



A Euro-ISME award in partnership
with C&V Defence

Euro-ISME and C&V Defence launch the Benoît Royal Award for Ethics in Defence

Brussels, 16 September 2025

Euro-ISME and C&V Defence are pleased to announce the launch of the Benoît Royal Award, established to recognise outstanding contributions to the field of defence and military ethics. Sponsored by C&V Defence, the award reflects a shared commitment to advancing ethical standards across the European defence community and honouring those who demonstrate exemplary leadership in this critical domain.



Air Commodore (retd.) John Thomas, President of Euro-ISME and Col. (retd.) Jean-Marc Vesco, Chief Executive Officer at C&V Defence in Madrid signing the Memorandum of Understanding creating the Benoît Royal Award for Ethics in Defence.

The Benoît Royal Award for Ethics in Defence will emphasise the vital role of ethics across all areas of defence, from military operations to the defence industry. It will recognise inspiring initiatives and the work of dedicated individuals. It will also help to raise European public awareness, promote ethical standards and a culture of integrity within the international defence community.

Named in honour of French Brigadier General (retired) Benoît Royal, Euro-ISME's first president and a pioneering voice in ethical military practice, the award will celebrate those whose contributions uphold the highest principles of ethical responsibility in defence. General Royal, author of *L'éthique du soldat français* (Economica, 2014), played a key role in advancing research, education, and training on military ethics within the European defence community.

"Euro-ISME is acutely aware that the world of defence and security is undergoing profound and rapid change. At the political level, governments are having react to seismic changes to the established world order; changes which have resulted in armed conflict in Europe and elsewhere. Technology is revolutionising the way wars will be fought. The use of Artificial Intelligence will further accelerate these changes, most controversially in the potential deployment of lethal autonomous weapons. All these changes raise urgent and important ethical questions for everyone involved in defence and for wider society. This award seeks to recognise the achievements of those who are making a telling contribution to both raising and answering those questions", stated John Thomas, President of Euro-ISME.

In addition to recognising significant achievements, the Euro-ISME Benoît Royal Award will serve as a platform for fostering dialogue around shared European values and strengthening global collaboration in the pursuit of ethical excellence in defence.

"At C&V Defence, we firmly believe that military ethics must reflect Europe's unique values: the supremacy of our national and international commitments to respect treaties and laws regulating warfare, including in times of conflict. And for us, this must cover both the way we design our defence systems, the way we use them and the way we supply them", stated Jean-Marc Vesco, Chief Executive Officer at C&V Defence. *"The Benoît Royal Prize is not simply a recognition, but a reaffirmation of Europe's distinctive commitment to principled defence. In an ever-changing security landscape, this award honours those who ensure that ethical standards are not a constraint, but a strength".*

The award was launched at the 2025 Euro-ISME Annual Conference, which took place at the Army War and Leadership College in Madrid on 21-23 May 2025.

Nominations will be invited to recognise European individuals or organisations who have shown exceptional courage, taken bold steps to promote military ethics, or made a lasting impact in ethical defence practices.

Nominations will be open until November 15th, 2025. Details will be available on the Euro-ISME [website](#) and on the C&V Defence [website](#). Following assessment by a jury composed of the Euro-ISME Board and C&V Defence senior leadership, the nominee will be awarded in Brussels early in 2026.



About Euro-ISME

The European Chapter of the International Society for Military Ethics (Euro-ISME) is an organisation that brings together academics, military practitioners, and educators committed to promoting ethics in military practice.

Founded in 2011, Euro-ISME provides a platform for dialogue and analysis on professional responsibility, the law of armed conflict, and the human rights dimensions of defence. It supports ethics education across European armed forces, promotes harmonised ethical standards, and contributes to a global network of military ethics societies. Every year since 2015, Euro-ISME has awarded a prize for the best European student's thesis (Masters of Arts) on military ethics.

Learn more: <https://www.euroisme.eu/en/>



About C&V Defence

C&V Defence, a Belgian SME established in 2020, supports European companies in developing sustainable and ethical strategies in the EU and NATO defence markets. With a firm belief in the importance of ethics and responsibility in defence innovation, C&V Defence integrates these values into every aspect of its work, notably through its involvement in the European Defence Fund. Through enhancing strategic capabilities and promoting responsible innovation, C&V Defence aims to contribute to the development of a more resilient and principled European defence landscape.

Within C&V Defence, the teams are committed to supporting and working with those who ensure that a weapon system can be used for fair reasons, because it is and can be used legally and ethically and not just for the legitimacy for which it is used.

Learn more: <https://cnv-defence.eu/en/>

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