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The Letter in PDF format

The Foundation on



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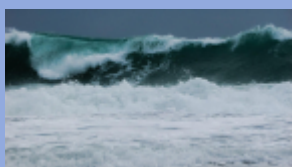


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The challenges in protecting maritime areas of common interest, from the Atlantic to the Indo-Pacific

Author: Hervé Hamelin



Recognised and respected for its economic weight, the European Union must also be able to influence maritime security issues which are strategic for it and its partners throughout the world. It has a key role to play in securing areas of common interest, through its naval operations, its capacity-building and governance programmes.

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Foundation :

Unreservedly European



In his book, Jean-Dominique Giuliani freely addresses his fellow citizens, who must refuse to accept the lies about the European Union while at the same time contributing to its improvement. This book, published by Marie B, is available in paper format on the Foundation's website and in bookshops. Order your copy now... [Read more](#)

Seminar on the data economy



The Foundation, in partnership with Alphalex Consult and IDFRights, is organising a seminar on the data economy on 1 June. The event, which will be held in Brussels and broadcast online, will be opened by the European Commissioner for the Internal Market Thierry Breton, and the debates will be chaired by former journalist and MEP Jean-Marie Cavada... [Read more](#)

The Permanent Atlas of the European Union is available

To better understand Europe in 2022, the Permanent Atlas of the European Union, published by Marie B Editions, is a unique work that offers a complete and easy-to-



access view of the European Union, the euro zone and each of its 27 Member States, with numerous maps. It is available in digital format... [Read more](#)

Map of Health Measures and Travel Conditions in Europe



Most of the health measures introduced during the winter have been lifted in the European Union. In Italy, the health pass has not been required for any activity since 1 May, but FFP2 masks must still be worn until at least 15 June in transport, cinemas, theatres, hospitals and schools. From 2 May in Malta, masks are no longer required indoors, except in aeroplanes, hospitals and old people's homes. For its part, the European Commission has called on Member States to step up vaccination and prepare for the next phase of the pandemic by supporting the development of the next generation of vaccines and treatments. To check the situation in the Member States, the Foundation offers you a complete map of the measures in place. An indispensable, regularly updated resource... [Read more](#)

Major European strategic issues at the halfway point of the French Council Presidency



Jean-Dominique Giuliani and Pascale Joannin will be among the speakers at a round table organised on 9 May by the French Institute in Budapest and the French Embassy in Hungary. It will be a debate with think-tanks on the major European issues of the moment... [Read more](#)

Ukraine/Russia :

Speech to the Ukrainian Congress of local and regional authorities



The President of the European Council, Charles Michel, addressed the Ukrainian Congress of Local and Regional Authorities in a video message on 27 April. He recalled that the European Union will play a role in the reconstruction of Ukraine, in particular through the Solidarity Trust Fund for Ukraine, and stressed the importance of combining investment and reform to "rebuild the Ukraine of tomorrow"... [Read more](#)

Deliveries of arms to Ukraine



US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin brought together representatives from 40 countries, including NATO and Ukraine, on 26 April at the US military base in Ramstein, Germany, to assess Ukraine's armaments needs. A contact group was established to support the coordination of resources. Prior to the meeting, Germany announced the delivery of Gepard anti-aircraft tanks. On 28 April, the Bundestag passed a resolution calling on the German government to continue and accelerate the delivery of arms to Ukraine as well as to deliver heavy weapons. On the same day, US President Joe Biden asked Congress for a \$33 billion budget boost to provide military equipment and financial assistance to Ukraine. On 30 April, in a telephone conversation, French President Emmanuel Macron assured his Ukrainian counterpart Volodymyr Zelensky that France would step up its deliveries of "major military equipment"... [Read more](#)

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Meeting of Energy Ministers



At a meeting on 2 May, EU energy ministers exchanged views on their preparedness in the event of a disruption in Russian oil and gas supplies. They took stock of the different options available to the EU in terms of gas transit and stock management. They reaffirmed their willingness to move away from dependence on Russian fossil fuels and agreed to rapidly establish the European gas purchasing platform... [Read more](#)

Suspension of customs duties on imports from Ukraine



The Commission proposed on 27 April to suspend import duties on all products from Ukraine for one year. Intended to boost Ukrainian exports to the EU, the proposal will lead to the suspension of existing EU anti-dumping and safeguard measures, including on Ukrainian steel exports... [Read more](#)

Cooperation between Eurojust and the International Criminal Court



On 25 April, the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court and the Prosecutors General of Lithuania, Poland and Ukraine signed an agreement on the initial cooperation between a Joint Investigation Team, set up with the support of Eurojust, and the International Criminal Court. The aim of this work is to undertake all possible efforts to "gather evidence on international crimes committed in Ukraine and bring those responsible to justice". This will allow for faster and more effective coordination and cooperation between the partner countries... [Read more](#)

NATO-European Parliament Discussions



On 28 April, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg met with the President of the European Parliament, Roberta Metsola, and attended the meeting of the Presidents of the Parliament's political groups. He praised NATO-EU collaboration on cyber, resilience, maritime security and the Western Balkans. He also said that the Alliance countries had pledged at least \$8 billion in military aid to Ukraine, recalling that this amount was not definitive. Finally, asked about the membership of Sweden and Finland, he recalled that the decision to join the Alliance was up to the two states... [Read more](#)

Visit of the UN Secretary General



UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres visited Borodyanka, Bucha and Irpin near Kyiv on 28 April, where he denounced the "senseless violence" and "horrific acts" committed against civilians and called on Russia to cooperate with the International Criminal Court. He met with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky in Kyiv, where five Russian missiles fell in the capital during his visit. Prior to his visit to Ukraine, Guterres met with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow... [Read more](#)

Parliamentary Assembly resolutions and visit to Congress



The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), meeting from 25 to 28 April, called on Russia to "immediately and unconditionally" stop its aggression against Ukraine. It called for the creation of an ad hoc international criminal tribunal to prosecute those responsible for the crime of aggression against Ukraine. It also suggests that confiscated real estate of Russian citizens be used to host Ukrainian refugees. On 28 April, the Congress President met with local authorities in Kyiv... [Read more](#)

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Provision of gas to Poland and Bulgaria



Commission President Ursula von der Leyen announced on 27 April that Poland and Bulgaria are now receiving gas from other Member States, after Russia's Gazprom decided to cut off supplies to the two countries because they have refused to pay in rubles. She also said that the US will soon provide additional imports of liquefied natural gas to EU countries... [Read more](#)

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Commission :

Proposals to organise legal migration



The Commission proposed on 27 April the introduction of a legal migration policy, which will be based in particular on strengthening cooperation with third countries and on better management of long-term migration. It proposes to revise the directive on the single application procedure and the directive on long-term residents and to intensify cooperation between Member States. It wants to encourage innovation and foresees in particular the setting up of a "talent pool" to attract third country nationals. Finally, the Commission proposes a pilot initiative to facilitate access to the labour market for people from Ukraine... [Read more](#)

Digitalisation of visa request procedures



The Commission proposed on 27 April the digitalisation of the Schengen visa issuing procedure in order to facilitate, improve and reduce the costs of visa application procedures for Member States. It also intends to harmonise procedures in the Schengen area to avoid "visa shopping" practices, by creating a single platform for submitting applications which will automatically determine the country responsible for examining them. The Commission

also used to reduce the risks associated with paper visas, including forgery and theft... [Read more](#)



Roadmap to ban of toxic chemical substances



On 25 April, the Commission published a roadmap to eliminate the most dangerous chemical substances for health and the environment from consumer products such as toys, cosmetics or electronic devices by 2030. As part of the revision of the REACH regulation, the roadmap targets 6 groups of pollutants and no longer just an exhaustive list of toxic chemicals. It will be regularly updated and exceptions are foreseen

for certain products... [Read more](#)



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Measures to counter "SLAPP lawsuits"



The Commission proposed on 27 April a directive to protect journalists and human rights defenders from "SLAPP lawsuits", a practice aimed at preventing them from speaking out on issues of public interest. The directive will allow judges to quickly dismiss "manifestly unfounded" prosecutions. It will establish dissuasive sanctions against abusive prosecutions, procedural safeguards and appeals, including against decisions given in a third country. The Commission encourages Member States to harmonise their rules with the proposed Directive and to adopt measures to combat SLAPP lawsuits, through training and awareness-raising... [Read more](#)



Triggering of the budgetary conditionality mechanism for Hungary



The Commission notified Hungary on 27 April of the triggering of the budgetary conditionality mechanism linked to the rule of law. The Hungarian government has three months to respond to the Commission's concerns about problems concerning the rule of law and the proper use of EU funds. If the answers are not satisfactory, the Commission may propose sanctions. This is the first activation of the mechanism... [Read more](#)



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Parliament :

Last plenary session of the Conference on the future of Europe



The plenary of the Conference on the Future of Europe concluded its work at a session in Strasbourg on 29 and 30 April and adopted 325 proposals to achieve 49 objectives on 9 themes such as climate, health, economy, citizenship and the rule of law. These proposals will be presented to the presidents of the EU institutions on 9 May at a ceremony in Strasbourg... [Read more](#)



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Proposals for a right of initiative



The Parliament's Constitutional Affairs Committee voted on 28 April on a proposal to give the Parliament a "general and direct" right of legislative initiative in the next revision of the EU treaties. The right of initiative should be exclusive for subjects where the "democratic legitimacy and sovereignty of the Union are concerned". MEPs call for the strengthening of Parliament's indirect right of initiative. The draft will be presented at the first plenary session in June... [Read more](#)



Vote on new tool to counter foreign subsidies



On 26 April, the International Trade Committee unanimously adopted a draft law enabling the Commission to investigate and remedy distortions linked to foreign subsidies. In particular, MEPs provided for the possibility for European companies to inform the Commission confidentially of potential disruptive subsidies. They also lowered the thresholds above which companies must inform the Commission of

foreign subsidies they receive. The Parliament is due to vote on the draft at its next plenary session in early May... [Read more](#)



Diplomacy :

Declaration on the future of the internet

The European Union, the United States and 58 other partners proposed a declaration for the future of the internet on 28 April. The signatories want the network to be open, free, global, interoperable, reliable and secure. The internet must strengthen democratic principles, fundamental freedoms and human rights. It must ensure fair



competition between companies and avoid unfair discrimination between individuals. In addition, the partners commit to cooperate to fight against the risks linked to its use for illicit purposes, disinformation or the repression of freedoms by certain actors, including authoritarian governments... [Read more](#)

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Court of Justice :

Ruling on the limits to the extension of internal border control



The Court of Justice ruled on 26 April that where a Member State has introduced border control at the internal borders of the Schengen area in the event of a serious threat to public order or security, it can only extend it beyond the authorised six-month period if there is a new and different serious threat... [Read more](#)

Reminder of obligations to control online content



In the context of an action for annulment of the Copyright and Related Rights Directive brought by Poland, the European Court of Justice reiterated on 26 April the obligation for online platforms to monitor content sharing prior to its distribution. It repeated the need to apply the Directive, which requires platforms to "actively monitor the content uploaded by users in order to prevent the posting of protected material"... [Read more](#)

Court of Auditors :

Report on intellectual property



In a report published on 26 April, the European Court of Auditors found that the protection of intellectual property rights related to trademarks, designs and geographical indications in the European Union is "generally sound" in the Single Market. However, the report highlights shortcomings in the setting of fees, the implementation of geographical indications and customs controls by the Commission and the Member States, and the management of the European cooperation projects of the European Union Intellectual Property Office... [Read more](#)

European Agencies :

Resignation of the Executive Director of Frontex



Fabrice Leggeri, Executive Director of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency Frontex, resigned on 28 April after his management of the agency was called into question by an investigation by the European Anti-Fraud Office (Olaf). He is being replaced temporarily by his deputy, Aija Kalnaja... [Read more](#)

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Moldova :

Is there a risk of the conflict spreading?



Reports of suspicious explosions in Transnistria, the separatist region of Moldova occupied by Russian troops and bordering Ukraine, on 25 April and in the days that followed, have raised fears of a Russian attempt at destabilisation. Moldovan President Maia Sandu said her country would not be drawn into a conflict... [Read more](#)

Montenegro :

New government



The Montenegrin Parliament approved the new government on 28 April, after overthrowing the previous government in February, which was seen as pro-Russian. The new Prime Minister, Dritan Abazovic of the liberal, green and pro-European URA party, leads a minority coalition government in parliament, but the Democratic Party of Socialists (DPS) of President Milo Djukanovic has pledged to support it... [Read more](#)

Norway :

Agreement on fishing in the Arctic



Norway and the European Union reached an agreement on 28 April to ensure sustainable fisheries in the north-eastern Arctic, including the waters of the Svalbard archipelago. With this agreement, both partners reiterate their commitment to the sustainable management of marine

living resources in the region. As a result of the discussions, the Council approved the modification of cod fishing quotas in Spitsbergen (Svalbard) waters and in some international waters for 2022... [Read more](#)

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Council of Europe :

Strengthening the strategic partnership with the European Union



The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), meeting from 25 to 28 April, adopted a resolution proposing the strengthening of the strategic partnership between the Council of Europe and the European Union on issues of democratic security and the rule of law... [Read more](#)

Osman Kavala's life sentence



Turkish businessman and philanthropist Osman Kavala was sentenced on 25 April to life imprisonment without parole by an Istanbul court. He is accused of trying to overthrow the government, but the European Court of Human Rights considers his arrest and detention unjustified and called for his immediate release in 2019. In February, the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers referred the case to the Court to determine whether Turkey had failed to fulfil its obligations. The President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Tiny Kox, expressed his dismay on 27 April and called for Osman Kavala's immediate release... [Read more](#)

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Defending the freedom of the press in times of conflict



The Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Marija Pejcinovic Buric, has expressed her concern about the findings of the latest annual report of the Platform for Strengthening Journalism Protection and the Safety of Journalists. The report denounces the increase in judicial intimidation of journalists and the lack of independence of public service media, which are often replaced by private media. She recalled that Russia had a duty to protect journalists, including in times of war... [Read more](#)

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Eurostat :

Increase in inflation in April



Euro area annual inflation rose to 7.5% in April from 7.4% in March, according to Eurostat's flash estimate published on 29 April. Energy saw the highest increase (38%, compared to 44.4% in March), followed by food (6.4%, compared to 5% in March)... [Read more](#)

Low growth in the first quarter



GDP grew in the first quarter by 0.4% in the European Union and by 0.2% in the euro area, according to a flash estimate published by Eurostat on 29 April. The increase is lower than in the fourth quarter of 2021, when GDP rose by 0.5% in the European Union and by 0.3% in the euro area... [Read more](#)

Culture :

European Heritage Label for 12 new historic sites



On 28 April, the Commission awarded the European Heritage Label to 12 new sites that "have played an important role in the history and culture of Europe". The European Commission's Danube Palace in Romania, the Oderbruch in Germany, the archaeological site of Vučedol in Croatia and the Ventotene Manifesto are now among the 60 museums, documents or monuments awarded the label... [Read more](#)

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"Pharaohs of two lands" at the Louvre



The Louvre Museum is showing the exhibition "Pharaohs of the Two Lands, the African Epic of the Kings of Napata" until 25 July. The leading role of the kingdom of the Kushite pharaohs, which extended from the Nile Delta to the confluence of the White and Blue Niles in the 8th century BC, is spotlighted... [Read more](#)

Art and Politics in Krakow



The Museum of Contemporary Art in Krakow is exploring the relationship between art and politics until 26 February 2023. The exhibition looks at the critical view of the powers that be through the works of contemporary artists, addressing issues such as the media, corruption and democracy... [Read more](#)

Toots Thielemans, the sound of a Belgian legend



Until 31 August, the Royal Library of Belgium is offering an interactive exhibition on the Belgian musician Toots Thielemans, who would have turned 100 on 29 April. The life of the guitarist and harmonica player is highlighted and visitors are invited to discover the many facets of his musical heritage... [Read more](#)

Artistic links between Kaunas and Vilnius



Until 28 August, on the occasion of "Kaunas 2022, European Capital of Culture", the MO Museum in Vilnius and the Kaunas Museum are presenting an exhibition tracing the link between the two cities. Central to the artistic, cultural and political development of Lithuania, this link is illustrated by paintings, photos and installations highlighting the identity of the two largest cities in the country... [Read more](#)

Dance Festival in Helsinki



The Spring Break Dance Festival takes place from 9 to 15 May at the Stoa Cultural Centre in Helsinki. Organised by the Kinetic Orchestra, it comprises three dance performances... [Read more](#)

Music Festival in Ireland



From 5 to 8 May, the Baltimore Festival is celebrating its 30th anniversary. This festival of traditional Irish music and folklore invites national and international artists to celebrate the island's culture. The Baltimore Fiddle Fair has become one of the most popular music festivals in the South of Ireland over the years... [Read more](#)

Spot Festival in Aarhus



On 6 and 7 May, the city of Aarhus in Denmark is hosting the Spot Festival. This music festival offers the opportunity to discover new talent and to see concerts by well-known artists. The festival is also organising conferences and debates on the music industry in Scandinavia... [Read more](#)

Exhibition Alejandra Riera in Madrid



From 4 May to 5 September, the Reina Sofia Museum in Madrid is presenting the exhibition "Garden of Mixtures: Attempts to Make a Place, 1995 -...", devoted to the work of Alejandra Riera. The artist creates flowerbeds called "Gardens of Mixtures", which revitalise the soil of this space, transforming it collectively from an ecological perspective and making it a meeting place... [Read more](#)

World Press Photo exhibition in Amsterdam



Until 14 August, the New Church in Amsterdam is hosting an exhibition of photographs from the annual World Press Photo competition on current affairs and the major issues of our time... [Read more](#)

Europe Day in support of Ukraine



Many Europe Day events around 9 May will be in support of Ukraine. In Paris on 7 May there will be a dialogue on fundamental rights and a debate on Europe in the face of the war in Ukraine. Germany and Poland, in the city of Guben/Gubin, on 7 May, are organising a festival with German, Polish and Ukrainian artists. In Spain, the government of Olivella is organising an art festival to promote peace on 7 May. In Brussels, Promote Ukraine is

organising a charity concert on 8 May with a tasting of traditional Ukrainian dishes. On 9 May, the European Union delegation in New Zealand is organising a concert for peace in Ukraine... [Read more](#)

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Agenda :



2-5 May 2022
Strasbourg
Plenary Session of the European Parliament

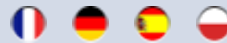


3 May 2022
Videoconference
Eurogroup Meeting



9 May 2022
Europe Day Strasbourg Closure on the Conference on the future of Europe

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