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Towards a renewed Euro-African partnership

Author: Alexandre Kateb



Aligning the continents of Africa and Europe with each other is now an existential imperative for Europe, at a time of growing security and migration threats, if it wants to continue to have influence in the world arena in the face of China and the USA. This strategic partnership might find inspiration in the experience Europe has had with Morocco after the recent 14th meeting of the EU-Morocco Association Council.

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Foundation :

The Grand Turning Point - the European 21st century



In the "Grand Turning Point" published by the Ecole de Guerre, contrary to the usual narrative - Jean-Dominique Giuliani shows that the European Union can rise to the new challenges set by the 21st century. Europe has succeeded well beyond the hopes of its Founding Fathers. It can still succeed in guaranteeing its place amongst the leading three powers in the world by the end of the century..... [Read more](#)

Permanent Atlas of the European Union



After the vote, and for a better understanding of the Union and what it does, the Foundation suggests you read the "Permanent Atlas of the European Union" a book that gives a complete overview of the Union, the euro zone and each of its Members States and their overseas territories. It is available in print version from the Foundation's website, in bookshops and in digital version. It is up-dated on a permanent basis [Read](#)

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The Schuman Report on Europe, State of the Union 2019



In this year of the renewal of the European Institutions, the "Schuman Report on the State of the Union 2019" is necessary more than ever before to understand the state of the Union and its chances of winning greater independence and weight on the international stage, thanks to the dependencies it will create amongst its Member States. The Report includes contributions from top experts and contains 33 original maps that summarise the main European challenges and a unique set of commented statistics. Now available to order.... [Read more](#)

European Elections: a site to understand the new Parliament



The new European Parliament, elected on 23rd-26th May, will meet for the first time on 2nd July. Our dedicated website provides details of results from the 28 Member States, the name of the 751 MEPs who will sit until 2024, the name of all presidents and vice-presidents of the political groups, and all news on installation of the new Parliament..... [Read more](#)

Commission :

Selection of the 17 first "European universities"



On 26th June the Commission announced the names of the universities which will be members of the first "European universities". 114 higher education establishments in 24 Member States were selected to form 17 alliances called European universities. The member establishments of these universities will pool their expertise and their resources and will offer greater mobility to their students and staff. They will enjoy a total budget of a maximum 85 million € over three years... [Read more](#)

Council :

Energy Council Conclusions



On 25th June, Europe's energy ministers adopted conclusions regarding the future of the Energy Union's energy systems. They defined the priorities and principles regarding future policies aiming to guarantee energy transition in view of achieving a reliable, competitive, safe and sustainable energy system... [Read more](#)

Environment Council Conclusions



On 26th June Europe's environment ministers adopted conclusions on chemical substances stressing the need to improve and integrate the assessment of chemical risks and the management of chemical substances in Europe's legislation as a whole to strengthen the coherence and efficiency of the latter in their regard. They also debate the recycling of water for agricultural irrigation... [Read more](#)

Cohesion Policy Council Conclusions



On 25th June Ministers discussed the negotiations over the legislative package for the cohesion policy 2021-2027. They simplified the management of the various funds included in the cohesion policy thereby reducing the amount of red-tape imposed on the Member States. Ministers debated the issues at stake in the programming of the said funds for the period 2021-2027, such as economic governance and the need to spend funds as effectively as possible, whilst maximising their impact and reducing regional inequalities... [Read more](#)

Start of the Finnish Presidency



Finland started its presidency of the Council of the European Union on 1st July for the second half of 2019, after Romania. The presidency's programme published by the Finnish government insists notably on the Union's role as a "world leader in terms of the climate", competitiveness, general citizen safety as well as the guarantee of our common values

and the rule of law... [Read more](#)

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Diplomacy :

Signature of Trade Agreements with Vietnam



Two new trade agreements between the EU and Vietnam were signed on 30th June in Hanoi - a free trade agreement and an agreement to protect investments. The free-trade agreement eliminates 99% of the customs barriers between the two parties whilst the second agreement strengthens the protection of European investments in Vietnam. The free-trade agreement also includes measures to protect intellectual property, sustainable development and the liberalisation of investments. Negotiations initially started in 2012... [Read more](#)

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Trade Agreement with Mercosur



The EU and Mercosur (Common Market of the South, which comprises Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay) concluded a free-trade agreement on 28th June, 20 years to the day after the start of negotiations. The agreement covers 773 million inhabitants, reduces customs duties on industrial and agricultural products and includes a precautionary principle. This provides for the protection of European geographical indications and the launch of public procurement in Mercosur. It also covers a commitment to counter deforestation in the Amazon... [Read more](#)

Vienna Meeting on the agreement with Iran



The European Union, Iran, France and Germany, the UK, China and Russia met in Vienna on 28th June to review the 2015 agreement over the nuclear issue (JCPOA), of which they are still signatories after the withdrawal of the USA in 2018. During the meeting the Europeans announced that Instex, an instrument that was introduced to continue trade with Iran despite the American sanctions is now operational... [Read more](#)

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G20 Summit



During the G20 Summit in Osaka (Japan) on 28th and 29th June, the leaders of the most industrialised countries discussed the trade issues at stake and called for a reform of the World Trade Organisation, without condemning protectionism however. Except for the USA all of the countries maintained that they would apply the Paris Climate Agreement... [Read more](#)

EU-Morocco Association Council



The 14th Association Council between the EU and Morocco took place on 27th June. In a joint declaration both sides said they were pleased with the revival of their institutional relations. The Council explored economic and trade issues as well as questions linked to mobility and migration. It also addressed the commitments taken on both sides in the fight to counter climate change, environmental cooperation and Euro-African relations... [Read more](#)

Extension of economic sanctions against Russia



On 27th June the Council extended its economic sanctions against specific sectors of the Russian economy until 31st January 2020. These sanctions were decided on 31st July 2014 in response to Russia's action that aimed to destabilise Ukraine. The decision to extend the sanctions again follows information given by German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Emmanuel Macron during the European Council on 20th and 21st June, regarding progress in terms of the implementation of the Minsk Agreements... [Read more](#)

Extension of EU mission in Palestine



On 28th June the Council extended the European missions in Palestine (EUPOL COPPS) which helps the Palestinian Authority in the establishment of the institutions of a future Palestinian State in the areas of police and criminal justice and EUBAM Rafah, an assistance

mission at the Rafah checkpoint... [Read more](#)

Court of Justice :

Advocate General's opinion regarding the reform of the Polish Supreme Court



The Advocate General of the ECJ (European Court of Justice), Evgeni Tanchev gave his opinion regarding a part of the reform of the Polish Supreme Court established by the government led by the Law and Justice Party (PiS). Following the reduction of the age of retirement of the judges of the Supreme Court, invalidated by the ECJ on 24th June, the latter can only appeal to retain their position before a new body, the "Disciplinary Chamber of the Supreme Court". The Advocate General deems that this Disciplinary Chamber does not satisfy the requirements of judicial independence guaranteed by Union law... [Read more](#)

Carles Puigdemont and Antoni Comin cannot take their seats in the European Parliament



On 1st July the European Court of Justice (ECJ) rejected the appeal made by the Catalan secessionists Carles Puigdemont and Antoni Comin to oblige the European Parliament to allow them their seat in the hemicycle on 2nd July. The President of the Court deemed that Parliament had to use the results that had officially been declared by the Member States without giving an opinion about their validity. C. Puigdemont and A. Comín are not on the list of MEPs elected in May by Spain due to their absence from the obligatory swearing in session that takes place before the Spanish Electoral Commission. The President of the Court therefore deemed that he could not consider the two politicians as having been officially declared elected... [Read more](#)

Denmark :

Presentation of the government of Mette Frederiksen



On 27th June the new Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen (Social Democratic Party) who won the elections on 5th June presented the new government, formed of the coalition of four leftwing parties (Social Democratic Party, People's Socialist Party, Unity List- Red/Green Alliance and the Social Liberal Party). Denmark is the third nordic country to form a centre-left government this year. The coalition programme is putting forward two priorities - climate and immigration... [Read more](#)

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France :

Visit by the French President to Japan



Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe hosted French President Emmanuel Macron on 26th June in Tokyo. The two leaders coordinated their positions, notably regarding trade and climate issues, on the eve of the G20 summit organised by Japan in Osaka, and prior to the G7 summit in Biarritz in August... [Read more](#)

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Montenegro :

Stabilisation and Association Council with the European Union



On 27th June, the EU-Montenegro Stabilisation and Association Council met in Brussels. It noted the progress made by Montenegro in view of its EU membership: 32 negotiation chapters have now been opened in all. The Council encouraged Montenegro to continue its work in the areas of rule of law, economic governance, public administration, the freedom of the press and the fight to combat corruption... [Read more](#)

Serbia :

Opening of a new membership chapter



During the tenth meeting of the Membership Conference with Serbia on 27th June, the European Union opened a new negotiation chapter (chapter 9 on financial services). It is the 17th chapter opened out of 35 for Serbia, which has been a candidate since 2009 and the start of negotiations in 2014... [Read more](#)

Council of Europe :

Marija Pejčinović Burić elected Secretary General



On 26th June the Croatian Foreign Minister Marija Pejčinović Burić was elected Secretary General of the Council of Europe. She won 159 votes against 105 for Belgian Foreign Minister Didier Reynders during a vote by the Council's Parliamentary Assembly. She will enter office on 1st October and will take over from Thorbjørn Jagland. She will be the second woman to occupy this post after French woman Catherine Lalumière 1989-1994... [Read more](#)

Resolution regarding migrant pushback and expulsion



On 28th June, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) expressed its concern about pushback practices and policy which it deems damaging to the rights of asylum seekers and refugees. On 27th it expressed its concern regarding "the serious threats" that weigh on child migrants during their journey towards Europe and the major lacuna that exist in policies and procedures which limit the legal migration paths to Europe... [Read more](#)

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The Parliamentary Assembly re-integrates Russia



Russia made its return to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) on 25th June after a vote the day before, 118 votes in support 62 against, on a resolution lifting sanctions against it. PACE deprived the Russian delegation of its rights in 2014 in response to the annexation of Crimea. In exchange the Assembly called on the Russian authorities to implement a series of recommendations made by the Assembly, notably the liberation of Ukrainian sailors, cooperating in bringing to justice those responsible for the destruction of flight MH17. On 26th June PACE called on the Russian authorities to "re-open and continue" their investigation into the assassination of opposition leader Boris Nemtsov, as it listed a certain number of "serious concerns" about the independence and efficacy of the said investigation at present... [Read more](#)

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NATO :

Defence Ministers' Meeting



On 26th and 27th June, the NATO member country Defence Ministers met in Brussels to debate the major security challenges and notably Russia's violation of the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces treaty (INF). Ministers insisted on the fact that Russia could still save the treaty and that it would be the position defended by the Allies in the NATO-Russia Council meeting which is to be held on 5th July. Ministers discussed the progress made regarding the issue of burden sharing, the position of dissuasion and the defence of the Alliance, new technologies and NATO's mission in Afghanistan. Finally, they approved a new space policy... [Read more](#)

Eurostat :

Sustainable development: report on the EU's progress



In a monitoring report regarding the sustainable development goals published on 28th June Eurostat notes that the Union has made progress over the last five years towards most of the 17 sustainable development goals to be achieved by 2030 as defined the UN. Most progress has been made in the areas of the "good health and well-being", "no poverty" and "decent work and economic growth"... [Read more](#)

Drop in unemployment rate



According to a study published by Eurostat on July 1st the unemployment rate in the EU lay at 6.3% in May 2019. This is the lowest rate recorded since January 2000. In the euro zone it lay at 7.5% in May 2019 in contrast with 8.3% in May last year. This is the lowest rate recorded in the euro zone since July 2008... [Read more](#)

Inflation stable in June in the euro zone

The euro zone's annual inflation rate is due to lie at around 1.2% in June, ie a stable rate in comparison with May, according to an estimate by Eurostat on 28th June. The main components of inflation -



foodstuffs, alcohol and tobacco, energy and services - are due to have annual inflation rates of 1.6%. That of industrial goods - energy apart is due to lie at 0.2%... [Read more](#)

Studies/Reports :

Report on tax trends in the Member States



In a report on the tax systems in the Member States published on 28th June the European Commission notes that the revenues generation by taxes have increased slightly in the Union: they represented 39% of the GDP in 2017, i.e a point more than in 2016. The revenues generated by environmental taxes have remained stable in the Member States and represent 2.4% of the Union's GDP... [Read more](#)

Report on the future of European industry



On 27th June the Industry 2030 round table introduced in December 2017 which brings together unions, employers and experts in view of preparing Europe's industrial strategy, presented its report on the future of the European industry by 2030 to the European Commission. This report presents a vision of Europe's industry as a leader in the international arena in terms of innovation, digitisation and decarbonisation. It provides suggestions to develop a long-term industrial strategy: working to counter climate change; stepping up the transition towards green industry; highlighting innovation and strengthening the Union's competitiveness... [Read more](#)

Culture :

The Classic Films Season



Until the end of September, films from the various Member States are being screened from of charge in 13 countries as part of the Classic Films Season... [Read more](#)

Roskilde Festival



The Roskilde Festival (Denmark), one of the biggest in Europe is taking place until 6th July with nearly 180 musical and artistic events... [Read more](#)

Photographic festival of Arles



The 50th photographic meeting in Arles will be taking place until 22nd September. A major collection of souvenirs and eye-witness testimonies (photos, videos, recordings, digitised documents) is delivered to the public during this event... [Read more](#)

"Summer Exhibition" in London



The 250th "Summer Exhibition" organised by the Royal Academy of Arts in London is taking place on 12th August. 10,000 pictures, sculptures, photographs and drawings by many artists including Banksy, Anselm Kiefer, Tracey and Emin and emerging artists are on show to the public... [Read more](#)

Classic Theatre in Merida



The International Classical Theatre Festival is taking place until 25th August in Merida, Spain brings to life texts that are mainly drawn from Greco-Latin tradition and also musical shows, as well as a series of films in an atypical venue of a Roman theatre dated 100 BE... [Read more](#)

European Weeks of Passau

Until 8th November the town of Passau in Bavaria is hosting concerts,

theatre plays, operas and shows of all kinds as part of the music festival, "European Weeks". Created in 1952 the European Weeks of Passau aim to achieve interaction between the populations of Europe and their common cultural heritage... [Read more](#)

Verona Opera Festival



The Opera Festival that has taken place yearly since 1973 in the Roman amphitheatre of Verona is taking place until 7th September. The arena is turned into the world's biggest open air opera stage (10,000 places) and offers amongst others a programme of adaptations from the Traviata, Aida, Carmen, the Trouvère and Tosca... [Read more](#)

Agenda :



1st July 2019

Brussels
Start of Finnish Presidency of the Council



2nd-4th July 2019

Strasbourg
Constitutive Session of the European Parliament



4th July 2019

Helsinki
Informal meeting of ministers responsible for Competitiveness



5th July 2019

Brussels
NATO-Russia Council Meeting



7th July 2019

Greece
Snap Election

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The Letter's Editorial Team :

Stefanie Buzmaniuk, Helen Levy ;
Cléa Agosta, Aurore Barbier, Delphine Bougassas-Gaullier, Clément Liénard, Magali Menneteau,
Marion Paronian, Cindy Schweitzer, Louise Siwertz

Editor-in-chief: Eric Maurice
Publishing Director: Pascale Joannin

Contact/Suggestions
info@robert-schuman.eu

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