

Hosted by Ifri

# Conférence navale de Paris 2025



04 February 2025

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# FOREWORD

## Ladies and gentlemen,



This third edition of the Paris Naval Conference is an ideal opportunity for exchanges between all the players in the maritime, economic and naval worlds.

Let us seize this opportunity because the strategic environment is demanding. It is characterized by profound instability, a temptation to turn inwards, and growing challenges to the international order. The global context, between mutations and disruptions, also opens up new opportunities.

In the maritime domain, this tension is reflected in heightened competition and even confrontation. Conflicts on land are spilling over into the sea. They have a considerable impact on maritime flows, as it has been the case for over a year in the Red Sea, or since February 2022 in the Black Sea. They also affect our marine and undersea infrastructures for energy and telecommunications, which are repeatedly the target of incidents or hybrid operations with grave consequences.

Our societies are experiencing this reality once again: our shared economic prosperity is dependent on the security of our trade flows, which, for the most part are through sea route. At times of geopolitical tension, all actors weigh risks and benefits. This maritime ecosystem reorganizes itself, adapting not only traffic flows, but also infrastructures, ports, logistics and supply chains.

This is where the key role of naval power comes into light. By controlling seas and oceans, sea power supports the economy. As they have done for several centuries, our navies provide security and stability essential to enable innovation and investment in the future. For our sailors, this requires a constant high level of preparedness and responsiveness to protect shipping, regulate maritime uses and enforce international law at sea. Our navies also attempt to anticipate all the emerging developments in the maritime economy linked to climate change, technological, and energy breakthroughs.

Faced with this complex environment, we can rely on a network of partners. First, foreign partners, through alliances and coalitions, to increase our influence, operate together, and consolidate access to areas of operations. Second, economic, educational, financial, and industrial partners: all parts of a broad and diversified ecosystem that needs to rally and mobilize.

In this Year of the Sea, the Paris Naval Conference aims to bring us together to reflect on the strategic issues that link naval power and the economy. I hope that this conference will be a great success, and I look forward to exchanging views with you in the corridors of the French Institute of International Relations (Ifri).

**Admiral Nicolas Vaujour**  
Chief of Staff of the French Navy

# Agenda

(ALL LISTED TIMES ARE IN UTC +1)

- 10h00 - 10h30** Arrival at Ifri, coffee  
(27 rue de la Procession, 75015 Paris)
- 10h30 - 10h35** Welcome remarks by  
Dr. Thomas Gomart, *Director, Ifri*
- 10h35 - 10h50** Opening remarks by  
M. Rodolphe Saadé, *CEO, CMA-CGM*
- 10h50 - 12h00** **SESSION 1**  
**Challenges and perspectives on securing maritime flows for navies**  
CHAIR : Dr. Thomas Gomart, *Director Ifri*  
Dr. Elie Tenenbaum, *Director of the Security Studies Center, Ifri*  
SPEAKERS : Admiral Nicolas Vaujour, *Chief of Staff of the French navy*  
Admiral Sir Ben Key, *First Sea Lord, Royal Navy*  
Admiral James W. Kilby, *Vice-Chief of Naval Operations, US Navy*  
Rear-Admiral Oliver Berdal, *Chief of the Norwegian Royal Navy*  
Rear-Admiral Søren Kjeldsen, *Admiral Danish Fleet*
- 12h00 - 12h30** Press conference
- 12h30 - 13h45** Lunch Break
- 13h45 - 14h00** Awarding of the Castex Prize
- 14h00 - 15h15** **SESSION 2**  
**Security in support of prosperity: safeguarding critical flows to enable long-term economic development.**  
CHAIR : Héloïse Fayet, *Research Fellow, Security Studies Center, Ifri*  
SPEAKERS : Simon Bergulf, *Group Representative for Europe, A.P. Møller – Maersk*  
Edouard Louis-Dreyfus, *President of Armateurs de France*  
Dr. Emily Holland, *Deputy Political Advisor for Critical Underseas Infrastructures, NATO Maritime Command*
- 15h15 - 15h45** Coffee Break
- 15h45 - 17h00** **SESSION 3**  
**The influence of the maritime economy on naval power: rethinking Mahan in the 21st century.**  
CHAIR : Maxence Brischoux, *Lecturer and research associate in international relations at the Centre Thucydide at Paris Panthéon Assas*  
SPEAKERS : Elisabeth Braw, *Senior Fellow au Scowcroft Center for Strategy & Security, Atlantic Council*  
Dr. Elizabeth Buchanan, *Senior Fellow, Australian Strategic Policy Institute*  
Dr. Nicolas Mazzucchi, *Head of Naval Strategy and Wargaming, Center for Strategic Studies of the French Navy*
- 17h00 - 17h30** Concluding remarks by Mrs. Agnès Pannier-Runacher, *Minister of Ecological Transition, Biodiversity, Forest, Sea and Fishing*

## OPENING REMARKS



**Dr. Thomas Gomart**

has been the Director of the French Institute of International Relations (Ifri) since 2015. He is a member of the Institute of Advanced Studies in National Defence's (IHEDN) scientific committee and serves on the editorial boards of the French journals *Politique étrangère*, *Revue des Deux Mondes*, and *Études*. Thomas Gomart was a member of the French Ministry of Armed Forces' strategic review committee for its *Strategic Review of Defence* and National Security 2017. He has published extensively on Russia, digital issues, think tanks, and geopolitical risks. Thomas Gomart's most recent book is *L'accélération de l'histoire – Les nœuds géostratégiques d'un monde hors de contrôle* (Tallandier, January 2024). He is also the author of *Les ambitions inavouées: Ce que préparent les grandes puissances* (Tallandier, 2023), *L'effolement du monde* (Tallandier, 2019), and *Guerres invisibles* (Tallandier, 2021). Dr. Gomart holds an EMBA from HEC Paris and a PhD from Pantheon-Sorbonne University.



**Rodolphe Saadé**

was born in Lebanon in 1970 and has extensive international experience. After graduating with a degree in business and marketing at Concordia University in Montreal, he founded a water dispenser company before joining, in 1994, the CMA CGM Group headed by his father, Jacques Saadé. From 1997 to 2000, he successfully managed various shipping lines before taking over the transatlantic and transpacific lines. In 2010, he was appointed Vice Chairman and became a member of the Board of Directors of CMA CGM. That same year, he supervised the financial restructuring of the Group. In 2015, Saadé led an all-cash voluntary conditional public tender offer for Neptune Orient Lines (NOL), a Singapore-based container shipping company, and was subsequently named President of NOL's Board of Directors in 2016. That year, he led the negotiations that resulted in the signature of OCEAN ALLIANCE, a strategic operating agreement with Cosco Shipping, Evergreen Line, and OOCL. In 2017, Rodolphe Saadé was appointed Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of CMA CGM.

# PLENARY SESSION 1

## Challenges and Perspectives on Securing Maritime Flows for Navies

**01. Dr. Élie Tenenbaum** is the Director of Ifri's Security Studies Center. A PhD graduate in History (2015) and a Sciences Po graduate (2010), he was a Visiting Fellow at Columbia University. He has taught international security at Sciences Po and the history of international relations at the University of Lorraine. Élie Tenenbaum works in particular on issues of irregular warfare, the fight against terrorism and hybrid threats as well as on French defense policy and military operations. He is the author of numerous articles and books on history and strategy, including his latest book, co-authored with Marc Hecker, *La guerre de vingt ans: djihadisme et contre-terrorisme au XXIe siècle* (The Twenty Years' War: Jihadism and Counterterrorism in the XXIst Century), published by Robert Laffont in 2021.

**02. Amiral Nicolas Vaujour** was appointed Chief of Staff of the French Navy in September 2023. During his career, he took command of the air defense frigate *Chevalier Paul* in July 2012. In early 2013, he was deployed to the Indian Ocean with the American Carrier Strike Group. Following this, in July 2015, he joined the Defense Staff as the officer responsible for operational coherence and capability development in combat operations. In August 2017, he was appointed Deputy Commander of the French Maritime Rapid Reaction Force (DCOM FRMARFOR). Promoted to Rear Admiral in April 2018, he assumed the role of Deputy Chief of Staff for Naval Air Operations at the Naval Staff. He was appointed Admiral in charge of International Relations for the French Navy in 2020 and Chief of Staff for Operations of the Armed Forces in 2021, overseeing operations conducted by French forces both domestically and abroad.

**03. Amiral Sir Ben Key KCB CBE** has served as First Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Staff since November 2021. He joined the Royal Navy in 1984 as a University Cadet. He qualified as both a helicopter aircrew and a Principal Warfare Officer. He has commanded four warships: the mine-hunter *HMS Sandown*, the frigates *HMS Iron Duke* and *HMS Lancaster*, and the aircraft carrier *HMS Illustrious*. His shore appointments have included roles in Resources and Plans at the Ministry of Defence, the UK's Permanent Joint Headquarters in Iraq, and as Principal Staff Officer to the Chief of Defence Staff. From April 2013 to July 2015, he served as Flag Officer Sea Training. Promoted to Vice-Admiral in February 2016, Admiral Key served as the Royal Navy's Fleet Commander until March 2019. He then served as the Chief of Joint Operations. In October 2021, he was selected to take office as First Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Staff.

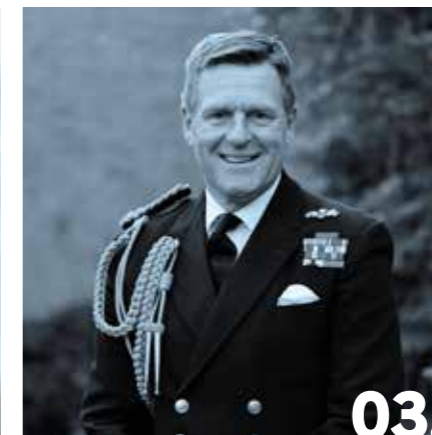
**04. Amiral James W. Kilby** has served as Vice Chief of Naval Operations since January 2024. He graduated from the United States Naval Academy in 1986. At sea, he held various roles, serving on the destroyer *USS Sampson* and the cruisers *USS Philippine Sea* and *USS San Jacinto*. He commanded both the destroyer *USS Russell* and the cruiser *USS Monterey*. Ashore, Admiral Kilby held diverse positions, including roles in the CNO's Surface Warfare Directorate, the Navy Personnel Command's Surface Warfare Division, and the Aegis BMD Program Office within the Missile Defense Agency. He commanded the Naval Surface and Mine Warfighting Development Center, Carrier Strike Group 1, and Task Force EIGHT ZERO. Additionally, he served as Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Warfighting Requirements and Capabilities and Deputy Commander of the U.S. Fleet Forces Command.

**05. Contre-amiral Oliver Berdal** has served as Chief of the Royal Norwegian Navy since October 2023. He joined the Royal Norwegian Naval Academy in 1993 and, after graduating, entered the Submarine Service, where he notably commanded *HNoMS Utsira* and *HNoMS Ula*. Meanwhile, he also pursued studies in psychology at the University of Bergen. Following his service in the Submarine Service, he took a two-year break to work in the private sector as a project manager for a new regional airport in Southern Norway and completed a Master's degree in project management. Rear Admiral Berdal rejoined the Navy as a teacher/commanding officer for the Norwegian Submarine Command Course. From 2011 to 2012, he attended the U.S. Naval War College. Subsequently, he held a staff position in the Norwegian Ministry of Defense, continuing his focus on submarines. In 2016, he was appointed Program Manager for new submarines and, in 2019, Commander of the Submarine Service. While serving in the Ministry of Defense, Berdal also led the development of Norway's Defense Industrial Strategy. In 2020, he was promoted to Commodore and became Chief of the Norwegian Coast Guard.

**06. Contre-amiral Søren Kjeldsen S.K.** has been appointed Admiral of the Danish Fleet in December 2024. He joined the Royal Danish Naval Academy in 1991. As a young officer, he served on various ships, primarily in the Arctic. He was staff officer at the Danish task Group from 2005-2006. Then, he held several staff positions ashore, notably in Planning, Strategy and Development, and Legal Affairs. He commanded inspection vessels *HDMS Vædderen* and *HDMS Thetis* from 2016-2019. Kjeldsen attended the Naval Command Course at the US Naval War College in 2019. After that, he led successively various entities in the Defense Command and the Naval Command, namely IT & CIS Management section, Planning and Governance section, Capacity Division, Department of Governance, then Implementation division.

CHAIR:

**Dr. Elie Tenenbaum**  
*Director of the Security Studies Center, Ifri*



**01. Héloïse Fayet** is a Research Fellow at Ifri's Security Studies Center and head of its Deterrence & Proliferation research program. Her work focuses on Nuclear Weapons States' doctrines, strategic risk reduction, and articulation between conventional and nuclear forces. She also writes on the geopolitics of the Middle East, the Mediterranean, and the Red Sea, as well as on new methods for strategic foresight. She is a member of the La Pérouse network of naval researchers and a regular speaker at conferences and training courses in France and abroad. Before joining Ifri, she worked for several years at the French Ministry of Armed Forces as a Middle East analyst. She is a graduate of Sciences Po Paris.

**02. Édouard Louis-Dreyfus** has been President of Armateurs de France since April 2023. He graduated from the University of Paris X-Nanterre with degrees in Law and English, as well as from the Rouen Business School (ESC). He began his career at Texaco in London as a trader in liquid gas and refined products. In 2002, he joined the Louis Dreyfus Group at its London desk, trading sugar and coffee, before entering the Group's shipping division in Paris in 2004. In 2006, he took charge of one of the Group's subsidiaries. After his family acquired Louis Dreyfus Armateurs in 2007, he became a member of the Executive Committee and Vice President of the Group in 2009. In 2010, he was appointed Chief Executive Officer in charge of commercial activities. He assumed the presidency of the Group in July 2015 and also chairs the Executive Board of Pacemar, the Group's family holding company. Édouard Louis-Dreyfus is a Board member of the UK P&I Club and the Shipowners Insurance & Guaranty Company (SIGCo). He has been a Young Leader of the France-Asia Foundation since 2020 and an auditor of the IHEDN.

**03. Simon C. Bergulf** joined A.P. Møller – Maersk as Director Regulatory Affairs in 2017. He is today Group Representative for Europe and in charge of Maersk's positioning and outreach on key regulatory topics including climate change, security and geopolitics. Simon is also a member of the World Shipping Council's Climate and Environment Council and a board member of the Danish Confederation of Industries Transport Section. Before joining Maersk, Simon headed the Danish Shipowners' Association's Brussels representation from 2009 to 2017. From 2001 to 2008, Simon worked as a public affairs consultant with Hill & Knowlton Brussels. Simon holds a BA from the Université Libre de Bruxelles and the Universidad de Granada in political science as well as an MA in public and political management from the Institut Supérieur de Management Publique et Politique Européen.

**04. Dr. Emily Holland** is the Deputy Political Advisor for Critical Undersea Infrastructure at NATO Maritime Command (Northwood, UK) and the Research Director and Assistant Professor at the Russia Maritime Studies Institute at the United States Naval War College. Previously, she was a postdoctoral fellow at the Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies at Harvard University and a visiting fellow at the Jordan Center for the Advanced Study of Russia at NYU, the European Council on Foreign Relations (Berlin), and the German Institute for Economic Research (Berlin). She is currently the International Security Fellow at the Hertie School. Dr. Holland holds a Ph.D., MA, and BA in Political Science from Columbia University. Her research focuses on the geopolitics of energy, Russian foreign policy, and European energy security. Her work has appeared in *Foreign Affairs*, *Foreign Policy*, *Newsweek*, *The Washington Post*, *War on the Rocks*, *Lawfare*, the *Journal of International Affairs*, and *The Christian Science Monitor*, among others. She has been featured on CNN, Government Matters, The Energy Show, Chain Reaction, and the WarCast.

## PLENARY SESSION 2

### Security in Support of Prosperity: Safeguarding Critical Flows to Enable Long-term Economic Development

CHAIR :

**Héloïse Fayet**

*Research Fellow at the  
Security Studies Center,  
Ifri*



**01. Maxence Brischoux** is a graduate of Ecole Nationale de l'Administration. He holds a degree in international relations from the University of St. Gallen (Switzerland). He is now a lecturer and research associate in international relations at the Centre Thucydide at Paris Panthéon Assas. He began his career at Direction Générale du Trésor, before becoming in 2017-2018 advisor on Trade Policy to Jean-Yves Le Drian, Minister of Europe and Foreign Affairs. He briefly joined the private sector at Naval Group, where he worked on European cooperation in connection with the European Defense Fund. He published « Le Commerce et la Force » in 2021 and « Géopolitique des Mers » in 2023. He is a member of the editorial board of the journal *Commentaire*.

**02. Elisabeth Braw**, is a senior fellow with the Atlantic Council's Transatlantic Security Initiative in the Scowcroft Center for Strategy and Security. She leads there the "Threats to the global maritime order" project. Her work focuses on defense against gray-zone and hybrid threats and the intersection of geopolitics and the globalized economy. Braw was previously a senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute and at the Royal United Services Institute. Prior to joining academia, she worked in the private sector following a career as a journalist. Braw is a member of the advisory boards of M&C Saatchi World Services, GALLOS Technologies, and Disruptive Industries. She is also an adviser to Willis Towers Watson's research arm, a member of the United Kingdom's National Preparedness Commission, and a member of the Krach Institute for Tech Diplomacy's advisory council. She published numerous books, including the award-winning *Goodbye, Globalization: The Return of a Divided World* (2024). She is the author of the upcoming book *The Undersea War*.

**03. Dr. Elizabeth Buchanan** is a senior fellow with the Australian Strategic Policy Institute and an expert associate at the French Ministry of Armed Forces' Institute for Strategic Research. She is the co-founder of the polar warfare program at the Modern War Institute of the West Point Military Academy. She is also the inaugural US-Australia Alliance Fellow at the Center for the National Interest (Washington, D.C.). Most recently, she was the Head of Research for the Royal Australian Navy (Department of Defence). Before joining Australia's Department of Defence, Dr. Buchanan was a Lecturer in Strategic Studies for the Defence and Strategic Studies Course at the Australian War College. Elizabeth holds a Ph.D. in Russian Arctic Strategy and completed her post-doctoral studies as a Maritime Fellow at the NATO Defense College in Rome. Dr. Buchanan has been a Visiting Scholar at The Brookings Institution and was previously an analyst with Royal Dutch Shell. She has published on geopolitics in a wide range of outlets, both Australian, American and British, and has published two books: *Russian Energy Strategy in Asia and Red Arctic: Russian Arctic Strategy under Putin*.

**04. Dr. Nicolas Mazzucchi** is the Head of Naval Strategy and Wargaming at the Center for Strategic Studies of the French Navy (CESM), where he is responsible for naval, energy, and cyber issues. He also supervises the development and implementation of wargaming for the French Navy. Dr. Mazzucchi holds a PhD in Economic Geography from Université Paris-1 Panthéon-Sorbonne. Before joining the CESM in 2022, he was a Research Fellow at the Foundation for Strategic Research in Paris. Earlier in his career, he held various positions at the French MoD, as a researcher and as an operations specialist at the Joint Staff. Nicolas Mazzucchi also attended the 25th session of the French War College and is currently a lecturer for the French military superior education (War College, CHEM). He is an advisor in strategy and foresight for the Deputy Chief of the French Navy and a scientific advisor for Futuribles International. His latest book, *La confrontation en mer, l'avenir de la stratégie navale*, was published in the fall 2024.

## PLENARY SESSION 3

### The influence of the maritime economy on naval power: rethinking Mahan in the 21st century

CHAIR :

**Maxence Brischoux**

*Lecturer and research associate in international relations at the Centre Thucydide at Paris Panthéon Assas*



# CONCLUDING REMARKS



**Agnès Pannier-Runacher** was appointed Minister of Ecological Transition, Biodiversity, Forest, Sea and Fishing on December 23, 2024.

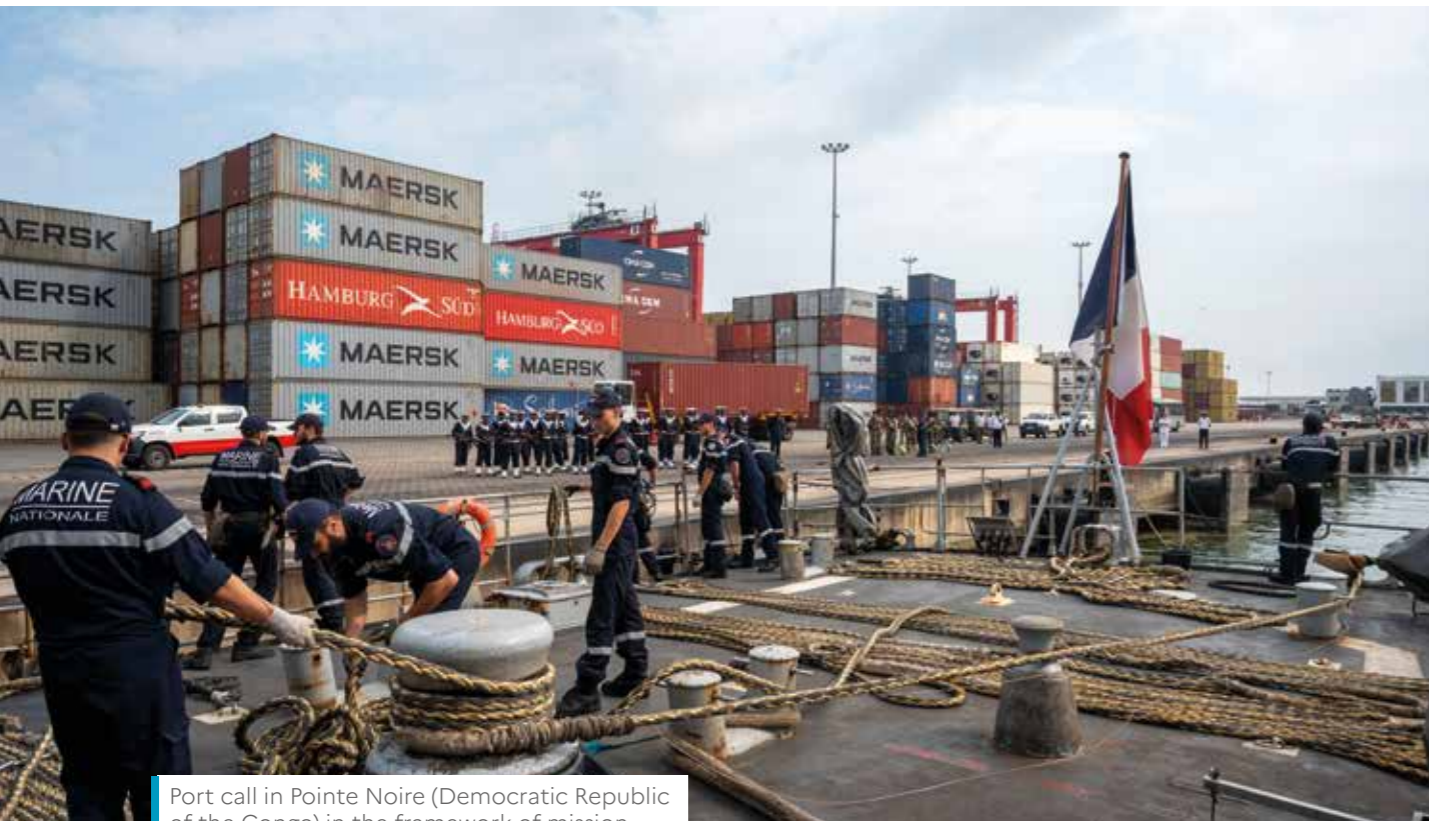
Previously, she served as Minister of Ecological Transition, Energy, the Climate and Risk Prevention (from September to December 2024); Minister Delegate to the Minister of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty (from February to September 2024); Minister for Energy Transition (from May 2022 to January 2024); Minister Delegate for Industry (from July 2020 to May 2022); Secretary of State for Economy and Finance (from 2018).

A graduate from the HEC Paris CEMS program and the *École nationale d'administration* (ENA), she joined the French Civil Service at the Inspectorate General of Finance. She also served as head of the office of the Greater Paris University Hospitals' (AP-HP) general director (2003-2006), before holding senior positions at the Caisse des dépôts et consignations and Strategic Investment Fund (now Bpifrance).

In 2011, she joined Faurecia Interior Systems before becoming deputy director at the Compagnie des Alpes from 2013 to 2018. She is also a Women's Forum 2007 "Rising Talent" and a Knight of the Ordre national du mérite. She received the 2020 Woman of Influence in Politics award and was named one of Forbes' 40 Women of 2020.

# Food for thought

—  
**NAVAL  
POWER IN  
SUPPORT OF  
MARITIME  
ECONOMY**  
—



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Port call in Pointe Noire (Democratic Republic of the Congo) in the framework of mission CORYMBE off the coasts of western Africa.

The concept of sea power has historically been based on the need to secure maritime flows, which, in a liberal conception of the economy, are essential to nations' wealth. For Alfred T. Mahan, the 19th-century American strategist, control of the seas through maritime trade and naval supremacy was the key to a great power's influence.

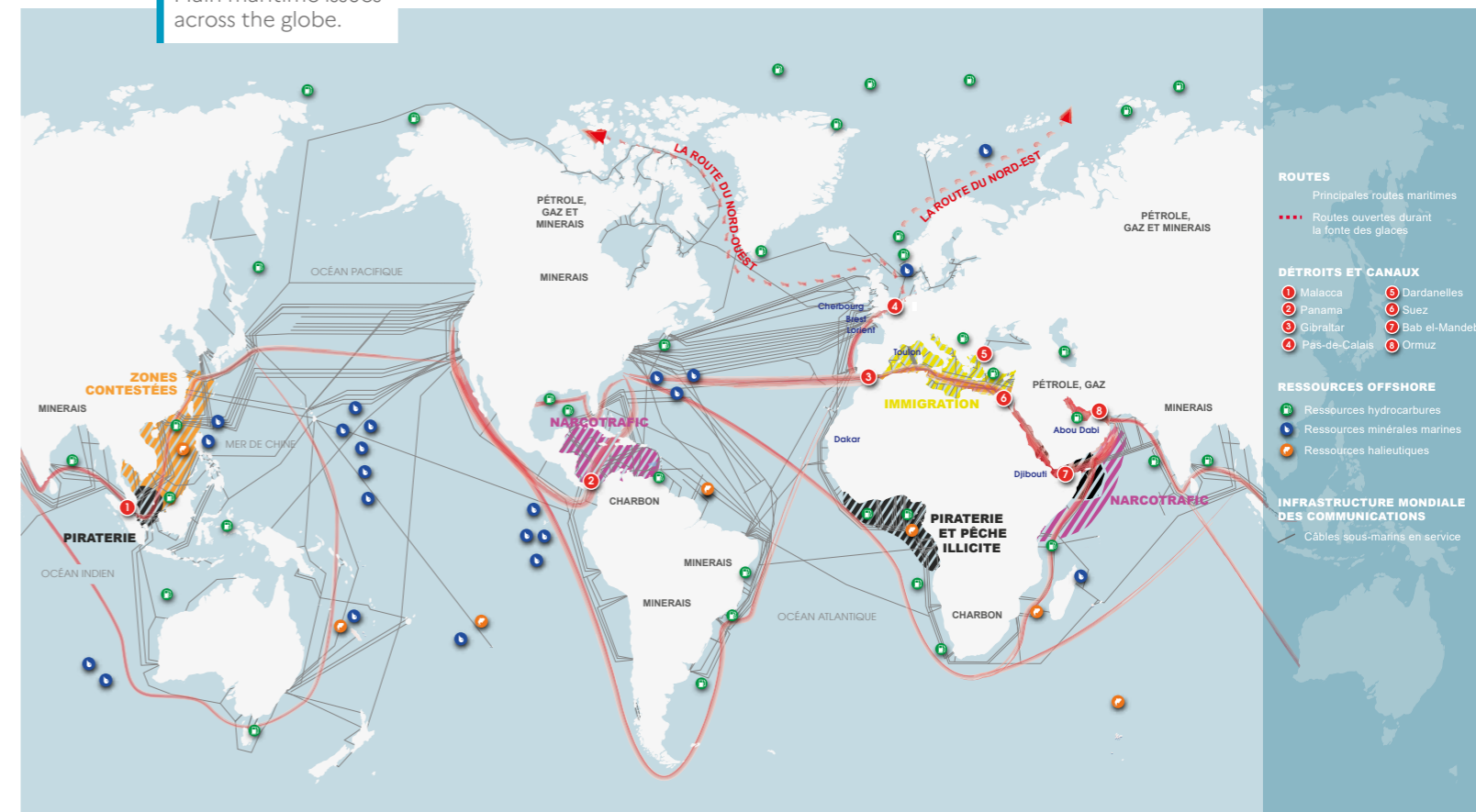
Targeting maritime trade meant attacking a competitor's economic prosperity and, thus, the foundation of its power. Widely practiced for centuries by those in a position of naval inferiority, privateering was outlawed by European nations in 1856 during the Treaty of Paris, which brought an end to the Crimean War.

Attacks on merchant vessels resurged during the World Wars of the twentieth century, particularly during the Battles of the Atlantic and Pacific, where each side sought to undermine the other's war effort by attacking the transport of equipment, reinforcements, and the supplies needed for its wartime economy.

Since then, the major naval forces have made a point of protecting civilian vessels in all types of confrontation at sea. This was all the more true after the globalization of the economy in the 1980s, when commercial maritime flows - the key to this globalization - came to be seen as a "global collective good."

The maritime economy took full advantage of this relative safety of navigation for decades. Today, maritime transport accounts for some 90% of the world's trade in goods. However, the gradual reduction in the size of Western navies since the end of the Cold War allowed for a modern form of piracy or armed robbery at sea to reemerge in the early 2000s in the Gulf of Guinea, the northern Indian Ocean, and in Southeast Asia due to difficult economic conditions for local populations. Moreover, merchant ships have occasionally been targeted and seized for political purposes during this period.

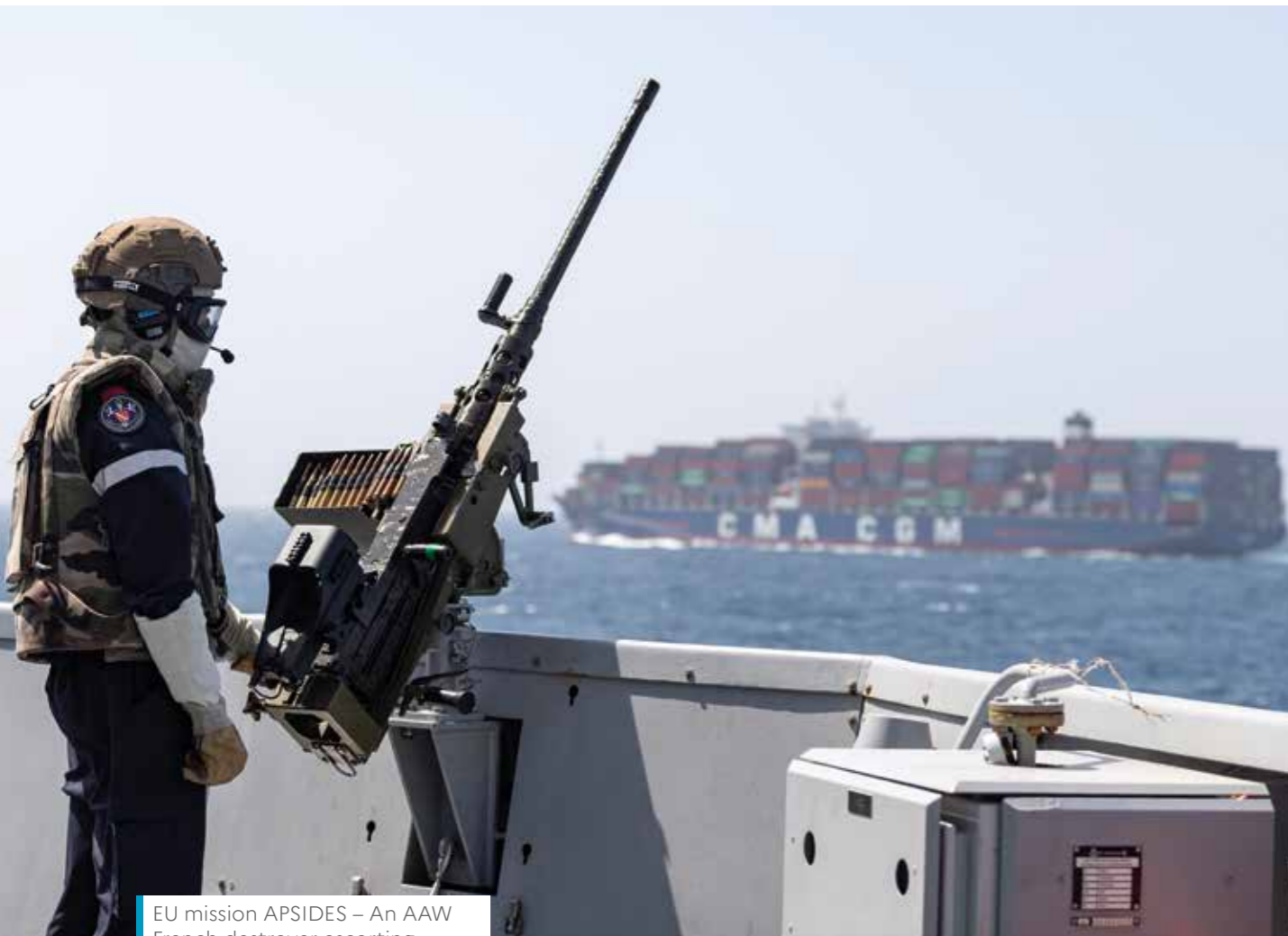
Main maritime issues across the globe.



CHIFFRES clés







EU mission APSIDES – An AAW French destroyer escorting merchant vessels in the Red Sea.

©M.BAILLY/MN



Polar patrol vessel L'Astrolabe operating in the southern polar region.

©MN/DEFENSE

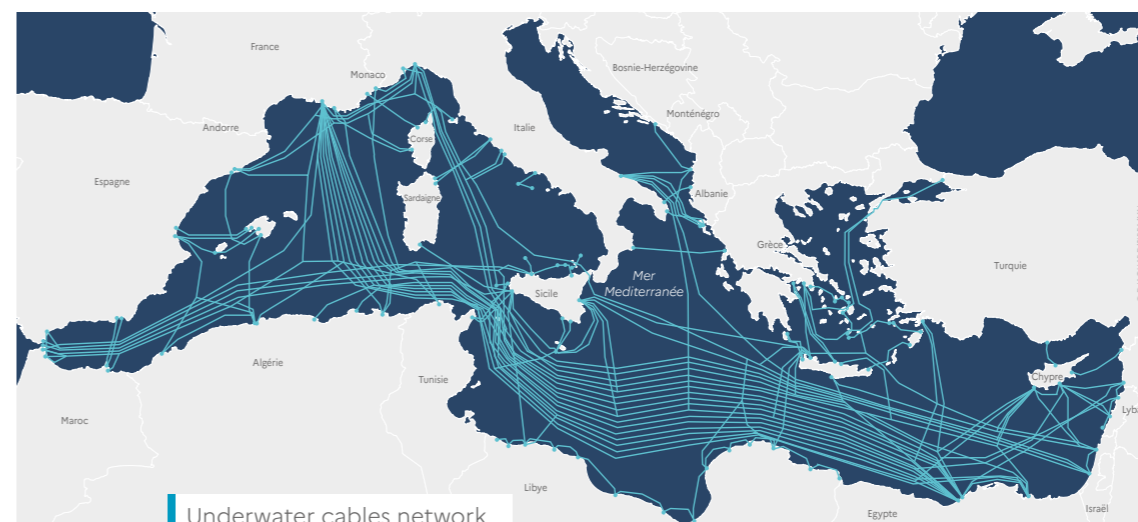
However, only since the early 2020s have we witnessed the full-scale targeting of commercial vessels as vectors of the maritime economy and, therefore, of a state's wealth. Ships seized by the Iranian Revolutionary Guards in the Strait of Hormuz or the Persian Gulf, Russian threats against ships serving Ukrainian ports as part of Russia's war in Ukraine, or the hundred or so attacks carried out since October 2023 by Yemeni Houthi forces against merchant vessels in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, are all proof of this growing phenomenon. These attacks have significantly disrupted the global maritime economy and forced the world's navies to provide ship escorts, notably through the European Operation Aspides.

Nevertheless, the maritime economy is not limited to shipping. It also includes fishing, extracting underwater resources, marine tourism, marine renewable energies, and marine and undersea infrastructures such as energy pipelines and communication cables, which carry 99% of intercontinental data exchanges.

In just a few years, various clandestine or hybrid actions have highlighted states' vulnerability to threats against these infrastructures, such as the sabotage of the Nord Stream gas pipelines in 2022, or the repeated damage to transoceanic internet cables. Here, too, the sea is becoming an increasingly key arena of confrontation.

The Arctic zone is a prime example of the intertwining of military and maritime issues. At a time when economic opportunities seem to be opening up due to the gradual melting of ice caused by global warming, Russia is claiming a large part of the Arctic as an extension of its continental shelf, asserting its ability to control maritime flows passing through the Northeast Passage as if they were in internal waters. Russia has been massively reinvesting in the Arctic militarily for several years now, under the guise of defending its national stronghold in the Barents Sea.

In response to these threats, some leading navies have developed surveillance and intervention capabilities, from space to the surface and deep underground, for both defensive and offensive purposes. Similarly, against a backdrop of resurgent conflict and threats to maritime flows and critical infrastructure, NATO nations have rediscovered the crucial importance of the Atlantic Ocean for the Alliance's security, formally recognizing it by creating the Joint Force Command Norfolk in 2019.



Underwater cables network in the Mediterranean Sea.

©D.JACQUES/SHANN



Oil platform seen from French LHD *Dixmude* patrolling in the Gulf of Guinea.

©C.LUU/MN

At the same time, protecting or monitoring civilian ships and marine infrastructure is highly resource-intensive for navies that rely on mobility and maneuverability in times of conflict.

Furthermore, the challenges related to the maritime economy show no signs of abating, especially when new activities are developing or are expected to develop, such as marine renewable energy, seabed mining, and the collection of marine bioresources. This increase in activity will further complicate naval forces' control of the aero-maritime environment, which is essential for operational efficiency and battlefield superiority in naval warfare.

These challenges of surveillance, protection and intervention challenges are problematic for navies that are already operating at their limits,

under significant human and material constraints. In a global context of rising conflict, balancing preparations for high-intensity conflicts with the renewed importance of maritime security missions, including more frequent humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) missions due to climate change, proves to be all the more difficult. However, the growing threat to the maritime economy, which is set to expand in new ways, will demand even more from naval forces.

Conversely, and in line with Mahan's principles, a powerful navy must be able to rely on a solid industrial base, first to support shipbuilding and the operational readiness of forces, on national territory or near deployment zones, but also to complement its capabilities for the projection or transport of



© ARMÉE DE TERRE

French LHD *Dixmude* navigating in the strait of Malacca during mission "Jeanne d'Arc".



© MN/DEFENSE

NATO naval units operating together during mine warfare exercise SPANISH MINEX.



© V. ORSINI/MN

French nuclear carrier vessel *Charles de Gaulle* leaving drydock in Toulon.

material by sea. While the maritime economy is now largely globalized, controlling value chains requires strengthening national assets or consolidating trusted partnerships in a context of heightened international competition.

Given their relative interdependence, the increasing disorder at sea seems to call for strengthened synergies between the naval and maritime worlds, but how so?

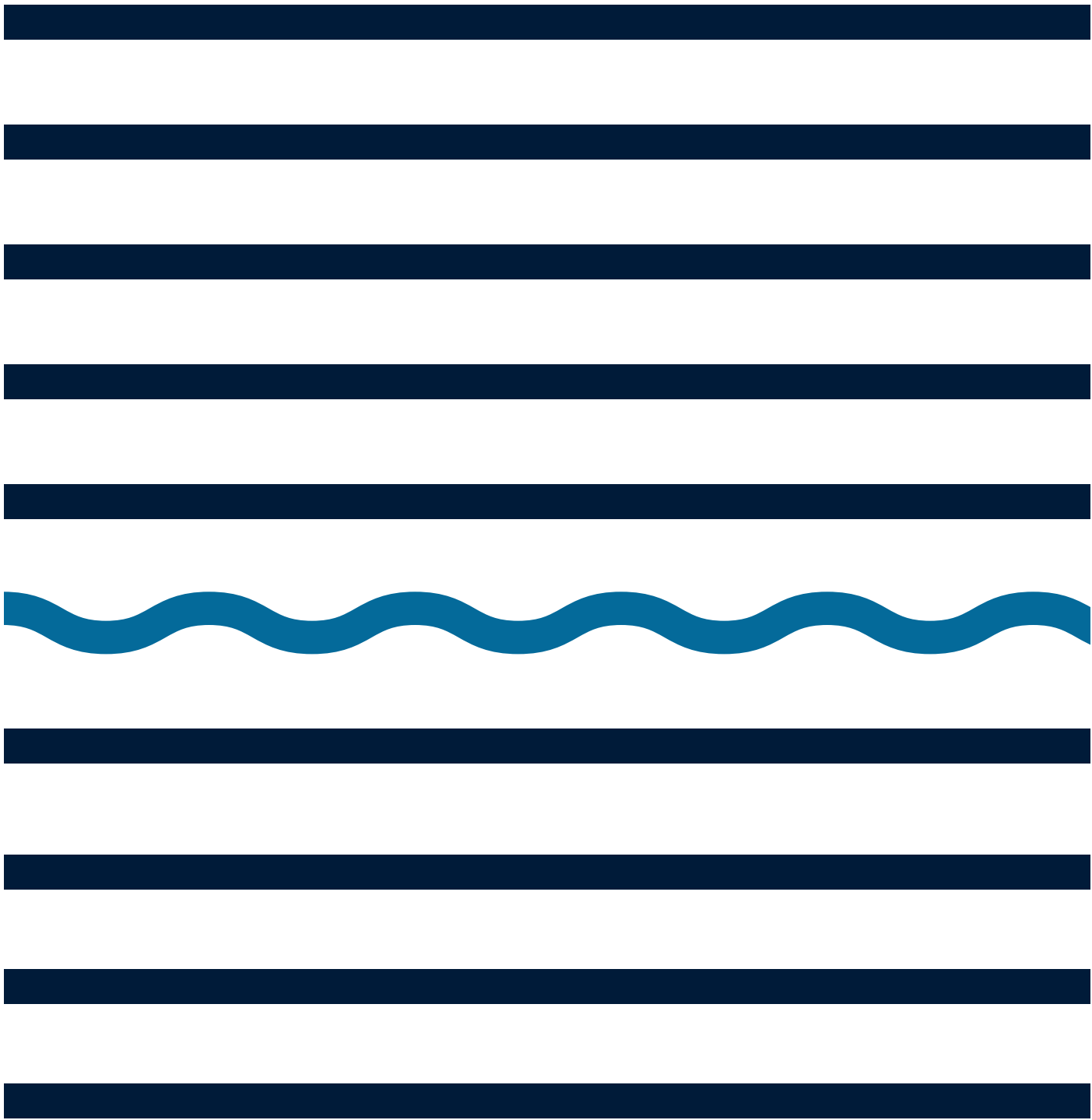
At the very least, maritime states must to explore the converging interests and cooperation between their maritime economies and naval forces. While smaller navies struggle to maintain a strong presence in the maritime domain, the world's top twenty merchant fleets boast a combined total of nearly 60,000 ocean-going vessels. This is a different scale compared to the 900 or so patrol or fighting ships of NATO navies.

Moreover, this raises questions about the nature of the relationship and shared vision that the maritime economy and naval forces must develop in areas such as policy, strategy, and connectivity, and about the possible limits of such convergence in the 21st century, between two worlds driven by different rationales. How do NATO maritime nations, as well as and Russian and Chinese competitors, see the necessary components of an integrated maritime strategy? There is also the question of the necessary format for naval forces to address this challenge in the coming decades, and what regulatory framework should be established for actors in the maritime economy to ensure their effective support for strategic resilience.

These are the major issues that the Paris Naval Conference aims to explore in 2025.

FOR MORE INFORMATION  
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