Conference Speakers Bio



Palais des Academies

Sam Ayoub – *Canada-Europe Economic Chamber - EU*



Sam Ayoub is the Founder and President of the Canada-Europe Economic Chamber, an organization dedicated to strengthening trade and business relations between Canada and the European Union. He works closely with Canadian and European companies to develop strategic market-entry and business development approaches, helping them unlock new opportunities, expand internationally and maximize the return on their cross-border investments.

Sam is also the owner of INFAX, a Canadian-based direct marketing company specializing in fax and email broadcasting services, serving clients across Canada and internationally.

A dual Canadian and French citizen, Sam brings extensive international business experience, having been actively involved in various international chambers of commerce in Quebec City, Montreal, Vancouver and Paris before establishing the Canada-Europe Economic Chamber, with operations in Canada and Europe.

Paperless Event

Nicholas Brousseau – *Government of Canada*



Dr. Nicholas Brousseau has been serving as Canada's Deputy Head of Mission to the European Union and Permanent Observer of Canada to the Council of Europe since August 2021. From July 2024 to October 2026, he also served as Ambassador of Canada to the Kingdom of Belgium and Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg.

A career diplomat with Global Affairs Canada since 2004, Dr. Brousseau has held a range of senior assignments in Canada and abroad. Prior to his current posting, he served as Ambassador of Canada to Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan. His diplomatic career has also included postings at the Permanent Mission of Canada to the United Nations, the Embassy of Canada to Russia and the Embassy of Canada to Romania, where he headed the Political Section and was concurrently accredited to Bulgaria and Moldova.

At headquarters, Dr. Brousseau has served in the European Union Division and the Eastern Europe and Balkans Division. He also held leadership positions in the areas of nuclear disarmament, arms control and disarmament policy, including as Deputy Director of the Nuclear Disarmament, Arms Control and Disarmament Policy Division. He further served as Senior Departmental Adviser to Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Dr. Brousseau holds a Bachelor of Arts in History from Université Laval, a Master of Arts and a Doctorate in History from Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, and a Diploma of Archivist-Palaeographer from the École nationale des chartes in Paris.

He is fluent in French and English and speaks Russian and German.

Paperless Event

Jonathan Blanshay – *Galvion*



Jonathan is the founder and Executive Chairman of Galvion (formerly Revision Military), a global defence company that designs, develops and delivers advanced head systems and power & data solutions for the global military market. He held the position of CEO for 22 years, having recently transitioned to the role of Executive Chairman in order to focus more strategically on high level vision, financing, M&A and partnering activities.

As Founder and CEO, Jonathan built the company from a start-up to the global market share leader in protective eyewear within 7 years and then led the expansion into complementary markets over the company's 22-year history. During his tenure, Jonathan was responsible for all elements of strategy, financing, operations, and business development. Galvion is currently one of the world's leading providers of military and tactical head systems, with 5 facilities and close to 500 employees, and has generated well over U$1B in total sales since inception.

He holds a B.A. in economics from University of Western Ontario and the Chartered Financial Analyst designation, and has a strong background in finance and sales, having run small to mid-cap merchant banking funds in both Canada and the United Kingdom. Prior to founding Revision/Galvion, Jonathan held management positions with Royal Bank of Canada, First Marathon Securities and Odin Capital Management.

Jonathan is a passionate entrepreneur and has been an angel investor in over 20 startups, often joining the Board or Advisory Councils of the companies he invests in. His particular expertise, passion and focus is in companies related to the Defence sector.

Denis Caron – *Port of Belledune*



Denis has been the President and CEO of the Belledune Port Authority in New Brunswick since 2016. Under his leadership, the Port has expanded its strategic vision, fostering innovation, sustainability, and economic growth in the region.

Prior to joining the Port, Denis spent over 30 years in the public sector with the Government of New Brunswick, where he held several senior management positions, primarily within the province's economic departments. Throughout his career, he was recognized for his strong leadership, strategic vision, and ability to drive innovative solutions to complex challenges. In the years leading up to his retirement from public service, Denis served as Deputy Minister with Business New Brunswick, Deputy Minister of Environment and Local Government, and President of the Regional Development Corporation, where he played a key role in advancing economic development and environmental initiatives.

Beyond his leadership at the Port, Denis actively contributes to economic and business development initiatives. He sits on various boards, including the Atlantic Provinces Economic Council, and serves as Chairman of the New Brunswick Business Council, representing leading CEOs in the province. His collaborative approach and forward-thinking strategies continue to shape economic growth and business development in New Brunswick and beyond.

Ana Coelho – *ACCIO*



A graduate in Business Management from a Parisian business school, Ana Coelho began her professional career in Africa, working for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). In 1993, she joined the European Commission, where she held various project management positions in the fields of economic development and preparations for EU enlargement.

In 2003, she became Director of the Brussels Office of the Government of Catalonia's Agency for Business Competitiveness (ACCIÓ – Catalonia Trade & Investment).

In recent months, she has been actively involved in her organisation's defence industry task force. Nearly 400 Catalan companies are currently active in this sector.

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Fabrice Comptour – *NATO*

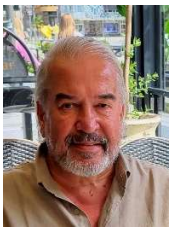


Fabrice Comptour joined NATO in September 2026 as Director Industry within the Defence Industry, Innovation and Armaments Division (D2IA).

Previously, he worked in the European Commission in the cabinet/private office of four successive European Commissioners, as well as in DG CNECT. In these positions, he led the work on the defence industry (EDF, ASAP, EDIP), space programmes management (Galileo, Copernicus, Iris^2), semiconductor, critical raw material, cyber, hybrid, drones, undersea cables, quantum and AI, standardization, as well as covid vaccine industrial ramp-up.

Fabrice Comptour graduated from Supelec engineering school in France and holds a Master of Science in Economics of Innovation from Chalmers University in Sweden as well as a Master in European economic integration from the College of Europe in Belgium.

Wim Dillen – *Port of Antwerp Bruges*



After learning the ropes of maritime forwarding at several renowned Antwerp Forwarding companies, Wim Dillen worked for close to 28 years in the non-ferrous metals industry, where he held several managerial functions, negotiated successfully important supply chain-contracts and headed international teams up to 50 people.

Wim Dillen saw a new challenge at the Antwerp Port Authority where he started in 2010 as Sr Business Development Manager, ensuring further growth & success of Port of Antwerp, by attracting new and safeguarding existing business (trade & investments). In 2015 he was put in charge of defining, developing and implementing Antwerp's commercial vision and strategy, heading a team of 10 Business Development managers. Since 2018, he represents the Port in the world during economic missions, roadshows, events, … He currently coordinates a team of 25 international Port representatives, Key-account-managers and coordinators, and manages important international challenges & opportunities for the Port of Antwerp-Bruges. Proficient in understanding and navigating cultural differences, he fosters effective relationships with international partners. His memberships include the Antwerp Chartering Club, Antwerp Propeller Club, Brabo Club, Breakbulk Club, Mars & Mercurius, and the Advisory Board of for the Leuven Centre for Irish Studies.

He holds amongst others a Master Degree in Logistic Management.

He is married to Kristel and father of 3 grown children.

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Stéphane Dion – *Université de Montréal*



Stéphane Dion is a former Canadian diplomat and politician. He served as Canada's Ambassador to Germany from 2017 to 2022, and subsequently as Ambassador to France and Monaco from 2022 to 2025, while also holding the position of the Prime Minister of Canada's Special Envoy to the European Union and Europe from 2017 to 2025.

From 2006 to 2008, he served as Leader of the Opposition and Leader of the Liberal Party of Canada. He also held several ministerial positions, including Minister of Foreign Affairs (2015–2017), Minister of the Environment (2004–2006), and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs (1996–2003). He represented the riding of Saint-Laurent–Cartierville (later renamed Saint-Laurent) in the House of Commons from 1996 to 2017.

Having returned to the Université de Montréal, where he previously served as a professor of political science, Stéphane Dion is now Diplomat in Residence, sharing his extensive experience and insights with students.

Jihane El Atifi – *Innovation & Foreign Direct Investment Consultant*



Jihane El Atifi is a Paris-based global affairs executive and C-suite advisor with two decades of leadership in innovation strategy, international market development and the advancement of startup ecosystems across Europe, North America, the Middle East and the Gulf. She advises governments on the development of competitive innovation ecosystems capable of attracting talent, capital and global enterprises. She further advises organisations on translating innovation agendas into investment, market growth and policy outcomes, with expertise in AI governance, entrepreneurship and foreign direct investment. As Founder and President of Global Innovation Catalyst since 2011, she has led high-level negotiations with ministers and chief science officers on international cooperation in artificial intelligence, research and defence. Her advisory work has informed national innovation policy in more than a dozen countries. She has established world-class accelerators and incubators ranked among the top five globally, with portfolios spanning 36 countries and more than €4 billion in capital mobilised. A senior lecturer in executive education, she is a frequent speaker at leading universities and premier international forums. She is fluent in French, English, Arabic and Spanish.

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Rick Froh – *Assig*



Richard (Rick) Froh's career in 3 acts.

ACT 1: Rick served as a combat engineer officer in the Canadian Armed Forces from 1968 until 1996, across Canada and in Europe and USA. Key assignments included G4 of the Special Service Force in Canada, Commanding Officer 4 Combat Engineer Regiment in Germany and Military Assistant to 3 Chairs of the NATO Military Committee in Belgium. Rick is a graduate, with honours, from the US Army Command and General Staff College, being recognized as a Master Tactician.

ACT 2: As a member of the International Staff at NATO Headquarters in Brussels from 1996 to 2015, Rick was Head of the Land and Joint Armaments Sections, then Deputy Assistant Secretary General (DASG) for Armaments, and finally, DASG for Operations, travelling extensively in Allied and Partner nations, including Ukraine and Georgia, as well as in the Middle East, Africa, Kosovo and Afghanistan. In 2017, he was called back to be NATO's Senior Civilian in Iraq for 3 months.

ACT 3: In retirement, Rick remains engaged. He has been appointed as an Honorary Professor in the School of Law and Politics at Cardiff University; acts as the Strategic Advisor to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of a Canadian/American regulatory technology company (Terida); serves as the Executive Director of the Dr Manfred Wörner Circle at NATO; and in 2023 moved from CEO to President of Allied Support Services International Group (ASSIG), a Canadian consulting company in the defence and security sector.

Daniel Gueorguiev – *Domyn*



Daniel Gueorguiev is the Head of Global Institutional Affairs at Domyn.

He previously worked at Ericsson, Vodafone and GSMA where he led engagements in Europe and globally on key connectivity, digital, infrastructure, and AI topics.

Daniel holds an Advanced Master's in EU Diplomacy from the College of Europe and a dual degree in International Relations and Psychology from McGill University.

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George Karkampasis – *European Aluminium*



George has an academic background in economics and holds a Master's degree in EU Studies from KU Leuven. He joined European Aluminium in 2020, having previously worked in the chemical and agricultural sectors. Since then, he has been working on EU policies related to the Circular Economy and Raw Materials.

Joost Korte – *European Commission*



Joost Korte was appointed to the position of Special Envoy for the EU- Canada Partnership in December 2025.

A lawyer by training, he joined the European Commission in 1991, following eight years of academic work on European law at the Universities of Utrecht and Edinburgh.

He retired from the European Commission on 1 January 2024 as Director- General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, a post that he occupied since March 2018.

Previously, the Dutch national served as Deputy Director-General in the European Commission's Trade Department, in the Agriculture and Rural Development Department as well as in the Enlargement Department. Furthermore, Mr. Korte spent several years in the Commission's Secretariat General as Director responsible for the relations with the Council of Ministers and gained extensive experience in the Private offices of Commissioners Sir Leon Brittan, Chris Patten and Danuta Hübner.

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Luca Membretti – *Avens - Rome*



Luca Membretti is an international business lawyer with over 20 years of experience in corporate and commercial law, cross-border M&A, international contracts and dispute resolution.

Admitted to both the Milan and Lyon Bars, he is bilingual in Italian and French, as well as fluent in English, and has a particular focus on cross-border transactions involving French-speaking companies and investors.

As Founding Partner and President of AVENS Milano, he advises Italian and international businesses on their investments, commercial operations and development across European markets.

He also takes a keen interest in the impact of artificial intelligence on the legal profession, particularly in relation to innovation, efficiency and the evolving role of legal advisers.

Jacques d'Oultremont – *Avens - Brussels*



Jacquelin d'Oultremont is a Belgian business lawyer and Founding Partner of Avens, with more than 20 years of experience advising companies and institutions on national and international legal matters. He assists clients with cross-border transactions, international contracts, dispute resolution and arbitration, and regularly supports businesses seeking to establish or expand their activities in the European Union, Canada and Africa.

Through his international practice and network, Jacquelin is particularly engaged in economic diplomacy, cross-border investment and the development of partnerships between businesses and public institutions.

Since 2024, he has also served as a Legal Advisor within the Belgian Armed Forces, further strengthening his involvement in international, strategic and defense-related legal matters.

Jacquelin holds a law degree, magna cum laude, from UCLouvain (Belgium) and is a member of the Brussels Bar.

Roch Pelletier – *Calian*



Roch Pelletier assumed his current position as Regional Vice-President (RVP), Calian Defence Europe/UK, following his retirement from the Canadian Armed Forces in January 2025, after 36 years of distinguished service.

He joined Calian bringing extensive experience in senior leadership, executive management, and the planning and conduct of multinational military operations, as well as individual training, collective training, and professional and military education.

Prior to joining Calian, he held several senior leadership positions in demanding operational environments, including:

- Commander of the Canadian Army Doctrine and Training Centre (CADTC)
- Director General of Intelligence, Operations and Plans at Canadian Joint Operations Command (CJOC)
- Commander of the 5th Canadian Division and Deputy Commander of Joint Task Force Atlantic (JTFA)
- Deputy Commanding General (Operations) of the U.S. Army in Alaska

Throughout his career, he successfully led multidisciplinary teams in both domestic and international operations. He also developed extensive expertise in designing and delivering highly effective military training programs, leveraging advanced technologies and simulation to enhance operational readiness and performance.

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Amaury Pirlet – *Avens - Brussels*



Amaury Pirlet is a Partner at Avens Brussels, an international law firm with independent offices in Brussels, Paris, Milan and Montreal. Based in Brussels, he leads the firm's Employment Law practice.

Advising a largely international client base, he has developed a thorough understanding of the challenges business of all sizes and across sectors face when operating in Belgium and throughout Europe. He also has substantial expertise in European Union law, with experience in matters involving EU courts and institutions.

Amaury also serves as a judge at the Hainaut Labour Tribunal and is the author of several publications on Belgian employmentlaw.

He brings particular insight into geopolitics and international trade, especially the mining sector. He has built an extensive network of relationships in West Africa, notably in Guinea.

Paolo Quattrochi – *Centro Studi Italia-Canada*



Paolo Quattrocchi focuses on corporate and commercial law and assists Italian and foreign groups in international transactions. As a member of ADVANT Nctm's International Desk, he works closely with international public institutions and has particular experience in fostering cross-border relations with Canada.

He holds several institutional positions, including: Founder and Director of the Centro Studi Italia-Canada, Member of the Scientific Committee of The Arctic Intelligence Observatory, Canada's Global Executive, EU Trade Champion, Vice President of the Italian Chamber of Commerce in Canada West, Responsable for Canada of the National Observatory for the Protection of the Sea.

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Siddhartha Rao – *SAP SE*



Siddhartha Rao is the Global Head of Product Security at SAP, and drives transformative changes including Securing Artificial Intelligence and adoption of Secure Post Quantum Cryptography across the enterprise. He is accountable for security policies, processes, standards, governance and tools that assure Secure Development & Secure Operations in a Secure Environment at SAP. He defines company-wide security KPIs for all engineering lines of businesses at SAP to adhere to and drives governance to strict targets at the highest levels in SAP.

His previous accomplishments include authoring bestselling books such as Teach Yourself C++. He has been an avid contributor to Open Source & leads an organization comprising brilliant security leaders that help SAP secure autonomous enterprises.

Nicholas Monette – *ROZVELT*



Nicholas Monette is the Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Rozvelt, a Canadian defence technology company developing a next-generation modular respiratory platform. Designed as a complement to existing full CBRN respirators, Rozvelt's lightweight, rapidly deployable, and mission-adaptable platform enhances protection, mobility, and operational performance for military personnel and first responders, including in Arctic and extreme environments.

Under his leadership, Rozvelt has quickly emerged as one of Canada's most promising dual-use technology companies. The company was a finalist for Startupfest's Dual-Use Prize and has been selected to present its technology to NATO stakeholders in Luxembourg, while advancing collaborations with leading international defence and security organizations.

Nicholas is driven by a vision to develop Canadian-made technologies that strengthen allied operational capabilities and contribute to the future of defence and security.

Claudia Massa – *Avens-Paris*



Claudia Massa is a French lawyer and Partner at Avens Paris, with nearly 30 years of experience in public procurement, French and European competition law, and regulatory compliance.

She advises French and international companies and public-sector entities on complex procurement procedures, contract negotiations, competition law and regulatory matters. Her expertise includes State aid, abuse of dominant position, and litigation before French and European courts. She also assists international businesses seeking access to the French public procurement market.

In 2025, Claudia was appointed to the Supervisory Board of the French Football Federation (FFF), contributing to the oversight of its governance, legal and financial affairs.

She holds a postgraduate degree in International Business Law from Paris V University and studied at the University of Kent in the United Kingdom. She speaks French, English and Italian.

Olha Paschenko – *EUReflect*



Olha Pashchenko is an economist, journalist, and Director of Eastern European and Transatlantic Partnerships at EuroReflect, an international media and research institute focused on diplomacy, economics, and international cooperation.

Her work centres on strengthening international partnerships and fostering dialogue among European and transatlantic stakeholders, including diplomatic, political, and business communities. Through her work at EUReflect, she contributes to advancing discussions on economic development, diplomacy, investment, and cross-border cooperation, bringing together perspectives from policymakers, diplomats, and business leaders.

Daniel Roussin – *Avens-Montreal*



For more than 40 years, Daniel has provided essential legal services to SMEs, structuring the legal aspects of their expansion in Quebec, across Canada and internationally. His approach focuses on sustaining their growth while helping them avoid the pitfalls of entering new markets.

Daniel has developed expertise in establishing businesses abroad and handling multi-jurisdictional business transactions, including joint ventures. He has extensive experience in international transactions involving clients acquiring businesses from foreign companies, being acquired themselves or partnering to carry out contracts and projects. He has represented major companies in civil litigation and in domestic and international commercial arbitration in Montreal, Dubai and Geneva.

Daniel was also the founding president of Concerto, an international association of law firms with 18 members across Europe, North and South America, and the Middle East. He is also president of the Avens Alliance, which brings together legal offices in Paris, Brussels, Milan and Montreal.

Denis Servais – *Belgian Defence*



Born in 1976 in Charleroi, Col (GS) Denis SERVAIS, MSc Eng., joined the Belgian MoD in 1994 as a candidate officer of the 149th Polytechnic Promotion of the Royal Military Academy. He also holds a master's degree in management from the Vrij Universtiteit Brussel.

Following his training as an Armour Officer, Denis served in a number of reconnaissance units as platoon leader, squadron commander and staff officer. He also had the opportunity to be deployed in operations in Kosovo with his platoon and later with his squadron.

During his career, Denis has held technical positions in the Belgian Defence General Staff as a system manager for land combat systems and a project officer for driving simulators. In 2016, following his graduation from the Joint Command and Staff Programme of the Canadian Forces College in Toronto (Canada), he joined the newly formed programme office CaMo (Motorised Capacity) that negotiated the strategic partnership with France on motorised capability. Starting in 2019, Denis was the coordination officer for the Land systems section that manages all the land systems of the Belgian armed forces.

In 2021, he became responsible for the Land capability development ensuring the coherence of the future evolution of the Belgian special operations and motorised forces.

In 2023, he was appointed as Deputy National Armaments Director and represents Belgium in international organizations such as European Commission and Council, NATO and OCCAR.

Jonathan Yendall – *Delegation of Canada to NATO*



Jonathan Yendall is currently the Deputy Permanent Representative of the Joint Delegation of Canada to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) a position he has held since August 2025.

Prior to this, he was the Executive Director of the Intelligence Policy and Programs Division at Global Affairs Canada.

Jonathan has also served as the Director of the Strategic Consular Operations Division, which is the primary point of contact within the Consular Operations Bureau for the management of complex consular cases, and Chief of Staff of the Summit Management Office during Canada's Presidency of the G7 in 2018.

He has been posted abroad on two occasions to Southeast Asia, including most recently as the Political & Public Affairs Counselor from 2011-2014 at Canada's Embassy to Indonesia and Timor Leste.

Jonathan has an M.A. in International Affairs from the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs, at Carleton University. He joined the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade in 2003.

He is married and has two daughters.

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