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Belgian Federal Police

GRECO

Belgium must strengthen the rules on the integrity of members of the government and review the system of authorisation of outside activities by police officers

The Council of Europe's Group of States against corruption (GRECO) of the Council of Europe has published its 5th round evaluation report on Belgium. This cycle focuses on preventing corruption and promoting integrity in central governments (top executive functions) and law enforcement authorities.

GRECO calls on Belgium to strengthen transparency, integrity and accountability in public life, in particular as regards ministers and members of their private offices. There is as such no integrity policy or ethical framework for ministers. The engagement and remuneration of the members of their private offices is at their sole discretion. There are very few rules on incompatibilities, accessory activities, gifts and none on relations with third parties, revolving doors etc.

Sustained efforts will therefore be required to regulate the conditions of recruitment and employment of private office members and make their activities more transparent, as well as to establish an appropriate code of conduct for all senior executive officials, combined with an implementa-

tion mechanism and awareness-raising activities. The improvements to the mandate reporting regime initiated as a result of the previous GRECO evaluation must continue, including more timely publication and effective scrutiny of declarations.

The Belgian federal police is well regarded by the public at large but it suffers from a lack of resources, which affects in particular the services responsible for preventing and fighting corruption. A few years ago, the federal police carried out a quality analysis of integrity within the police force, but this work does not seem to have been continued more recently. The code of conduct must be updated and an integrity check must be introduced during the police officers' career, particularly when officers are being recruited to certain sensitive posts.

The most significant gap for the federal police is the recent change in the rules on outside activities from a restrictive practice to one in which authorisation is granted almost automatically. This regime change raises many questions in terms of preventing conflicts of interest and managing working time. GRECO

considers that the exercise of outside activities must be subject to transparent criteria and effective scrutiny. More generally, the internal supervisory system as a whole needs to be more proactive. As for external control bodies, they must be informed in good time of criminal investigations and convictions regarding police officers.

GRECO will evaluate in 2021 the implementation of the recommendations addressed to Belgium under its compliance procedure.

The Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) is a Council of Europe body that aims to improve the capacity of its members to fight corruption by monitoring their compliance with anti-corruption standards. It helps states to identify deficiencies in national anti-corruption policies, prompting the necessary legislative, institutional and practical reforms. Currently it comprises the 47 Council of Europe member states, Belarus, Kazakhstan and the United States of America.



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HYMEN REPAIR

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Turkish Special Kas Medical Center's advertisement on the internet for virginity restoration

HYMEN REPAIR

Economics and ethics of virginity restoration

In Muslim societies as well as in a number of other cultures around the world, an intact hymen traditionally acts as a signifier of the virginity of a woman and can be of paramount importance when a girl is married for the first time.

But in Europe and elsewhere, more and more women are undergoing hymenoplasty – the surgical reconstruction of the hymen – for a number of reasons, other than religious and cultural ones.

Some of these include psychological healing, as when a woman has had her hymen torn as a result of sexual assault and rape. In these cases, hymen surgery can repair some of the psychological damage by restoring her both physically and mentally.

There are also instances when the hymen can tear before intercourse. The use of sanitary tampons and some very vigorous exercises for example, can cause tearing of the hymen.

Whatever the reasons, hymenoplasty is on the rise in Europe as well as in some Muslim countries such as Tunisia and Turkey where the procedure is considerably less expensive than in western Europe. The operation is widely advertised on the Internet, and a large choice of medical tourism packages are available.

But the practice is also drawing strong criticism from some quarters.

In a number of European capitals and particularly in London, doctors are earning thousands of euros at a time for hymenoplasty, commonly known as ‘virginity repair’ operations. Patients are mostly young Muslim women and surgeons have been accused of cashing in on their fears as they come under pressure from their traditionalist families to be ‘untouched’ before they marry.

There are no reliable statistics on these operations mainly because these are necessarily performed in private clinics and are therefore not covered by health insurance plans.

However, more and more young Muslim women are seeking certificates from gynecologists to prove their virginity.

The Koran forbids Muslims engaging in extramarital sex but according to various Islamic scholars, hymen reconstruction surgery is permissible in certain cases. Abdallāh al-Najjār, a scholar from Al Azhar University in Cairo is of the opinion that there is nothing in Islamic jurisprudence that forbids the surgery whether the hymen was broken due to an immoral act or a moral cause that excuses the woman.

Other experts such as Dr. Muhammad Bin Yahya al-Nujaymi from the International Islamic Fiqh Academy in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, say that hymenoplasty is permissible only if it was due to factors outside the woman's control, such as rape.

In the UK as well as most western countries, the operation is legal. However, bodies such as the British General Medical Council say that doctors must first obtain from the patient an 'informed consent' which may be considered invalid if it is given 'under pressure or duress exerted by another person'. In any event, critics are of the opinion that hymen repair perpetuates harmful myths about virginity.

The operation itself involves the reconstruction of a layer of skin at the entrance to the vagina that usually tears, accompanied by bleeding when a woman has her first sexual intercourse. Even though this is a traditional sign of virginity, a great many women do not bleed upon losing their virginity.

Some 22 London clinics – many in Harley Street - have put out advertisements on the internet for the operation that costs around 3,000 euros and is performed under local anaesthetic, in under one hour. Some private clinics attract potential patients with advertisements saying the surgery can 'restore your innocence and is 100% safe'. This is of course is a debatable claim.

Others recommend the operation by asserting that the hymen is 'a sign of virginity and for religious reasons is an important factor in a new marriage...some marriages are even annulled in the event of a torn hymen'.

In any case, there is a degree of anguish involved for many of the young women applying for the operation. It is a fact that social and sexual differences between young Muslim and non-Muslim women in Europe are diminishing, including a trend of marrying later in life; and what's more, that trend has generally reduced the probability of women of any faith marrying as virgins.

Even so, many Muslim women who apply for hymenoplasty still evoke the pressure and intimidation that threaten their physical and psychological well-being as their traditional wedding dates approach.

In France, as long ago as 2008, the College of Gynecologists and Obstetricians had opposed hymenoplasty for cultural, health, as well as moral reasons. Some physicians were of the opinion that by performing

the operation, they were empowering women by giving them a viable future and preventing them from being abused.

But the head of the College, Professor Jacques Lansac had said that "attaching so much importance to the hymen is regression, submission to the intolerance of the past."

The then French Justice Minister, Rachida Dati who is Muslim faced calls for her resignation after she had upheld a court ruling that annulled the marriage of two French Muslims, on the grounds that the woman's hymen was not intact. The court cited a breach of contract because the man had agreed to the marriage after the woman was "presented to him as single and chaste."

A number of physicians, lawyers and feminists were of the opinion that the court ruling would lead more and more Muslim women in France to seek virginity repair operations.

Their fears were of course justified and the debate is ongoing. On 23 January 2020, Baroness Thornton, Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Health in the House of Commons asked Lord Bethell, Government Whip, if Her Majesty's Government plan to ban repair of hymen surgery.

The answer was : "My Lords, no one should undergo any surgical procedure that they do not want or need. Presuring a female partner or family member into having an unnecessary surgical procedure is never acceptable. The Government are investigating hymen repair surgery, and we will take all necessary action to ensure that all vulnerable women and girls are protected."

UK Belvedere Clinic's advertising on the internet



Former French Justice Minister, Rachida Dati



Dorothea Glenys Thornton, Baroness Thornton



Lord Bethell, currently holds the Government post of Lord in Waiting (HM Household) (Whip) UK Parliament

Whereas Baroness Thornton replied : *“I thank the Minister for his reply. As noble Lords will have gathered, hymenoplasty is the so-called restoration of virginity, and it is not illegal in the UK. It is carried out in private clinics, by and large, and apparently costs about £3,000 a go. The Sunday Times revealed that NHS (National Health service) facilities were used to carry out this procedure 82 times in the past eight years. The noble Lord is quite right: clinicians agree that there is no medical reason for the restoration of the hymen, so why is that procedure available on the NHS? No explanation was given to the Sunday Times when it asked why the procedure was delivered. I think the noble Lord and I would agree that the NHS should not be offering a procedure designed to perpetuate harmful myths about virginity and threats to vulnerable women and girls.”*

Lord Bethell then answered : *“The noble Baroness is absolutely right about harmful myths. The Government are deeply concerned about the climate in which this industry is operating. We will be looking into how the frameworks are being applied by the GMC (General Medical Council), the CQC (Care Quality Commission) and the ASA (Advertising Standards Authority). On her specific question about the NHS, there were around 82 cases according to the records available. Very sadly, there are cases of abuse and rape—and, I am afraid, of fear of death—that may, even with the best counselling available, give a young woman or girl a good reason to ask for this procedure. It is under such circumstances that the NHS provision has been made.”*

The “Western” and Islamic bioethical debate on hymenoplasty will likely continue into the future as the critical concepts that underpin ethical and medical justifications for and against the procedure are taken into consideration.

Hossein Sadre

IAEA

A course on preparedness and response to a nuclear or radiological emergency



© L Gil/IAEA

Participants respond to a mock emergency with a lost radioactive source combined with a flood. Traiskirchen, Austria

Traiskirchen, Austria — Imagine a nuclear emergency triggered by another emergency, such as a natural disaster like an earthquake, volcanic eruption, or tsunami. Or, imagine a tropical cyclone, hurricane or civil disturbance leading to a radiological emergency. Preparing to respond in complex emergency scenarios is what participants learned to do at a recent course on the topic, the first-ever such course by the IAEA, offered in cooperation with Austria's Civil Protection School in Traiskirchen, near Vienna.

“It is unlikely that a radiological event will be affected by an extreme natural disaster, but it is a possibility we need to be aware of and ready to respond to,” said Emiliano Mingorance Sánchez, Head of the Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Technical Unit at the Spanish Guardia Civil, who participated in the course.

Participants — mainly nuclear power plant operators, regulators and first responders — learned about the specific requirements different response professionals need to meet to effectively respond to combined emergencies and their associated challenges. Combined emergencies amplify the challenges emergency responders must manage. During the week-long course, they analysed real case studies. One such case was the accident at Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant — a nuclear emergency combined with a natural emergency caused by a severe earthquake and tsunami.

GSR Part 7, or the IAEA Safety Standards Series' General Safety Requirements Part 7, Preparedness and Response for a Nuclear or Radiological Emergency, addresses the requirements for preparedness and response to any nuclear or radiological emergency, irrespective of its cause. This includes combined emergencies.

A FLOOD AND A SOURCE

Participants were asked to come up with a response plan for a simulated emergency with a missing radioactive source, combined with a flood. The challenge? To reach a consensus on the response plan and to think of all stakeholders and institutions required.

“Ensuring effective preparedness and response to a combined emergency requires the development and maintenance of an all-hazards emergency management system,” said Phillip Vilar Welter, IAEA Emergency Preparedness Officer in charge of the training course. “A necessary element for such an all-hazards emergency management system is the establishment of a unified command and control system, which provides a means for effective communications, coordination, cooperation and integration of operating, local, regional and national emergency response organizations.”

The topic of combined emergencies, Vilar Welter said, became especially relevant and was prioritized by the international community after the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant accident. The IAEA then developed specific guidance that reflects the lessons learned from the accident.

Following this pilot course, the IAEA plans to publish an Emergency Preparedness and Response series publication on nuclear or radiological emergencies combined with other incidents or emergencies.

“After this course, I can reassess some of the procedures back home and try to influence or raise awareness of the need to adapt our norms and intervention protocols in the face of such emergencies,” Mingorance Sánchez said.

More than 50 experts from 15 countries attended the course at Austria's Civil Protection School, a national education and training facility for radiation protection where police officers and first responders such as the fire brigade and ambulance services are regularly trained.



“Collaborating internationally in the face of transregional and international disasters is key to responding effectively in crisis situations, which is why we look forward to our continued cooperation with the IAEA,” said Almira Geosev, course host and member of the Civil Protection Training Unit of the Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior (BMI).

Laura Gil, IAEA Department of Safety and Security



© Picture credits Expo 2020 Siemens AG

The multistory Mobility Pavilion was designed by Foster + Partners, the world-famous architectural firm that implemented buildings such as the Berlin Reichstag and the City Hall in London. The pavilion is situated at the South entrance of the exhibition grounds. Its floor plan is roughly the shape of a Three-leaf clover. Expo visitors who enter the futuristic building will be able to experience the latest technological developments in the field of mobility.

EXPO 2020 DUBAI

Is this what the city of the future looks like?

Why the first World Expo in the Middle East has the potential to become a blueprint for smart cities around the globe. The Eiffel Tower and the Atomium, colour TV and the zipper: a World Expo is about spectacular structures and ingenious inventions. Architecture and innovative technology have never been as closely linked as they're going to be at Expo 2020 Dubai. More than 130 buildings at the site will be connected via Internet of Things or IoT technology, making Expo 2020 Dubai a blueprint for future smart cities. Thanks to a newly developed application, the infrastructure can be monitored and controlled in real-time on a smartphone.

At the 1889 World Expo in Paris, the Eiffel Tower made architectural history. It demonstrated the height to which a structure could be built using a new iron working process. Until 1930, "La Tour Eiffel" was still the tallest structure in the world – and continues to be the most famous World Expo landmark of all time.

The first World Expo in the Middle East, Africa and South Asia (MEASA) region begins in October of 2020 in Dubai. Visitors can once again look forward to spectacular buildings whose technologies push

the boundaries of the possible, just as the Eiffel Tower once did.

This time, however, the height of the buildings will be secondary – and not just because Dubai already has the world's tallest skyscraper, the Burj Khalifa. Expo 2020 Dubai is focused on three themes: Opportunity, Mobility and Sustainability.

The site is divided into three Thematic Districts, each featuring a Thematic Pavilion with unique architecture inspired by its theme. For example the Sustainability Pavilion, with its impressive solar-panel-covered can-

opy and ability to create water from the air around it, demonstrates how it's possible to supply power from renewable sources and use natural resources sustainably.

CONNECTED BY THE INTERNET OF THINGS

Architecture enthusiasts might easily overlook one of the most exciting technological innovations. The entire Expo site, which is currently under construction, is being digitally connected by Siemens, the official Infrastructure Digitalization Partner for



© Picture credits Expo 2020 Siemens AG

Behind the futuristic facade lies pioneering technology. All the buildings on the premises are connected to the IoT. Some 200,000 data points supply information to MindSphere, the open, cloud-based IoT operating system from Siemens.

Expo 2020 Dubai – from air-conditioning and elevators to access control.

More than 130 buildings on the 4.38-square-kilometer site will be interconnected via the Internet of Things (IoT). Altogether, several hundred thousand sensors will communicate with a central IoT platform via subsystems, making Expo 2020 Dubai the most digitally connected World Expo in the event's 167-year history.

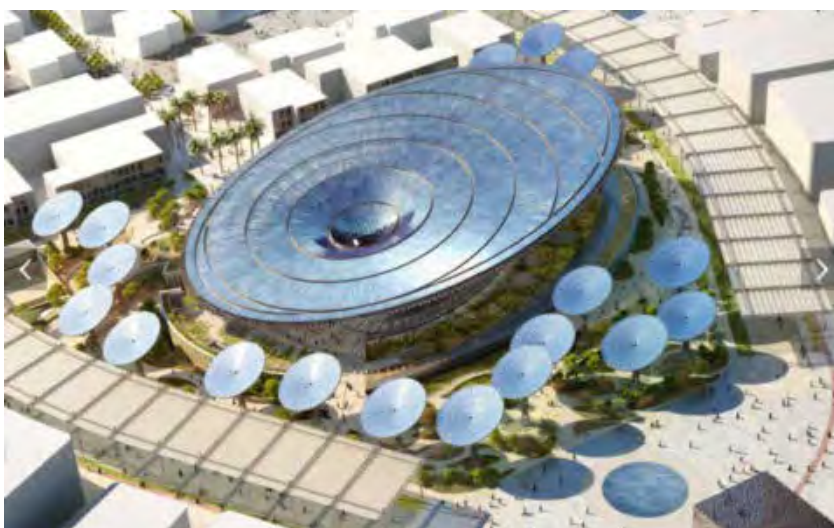
The core of the digital infrastructure is MindSphere, the open, cloud-based IoT operating system from Siemens. Data from sensors, gateways, systems and building management applications is gathered in MindSphere, where it can be analyzed and visualized by applications such as Navigator, the cloud-based energy and asset management platform from Siemens. The Siemens system helps Expo 2020 Dubai achieve its goal of an optimal balance of energy efficiency with visitor safety, security and comfort.

AN ENTIRE CITY ON A SMARTPHONE

To analyze the data in MindSphere, Siemens is working closely with the organizers of Expo 2020 Dubai to develop a smart city app that will be used for the first time at the mega event. The app conveys the idea of the potential of a pervasive digital infrastructure. For instance, it can supply

detailed environmental data such as air quality and weather conditions, and can monitor and control irrigation systems on the Expo grounds.

By the time the Expo opens, the software will also be able to monitor electric vehicle charging and provide information on the sustainability of plant operation. With the aid of artificial intelligence, the app will also be able to make predictions. When it's connected to a weather station, it can use current and historical weather data and air-quality measurements to forecast the likelihood of a sandstorm, and recommend how best to protect the Expo infrastructure.



© Picture credits Expo 2020 Siemens AG

Using energy from the sun: The Sustainability Pavilion, designed by the British architectural firm Grimshaw, has an enormous roof that not only provides shade but also produces electricity. The same is true of the "energy trees" arranged around the building that track the sun.

But that's just the beginning. What's actually being created here, in collaboration with the organizers of Expo 2020 Dubai, is a test run for the future smart city, because the app can be expanded to accommodate all possible use cases and has the potential to become the smart city's all-purpose tool. "This new digital application will help Expo 2020 Dubai become the most connected World Expo in history; a great step forward as we continue to explore how digitalization and IoT technologies can address urban challenges," said Dr. Roland Busch, Chief Operating Officer and Chief Technology Officer, Siemens AG. "By integrating the infrastructure of the largest-ever event in the Middle East with the Internet of Things, we have the potential to inform the development of future smart cities around the world."

DIFFERENT CITIES, DIFFERENT CHALLENGES

Obviously, not all cities have to be prepared for sandstorms. Taipei, Los Angeles, and Buenos Aires face very different challenges – and the digitalization of infrastructure offers new and flexible ways to manage many different types of conditions worldwide. "Our solution in Dubai will demonstrate how smart infrastructure can contribute to more liveable, more sustainable cities around the world", says Oliver Kraft, Siemens' Head of Project and Account Management for Expo 2020 Dubai. "Ultimately, our work is not just about ingenious technology,



The Expo 2020 Dubai site

but about creating added value for society and making our cities better places to live.”

The partnership between Siemens and Expo 2020 Dubai is a prime example of how this can be achieved. The first step is to create the technical foundation for centralized data collection. The second is to work together to understand how the rich pool of data can best be used to inform the development of relevant solutions and, in the process, build the city’s strategic knowledge base.

TRANSFERRABLE INNOVATION

In the coming decades, Paris will continue to be the Eiffel Tower’s only location (with a smaller version in

Las Vegas). The concepts underlying the smart city that is being created in Dubai, however, can be beneficially applied around the world. Demonstrating this type of innovative solution is a declared goal of the organizers of Expo 2020 Dubai. “Innovation is the focus of World Expos and of the UAE,” says Mohammed Alhashmi, Chief Technology Officer at Expo 2020 Dubai. “In conjunction with Dubai’s ambitious plans to be a pioneer in smart-city technology, and through our partnership with Siemens, we’re excited to be setting an example to a worldwide audience of what smart city technology can achieve.”

EXPO FACTS AND FIGURES

- Expo 2020 Dubai is the first World Expo to take place in the Middle East, Africa and South Asia (MEASA) region.
- The organizers are expecting **25 million** visits.
- The Expo grounds cover **4.38 square kilometers** – that’s **more than 610** football fields.
- Expo 2020 Dubai will have its own Dubai Metro station on the Route 2020 line, with carriages capable of transporting **44,000 passengers per hour** to and from the site.
- When the event is over, the Expo site will be repurposed as District 2020, to become part of the **new Dubai South District**, which will be about twice the size of Hong Kong Island.



MSC CRUISES

A fleet expansion plan up to 2030, with focus on next-generation environmental technology

MSC Cruises and Chantiers de l'Atlantique sign firm contracts for construction of third and fourth LNG-powered MSC World Class ships. Partnership further reinforced with two additional newbuild projects that will focus especially on the development and utilization of next-generation environmental technologies.



© Photo Chantiers de l'Atlantique

The LNG powered MSC World Class ships will be delivered in 2025 and 2027

MSC Cruises and Chantiers de l'Atlantique further extended their long-term partnership by making a number of strategic announcements at a ceremony held at the Matignon Palace, the French Prime Minister's official residence.

The ceremony was attended by Édouard Philippe, Prime Minister of France; Gianluigi Aponte, MSC Group's Founder and Executive Chairman; Pierfrancesco Vago, MSC Cruises' Executive Chairman; and, Laurent Castaing, Chantiers de l'Atlantique's General Manager.

First, the two companies announced the signing of firm contracts for the construction of MSC Cruises' third and fourth LNG-powered MSC World Class ships, to be delivered in 2025 and 2027. The first of the initial two ships in the class is currently under construction at Chantiers' shipyard in Saint-Nazaire and is due to enter service in 2022. With 205,000 GT, she will become the biggest vessel operated by a European cruise line as well as the first LNG-powered cruise ship built in France. Compared to standard marine fuel, LNG combined with saving measures decreases sulphur emissions and particulate matter by 99%, NOx emissions by 85%, and CO2 emissions by 25%.

These contracts represent a capital investment by MSC Cruises exceeding EUR 2 billion and are expected to generate with the shipyard and its suppliers 14 million additional working hours, amounting to over 2,400 full-time equivalent jobs for the next three and a half years, directly supported by those orders. Today's signature also allows Chantiers de l'Atlantique to start working with the hundreds of suppliers and subcontractors involved in the projects, setting in motion a new cycle that will greatly benefit the French economy.

Today MSC Cruises and Chantiers de l'Atlantique also extended their partnership over the next decade with two

additional newbuild projects. First, the companies signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) for the development of yet a new prototype class of LNG-powered cruise ships to operate under the MSC Cruises brand. For this project, MSC Cruises, Chantiers de l'Atlantique and other partners will focus on developing emerging environmental technologies in line in particular with IMO's vision for 2030 and 2050. The four vessels in this new class would represent a capital investment exceeding EUR 4 billion and an extra 30 million working hours for the yard, the suppliers and subcontractors involved in the project.

A second MoU sees MSC Cruises partnering with Chantiers de l'Atlantique in the development of yet another innovative prototype ship class concept with which they will explore opportunities that wind power and other advanced technologies could bring to passenger shipping.

Pierfrancesco Vago, Executive Chairman, MSC Cruises, said: *"The three agreements signed today extend our investment plan up to 2030. They stem from an exceptional partnership, with Chantiers, that has already delivered 15 highly-innovative innovative cruise ships over the past two decades and will see many more vessels come to life at Saint-Nazaire's docks in the next ten years. They also confirm that this industry's commitment to environmental sustainability, in this case helping the French national industry further position itself as a world leader in the development of next-generation technologies and other solutions."*

Laurent Castaing, General Manager, Chantiers de l'Atlantique, said: *"We are really proud and happy to have built such an outstanding relationship with MSC Cruises, based on mutual trust and driven by the spirit of innovation. We are both committed to shaping the cruise of tomorrow and to developing ship concepts which go far beyond the existing environmental standards. Our companies have already been working together for twenty years and these new projects allow us to look enthusiastically to the future."*

MSC Cruises is strongly committed to achieving a zero-impact future by investing in the accelerated development of new energy solutions and other environmental technologies that will allow that. On 1 January 2020 MSC Cruises became the first major cruise line to achieve carbon neutral fleet operations. As today's most advanced environmental technology alone is insufficient to reach that, while it works to minimize and continuously reduce its environmental footprint, MSC Cruises is offsetting all CO2 emissions from its fleet that it is not possible to abate through such technology, by using a blend of high standard carbon offset projects.

CEB BANK

An Award for Social Cohesion



Snežana Samardžić-Marković Director General of Democracy at the Council of Europe, President of the Jury

The Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB) launches an annual competition to acknowledge outstanding contributions to social cohesion across Europe. The **CEB Award for Social Cohesion** will bestow a €25,000 prize on a project that addresses pressing social issues in one of the CEB's 41 member countries.

Eligible for nomination are individuals over 18 years old and small organisations from CEB members. Nominations should be either for projects at an early stage of implementation or for advanced project ideas. The overarching theme of 'social cohesion' will be assessed on impact, sustainability and innovation/replicability.

An independent Jury, comprising five members, will select one single award winner on the basis of a shortlist drawn up by CEB experts. Reflecting the diversity of CEB membership, the Jury is diverse and well balanced and its members come from the fields of social development, social entrepreneurship, academia or civil society.

The first ceremony of the CEB Award for Social Cohesion is scheduled to take place on the occasion of this year's CEB Joint Meeting, to take place in Dublin on 2nd July 2020.

"The CEB itself has been working for over 60 years to strengthen social integration and eliminate social and economic inequalities in Europe. Knowing that there are numerous initiatives in CEB member countries serving the same purpose and making their own contribution to the promotion of social cohesion, we sought a way to give

those initiatives credit and set them as positive examples to be emulated," said Rolf Wenzel, the Governor of the CEB. "I am delighted that today we are launching the CEB Award for Social Cohesion," he concluded. Applications: <https://cebsocialcohesion.awardsplatform.com/>

The winner of the Award will be recognised at a ceremony which kicks off CEB annual Joint Meeting, taking place every year in a different member country. In 2020 the meeting and the Award ceremony will be held in Dublin, Ireland.

THE SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK IN EUROPE

The Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB) is a multilateral development bank with an exclusively social mandate.

Through the provision of financing and technical expertise for projects with a high social impact in its member states, it actively promotes social cohesion and strengthens social integration in Europe.

The CEB represents a major instrument of the policy of solidarity in Europe. It participates in financing social projects, responds to emergency situations and contributes to improving the living conditions of the most disadvantaged population groups.

The CEB contributes to the implementation of socially oriented investment projects through three sectoral lines of action, namely:

- Inclusive growth: working to guarantee access to economic opportunities to ensure a prosperous future for all.
- Support for vulnerable groups: helping to integrate the most vulnerable citizens to nurture a more diverse society.
- Environmental sustainability: supporting a liveable society that promotes environmental sustainability, mitigates and adapts to climate change.

Working to strengthen social cohesion in accordance with its mandate, through its lending activity the Bank promotes the values and principles of the Council of Europe. It is nevertheless a separate legal entity and financially independent.

As evidence of these institutional links, the Secretary General of the Council of Europe issues an opinion on admissibility in terms of compliance with the Council of Europe's political and social objectives for all the projects that the Bank submits to its Administrative Council for approval.

NEWS IN BRIEF

From around Europe

BGK, THE POLISH STATE DEVELOPMENT BANK, OPENS NEXT REPRESENTATIVE OFFICES ABROAD

Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego (BGK) has opened its third representative office abroad in London. There are also plans for opening offices in Amsterdam, Singapore, Washington and several other places. Maciej Barański, Head of FDI-Central Europe in UK Embassy, said: "The opening of the London representative office of BGK, which was actively supported by the Department for International Trade, is a significant and highly desirable step in the process of building an infrastructure to support the internationalisation of Polish companies, and especially the entry into the British market, which is becoming a springboard for global expansion."



BGK

MEPS CALL FOR A COMMON ELECTRONIC CHARGER

MEPs want to make life easier for consumers and cut electronic waste through the introduction of a common charger for all mobile devices.

They called on the European Commission to come up with a proposal by July 2020 during a debate on 13 January. The Parliament's internal market and consumer protection

committee is behind the initiative as its members want a common charger for smartphones, tablets, e-book-readers, smart cameras and wearable technology. The introduction of a common charger would reduce electronic waste, lower costs and improve the safety and interoperability of chargers.

According to the European Commission, electronic waste is one of the fastest growing waste streams in the EU, expected to grow to more than 12 million tonnes by 2020.

MEPs expect a proposal from the Commission by July 2020 that should help reduce e-waste generated in Europe.

On Thursday, 30 January, members adopted a resolution calling for measures to make common chargers for mobile devices a reality.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION AND EUROPEAN INVESTMENT FUND LAUNCH €75 MILLION BLUEINVEST FUND

The European Commission is partnering with the European Investment Fund, part of the European Investment Bank Group (EIB), to launch the BlueInvest Fund. During the BlueInvest Day conference in Brussels last February, EIB Vice-President Emma Navarro and Virginijus Sinkevičius, Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries, launched a €75 million equity investment fund for the blue economy.

The BlueInvest Fund will be managed by the European Investment Fund and will provide financing to underlying equity funds that strategically target and support the innovative blue economy. This sector can play an important role in the transformation to a carbon-neutral economy by 2050, an ambition announced in

the European Green Deal. The new programme is backed by the European Fund for Strategic Investments, the financial pillar of the Investment Plan for Europe.

The blue economy includes economic activities related to oceans, seas and coasts. It ranges from companies in the marine environment to land-based businesses producing goods or services that contribute to the maritime economy. The blue economy harbours many promising early-stage ventures and companies – often emanating from EU-funded R&D programmes. These companies develop solutions for renewable energy, sustainable seafood, blue biotechnology, maritime IT and much more.

The new fund is complemented by the European Commission's BlueInvest platform, which supports investment readiness and access to finance for early-stage businesses, SMEs and scale-ups. Through the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund, the Commission also funds an additional €40 million grant scheme, to help blue economy SMEs with developing and bringing to market new innovative and sustainable products, technologies and services.

AIRBUS REVEALS ITS BLENDED WING AIRCRAFT DEMONSTRATOR

During the Singapore air show 2020, Airbus has revealed MAVERIC (Model Aircraft for Validation and Experimentation of Robust Innovative Controls) its "blended wing body" scale model technological demonstrator.

At 2 metres long and 3.2 metres wide, with a surface area of about 2.25m², MAVERIC features a disruptive aircraft design, that has the potential to reduce fuel consumption by up-to



20 percent compared to current single-aisle aircraft. The “blended wing body” configuration also opens up new possibilities for propulsion systems type and integration, as well as a versatile cabin for a totally new on-board passenger experience.

Launched in 2017, MAVERIC first took to the skies in June 2019. Since then the flight-test campaign has been on-going and will continue until the end of Q2 2020.

“Airbus is leveraging emerging technologies to pioneer the future of flight. By testing disruptive aircraft configurations, Airbus is able to evaluate their potential as viable future products,” said Jean-Brice Dumont, EVP Engineering Airbus. “Although there is no specific time line for entry-into-service, this technological demonstrator could be instrumental in bringing about change in commercial aircraft architectures for an environmentally sustainable future for the aviation industry.”

Airbus is using its core strengths and capabilities of engineering and manufacturing, in close collaboration with an extended innovation ecosystem, to accelerate traditional research and development cycles. By doing this Airbus is able to achieve proof of concepts, at a convincing scale and speed, thereby driving forward maturity and increasing their value.

Through AirbusUpNext, a research

programme, Airbus is currently working on a number of demonstrator projects in parallel; E-FAN X (hybrid-electric propulsion), fello’fly (v-shaped “formation” flight) and ATTOL (Autonomous Taxi Take-Off & Landing).

FAKE INVESTORS BUSTED IN BELGIUM AND FRANCE

More than 85 victims in Belgium and France suffered around €6 million losses for believing in the fraudsters’ false promises

The French National Gendarmerie (Gendarmerie Nationale) in collaboration with the Belgian Federal Judicial Police (Police Judiciaire Fédérale) and the Israeli Police, supported by Europol and Eurojust, have brought down a large network of investment fraudsters. The criminal group was involved in money laundering and binary investment fraud. Fake websites and bogus companies to fraud investors

In the beginning of 2019, four suspects were arrested in France, three of which were detained. At the end of 2019, five other suspects were arrested and questioned in Israel with the support of an international Operational Task Force set-up by Europol bringing together Belgian, French and Israeli investigators and magistrates. More than one million euros have already been seized from

the fraudsters’ accounts. A French-Israeli citizen who has already been convinced of massif fraud related to carbon tax is suspected to be the mastermind.

The investigation into this criminal network, active in Belgium and France and controlled by an Israeli branch, started in 2018. The criminal organisation managed to set-up a sophisticated system promising big gains on investments in bitcoin, gold and diamonds. The suspects were offering their financial services on online platforms. The criminal network also set up bogus companies as a part of their money laundering scheme. No real easy gains.

The suspects were promising between 5 and 35% return on investment. They then proceeded to pretend to manage the victims’ wallets and invite them to invest more money. To increase the confidence in their services, they were paying some of the victims the interests on their investments. Once the victims were won over, the fraudsters would offer bigger opportunities, which required higher amounts to be invested. A big French private company and a French local authority are among the victims of this network. The investments of the victims were placed on accounts in different EU Member States before being transferred to other international accounts.

The network is believed to be responsible for frauds which amount to at least €6 million. The investigators have also discovered invoices for few million euros, which the fraudsters had not yet finalised.

Europol supported the investigation since 2018 and facilitated the information exchange between the participating countries. A Europol Operation Task Force between investigators and magistrates from Belgium, France and Israel to increase the operational cooperation between the countries involved in the investigation. Europol provided also analytical and technical support and deployed an expert on-the-spot to cross-check operational information against Europol’s databases and thus, provide leads to investigators.



MONACO

**GRETA PUBLISHES A
COMBINED 1ST/2ND ROUND
REPORT ON MONACO
“NO VICTIMS OF
TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN
BEINGS HAVE BEEN
IDENTIFIED TO DATE IN
MONACO”**

In its first report on Monaco published today, the Council of Europe's Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA) welcomes the initiatives taken by Monaco, but asks the authorities to adopt legislative measures, public policies and practical provisions in line with a human rights-based and victim-centred approach.

Although no victims of trafficking have been identified to date in Monaco, GRETA emphasises the need to adopt a policy document covering the prevention of trafficking, training for relevant professionals, the identification and protection of victims and the prosecution of trafficking offences. It also calls for a structure to be developed for co-ordinating the actions of relevant actors in the event of a case of human trafficking, with the involvement of civil society, and urges the authorities to ensure that all professionals likely to come into contact with potential victims have access to the appropriate tools.

In terms of preventing trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation, labour inspectors should be provided with training on this type of trafficking and on victims' rights, and measures taken to raise awareness among the general public and, more specifically, migrant workers.

The report also reiterates the importance of identifying all victims and ensuring that they benefit from the

appropriate assistance and protection measures to help them with their physical, psychological and social recovery. A clear procedure for the identification of child victims of trafficking, based on multi-agency action and integrated in the child protection system, should be devised.

In addition, domestic legislation should guarantee the right of presumed trafficking victims to a recovery and reflection period of at least 30 days, and provision for granting a residence permit to victims of trafficking in human beings if the competent authority considers that their stay is necessary because of their personal situation and/or if it is necessary for the purpose of their co-operation with the competent authorities in connection with an investigation or criminal proceedings.

Lastly, all relevant professionals, including members of the law enforcement authorities, prosecutors, judges, labour inspectors, lawyers, officers of the asylum authorities, social workers, child protection professionals and medical and educational staff, should be kept regularly informed and undergo training, especially as regards the requirement to apply a human rights-based approach to action against trafficking.

**RULING BY WORLD BANK
INVESTOR TRIBUNAL PAVES
WAY FOR GREEK INVESTORS
TO BRING CLAIMS AGAINST
REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS FOR
MASSIVE LOSSES STEMMING
FROM GOVERNMENT'S 2013
BANK RESTRUCTURING**

Greek citizens whose life savings were nearly wiped out by a 2013 restruc-

turing of banks in Cyprus have been given a path forward following a new ruling by a World Bank tribunal.

The International Centre for Settlement Investment Disputes in Washington has ruled that it has jurisdiction to arbitrate claims of nearly 1,000 Greek bank depositors and bondholders who assert their massive financial losses were caused by the government of Cyprus's 2013 bank "bail-in."

The ICSID decision issued on Feb. 7 held that all of the investor claims can be adjudicated under identical treaty provisions and are based on Cyprus's 2013 moves to restructure its main banks, impacting all claimants in a similar fashion akin to a class action. By determining that all of the claims were sufficiently homogenous, ICSID provides a green light for investors to seek redress in a single, combined arbitration. It is the first mass investor claim to be given such a ruling since the famous cases brought by Argentine bondholders.

Next step: ICSID will now assess Cyprus's liability for discriminating against the foreign investors and expropriating their assets without compensation.



Grant & Eisenhofer

"This precedent-setting decision has major implications for investor-state arbitration," said Olav Haazen of law firm Grant & Eisenhofer, one of several firms representing the claimants. "It opens up a new avenue for smaller investors who were wronged by foreign governments. They can now join forces and seek collective redress, even if the host states' own laws offer investors no equivalent access to effective and impartial justice."



© All rights reserved Photo P. Bernard

Victor Simon The blue canvas May 1943–October 1944 On permanent loan from the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Arras LaM, Villeneuve d'Ascq

EXPO MAILLOL

The painters of the beyond



© Adagp. Paris, 2019 Photo N. Dewitte LaM

Fleury-Joseph Crépin The temple of ghosts
Picture no. 77, March 1940 LaM, Villeneuve d'Ascq

MUSÉE MAILLOL, PARIS
2 APRIL - 26 JULY 2020

The next exhibition that will be held in the Musée Maillol—after initially being presented in the LaM museum in Villeneuve d'Ascq—will enable the public to discover the work of the three most important 'spiritualist painters' who were active at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century: Augustin Lesage, Victor Simon, and Fleury-Joseph Crépin.

The exhibition's chronological, historical,

and thematic itinerary will include more than one hundred works held in European public and private collections.

All three artists came from the north of France and had modest backgrounds; they worked as miners, plumbers, or ran cafes, and they were by no means predestined to paint works of art until inner voices urged them to become artists.

They painted strange, exceptionally detailed works with a rich plastic quality, which were conceived as spiritual compositions that combined influences and inspirations from many sources: Christian, Hindu, Oriental, and ancient Egypt.

Ornament and symmetry were the dominant features of their oeuvre, and this was also a characteristic of the works of the other spiritualist painters presented in the exhibition.

The spiritualist movement, which initially emerged in the United States in the middle of the nineteenth century, spread to Europe. Communicating with spirits soon became a societal phenomenon, which was boosted by the wars that shook the continent, and subsequently cultivated by intellectual circles. The Surrealists André Breton and Victor Brauner were some of the first to collect the works of these artists, as did Jean Dubuffet later on.

Via archive documents, contemporary works, installations, and videos, the exhibition

will also highlight the continuance of spiritualist practices and their dissemination beyond the world of painting.

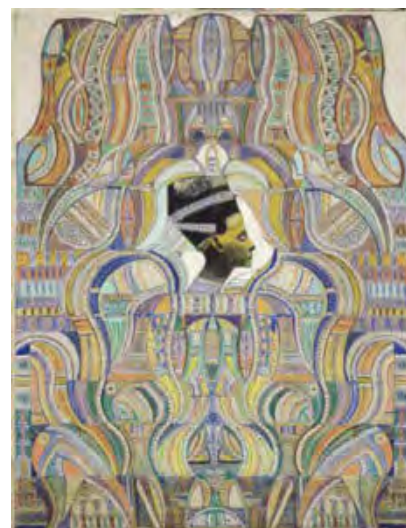
Curatorship:

Savine Faupin, Head Curator in charge of Art Brut - LaM, Villeneuve d'Ascq.

Christophe Boulanger, Assistant Curator in charge of Art Brut - LaM, Villeneuve d'Ascq.

Musée Maillol
61 rue de Grenelle - 75007 Paris

<https://www.culturespaces.com/en/press-room>



© Adagp. Paris, 2019 Photo N. Dewitte LaM

Augustin Lesage Nefertiti 1952, LaM, Villeneuve d'Ascq

DIPLOMACY

Newly accredited European ambassadors

JANUARY 2020 - GEORGIA

New Ambassadors present credentials to President Zourabichvili

H.E. Enrico Valvo, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Italian Republic and H.E. Ran Gidor, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the State of Israel presented their Letters of Credence to President Salome Zourabichvili.



H.E. Enrico Valvo, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Italian Republic



H.E. Ran Gidor, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the State of Israel presented their Letters of Credence to President Salome Zourabichvili



Ambassador Kelly C. Degnan of the United States of America and President Salome Zourabichvili

JANUARY 2020 - REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA

New Ambassadors present credentials to President Kersti Kaljulaid

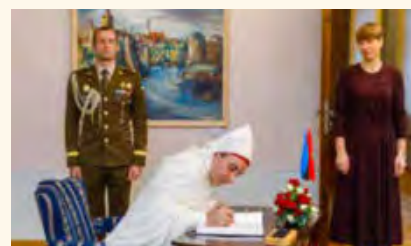
H.E. Archil Karaulashvili, Ambassador of Georgia, Apostolic Nuncio Archbishop Petar Rajic and H.E Mohamed Achgalou, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Morocco presented their Letters of Credence to President Kersti Kaljulaid President of Estonia.



H.E. Archil Karaulashvili, Ambassador of Georgia



Apostolic Nuncio, Archbishop Petar Rajic



H.E Mohamed Achgalou, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Morocco presented their Letters of Credence to President Kersti Kaljulaid

FEBRUARY 2020 - RUSSIAN FEDERATION

New Ambassadors Present Credentials to President Putin



H.E. Ignacio Ibanez Rubio Ambassador of the Kingdom of Spain



Miroslav Lazanski, Ambassador of the Republic of Serbia



Geza Andreas von Geyr, Ambassador of the Republic of Germany



Malena Mard, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Sweden



Deborah Jane Bronnert, Ambassador of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland



Pierre Levy, Ambassador of the Republic of France

TIMELESS CHIC

Standout Fashion and Beauty trends

By Clara Bauman

“Always look on the pink side of life”

Christian Dior liked to say that pink is « the softest colour ; the colour of happiness and that of femininity ». This season, pink is at the heart of all the new trends, in all its variants: fuchsia, coral, lavender, pastel and bubblegum pink. Whether they're garments, bags or shoes, none will remain untouched by the pink wave.



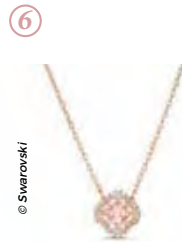
© & Other Stories

To belie its reputation for being « too serious, too classic, too boring », the trouser suit, in its 2020 version, comes in pastel pink ([stories.com](https://www.stories.com))



© Chloé

The saying « seeing life through rose-coloured glasses » takes on its full meaning here ([chloe.com](https://www.chloe.com))



© Swarovski

Elegant minimalism by Swarovski : a pink crystal pendant inset with white crystals ([swarovski.com](https://www.swarovski.com))



© Ginger

There's only one solution for countering 'winter pallor' : wearing colours that enhance the complexion. Among these, pink works miracles ([fredginger.com](https://www.fredginger.com))



© Loewe

Reputed to « make an improbable comeback », the 'belt bag' has become a must-have of fashion. No wonder then to have it available in pink ([debijenkorf.nl](https://www.debijenkorf.nl) et [loewe.com](https://www.loewe.com))



© Steve Madden

The “nude pink” court shoe in suede...a must-have in all springtime wardrobes ([stevemadden.eu](https://www.stevemadden.eu))



© Arket

To change from the eternal beige trenchcoat, opt for a version in pink. Rainy days will become all but depressing ([arket.com](https://www.arket.com))



© Pandora

Vividness and flowers bathed in a pink hue : all the codes for the spring season are reunited in the new jewellery collection by Pandora ([fr.pandora.com](https://www.fr.pandora.com))



© Scotch & Soda

Be prepared : the bermuda short is among the strongest fashion trends of the 'spring-summer' season. Worn in casual style or with a jacket, 'working girl' style, it'll be everywhere ! ([scotch-soda.com](https://www.scotch-soda.com))

Pink : a user manual

To stay clear of that « Barbara Cartland » look, avoid wearing all-pink, monochrome outfits. Throw in touches of colour:

- White, for a radiant silhouette
- Grey, to add a touch of seriousness to a colour often judged « child-like »
- Blue denim for a touch of cool, and that modern look.

TIMELESS CHIC

Standout Fashion and Beauty trends

By Clara Bauman



It-jean

Each season sees the arrival of a new blue jean model. This coming 'spring-summer' season, it is 'high waisted'. It's worn rather loose but not too long. It's stonewashed but not 'ripped'. Above all, it's a truly all-purpose item: perfectly casual with sneakers ; ultra-feminine with high heel pumps.

Example: This 'Erin' model by Arket, meets all the criteria

(arket.com)



The 'feel good' ritual

Lovers of fragrances and relaxing creams, rejoice ! Rituals has just released 'Relax', a brand new range of products dedicated to the relaxation of body and mind. On the menu : a calming foaming shower gel, a body scrub, a soothing body cream as well as a scented candle.

The fragrance of this range is due to the warm and floral scent of essential oils from the sacred lotus and jojoba.

Recommended for beginning a busy day or for ending a tiring day on a high note

(rituals.com)

New time...new watch

All these temptations are justified before switching to summer time in style. The most difficult part: which to choose?

①



Minimalist chic
Chain bracelet watch,
with inset crystals
(swarovski.com)

②



High tech
« Galaxy Midnight »
smartwatch
(samsung.com)

③



Timeless
Automatic watch
with leather strap
(longines.com)

④



Modern art
Watch with
'Milanese loop'
(calvinklein.fr)

⑤



Gold or silver ? Both !
Watch with
'Milanese loop'
(fr.cluse.com)

BOOKS



JEWIS AND POWER

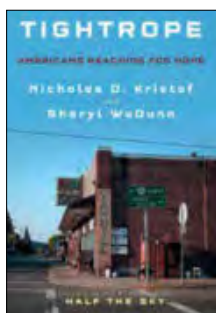
By Ruth R. Wisse

PART OF JEWISH ENCOUNTERS SERIES

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.



TIGHTROPE

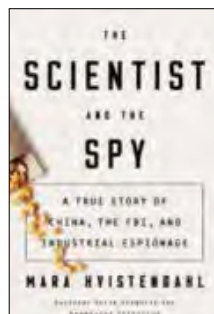
By Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn

AMERICANS REACHING FOR HOPE

"A deft and uniquely credible exploration of rural America, and of other left-behind pockets of our country. One of the most important books I've read on the state of our disunion." —Tara Westover, author of *Educated*

The Pulitzer Prize-winning authors of the acclaimed, best-selling *Half the Sky* now issue a plea—deeply personal and told through the lives of real Americans—to address the crisis in working-class America, while focusing on solutions to mend a half century of governmental failure.

With stark poignancy and political dispassion, *Tightrope* draws us deep into an "other America." The authors tell this story, in part, through the lives of some of the children with whom Kristof grew up, in rural Yamhill, Oregon, an area that prospered for much of the twentieth century but has been devastated in the last few decades as blue-collar jobs disappeared. About one-quarter of the children on Kristof's old school bus died in adulthood from drugs, alcohol, suicide, or reckless accidents. And while these particular stories unfolded in one corner of the country, they are representative of many places the authors write about, ranging from the Dakotas and Oklahoma to New York and Virginia. But here too are stories about resurgence, among them: Annette Dove, who has devoted her life to helping the teenagers of Pine Bluff, Arkansas, as they navigate the chaotic reality of growing up poor; Daniel McDowell, of Baltimore, whose tale of opioid addiction and recovery suggests that there are viable ways to solve our nation's drug epidemic. These accounts, illustrated with searing images by Lynsey Addario, the award-winning photographer, provide a picture of working-class families needlessly but profoundly damaged as a result of decades of policy mistakes. With their superb, nuanced reportage, Kristof and WuDunn have given us a book that is both riveting and impossible to ignore.



THE SCIENTIST AND THE SPY

By Mara Hvistendahl

A TRUE STORY OF CHINA, THE FBI, AND INDUSTRIAL ESPIONAGE

A riveting true story of industrial espionage in which a Chinese-born scientist is pursued by the U.S. government for trying to steal trade secrets, by a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in nonfiction.

In September 2011, sheriff's deputies in Iowa encountered three ethnic Chinese men near a field where a farmer was growing corn seed under contract with Monsanto. What began as a simple trespassing inquiry mushroomed into a two-year FBI operation in which investigators bugged the men's rental cars, used a warrant intended for foreign terrorists and spies, and flew surveillance planes over corn country—all in the name of protecting trade secrets of corporate giants Monsanto and DuPont Pioneer. In *The Scientist and the Spy*, Hvistendahl gives a gripping account of this unusually far-reaching investigation, which pitted a veteran FBI special agent against Florida resident Robert Mo, who after his academic career foundered took a questionable job with the Chinese agricultural company DBN—and became a pawn in a global rivalry.

Industrial espionage by Chinese companies lies beneath the United States' recent trade war with China, and it is one of the top counterintelligence targets of the FBI. But a decade of efforts to stem the problem have been largely ineffective. Through previously unreleased FBI files and her reporting from across the United States and China, Hvistendahl describes a long history of shoddy counterintelligence on China, much of it tinged with racism, and questions the role that corporate influence plays in trade secrets theft cases brought by the U.S. government. *The Scientist and the Spy* is both an important exploration of the issues at stake and a compelling, involving read.



YESTERDAY'S MAN

By Branko Marcetic

A DEEP DIVE INTO JOE BIDEN'S HISTORY AND THE ORIGINS OF HIS POLITICAL VALUES

Yesterday's Man exposes the forgotten history of Joe Biden, one of the United States' longest-serving politicians, and one of its least scrutinized. Over nearly fifty years in politics, the man called "Middle-Class Joe" served as a key architect of the Democratic Party's

rightward turn, ushering in the end of the liberal New Deal order and enabling the political takeover of the radical right. Far from being a liberal stalwart, Biden often outdid even Reagan, Gingrich, and Bush, assisting the right-wing war against the working class, and ultimately paving the way for Trump.

The most comprehensive political biography of someone who has tried for decades to be president, *Yesterday's Man* is an essential read for anyone interested in knowing the real Joe Biden and what he might do in office.

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**THE FUTURE
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