



Achieving results is a team effort: a comparative study of decision making processes in France and Germany regarding security crisis management



Author: Emmanuel Lefebvre

The Robert Schuman Foundation has published a European Issue by Emmanuel Lefebvre, former marine officer who compares the decision making process in France and Germany, in terms of security crisis management. To respond to crises cooperation between France and Germany, which is "a powerful factor of influence" is especially necessary. However in this area both countries differ because of their structures, procedures and cultures. As an example the German political system fosters endurance whilst France focuses more on responsiveness; France gives preference to steering and the creation of specialist entities whilst Germany prefers coordination and consensus between the various responsible bodies. However both share the same vision of crisis management based on "a comprehensive approach", i.e. a coherent approach which combines a variety of instruments in a multi-lateral context with particular attention being paid to the prevention of problems.

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Front page! :

[The Permanent Atlas of the European Union : the first continuously updated atlas!](#)

The Robert Schuman Foundation has published the only permanently updated Atlas of the European Union co-written by Jean-Dominique



Giuliani and Pascale Joannin, Chair and General Director respectively of the Foundation. This reference work presents the Union, its institutions and each of the Member States via their history, culture and statistic reality. With over 50 original maps, historic sheets and updated figures it offers a full, unique overview of Europe. A unique innovation, the data is permanently updated so that everyone can enjoy the most up to date information on Europe via the internet site www.atlas-permanent.eu. Order the atlas on the Foundation's site www.robert-schuman.eu. [Read more](#)

Suspending further accession until the reform of the Union



The Chairman of the Robert Schuman Foundation, Jean-Dominique Giuliani has published an article in LeMonde.fr in which he recalls that the Union has grown from its origin adding 21 States at a rate of 3 per year with an acceleration of one new State every 19 months from the first enlargement in 1973 to the most recent in 2007. All of this has been beneficial for the Union, as it has been for the States. But to continue enlarging without undertaking any real reform of governance would probably lead to greater dilution of European unity, and a further weakening of public support and the destruction all of its advantages... [Read more](#)

A European Treaty without France?



One month before the French Presidential election the Chairman of the Robert Schuman Foundation, Jean-Dominique Giuliani, has published an editorial on the electoral campaign and the proposals put forward by some candidates regarding Europe... [Read more](#)

Elections :

Joachim Gauck- Elected German President



Joachim Gauck, supported by the CDU/CSU, the FDP, the SPD and the Greens was elected on 18th March in the first round of voting as President of Germany against Beate Klarsfeld, who was supported by the Left Party (Die Linke) said the leader of the Bundestag, Norbert Lammert. Mr Gauck won 991 of the 1,232 votes cast within the Federal Assembly (Bundesversammlung) comprising 620 MPs from the Bundestag and the representatives of the regional States. The German Federal President has, above all, a moral authority in Germany... [Read more](#)

Financial Crisis :

Governance, Greece and Hungary on the agenda at the Economy-Finance Council



On 13th March the 27 Economy and Finance Ministers looked into the report on the alert mechanism on macro-economic imbalances presented by the European Commission just a few weeks ago. They were satisfied with the European Commission's determination to undertake advanced analyses of the situation in several countries. They also addressed the problem set by Hungary's excessive debt. On this issue they took a decision to suspend the payment of 495 million euros in aid (Cohesion Fund) and addressed a recommendation to the Hungarian government asking it to take all the necessary steps to correct its deficits by the end of the year. However ministers postponed the adoption of a tax on financial transactions until later... [Read more](#)

Eurogroup satisfied with Greece and Spain



On 14th March the President of the Eurogroup, Jean-Claude Juncker announced that the 17 euro zone Finance Ministers had come to agreement on the payment to the Greek government of the first part of aid to a total of 39.4 billion euros. He called on the Greek authorities to continue the reforms that had been started so that the potential of this aid could be used to the full and in the interest of all. Eurogroup members said

they were satisfied with Spain, noting the work undertaken by the government to consolidate public finances and to reduce deficits, stressing the importance of undertaking major structural reforms at the same time so that the economy could recover... [Read more](#)

The IMF approves a new aid plan to Greece



In addition to the new European public aid plan (130 billion euros) and the operation to restructure the debt held by the private sector, the IMF approved a new aid programme of 28 billion euros for Greece on 15th March. This new credit facility is now planned over four years. The IMF board indeed adopted a reform extending the maximum length of the loans that it is paying to the country by three to four years. Athens can therefore receive 1.65 billion euros immediately; the rest will be released in successive instalments... [Read more](#)

Spain's Public Debt rises to a New Record



Spain's public debt reached an historic record at the end of 2011 representing 68.5% of the GDP - around 7 points more than a year ago (61.2%) according to figures published by the Bank of Spain on 16th March. The level of the Spanish debt, which has reached a peak since the start of this cycle of statistics in 1995, is higher than the limit set by the EU's Stability Pact (60%), but it still 20 points below the euro zone average (87.4% in the third quarter of 2011). It totalled 734.961 billion euros at the end of December which represents 68.5% of the GDP a rise of over two points in just three months (66% in the third quarter)... [Read more](#)

Commission :

Publication of the 2nd quarterly report by the Task Force on the situation in Greece



By maintaining the goal for aid in support of growth and the creation of jobs in Greece the Task Force published its second quarterly report on 15th March. This report describes the progress achieved with regard to Greece's absorption of European funds and with regard to the implementation of the technical assistance by around 20 Member States, the Commission and the IMF. The President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, said on this occasion that "the aid provided by the Commission's task force is a vital tool in the support of growth and employment."... [Read more](#)

A unique programming tool for the entire structural fund



On 14th March the European Commission presented the common strategic framework in view of the next budgetary programming period 2014-2020. Not only should this framework help to establish investment priorities for this period but it should also enable a better association of funds to optimise their impact. It also defines the key actions in these programmes, supported by the Cohesion Fund and the Structural Funds, but also by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Fund for Maritime and Fisheries Affairs in order to achieve "better coordination of the measures and so that projects are more effective," according to Dacian Cioloș, the Commissioner responsible for Agriculture and Rural Development... [Read more](#)

The Commission proposes a new directive to counter crime



As part of the EU's Internal Security Strategy the Commission proposed a directive on 12th March that aims to enhance the effectiveness of procedures regarding the confiscation of funds and other property acquired as a result of criminal activity. The freezing of assets will be facilitated and Member States' competence enhanced. According to Cecilia Malmström, European Commissioner for Internal Affairs "repressive and legal authorities must be given better tools to counter this scourge" which, according to a UN estimate, generated over 2,100 billion dollars in 2009, ie 3.6% of the world's GDP... [Read more](#)

Parliament :

Debate on the 2013 budget



During a plenary session of the European Parliament in Strasbourg on 14th March 2012 MEPs adopted a resolution that defines the European Parliament's position regarding discussions over the 2013 budget. They stressed the importance of continuing efforts to control budgets but also they called for austerity measures to be taken alongside investments, so that growth and employment are revived. They notably insisted on the need to support SMEs that form the greater part of the economic network in Europe... [Read more](#)

In support of a European programme against diabetes



On 14th March MEPs adopted a resolution asking the European Commission to draw up a common strategy to counter diabetes. This should include preventive detection, and management measures, as well as specific action regarding education and research. They also asked Member States to adopt a common methodology in their approach to diabetes and insisted on the need to continue work, notably financial, to limit the number of people affected... [Read more](#)

Creation of a Committee on Organised Crime



On 14th March MEPs decided to create a Parliamentary Committee on Organised Crime. This aims to analyse how criminal and mafia like groups infiltrate legal notably economic, financial and political, activities. It also has to draw up recommendations to fight this scourge better on an international, European and national level. The composition of this committee will be decided upon at the end of March and it will start work at the end of April with a one year mandate... [Read more](#)

Facilitating Cross Border Successions



On 13th March MEPs adopted a regulation, 589 votes in support, 21 against and 79 abstentions, that aims to facilitate 450,000 cross-border successions which represent 10% of all successions. This text plans that authorities in the last country of residence have the competence to manage the succession, except if the people involved have indicated that they prefer that their country of origin applies its own legislation. A facultative European Certificate of Succession, should enable heirs, creditors and authorities to process successions rapidly. The text, which will not apply either in the UK, Ireland or Denmark, still has to be adopted formally by the Council, with which an agreement has already been found... [Read more](#)

Quotas to step up women's participation



MEPs have asked for an improvement in parity in terms of women's remuneration and representation in the world of work and politics. The report presented by Sophia in't Veld (ALDE, Netherlands) advises on the introduction of quotas of women on company boards and targets European wage equality. This report adopted by 361 votes, 268 against and 70 abstentions, was completed by a resolution adopted by 508 MEPs, 124 against and 49 abstentions, asking for the introduction of quotas on candidate lists in elections. The General Director of the Robert Schuman Foundation Pascale Joannin, has published a study on this issue entitled "The Gender Mix, a European Model"... [Read more](#)

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A review of EU candidate countries



On 14th March MEPs noted the differences in progress achieved by Iceland, Macedonia and Bosnia-Herzegovina in view of their accession to the EU. With regard to Iceland some problems continue, notably regarding fishing, but MEPs really do hope that the country will soon join the EU. As for Macedonia MEPs asked the Council to set a date

soon for the start of negotiations. They regretted that the dispute over the country's name continued to rage. However with regard to Bosnia-Herzegovina, MEPs were much more reserved, believing that the construction of a democratic State was far from being complete and they wonder about the development of the role played by the international community... [Read more](#)

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The European Parliament denounces infringements in the Russian presidential election



In a resolution adopted on 15th March MEPs firmly condemned the various infringements that took place during the Russian presidential election revealed by various international organisations and NGO's. They asked the Russian authorities to continue dialogue with the opposition and to implement major political reform and invites the opposition to become more structured... [Read more](#)

Council :

Trade Agreement with Colombia and Peru



On 16th March the 27 Trade Ministers approved the comprehensive revision of the Generalised Preference System for developing countries. The aim of this reform is to adapt this tool to economic developments and to respond better to the needs of the countries involved. Preferences will be focused on the most needy countries. The Council also came to a political agreement on free exchange between the EU, Colombia and Peru, which still has to be made official. The focus of this agreement aims amongst other things to bring down the trade barriers that persist and to eliminate customs duties... [Read more](#)

Germany :

Wolfgang Schäuble, next President of the Eurogroup?



German Chancellor Angela Merkel has put her Finance Minister, Wolfgang Schäuble, forward to take over as head of the Eurogroup after the departure of Luxemburger Jean-Claude Juncker according to the Financial Times Deutschland published on 16th March. The final decision may be postponed until after the presidential election in France in May according to the newspaper. French President Nicolas Sarkozy has still not given his go-ahead fearing that "the German position will become too powerful" according to sources close to Eurogroup quoted by the Financial Times Deutschland... [Read more](#)

Early elections in North Rhine Westphalia



The Social-Democratic-Ecologist coalition which leads the most populous Land in Germany - North Rhine Westphalia - was dissolved on 14th March. It did not succeed in terms of the adoption of its draft budget for 2012. Elections will be organised on 13th May. According to the most recent polls the SPD, (Social Democrats) are due to win 38% of the vote, ahead of the CDU (Christian Democrats) with 34% followed by the Greens (14%), the Pirate Party (5%), Die Linke (4%) and the Liberals (FDP) with 2%. The end of the minority government in NRW heralds the third major regional election this year in Germany. Indeed there will also be elections in Saarland and Schleswig-Holstein... [Read more](#)

Ms Merkel visits her troops in Afghanistan



Chancellor Angela Merkel undertook a visit to Mazar-e Charif in Afghanistan on 12th March where she confirmed the goal of withdrawing German troops by 2014. The German Chancellor demonstrated however that she was "quite sceptical about the positive development of the country's situation as far as security was concerned." It was the fourth visit by Ms Merkel in Afghanistan since 2005. There are still nearly 4,900 German soldiers stationed in Afghanistan... [Read more](#)

Bulgaria :

Two Bulgarian Ministers Resign



Bulgarian Prime Minister Boiko Borissov accepted the resignations of Economy, Energy and Tourism Minister Traïtcho Traïkov, and that of Healthcare Minister Stefan Konstantinov on 15th March. It emerged that the latter was unable to launch any major reform in the Bulgarian healthcare system and the Economy Minister regularly attracted the anger of the population. The next day the Prime Minister's party (GERB) announced their replacements: Delos Dobrev as Economy, Energy and Tourism Minister and Desislava Atanasova as Healthcare Minister... [Read more](#)

Cyprus :

Cyprus: ministerial reshuffle in view



The Cypriot President Demetris Christofias undertook a ministerial reshuffle on 19th March after the resignation "for health reasons" of the Finance Minister Kikis Kazamias on 16th March. Vassos Shiarlis will replace him as Finance Minister. The Interior Minister Neoclis Sylikiotis will now be Trade, Industry and Tourism Minister and he is to be replaced by Eleni Mavrou... [Read more](#)

France :

Seminar on European Competitiveness



On 13th March Le Monde and the Association Française des entreprises privées (AFEP) invited a certain number of European leaders to a seminar on Competitiveness in Europe. The President of the European Council, Herman van Rompuy, called for all economic players to improve European competitiveness and called for them not to be blinded by growth figures in the emerging countries, recalling that these countries lagged behind from an economic, social, environmental and even political point of view. Mario Draghi, president of the European Central Bank stressed the dangers associated with the differences in competitiveness between European countries... [Read more](#)

Italy :

Mario Monti receives Angela Merkel



On 13th March the President of the Italian Republic, Giorgio Napolitano and the President of the Italian Council, Mario Monti, received German Chancellor Angela Merkel. Mario Monti and Angela Merkel called for care still to be taken even if the euro zone crisis is no longer in its most acute phase and stressed their will to act in support of growth. "The crisis has revealed our weaknesses," stressed Ms Merkel, saying that the EU "needed work, growth and competitiveness." "We need more of Europe and not less," she declared, calling for a "strengthening of the institutions" and the internal market... [Read more](#)

Czech Republic :

The Population Declines in the Czech Republic



The Czech Republic acknowledged that last year its population had declined for the first time since 2002, notably after a decrease in the number of births, according to data published on 13th March by the national statistics bureau (CSU). The country had 10,504,203 inhabitants on 31st December 2011, ie 28,567 less in comparison with the end of 2010 said the CSU. In all 108,673 children were born in the Czech Republic last year, an annual contraction of 8,840 according to the same source. "The birth rate declined to 1.42 children per woman in 2011 after lying at 1.49 in 2009-2010", indicates the report. At the same time the Czech Republic received 22,590 migrants last year, notably Slovaks, Russians and Ukrainians... [Read more](#)

UK :

Anglo-Irish Relations over the next Decade



On 12th March the British and Irish Prime Ministers - David Cameron and Enda Kenny signed a declaration in which they formalized the cooperation between their two countries for the next ten years... [Read more](#)

The British Prime Minister on an official visit to Washington



During a joint press conference on 14th March in Washington American President, Barack Obama and British Prime Minister, David Cameron recalled the close links that bind their two countries in a "special relationship". The British Prime Minister stressed the importance of action taken by both countries in Afghanistan against terrorism; he mentioned the withdrawal of troops in 2014 and future aid that will be given to support the new government in power. With regard to Syria the two men declared they wanted to continue providing humanitarian aid. Then they announced the upkeep of political and economic pressure on Iran with regard to its nuclear programme. Finally in terms of economic growth they highlighted the need to stimulate investment and trade relations between the two countries... [Read more](#)

Slovakia :

Robert Fico asked to form a government



The Slovakian President Ivan Gasparovic officially gave Robert Fico the task of forming a new government on 15th March after the victory of his party SMER-SD in the general elections on 10th March. "I have asked the leader of the victorious party to form the new government, as stipulated in the Constitution," declared Mr Gasparovic to the press. "The first session of the new elected Parliament will take place on 4th April and I shall appoint the new government", he added. Mr Fico said that his party SMER-SD would form the new government alone after the refusal of five other parties, which entered parliament, to join forces with him. Mr Fico's party won 44.41% of the vote and will enjoy the absolute majority with 83 out of 150 seats... [Read more](#)

Serbia :

Serbia: elections 6th May



The Serb president, Boris Tadic, announced that general elections would take place on 6th May; these are the first not to take early since the fall of Slobodan Milosevic's regime in October 2000. Local elections across the entire country and also regional elections in the province of Vojvodina (North) will also take place on the same day. More than seven million voters are being called to elect 250 MPs in the mono-cameral parliament of Serbia and to renew the local councils and the Regional Assembly of Vojvodina... [Read more](#)

Moldova :

Nicolae Timofti, new President of Moldova



On 16th March the Moldovan Parliament elected the judge Nicolae Timofti as President of Moldova after three years of political crisis which has deprived the country of a head of State in his own right. Nicolae Timofti won the support of 62 MPs out of 101, ie one vote more than the 3/5 necessary to be elected. The 39 communist MPs boycotted the vote... [Read more](#)

Switzerland :

Switzerland joins the European Defence Agency



On 16th March the European Defence Agency and Switzerland signed an administrative agreement that enables the Helvetic Confederation to take part in projects undertaken by the agency. Cooperation should notably be undertaken in the area of research and development. Switzerland has a modern, specialised arms industry within certain areas, such as demining and drones. The European Defence Agency has already

concluded similar agreements with Norway (2006) and the European Space Agency (2011)... [Read more](#)

WTO :

The WTO condemns the USA for making illegal subsidies to Boeing



On 12th March the European Commission welcomed the conviction of the USA by the WTO for having granted illegal subsidies to the aviation sector, and notably to Boeing. This aid was not in line with WTO rules totalling more than 8 billion euros granted since 1989. In its decision the WTO believed that these subsidies had seriously damaged the interests of the EU. The USA now has six months to fall in line with the WTO's recommendations. The USA and the European Commission have been in dispute since 2004 and have accused each other of having granted illegal subsidies to the aviation sector... [Read more](#)

Joint complaint against China regarding rare earths



On 13th March the EU, the USA and Japan made an official complaint to the WTO against China accusing the latter of anti-trust practices and for restricting the export of rare earths and certain minerals such as tungsten and molybdenum. For some years now China has controlled the export of these resources in an increasingly restrictive manner since it is the world's main producer. These resources are vital in the high tech and defence industries... [Read more](#)

Eurostat :

Inflation rate, 2.7% in the euro zone



According to data published on 14th March by Eurostat the annual inflation rate in February 2012 is, in comparison with January, stable in the euro zone at 2.7% but it did increase in the EU rising to 3%. Over one year inflation has risen above 5% in Romania and Malta and only totals 1.3% in Sweden... [Read more](#)

Industrial Output Rising



According to a Eurostat publication on 14th March industrial output in the euro zone and in the EU increased by 0.2% in January after having dropped respectively by 1.1% and 0.8% in December. Over one year Poland, Lithuania and Slovakia recorded the biggest increases (more than 7%) whilst Luxembourg, Finland, Greece and Italy recorded declines ranging from 5% to more than 10%... [Read more](#)

External Trade Deficit of the euro zone to a total of 7.6 billion euros in January



According to initial estimates published on 16th March by the European Statistics Office, Eurostat, the euro zone recorded an external trade deficit of 7.6 billion euros in January, after a surplus of 9.1 billion euros in December. In January, in comparison with December, exports, corrected according to seasonal variations, increased by 1.3% and imports by 2.4%. One year ago, the euro zone's trade deficit was higher 16.1 billion euros (revised figure) according to Eurostat... [Read more](#)

Studies/Reports :

Proposals to "reform the European project"



The Montaigne Institute published a paper on 13th March entitled "Reforming the European Project" which highlights the need for a return to "the fundamentals of the European project" and to put it back into the heart of the political dynamic. Hence, according to the author, Jean-Paul Tran Thiet, this reform means redefining priorities in the European project, putting an end to institutional obstacles and the end of short term visions. Amongst the measures put forward there are notably the issue of European savings vouchers and the coordination of budgetary and taxation policies...

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Reciprocity and International Trade



On 8th March the Chamber of Trade and Industry of Paris adopted a report entitled "Reciprocity and International Trade: how to restore loyal competition conditions?" This report advises the implementation of measures to impose greater respect of the reciprocity principle in international trade. These measures include a better inclusion of the reciprocity imperative in trade agreements, the exclusion of "non-reciprocal partners" in European public procurement, the systematic integration of a clause focusing on public procurement in trade agreements and a more systematic use of the WTO's Dispute Regulation Body, the transformation of this into "a regulation tool" or support to the accession of the major emerging economies to the OECD... [Read more](#)

The Common Security and Defence Policy revived by the Libyan Crisis



"The Transeuropean Policy Studies Association" (TEPSA) has published a study devoted to the European Common Security and Defence Policy. Some analysts believe that the Libyan crisis has "sounded the alarm" on the ESDP, thereby starting off a debate on the European Crisis Management Policy whilst the ESDP seems to be slowing and that operations undertaken in Libya, in the first major security crisis after the signature of the Lisbon Treaty, proved to be disappointing. The study proposes, in this context, several measures to increase Europe's military planning capability and to encourage "a more pro-active use of European rapid response tools", to improve international coordination and to pool the military capabilities of the various States... [Read more](#)

Publications :

The Spring issue of the review 'Commentaire' has just been published



The spring issue of the review "Commentaire" has just been published. It contains an article by Alain Juppé, French Foreign Minister amongst others. Note should also be taken of a study by Thierry Chopin, Studies Director at the Robert Schuman Foundation and Jean-François Jamet on "Comment sortir de la crise de l'Europe". (How to overcome the crisis in Europe).. [Read more](#)

Culture :

Jean Plantu Exhibition at the CIDAL



The CIDAL (Centre d'information et de documentation sur l'Allemagne) is putting on an exhibition until 15th April 2012 - it offers the public Franco-German caricatures by the famous artist who works for the Monde and L'Express - Jean Plantu, a fervent defender of Franco-German friendship. Although his caricatures are scathing and sometimes provocative his view of Franco-German relations is well-meaning. His book "Drôle de peuple, Komisches Volk!" has been published by the German publishing house "Schaltzeit Verlag"... [Read more](#)

100th Anniversary of the German National Library



In celebration of the 100th anniversary of the German national library, a series of events are being organised in Leipzig and Frankfurt. The inaugural ceremony took place on 13th March. On this occasion the new permanent exhibition entitled "Zeichen -Bücher-Netze: Von der Keilschrift zum Binärcode" was launched showing the development of writing from the start of printing to the internet era... [Read more](#)

Review of State Aid to the Cinema

The European Commission would like to review the assessment criteria of State aid granted to the film industry in order to avoid a race for subsidies, which States undertake to attract superproductions. A project on which several interested parties must give their opinion by



mid-June has been dispatched announced the Commission on 14th March. The guardian of competition in Europe, the Commission, is suggesting the modification of the rules that are presently in force regarding subsidies to the European film industry... [Read more](#)

"Miro! Poetry and Light"



80 pictures and sculptures by Joan Miro are on show until 10th June in the intimate context of the Cloister of Bramante in Rome in tribute to the poetry and light that animates the work of the Spanish artist. Apart from the 50 oil paintings such as "Woman in the Street" (195x130, 1973), the exhibition entitled "Miro! Poetry and Light" offers the public a series of terracotta, bronzes and water colours but also sketches like those undertaken for the American University of Harvard... [Read more](#)

Turner/Le Lorrain at the National Gallery

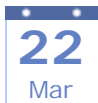


The National Gallery is devoting an exhibition to the admiration that William Turner had for the French classical, landscape painter Claude Gellée, otherwise known as "le Lorrain", born nearly 170 years ago. When the young Turner started to paint in the 1800's, le Lorrain was the focus of such veneration in England that he was often only called by his forename: Claude. His canvasses that bathe in light, inspired by his journeys to Italy, were all the rage amongst English collectors, at a period when Italy was the privileged destination of the aristocracy. The exhibition that shows fifteen paintings by Claude Le Lorrain and fifty by Turner also shows how the pupil rose beyond the master, giving ever greater emphasis to light, air and reflections on water... [Read more](#)

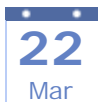
Agenda :



19th-20th March
Brussels
Agriculture-Fisheries Council

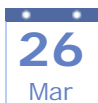


22nd March
Frankfurt
Council of Governors and General Council of the European Central Bank



22nd and 23rd March
Brussels
"Defence" Council

Brussels
"Transports" Council



26th March
Brussels
General Affairs Council



27th March
Brussels
Presentation of the "Schuman Report on Europe, the State of the Union 2012" in French and English



 I love the Robert Schuman Foundation's Letter

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