STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

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THE BASES OF FRENCH PEACE OPERATIONS DOCTRINE: PROBLEMATICAL SCOPE OF FRANCE'S MILITARY ENGAGEMENTS WITHIN THE UN OR NATO FRAMEWORK

BY

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ABSTRACT

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France believes that external threats to its vital and important interests spring more from potential instability on the periphery of Europe than from rival European powers. France has modified its military doctrine to reflect this strategic calculus, and France's conception of peace operations reflects this doctrinal change.

France's revision of its peacekeeping doctrine has led or lagged its NATO partners' evolution in thinking, but doctrinal convergence is evident. A meeting of minds has come about because developments that jeopardize France's security are likely to affect that of its key allies as well. France has taken steps to defend its interests within a UN or NATO framework, through the application of force if necessary.

NATO political leaders now have cause collectively to play a greater role in North Atlantic Treaty deliberations than they had during the Cold War. Defending Western interests in the face of amorphous threats calls for unity of effort and clarity of purpose. If France's comparative advantage lies in the use of force for peacekeeping and associated operations, the Alliance may want to institutionalize this fact via an appropriate mechanism.

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THE BASES OF FRENCH PEACE OPERATIONS DOCTRINE: PROBLEMATICAL SCOPE OF FRANCE'S MILITARY ENGAGEMENTS WITHIN THE UN OR NATO FRAMEWORK

France's security and defense policy aims to protect the fundamental interests of the nation. The French government categorizes these as vital, strategic, and force or power interests (intérêts vitaux, stratégiques, et de puissance).

- France's vital interests encompass its territorial integrity and that of its air and maritime approaches, free exercise of France's sovereignty, and protection of its nationals.
- France's strategic interest lies in the maintenance of peace in Europe and its periphery, in particular the Mediterranean, as well as in areas essential to France's economic well-being.
- France's "power" interest stems from its responsibilities as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, armed with nuclear might.[1]

Developments whose first-order effects might jeopardize France's survival as a sovereign state are of vital interest. France considers respect of its treaty obligations a "strategic" or "power" interest. Before using force to protect other important but not vital interests, France often seeks UN sanction. For France, the United Nations remains the arbiter of what constitutes legitimate foreign intervention in areas of the globe where the vital interests of its member states are not at stake.

France has a realistic view of what constitutes its vital interests and challenges to its national security. It defines its interests in terms of regional stability since its security is linked inextricably to that of its regional partners.[2] France believes that external threats to its interests spring more from potential instability on the periphery of Europe than from rival European powers. France has modified its military doctrine to reflect this strategic calculus, and France's conception of peace and related operations reflects this doctrinal change.

The objectives of France's national security strategy are assuring defense of France's fundamental interests, contributing to its security by preventing or resolving crises, and helping maintain international stability. Execution of this strategy presupposes mastery of four strategic functions: deterrence, prevention, projection, and protection.[3] France's peace and related operations doctrine centers on these four roles.

NATO remains important to France, just as it was during the Cold War. That importance stems from NATO's being a force enabler and multiplier, especially for out-of-area deployment of troops, rather than a guarantor of tranquility in Central Europe. France has taken steps to defend its interests within a UN or NATO framework, through the application of force if necessary. French forces engage in

multilateral operations within the framework of NATO or the European Union (EU) or in *ad hoc* groups, mainly in Europe, the Mediterranean basin, or Europe's southern flank. Their mission is ensuring peace and stability under a UN or European mandate or, as a consequence of France's defense accords, with African 'partners.'[4]

Defending Western interests in the face of amorphous threats calls for unity of effort and clarity of purpose. The economic implications of demographic trends in Western Europe and the United States, the technological superiority of U.S. military forces relative to EU member state forces, and the need of both to ensure sustainable fiscal balances suggest that Western political leaders should review the roles their countries play in the maintenance of stability and peace in the world. If the comparative advantage of France lies in the use of force for peacekeeping and related operations, NATO may want to institutionalize this fact via an appropriate mechanism.

FRENCH CONCEPTION OF PEACE AND RELATED OPERATIONS

Conceptual and Doctrinal Sources

Geography is a good vantage point from which to consider the origin of France's security doctrine, of which peacekeeping and related operations doctrine is but a subset. Wedged in between the United Kingdom on the west and a united Germany on the east, France pursues engagement as a national policy. Having been invaded five times between 1789 and 1944, France is "stubbornly realistic, state-centred, self-reliant, and threat-focused."[5] This fact has forced French strategic thinkers to concentrate on the essential. While French strategic thinking has been remarkably constant, changes in the national and international environments have caused France to adjust its focus. The fall of the Berlin Wall, the demise of the Warsaw Pact, and other transformations in the international environment including economic and technological progress all provoked change in French thinking on defense in the early nineties.[6]

Elements of France's doctrine with respect to peacekeeping and associated operations are traceable to doctrine that justified France's intervention in its former colonies in the early years of the Fifth Republic. Shortly after General Charles de Gaulle was elected president in 1958, the French Government sought to consolidate its relations with France's colonies within the framework of a *Union Française*. One of the results was a series of security and defense agreements whereby France could intervene in the colonies at their request. Some of these agreements remain in effect, especially with former African colonies. They permit France to maintain bases abroad for the prepositioning of troops and materiel, and in this respect are relevant to the execution of France's peace operations doctrine.

While France's relationship with its former colonies provides a basis for the projection of forces, the structure through which this can be done in a major operation lies in Europe and within NATO. Although France withdrew from NATO's integrated military structure in 1966, France has signed accords with NATO to deploy French forces beyond its national boundaries within the NATO framework. Practical interests and shared values account for France's willingness to work with NATO allies. French Defense Minister François Léotard noted in 1994 that France's interest lay "no longer [in] playing off one state against another, but by achieving...a mutualization of power at the service of Europe's defence and of a security shared by the states engaged in its construction.... The defence of our values, of our ideals... and in places far away from our national territory, will often form the main path to our security."[7]

Many elements of France's peace operations and related doctrine stem from a review of the strategic environment that the French Government conducted at the beginning of the last decade, the findings of which were published in the *1994 White Paper on Defense*. This white paper was only the second such paper on defense since the establishment of the Fifth Republic in 1958. The first white paper was published in 1972 to clarify "the principles of the defence policy that had been defined by General de Gaulle.[8]

The *1994 White Paper* described a strategic environment in which France perceives no major direct threat to its vital interests near France's frontiers, an interdependent relationship among the world's major powers, and a world in which the threats to France's important interests are asymmetric. "Contrary to its centuries-old experience, France finds itself in the unfamiliar situation in which its frontiers no longer seem immediately or directly threatened.[9] The main security risk," France concluded, "now lies in regional conflicts [that can] jeopardize the quest for international stability and more just and balanced growth in the world.[10] The defence of France ... depends on preservation of international stability and on prevention of crises, within and [beyond] Europe, which, by degenerating, [can] imperil our interests and our security."[11]

Asymmetric threats to France's national interests circumscribe the domain within which it has adapted its ends, ways, and means to defend its interests. The *1994 White Paper* described a general model or framework for intervention that corresponds with France's objectives and capabilities. This model is premised on France's defense of its vital interests and confirmation of its European option and "international calling." The model postulates that France must be able to defend its interests "without claiming a capacity for global action," a significant conclusion with respect to France's ways and means for achieving its ends. This model reflects France's view that:

- the prevention and management of crises of varying intensity are now its prevailing concerns;
- crises more often than not take place at great distances from its national territory;

- most do not appear, at least initially, to call into question France's vital interests although the risk of dangerous second- and third-order effects cannot be neglected; and
- France will use its forces and facilities generally in concert with its partners or allies, in multinational operations.[12]

Because these assumptions underpin France's strategic thinking, the capability of its conventional forces to participate in the settlement of regional crises is of greater practical relevance than is its nuclear deterrent. In the *1994 White Paper*, France's prime minister, Edouard Balladur, underscored their continuing relevance. "Our classical forces," he said, "have a new task and a new dimension."[13] France's conventional forces must be able to contribute, "if necessary by force, to the prevention, limitation, or settlement of regional crises or conflicts that that do not involve risks of extreme escalation."[14] France's conventional forces must be able to deter or dissuade, prevent, project, and protect, as conditions warrant.[15]

A New Defence: 1997-2015, which was published in 1996, supplemented the *1994 White Paper.*[16] The former introduced new elements into the equation like the end of military conscription, an innovation that *Le Monde* characterized as '*une véritable révolution.*'[17] This center-left newspaper was right, given the long-term implications of these changes. The two most noteworthy are that (1) France's armed forces, although fewer as a result of the end of the draft, can be more easily deployed outside France (since there are no statutory impediments to such use of volunteer forces) and (2) France's professional armed forces can more easily collaborate with NATO-dedicated forces, among other reasons because of the ethos they may have in common..

Four years later, writing on the doctrinal bases and orientation of the French army, the commandant of the Research and Documentation Center of the French Army's Doctrine and Training Command noted that armed intervention now takes place under new circumstances. Continuous fronts no longer characterize areas of operations (AORs); spatial discontinuity of conflict is more likely. Fewer forces are engaged in increasingly fragmented AORs. An equally significant feature of the new environment is that French forces no longer have a singular end, destroying an enemy force.[18] The last observation is doctrinally important for reasons described below.

In 1995, France's Armed Forces Chief of Staff Jacques Lanxade characterized the types of peace operations in which France's forces can be involved as first, second, and third generation operations:

- peacekeeping (1): traditional operations conducted under Chapter VI of the UN Charter and premised on the consent of the parties and the existence of a cease-fire;

- peace restoration (II): operations conducted under Chapter VII premised on the absence of both a cease-fire and consent and in which the United Nations intends to restore peace without identifying a particular aggressor; and
- peace imposition (III): operations conducted under Chapter VII in which the United Nations intends to impose peace by the threat or use of force against an identified aggressor.[19]

The liberal interpretation of what constitutes threats to peace under Chapter VI of the UN charter has led to operations that UN Secretary General Dag Hammarskjold designated Chapter VI and a half operations. Peace restoration operations are sometimes called Chapter VI and a half interventions. Such operations include humanitarian intervention accompanied by use of force.[20]

Lanxade had filled a doctrinal void in March 1995 when he expounded his views on the conditions under which force could be used in the gray area existing between peace and war. In what became known as the Lanxade Directive, the admiral "articulated the new concept of 'peace restoration,' situated between the well-known missions of 'maintaining' (Chapter VI, UN Charter) and 'imposing' peace (Chapter VII, UN Charter)."[21] The directive "argued that 'peace restoration' necessitated active use of military force and that strict neutrality was not a policy option. Rather, use of force should be 'impartial' in the sense that it should not aim to affect the local balance, but serve to protect and create respect around French forces."[22]

The Lanxade Directive was first executed when a Franco-British-Dutch rapid reaction force deployed as part of NATO's Operation Deliberate Force in the fall of 1995.[23] This was a decisive development since it led to political recognition that a gap had to be bridged between war and peace operations.[24] France's experience in Bosnia provoked realization that conflicts occur along a spectrum, and that operations to 'restore peace' fall within the ambiguous middle of such a spectrum.[25] France's experience also shed light on the possibility of escalation from one operation to another, or from one of the White Paper scenarios to another.[26] The situation in Kosovo in late 1999 exemplified the new setting. Testifying at a French Senate hearing in March 2000, General Bernard Thorette noted that French forces encountered three types of situations there: combat, periods of truce, and activity in between the first two. France, he said, had the troop structure to respond to all three situations. While its armed forces were prepared for combat, its gendarmes helped re-establish public order.[27]

From its experience in the mid nineties, France concluded that its forces might often engage in peace operations in environments characterized by limited consent, in operations known as "gray operations."[28] Gray operations involve low to medium intensity conflict "half way between open warfare and a state of peace, in environments that are often urban and complex."[29] This concept is akin to

France's concept of peace restoration, which France places midway between peacekeeping and peace imposition or enforcement on the spectrum of conflict.[30] In the conduct of gray operations, France regards "a credible coercive capacity as a prerequisite for success."[31]

After reflecting on the ineffectiveness of peace operations in Bosnia in the early nineties, French doctrinal writers concluded that the problems with the traditional approach were caused by military weakness, misunderstanding of impartiality, and restrictive rules of engagement that prevented troops from using force to protect civilians and implement their mandate. France's solution is to equip and organize its "forces deployed on peace missions with 'real self-defence and even combat assets... whatever their initial mission's environment may be.' The key to success in French eyes [is] to equip forces from the outset so that they can deal effectively with a deterioration of the mission environment. This [is] also seen as the best way to deter non-compliance."[32]

According to General Philippe Morillon, the acceptance of that lesson by the international community was a watershed in doctrinal thinking. "The UN has understood that [others were] strong only to the extent that the UN was weak. By finally giving its soldiers the authority and means to retaliate not only when their own lives [are] in danger but also whenever their freedom of movement [is] obstructed, the UN has understood that, to limit violence, its military forces must be able to implement their mandate whilst throwing the down the challenge 'shoot at us, if you dare.'"[33] "The emerging consensus on gray area operational doctrine, reflected in recent British, French, NATO and US thinking, provides a straightforward answer to the problem created by uncertain consent: when in doubt deploy a force capable of using both carrots and sticks to promote consent, deter non-compliance and, if necessary, enforce compliance."[34]

When engaging in peace restoration, French troops do not need to obtain consent from the parties to the conflict, although no party is designated the enemy prior to France's engaging in such operations.[35] In a semi-permissive environment, lack of consent is of secondary importance. George A. Bloch, a defense analyst writing on this "new departure in French doctrinal thought," explained that French Army leaders posit that "violence itself, rather than an identifiable opponent, will likely be the primary future enemy of French and allied soldiers."[36] France's peace operations doctrine cautions commanders, however, that while the parties to a conflict may not be considered... enemies, they still "'cannot be regarded as neutral elements.'"[37] The distinction, as France understands it, between impartiality and neutrality is an important doctrinal point. Impartiality means not having preconceptions about the warring parties, keeping the option of taking sides open if necessary. Neutrality requires not taking sides in any circumstances.[38]

With respect to impartiality, France subordinates a hostile party's appreciation of a situation to that of a larger community, the view of which underpins the mandate of France's engagement. "'Active impartiality' allows peacekeepers to use force in defence of the mandate and of civilians in all types of peace operations. This is not expected to result in a loss of impartiality provided that force is employed in a controlled manner against parties who prevent the peace contingent from performing its duties. To make this concept workable, French doctrine recommends the deployment of combat troops that 'enjoy, to the extent possible, undisputed military superiority' If there is a risk that consent will be withdrawn, they must deploy a force capable of imposing compliance of UN resolutions on the parties."[39]

France's interpretation of impartiality was novel in the mid nineties and contrasted with the "traditionalist" doctrine that placed emphasis "on managing and preserving consent in [gray] operations and on avoiding inadvertent escalation to peace enforcement. Traditional and wider peacekeeping operations, the doctrine held, shared the same 'intrinsic nature' and should consequently honour the same principles: consent, impartiality and non-use of force except in self-defense. Use of force had to be minimal and was only allowed at the tactical level against 'maverick, unrepresentative opposition'. Use of force against a major party meant crossing the consent divide that separated wider peacekeeping from peace enforcement. Crossing the consent divide had to be avoided because... to cross the consent divide [might] be to cross a Rubicon."[40]

Unlike the 'traditionalist' doctrine that was designed to prevent the loss of consent from excessive use of force, France's doctrine reflects the view that inability to use minimum force necessary to protect civilians and to implement the mandate of an operation results in loss of credibility and prevents restoration of peace. The priority must be maximizing deterrence in order to avoid placing troops in a situation where they cannot protect themselves or take effective action to protect the civilian population and fulfill their mandate. Peacemakers "must be capable and prepared to use force... to 'stop violent actions that threaten the population or that stop [French] troops from fulfilling their mission.'"[41] They must use all available means in their attempt to end conflict. Likely use of force leads France to base its intervention on a UN Chapter VII mandate, whenever possible.[42]

In the conduct of peace operations, French commanders must distinguish between actual hostility and generalized unrest in order "to determine the nature and degree of force required to 'control, dominate, and eliminate' the threat."[43] Since the intent of military action is achieving this end-state, commanders must impartially employ force, if necessary, to suppress the freedom of action of belligerents without escalating their opposition, if possible.[44] In addition, since peace operations take place along a continuum, peacekeeping forces must be able to adapt themselves immediately to possible changes in mandate or operational framework.[45]

France's peacekeepers need to be prepared to engage in joint multinational operations to be effective. The authors of the French Army's doctrinal manual *Instruction 1000: Doctrine interarmées d'emploi des forces en opération*, acknowledging conceptual borrowings from NATO document *AJP.01(A)*, the *1994 White Paper on Defense*, and the *Concept d'emploi des forces 1997*, state that "the principal role of our conventional forces is to contribute actively to the prevention, limitation, or, if necessary, resolution of crises or regional conflicts by force, within the framework of the Alliance, the WEU, a coalition, or ourselves as the case may be."[46] Reflecting the French army's experience in multinational operations, doctrine highlights the importance of the army's interoperability within an alliance framework, whether with respect to command and control, communications, or the composition and projection of forces.[47]

To ensure proper execution of orders and procedures in the multinational environment, the French Army encourages its peacekeepers to master English.[48] "Knowledge of English, the language most probably to be used in joint allied operations, is an imperative of interoperability, the guarantor of a unit's integrity."[49] In this spirit, while writing the *Doctrine interarmées d'emploi des forces en opération in* 1999, Colonels Fréré and Gaitinos of the French General Staff "used NATO Military Committee manuals—referring to the integrated command of which France is not a part—to adapt the planning scenarios that would make French and NATO documents immediately compatible. The authors of the manual literally used the NATO vocabulary, which is as specific as any ordinary dictionary and perhaps even more precise, given the requirements of coordinating planning among the allies, to write the French document."[50]

Doctrinal Afterthoughts

The French Army categorizes conflicts as symmetric, dissymmetric, and asymmetric.[51] Its definitions of the first and last concepts are not unlike those of the U.S. armed forces, but the second concept needs expansion. "Dissymmetry is a major imbalance between two opponents in either the stakes or the performance of assets, but hardly ever (or not at all) the nature of these assets. However, the nature of the stakes is different in that the party for whom they are the smaller is disadvantaged, insofar as it will not engage in the same outbidding in the search for its objectives."[52] A footnote associated with the sentence above indicates that "from this point of view, the concept of 'zero casualties,' when openly announced before the beginning of a conflict, is a signal to the opponent, giving him the fundamental advantage of dominating the escalation process."[53]

The French Army has drawn two conclusions from the conceptual distinction mentioned above. First, when "a conflict initially appears to be symmetrical or dissymmetrical, [the Army tries] to prevent it from slipping into asymmetry, because it is, for [the Army], the most unfavourable configuration. Moreover, in a situation of imbalance and weakness, it should be feared that the opponent may change his ends and means in order to overcome what he believes is the source of [the French armed forces'] operational superiority. This slippage is especially likely where the conflict represents an essential stake to the opponent and when his collective morality is very permissive (use of human shields by Iraq during the Gulf War)."[54] Secondly, while French forces "were used to producing physical effects on their opponents first, hoping that a psychological impact would follow (collapse of will), asymmetrical conflicts most often place [French forces] in situations in which the psychological effects come first and normally have to be found [later], without any armed and generalized show of strength."[55]

Cautioning against underestimating enemy capabilities, *Future Engagements* identifies two factors that tend to inhibit military action. The first is the difference in the nature of the stakes involved, a difference that will often lead to refusal to accept a level of risk that would place the armed forces in a position to preempt escalation. The "more limited the conflict, the more the political authorities make sure that it is kept within a circumscribed framework, as no commitment of forces should produce the opposite effect.... This constraint is a new element that reduces the operational superiority of armies whose sophistication requires that effectiveness be based on higher control of the time-space relationship."[56] However, "to dominate escalation, it is necessary to be ready to outmatch an opponent in order to achieve operational superiority and create favourable dissymmetry. As soon as one of the protagonists believes that the stakes are limited, he is logically no longer ready to do this and loses control of the situation."[57]

The second factor that tends to inhibit military action is a collective morality that forbids immoderate use of superior firepower.[58] For this reason, French forces apply a "lightning principle": they have to be quicker than their opponents and impose their own tempo.[59] Execution of this principle does not aim at destroying everything, but at breaking the tempo of an opponent to prevent him from recovering and thus to keep him permanently behind the curve.[60] The logic underpinning this principle is rejection of escalation as a principle of military action.[61] With respect to crowd control in hostile environments, the manual warns that some crowds "will not follow a code of behavior tacitly imposing some limitation on violence. Confrontations may suddenly degenerate."[62] To prevent this outcome, the French armed forces need to have their weapons visible "and it will be wise to be able to use them without prior notice."[63]

UN Frame of Reference

France attaches strategic importance to its permanent membership on the UN Security Council. There, France has a role that is more than just nominally equal to that of the great powers; in fact, within the UNSC, France's voice counts just as much as theirs does.[64] Like the United States, France has a say when the Council invokes Chapter VII of the UN Charter, which authorizes recourse to armed force, failing the application of Chapter VI provisions aiming at the peaceful settlement of disputes. Through the UNSC, France maintains its *rang* or rank as a major player, a privilege that France is loath to abandon and one that conditions its peace operations doctrine. "As a permanent member of the Security Council, France has to contribute actively, no doubt more than others do, to the maintenance of world peace and the respect of international law.... Assuming these international responsibilities, [and] promoting democracy and law are aims connected with the defence of France's world rank...."[65]

France's participation in the Gulf War illustrates how France advances its "power" interests through UNSC action. France committed itself to the Gulf War coalition for reasons that had "remarkably little to do directly with the Middle East, and rather more to do with France's national interests and future role in the post-Cold War world."[66] Mitterrand stated in December 1991 that "'assuming 'the rank, the role and the responsibilities which [are] hers, and declaring her solidarity with the camp of law against the politics of aggression,' France would participate in military action against Iraq in fulfillment of the resolutions of the Security Council."[67] "In the face of challenges to France's international rank, cooperative action, preferably through the UN or Europe, [offers France] the prospect of deliberative equality and associated credit when operations [are] successfully fulfilled."[68]

France's high profile in UN deliberations and operations supports French norms and values, some of which seem to have little to do with classical *realpolitik*. France was the lead nation in the UN adoption of Resolution 43/131 in December 1988 that laid the foundation for a UN *droit* or *devoir d'ingérence* by mandating humanitarian assistance in cases of natural disasters and 'emergency situations of the same order.'[69] In a speech before the United Nations General Assembly on 6 October 1988, President Mitterrand had said "the humanitarian situation constitutes a reason that may justify an exception to the rule—the UNSC's primacy in establishing the legitimacy of a mandate to act in a crisis—however strong and solid it be. If it appeared that a situation required it, France would not hesitate to join others who would want to assist those in danger."[70] Four years later, in 1992, Prime Minister Bérégovoy affirmed that "'France intends to be present, always under UN auspices, wherever the law must be respected or human lives preserved'."[71]

In the early nineties, the developments in Somalia focused attention anew on the possibility of humanitarian intervention in times in crises. "The humanitarian motivation for action in Somalia...

precipitated within France a wide-ranging debate about the *devoir d'ingérence* [the duty to intervene] and the *droit d'ingérence* [the right to intervene]."[72] Jean-Bernard Raimond, a deputy in the National Assembly, addressed this issue in *La Politique d'intervention dans les conflits: éléments de doctrine pour la France* published on 23 February 1995. Raimond argued for incorporation of the principle of humanitarian intervention in France's peace operations doctrine and for a better interface between humanitarian and other forms of peace operations.[73]

France's readiness for military-backed humanitarian intervention is predicated on a principle of limited intervention. This principle "allows states to use armed force in other states for humanitarian reasons and for the very purposes declared in the UN Charter, i.e., to maintain international peace and security."[74] Under this principle, individual states may engage on their own initiative in an operation prior to collective endorsement of their engagement. In recent interventions, in Kosovo in particular, "NATO countries acted to avert a humanitarian catastrophe and to restore peace and stability in the region. Both reasons were always cited simultaneously; NATO never claimed to act to maintain peace and stability exclusively, and this illustrates an important aspect of the new principle."[75] Taken together, the two concepts confer legality via the UNSC and legitimacy via the broader community.[76]

Although France endorsed NATO's action in Kosovo because NATO is the collective defense organization upon which rests the fundamental stability of Europe, this was not the only reason it did so. NATO's Strategic Concept of 24 April 1999 generally satisfied France's concerns.[77] Paragraph 10 of Article 7 of the Washington Treaty reaffirms that the UN Security Council is primarily responsible for maintenance of peace and international security.[78] And paragraph 31 recalls the Alliance's offer to support peace and other operations under the authority of the Security Council or the responsibility of the OSCE on a case by case basis.[79]

The effectiveness of peace operations that French forces carry out depends on the clarity of the military directives resulting from the political mandate. The desired end state must be explicit. France must provide input for the concepts of operations, input based on thorough review of military needs as well as lessons learned, as called for in the UN *Agenda for Peace*. In UN-mandated operations, French forces must not be placed in untenable situations that would condemn them to witness violence against civilians without being able to react before the end of hostilities.[80] To avoid such situations, the first rule to be respected always is knowing the intended end state of an operation.

France's interest can be served by strengthening the UN peace operations planning cells, assigning experienced personnel to UN offices, and by drawing upon resources existing within the EU and NATO structures.[81] France believes that "the responsibilities and competences of the Secretary

General's military advisors have to be expanded, as well as the means of communications and monitoring of crises and even facilities for making emergency plans.... [Military concerns] connected with the implementation of Security Council mandates have to be dealt with more carefully and integrated more promptly and continuously into the Council's tasks."[82]

Since France favors strengthening the UN's capability for peace operations, France responded quickly to UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali's *Agenda for Peace* that was published in June 1992. In its wake, France proposed various measures to strengthen the United Nations. These included organizational changes to enhance its military competence, the suggestion that the United Nations have a 5,000-strong standing military force, and the offer of up to 1,000 French troops to be put at the disposition of the United Nations on 48-hours notice.[83] France's efforts to strengthen the United Nations' military capability are not disinterested; they help assure France's permanent seat on the Security Council and confer additional influence upon France within that forum.

As of July 2001, France had about 9,000 troops engaged in peace operations under a Chapter VIII mandate (UN delegation of responsibility to a regional organization), about 8,800 of which were in the Balkans.[84] By contrast, it had only 400 troops in operations led directly by the UN.[85] With respect to the doctrinal aspect of France's involvement in UN operations, in general France now takes part only in operations in which its presence can affect its national interest.[86] Including troops deployed pursuant to bilateral accords (Article 51 of the Charter), France had about 10,000 in the field in July 2001.[87]

PEACE OPERATIONS WITHIN UN OR NATO FRAMEWORK

EU and NATO Structures

France has been in the forefront of the Western European states' pursuit of European integration for fifty years. Throughout this period France has directed its efforts toward a single purpose: ensuring peace and tranquility in a Europe in which it can remain a dominant player. France's actions within what was first called the European Economic Community, then the European Communities, and now the European Union (EU) reflected and continue to reflect this constant of French policy. "France's maintenance of its world rank will largely depend on its aptitude to influence the European structure and Europe's future evolution. If France proves strong on the continent, it will speak with a firm voice everywhere else. Its success or failure in this venture may determine the role it will play in the community of nations."[88]

France's ratification of the Treaty on European Union, signed in Maastricht, Belgium on 7 February 1992, was a step forward. The treaty provides for the establishment of an EU common foreign and security policy and for "creation of a true European defence identity, followed by a joint defence and security policy that can lead to common defence when the time comes."[89] The Treaty stipulated in article J 4.2 that the Western European Union (WEU) was an integral part of the European Union. For its part, the WEU, in a declaration attached to the Treaty, affirmed its intention "'to develop WEU as the defence component of the EU and as a means to strengthen the European pillar of the Alliance.'"[90] Article J 7.3 provided for EU recourse to the WEU to formulate and implement EU decisions having defense implications.[91]

The EU's assimilation of the WEU by mutual agreement in 2001 represented a victory of French diplomacy. The EU may play a significant role in Europe's defense and security, given that the WEU's *raison d'être* was mutual defense of member states. Assured of the solid foundation of Franco-German defense and security cooperation, France is firming up its political and military cooperation with the United Kingdom. Both agreed in December 1998 in St. Malo, France that the EU 'must have the capacity for autonomous action, backed up by credible military forces, [as well as] the means to decide to use them and a readiness to do so in order to respond to international crises.'"[92] In this context, 'European autonomy' refers to the capability of NATO's European Union member states to act together without US participation. France envisages European autonomy primarily in relation to NATO's non-Article 5 missions since Article 5 missions implicate the United States.

The EU member states have since taken steps to create practical arrangements to cooperate in crisis management and military operations. They have established an EU military committee (EU summit in Cologne, June 1999); are implementing proposals for a European rapid deployment force for humanitarian and peacekeeping duties, incorporating multinational planning cells and cooperation in military transportation (Anglo-French summit in London, November 1999); and are pursuing proposals for enhanced naval cooperation between Britain and France.[93] France is unlikely to disengage itself from this process since it promotes European integration and strengthens the "European pillar" of the Atlantic Alliance. This dynamic is compatible with France's European ambitions and with the post-Cold War role that it seeks.

The Amsterdam summit of April 1997, which endorsed the EU-WEU merger, included the WEU "Petersberg tasks" in the treaty. Article 17.2 of the Amsterdam Treaty on European Union defines these Petersberg tasks as follows: "Questions referred to in this Article shall include humanitarian and rescue tasks, peacekeeping tasks and tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peacemaking."[94] The fifteen members of the EU "chose [in 1997] to retain the language adopted by the nine WEU states at

Petersberg in 1992 rather than work out a new description, as there was consensus on a text that allowed for various interpretations (constructive ambiguity)."[95]

The three types of mission envisaged at Petersberg cover measures that range from the most modest to the most robust. Keeping in mind the context in 1992, peacekeeping tasks refer to the interposition missions and second-generation peace operations—the chapter "six and a half" missions that Admiral Lanxade designated as peace restoration—that were being conducted in the early nineties. Article 17.2 of the Amsterdam Treaty is broad enough to encompass France's concept of peace restoration under the category of 'tasks of combat forces in crisis management.' The best example of "tasks of combat forces in crisis management" during that time was the allied action against Iraq.[96] The last Petersberg task, peacemaking, includes coercive measures, and can be interpreted as peace enforcement.[97]

The presidential conclusions of the Cologne, Helsinki, Feira, and Nice European Councils all indicate that the EU is standing up a force that will have "the ability to carry out all the Petersberg missions, including the most demanding of them."[98] "In 1999, the Cologne and Helsinki European Councils decided to create a rapid reaction force for crisis management, and much work has been done to implement that decision, as was noted at the Nice Council in December 2000."[99] The rapid reaction force's projection capability, interoperability, and flexibility are to be such as to meet the operational requirements for these types of operation.[100]

The 1992 Petersberg formulation implicitly subordinated WEU use of force to the Security Council, a relationship not echoed in the Treaty on European Union (TEU). While the treaty deliberately omitted any link between the Petersberg missions and a Security Council mandate, the TEU includes reference of the principles of the UN Charter in Article 11.1.[101] The logic of this omission was no different from that which had guided the British representative at the 1945 San Francisco conference that came up with the UN Charter: "The purposes and the principles ... seem ... of the highest importance.... Instead of trying to govern the actions of the members and the organs of the UN by precise and intricate codes of procedure, we have preferred to lay down purposes and principles under which they have to act. And by that means, we hope to insure that they are in conformity with the express desires of the nationals assembled here, while, at the same time, we give them freedom to accommodate their actions to circumstances which today no man can foresee."[102]

Use and Scope of French Forces

Senator François Trucy's report on *Participation de la France aux opérations de maintien de la paix* helped refine French thinking on peace operations.[103] In his February 1994 report to the Prime Minister, Trucy had called for a definition of the types of missions in which French forces might participate and the conditions under which they might do so. The *1994 White Paper* established the boundaries of France's likely intervention. *New Defence: 1997-2015* specified how and where France is apt to use its forces in the decades ahead.

The types of missions that French forces are likely to be engaged in are asymmetrical crises and conflicts short of all-out war. Performing them calls for forces that possess joint and multinational operational capabilities, conventional technological advantages, and an ability to participate in operations ranging from major theater engagements to peacekeeping, peacemaking, and other limited interventions.[104] These missions require action that can:

- Preempt, contain, and control escalation of violence, thus giving scope for possible resolution of conflict through political, diplomatic, humanitarian, and media action;
- Impose the international community's will by force if necessary and thus compel an adversary to renounce his objectives, by engaging forces adapted to the political and military objectives pursued;
- Offer an adversary material and psychological incentives to disengage in certain situations; and
- Lead to crisis resolution and participation in post-conflict peace consolidation efforts.[105]

The *1994 White Paper* mentions the conditions under which France's armed forces may participate in an operation, individually or in a coalition or alliance:

- The principle of the operation and the expected scope of France's commitment must correspond with its strategic priorities and interests.
- The general and specific political objectives of the operation must be determined at the outset and must form an unequivocal framework of reference for the states that will participate in the operation.
- The constraints on the operation, especially the rules of engagement, must be approved at the national and multinational political levels prior to its initiation, and the prospect of success must be clear.
- The division of responsibilities between the operation's political representative and the commander of the forces to be employed must reflect rules underscoring the preeminence of the senior civilian authority as regards the general application of the mandate, and the military commander's operational responsibility as regards the conduct of the military aspects of the operation.

- France retains the right to limit its participation or to withdraw from an operation if the conditions prevailing at the time of the initial decision are no longer being met.[106]

The second and third points mentioned above—clear objectives and robust rules of engagement that permit necessary use of force—aim to avoid the ineffectualness of French soldiers on the ground. The French military forces' experience in Bosnia has led them to adopt a simple maxim with respect to peacekeeping or enforcement operations: '*on tire ou on se retire*' (we fire or we pull back).[107] Doctrinally, the meaning is clear: French forces must have the capacity and freedom to defend themselves and pursue their mandate or they have no business being in a conflict theatre.[108] Given the possibility that operations may deteriorate from peacekeeping to peace restoration, French forces must be equipped to engage in combat notwithstanding the UN operational framework in which they may be committed.[109]

In 1996, President Chirac observed in *New Defence: 1997-2015* that France must be able to project large enough forces anywhere and quickly for its opinions and interests to be considered with respect to how crises are handled and what goes into their settlement.[110] Since readily deployable forces assist in preventing or resolving crises and conflicts, sustaining their capability to employ important means far from the homeland is the priority of France's conventional forces.[111] The extent to which French forces may be used depends on the role that France intends to play in an operation. If "France's contribution is [to be] based on the concern to simply manifest its presence,... the specific nature and quality of the assets is emphasized; [if] it intends to take a significant place in the plan of action,... the criterion of volume comes into play; [and if] it is... to play a crucial role,... France can indeed be made to supply the central element of a European action, jointly with one of its principal partners."[112]

To reconcile its international commitments and limited means, France is adapting its conventional forces to exercise influence outside Europe at the lower level of conflict. Underlying France's approach to use of military power is its desire to deal with threats to French interests and to international stability at the lowest level of military force possible. Four elements of doctrine and policy help interpret the trend: the roles of prevention and projection; the interplay of French forces deployed in French territories outside metropolitan France or in peace operations; and the establishment of four 15,000-strong combat projection forces with the requisite air, naval, logistic and command and control support, about which we have more to say below.

France's concept of prevention makes clear that France prefers to address situations or conflicts before they escalate, on the premise that timely involvement obviates riskier commitments later. France's inclination to act before escalation of a crisis is also premised on its capability and willingness to act promptly, if necessary in advance of broader international consensus.[113] France's concept of prevention

entails advantages and risks. The advantages flow from a better match between French capabilities and situational requirements if France acts early in a crisis. In the nineties, France repeatedly deployed troops at levels below 5,000 troops and its willingness and ability to act in relation to low-level threats enhanced France's influence at little cost. The risk arises from France's predisposition for action, which can generate perceptions of French adventurism.

Prevention, according to *New Defence: 1997-2015*, aims to "avoid the return or emergence of threats to [France's] interests and [its] security, the outbreak of conflicts, or even the development of situations, which may in the long run give rise to the reappearance of major threats."[114] To ensure such an outcome, "projection of power becomes... the priority mission for [French] forces."[115] Projection presupposes availability of forces deployable far from permanent bases, and long-range lift capability. The time it takes to deploy ground troops to an operational theatre is a distinguishing characteristic of France's "projection of force" or "projection of power."[116] Force projection presupposes deployment of troops with command and combat means, and support elements adapted to the force deployed.[117] Power projection refers to employment of superior force and of special forces in a briefer period and can be complementary to force projection.[118] Only to the extent that military force can be projected in zones of crises or conflicts is credibility of prevention assured.[119]

France does not expect to act alone whatever the nature of the operations. On 15 June 2001, multinational participants at a forum at the *Ecole Militaire* discussed doctrinal issues including the multinational component of peace operations. The participants shared the view that France's participation in multinational forces endows French forces with an indispensable political and moral legitimacy, the advantages of which outweigh the disadvantages. French Army Chief of Staff Yves Crene asserted that France's doctrinal thinking about the employment of its ground forces must reflect operations conducted in common with its allies. The establishment and application of a body of common doctrine applied by allied forces can but enhance their effectiveness, he said.[120]

The participants at the forum also agreed that multinational operations never constitute an insurmountable obstacle when a clearly defined mission remains the objective. Besides interoperability, success requires training that reflects common principles, acceptance of subordinate structures, a willingness to integrate and contribute to group cohesion, and confidence among national contingents. The execution of common doctrine reflects not only a shared philosophy but also permits political commitment. The stronger the commitment, the less likely it is that differences in language, in secondary interests, and in rules of engagement will hinder the mission's execution.[121]

New Defence: 1997-2015 had foreshadowed the reorganization of France's defense forces for multilateral and out-of-area operations in ways that look remarkably like those necessary to shape French forces "to slot smoothly into, or at least closely beside, NATO."[122] France played a major role in leading several European states in multinational deployments in Bosnia as part of the UN Protection Force between 1992 and 1995. France worked with the British and Dutch to deploy a Rapid Reaction Force to Bosnia in June 1995 to firm up the UN contingent. France persuaded Germany to deploy combat troops from the Franco-German brigade to man the Stabilization Force in January 1997. France took the lead with Italy in the all-European 'Operation Alba' in Albania in 1997. France played a key role in the initially all-European Macedonian Extraction Force supporting the OSCE in Kosovo at the end of 1998.[123] France also participated in NATO air strikes against Serbia and Serbian targets in Kosovo in early 1999. One striking feature of France's participation in these operations was its early commitment to the Alliance war aims, notwithstanding the absence of an explicit UN mandate for the bombing.[124]

With respect to force projection, France is standing up four division-like entities distinct from the Eurocorps, which are European forces answerable to the EU. The objectives for the year 2015 call for a capability to deploy the following forces with their equipment and logistical and support elements:

- With respect to the Army, up to 60,000 personnel, 50,000 of whom will be combat troops to take part in a major engagement within the framework of the Alliance or 30,000 men in one theater, for a year, with relief forces (which implies a total of 35,000 men) and another 5,000 men engaged in a secondary theater who can be rotated (which corresponds to about 15,000 men)
- With respect to the Navy, one naval aviation group with its support element, as well as attack submarines
- With respect to the Air Force, transport aircraft equal to the actual fleet and some 100 combat aircraft and associated air tankers, as well as air control and detection systems.[125]

France's capability to project more than 5,000 troops quickly is problematic. Rapidly projecting more, with hundreds of pieces of heavy equipment, is beyond France's actual capabilities. France lacks lift capability and France is not accompanying its expansion of projection forces with parallel expansion of airlift or sealift, refueling, and logistics support capabilities. France's vessels are deployed around the globe servicing France's overseas territories. Even if France could allocate all of them to a single time-sensitive operation, their combined carrying capacity could accommodate only a quarter of the troops and hardware of a single heavy armored group.[126] Budget constraints may prevent France from bridging the gap in the medium term; that is, within seven to ten years. France may be able to buy or lease adequate lift to deploy up to 5,000 troops during this decade, but capacity to project much greater force will be inadequate at least until 2015.[127]

France's maintenance of a forward presence in former colonies is a way partially to overcome lift limitations. The African states from which France can project forces—Djibouti, Gabon, Ivory Coast, Senegal—and the French overseas territories ensure France a global reach. Without them, France's claim to global reach would be greatly diminished.[128] The simultaneous stationing of troops in Francophone Africa in accord with bilateral defense agreements, deployment of projection forces in the French overseas territories, and use of increasingly robust rules of engagement of French forces on UN deployments generate a synergy that partly compensates for France's inadequate lift capacity.[129]

The contours of French policy with respect to foreseeable peace operations can thus be characterized as follows:

- France is moving along a multilateral trajectory oriented toward pan-African, European, or international responses to regional crises.
- France supports multinational peace operations if the underlying mandates are specific and the rules of engagement robust.
- The number of troops that France can project into regional theatres is a function of its logistical capability and its desire to maintain global reach and relevance.
- France's military forces are especially useful at lower levels of conflict and enable France to "'punch above its weight' by [its] being able and willing to act where others [dare] not."[130]

IMPLICATIONS OF DOCTRINAL CONVERGENCE

NATO's January 1994 summit represented the point at which NATO's evolution and France's security ambitions for Europe became intertwined through the Combined Joint Task Forces (CJTF) concept, given U.S. willingness to entertain a larger European role in NATO.[131] Potential use of the CJTF in non-Article 5 missions implies evolution away from NATO's Cold War integration of member state armed forces under a single command.[132] For France, these decisions are significant since they "[hold] out the prospect that military integration, the *bête noire* of France's relations with NATO, [will] be abandoned because, as Frédéric Bozo observed, in the new context what [matters is] 'not the integration of forces but [the flexibility] for each country... to act together—or not—when the time comes.'"[133]

France participates in NATO both to exert influence and to ensure that a European Security and Defense Identity evolves in ways that advance France's interests. France concluded from its need to work with NATO that France's willingness to cooperate matters. France was drawn into NATO deliberations by the war in Yugoslavia; once engaged, France found itself influential because NATO itself was being shaped by events in Yugoslavia.[134] This was proof that a state's influence rests on its capacity

to be heard "in situations where 'political, military, and regional dimensions mingle from the strategic point of view, while multinational and inter-army (joint) dimensions mix in the military domain.'" [135]

The path that France has mapped out suggests a NATO Article 5 and EU non-Article 5 division of labor. The United States should be reassured that France wants the European Union to take on Petersberg tasks. These tasks do not cover national defense in the traditional sense of ensuring, by military means, the territorial integrity and political independence of a state in the face of a military threat. Nor do Petersberg tasks cover collective defense commitments. Since these operations do not encompass collective security as NATO has defined the concept, the EU's taking the lead in Petersberg tasks should not threaten the integrity of the Alliance.

If France should find itself involved in regional conflicts not implicating France's vital interests, conflicts that involve conventional war among regional powers, French forces will "act under international mandate within the framework of the Atlantic Alliance, the Western European Union, and eventually the European Union or a coalition."[136] France's military capabilities dictate that it pursue coalition operations in the advancement of its national interest. France's economic requirements compel it to do so whenever possible. France lacks funding for lift capacity to deploy military forces in external theaters using national means exclusively. Since France must use whatever means it has at its disposition to maintain its *rang*, the EU, NATO, and the UN provide the framework for such action.

The prospects of France's participation in coalition operations are therefore buoyant. France has demonstrated to the United States that it is a "mover and shaker..., perhaps the only state [with the possible exception of Great Britain] capable of mobilizing other EU states around collective action."[137] France has a decisive contribution to make, having shown itself to be one of the United States' most reliable partners in post-Cold War world order roles (Gulf War, Somalia, Bosnia and Kosovo). [138] If the comparative advantage of France lies in the use of force for peacekeeping and related operations, NATO may want to institutionalize this fact via an appropriate mechanism.

WORD COUNT: 8,937

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