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# Winning the Battle Building Peace

**Land Forces in Present  
and Future Conflicts**



**ARMÉE DE TERRE**



**WINNING THE BATTLE  
BUILDING PEACE**

Translated into English by a panel of British and French officers and academic military experts.

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Future Conflicts

CENTRE DE DOCTRINE D'EMPLOI DES FORCES,  
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## Land Forces in Present and Future Conflicts

As an armed confrontation of wills, war always causes destruction and suffering, but its face and place in the world have changed.

Primarily, it is the political effectiveness of military confrontation that has changed; the destruction of the opponent often no longer constitutes an effective response to conflict situations. **Battle**, that until recently could lead directly to political success, is no longer sufficient, nor is it the proof of victory or of defeat for the protagonists. Its place has been reduced to that of an initial stage, short and violent, in the general course of conflicts whose durations are extending and for which the establishment of the conditions for a return to peace is becoming decisive. Hence after battle, **it becomes necessary to build peace.**

But war has also changed because of the emergence of new types of belligerents who, divorced from traditional military logic, live and operate among the people that have become both key actors and stakes in the conflict. Henceforth at the centre of conflict, they are a cause for major concern for military forces.

Faced with these developments, military reaction has changed. No longer is destructive capability the main parameter for an instrument that does not lead directly to the achievement of the strategic objective, but merely contributes to it. It does this with a broad set of actors who all play a role in success or failure and with whom forces need to operate and coordinate.

The cohesion and aim of operations have been modified as a result. The initial intervention stage, where a force generally acts with all means at its disposal, now prepares the way for a

stabilisation phase. This phase, both decisive and fundamental to the operation, takes place essentially in the land environment.

The aim of this publication, the fruit of collective thought in the French Army, is to present the main changes that have profoundly affected land forces deployed in a number of theatres. At the very heart of these operations, they reach their full potential in the resolution of crises that have strayed from inter state conflict to invest the field of confrontation in the very midst of society.

In this new environment, the French Army asserts and implements a double requirement: that of power and the control of force.

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# The New Face of War

Military engagement alone no longer wins wars; it simply leads to the establishment of **minimal conditions for strategic success**, which take shape in the **stabilisation phase, the new decisive phase of conflicts**.

While Western armies possess an undisputed technological supremacy, they are facing adversaries that gain their strength from the diversity of their courses of action.

The armed forces conduct **war among the people** that have become key actors and stakes. More than ever, land forces are at the heart of operational engagements that **concentrate in towns** and require numerous and sustainable units.

As the ordinary citizen of a society increasingly demanding in terms of its security, legally aware and eager for information, **the soldier** must develop the ability to adapt. In particular, he needs to possess a **necessary flair for dialogue** while still retaining his ability to confront **extreme situations**.



# 1 –New World - New Conflicts

## 1.1 Establishing the Conditions for Strategic Success

Traditionally accepted as the usual means of solving conflicts characterized by the interests of power and the ambitions of conquest, the use of war has progressively entered an international legal framework which no longer recognises the use of force as an instrument for the settlement of inter state differences<sup>1</sup>. Within this new framework, the French armed forces now intervene primarily within systems characterised by chaos, the violation of the rule of law or the threat to peace in order to facilitate the restoration of a stable social and political system.

Moreover, while in the past, the strategic objectives of a conflict tended to depend on the direct outcome of the fighting, the military results achieved in today's theatres of operations only lead to the **establishment of minimal conditions for strategic success.**

However, throughout the world war is not only approached in a manner that is always different depending on the status occupied by nations and individuals, but it is also represented, even idealised, depending on different trains of thought. While rationally conceived as a social and political activity subjected to laws in the West, war is often considered and experienced differently elsewhere. This can have fundamental consequences in the definition of the political objectives of a conflict, including among friends and allies, as thinking differently about war also entails thinking differently about victory.

<sup>1</sup> See article 2§4 of the UN Charter

## 1.2 Stabilisation, the Decisive Phase in Today's Conflicts

Following the preparation and decision-making stage, three main phases which form part of a same continuum characterise the engagement of forces in an armed conflict: **intervention, stabilisation and normalisation**. All, to varying degrees, contain moments of coercion and of control of violence, i.e. low and high intensity moments.

### *1.2.1 – Intervention, an Indispensable Phase*

By the introduction of an armed force into a given geographical area, the intervention phase generally aims at establishing temporary order by the use of force to defeat violence and chaos.

As the phase of military ascendancy over diplomacy, the intervention phase is, generally, the period of armed confrontation, sometimes of high intensity, usually against an identified opponent. The objectives tend to be clearly defined: a military victory, an end to the fighting between belligerents or the successful deployment of forces into the theatre of operations. The way this phase is carried out greatly influences the rest of the operation as the choices made (courses of action, nature of assets) have enduring impact on subsequent phases. Moreover, if the success of this phase opens the door to strategic success, failure leads logically to the failure of the operation and becomes synonymous with political defeat. This is the reason why a deployed force needs to be able to establish itself over any adversary likely to oppose its actions. It must possess the means that allow it to achieve military objectives defined according to the strategic aims of the operation, even though the intervention phase has to be planned and conducted dependent on the these aims.

“A country has not been conquered and pacified when the people have been decimated by military operations and bowed down in terror; once the initial fright has subsided, seeds of revolt will take root that will be further nourished by the built-up rancour due to the brutality of the initial action.”

“The best way to attain peace is to combine force with politics. We must remember that destruction must be used as a last recourse, and even then only in order to build something better in the end... Each time an officer is required to act against a village in a war, he needs to remember that his first duty, after securing submission of the local population, is to rebuild the village, reorganize the local market and establish a school. The process of establishing peace and future organization in a country will come from the combined use of force and politics. Political action is by far the most important. It derives its strength from the country's organization and its inhabitants.”

General Gallieni

*Fundamental Instructions, May 22<sup>nd</sup> 1898.*

### 1.2.2 – Stabilisation, the New Decisive Phase

In this phase of conflict, the aim is to consolidate the transitional order previously imposed through the reduction and the containment of the violence, allowing all to set off on the path towards peace. For those involved, this is a time of complexity and the management of opposites, where short term emergencies and long term necessities must be dealt with at the same time within a country that has been shaken at its very core.

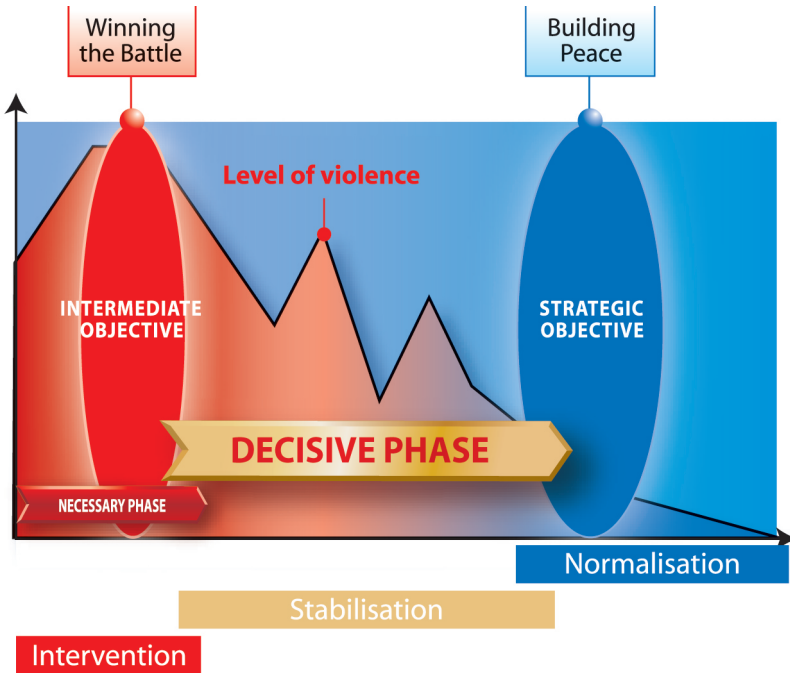
The presence of armed forces is essential to assist and support those working towards the establishment of an enduring peace. However, in contrast to the previous phase, the objectives are rarely clearly defined, even though in broad terms, the aim is to restore stability through a general control of the area and make confidence-building possible between the protagonists.

This phase must lay the foundations for the reconstruction of the state and has to be conducted by the military force working in close cooperation with its environment in order to ensure the coherence of all the lines of operation. Cooperating with increasingly important non-military actors, the armed forces may play the leading role (military operations, overall security), a supporting role (public order, the restoration of the state, humanitarian actions, environment) or only participate indirectly (justice, economic support, diplomacy).

However, it is also about nation building. In all theatres and beyond political and economic structures, it is the rejection of secular ties and the disruption of social foundations that reveal ethnic, religious or cultural rifts. Along with others, armed forces need to help heal the wounds and rebuild a common vision, a necessary condition for a return to peace.

**The stabilisation phase is the decisive phase of a military operation;** the decisive action is carried out on the ground, at the heart of human society. It is here that armed forces establish the conditions for strategic success. The stabilisation phase depends to a large extent on a preparation which, involving numerous actors, starts with the concept of the operation, and

allows for a successful transition from one phase to another as this profoundly influences the future course of the conflict. The success or failure of the stabilisation phase is often determined by the beginnings.



### 1.2.3 – Normalisation, the Return to Peace Phase

Relying on the relative stability obtained and the bases necessary for the reconstruction of the state and the nation, the normalisation phase focuses on the installation and strengthening of an enduring political, judicial and social system accepted by the protagonists in the conflict. The success of this phase assumes a good understanding that the “normality” to be re-established, is very often and in many ways very different from the normality as understood within the nations involved. As with the previous stabilisation phase, this success assumes that

it was thoroughly thought out before the start of the intervention. One only comes out of a crisis well if one enters it well.

The progressive withdrawal of the force in favour of the legitimate authority, local security forces and non-military actors marks the ultimate success of the military operation.

While in the past, the achievement of the strategic objectives of a conflict closely depended on the outcome of the fighting, the military results achieved in current theatres of operations lead only to the **establishment of conditions for strategic success.**

Prior to undertaking the operation, the **intervention phase** must end with an **indispensable tactical success**, be conducted as determined by the strategic objectives and allow a harmonious transition to the following phase.

**The stabilisation phase is the decisive phase.** Here, military forces operate in close coordination with their environment and restore stability through a general control of the area. This phase allows the establishment of conditions for the achievement of the strategic objective and precedes a **normalisation phase** which is that of a **return to peace.**

### 1.3 From Symmetrical Warfare to Asymmetrical Conflicts

The age-old form of war, the combat of the weak against the strong, has lost much of its relevance today: while Western armies retain an undisputable operational superiority, they are increasingly confronted with new forms of conflicts, which Clausewitz described as “small wars”, and they need to be able to engage in different forms of conflict.

### *1.3.1. – Symmetrical and Dissymmetrical Conflicts*

Traditional forms of armed conflict, these conflicts could be described as conventional. They are conducted by institutional armies that pursue similar goals and use similar means and courses of action. The essential distinction between the two lies in the difference in strength between the belligerents and the consequences that it may cause.

Symmetrical conflicts oppose similar adversaries and are not immune to the risk of defeat. Therefore, except when the development of a deterrent strategy prevents armed confrontation, the interest of each potential protagonist is to gain superiority, i.e. create a dissymmetry which will guarantee victory and hence allow it to enter the conflict with the greatest chance of success.

Dissymmetrical conflicts oppose similar adversaries with, however, unequal military capabilities. They offer the greatest chances of success to the most powerful belligerent. However, most conflicts no longer end through official means such as a surrender or an armistice, but rather tend to continue in a different mode. Hence, unless the conflict ends rapidly through a decisive victory accepted by all parties, such a conflict often leads the weaker belligerent to shift towards an asymmetrical form of conflict which constitutes his only hope of victory against the stronger party.

### *1.3.2 – Asymmetrical Conflicts*

In asymmetrical conflicts, one of the belligerents deliberately places himself in a field different from the one in which his opponent possesses a manifest superiority. The emphasis is thus placed on the total disparity between the nature of the means and courses of action. In such conflicts which are largely determined by the technological and/or material superiority of one of the protagonists, the aim of the weaker belligerent is to transform the operational dominance of his opponent into impotence or weakness. In this way, he emphasises his own factors of superiority, even more so since these are materially,

psychologically and morally distinct from those of his opponent. The military superiority of Western armies is most likely to provoke increasingly asymmetrical responses. One can distinguish two types of asymmetry which have different implications for the armed forces:

- a conflict in which a subversive system leads a global asymmetrical struggle against the interests of a state or an alliance and in which the armed forces are only part of the instruments available in response to the threat;
- a conflict in which an armed force is confronted with an asymmetrical form of combat directly linked to its involvement constituting the violent response of its opponent in the field. As the main targets of these actions located in the theatre of operations, the armed forces are the key actors in that fight.

### *1.3.3 – From Symmetrical to Asymmetrical Conflicts*

Though asymmetrical conflicts have become increasingly important over recent decades, they are not new. On the one hand, such conflicts have always been part of humanity's history of warfare and all ages and all armies have experienced them. On the other hand, that which appears at once new, outside the traditional field of military combat and temporarily without an adequate response is often described as asymmetrical.

Marked by a national history characterised mainly by warfare on the European continent, the French Army has primarily been organised and equipped with reference to symmetrical conflicts. Nevertheless, in its military history - whether recent or distant - the French Army has also had to deal with dissymmetrical or asymmetrical conflicts, though these have not significantly influenced the Army's organisation.

While a future commitment of our country in a symmetrical conflict cannot be excluded, it is unlikely to occur in the coming decades.



“It seemed that rebellion must have an unassailable base, something guarded not merely from attack, but from the fear of it: such a base as we had in the Red Sea Ports, the desert, or in the minds of the men we converted to our creed. It must have a sophisticated alien enemy, in the form of a disciplined army of occupation too small to fulfil the doctrine of acreage: too few to adjust number to space, in order to dominate the whole area effectively from fortified posts. It must have a friendly population, not actively friendly, but sympathetic to the point of not betraying rebel movements to the enemy. Rebellions can be made by 2 per cent. active in a striking force, and 98 per cent. passively sympathetic. The few active rebels must have the qualities of speed and endurance, ubiquity and independence of arteries of supply. They must have the technical equipment to destroy or paralyse the enemy's organized communications, for irregular war is fairly Willisen's definition of strategy, “the study of communication” in its extreme degree, of attack where the enemy is not. In fifty words: Granted mobility, security (in the form of denying targets to the enemy), time, and doctrine (the idea to convert every subject to friendliness), victory will rest with the insurgents, for the algebraical factors are in the end decisive, and against them perfections of means and spirit struggle quite in vain.”

T.E. Lawrence,  
*Desert Guerrilla*

Dissymmetrical and, even more so, asymmetrical conflicts have become the points of reference for the French Army. Since asymmetrical warfare finds its full expression in insurrections, guerrilla warfare, terrorism and the manipulation of populations, certain capabilities which are indispensable for the conduct of symmetric or dissymmetrical warfare have proven to be ill-adapted in part to asymmetrical conflicts.

While still essentially organised within the framework of conflicts between forces of a similar nature, Western armies are today confronted with a **rise in asymmetry** which largely feeds on their technological or material superiority. Since their adversaries can only hope to win through other means, they put the emphasis on the disparity in nature of the means and courses of action allowing them to capitalise on their own strengths.

## 1.4 New Adversaries

Confrontation between states by means of regular armed forces has given way to conflicts in which new adversaries appear alongside states adopting an asymmetrical approach.

As in the past, some states use asymmetry either as an indirect military approach aimed at avoiding the strength of the opponent and at exploiting his weaknesses (as generally the case with guerrillas), or by means of an indirect strategy seeking to defeat the opponent's will by non military or non conventional means (terrorism, development of WMD, manipulation of information).

However, other non-state actors appear and assert their presence. They use fundamentally asymmetrical methods whose forms depend on their own objectives:

- predatory systems such as criminal organisations aimed at making a profit seldom enter within the field of competence of the armed forces and are primarily dealt with by the law enforcement apparatus (justice and police);

- protest systems pursuing local political goals by means of an armed confrontation seek to obtain participation in or gain control over local power structures. They also use the armed confrontation as a means to subtract territories and populations from the authority of the state they are fighting;
- subversive systems of a revolutionary nature use unbridled violence in pursuit of an uncompromising global political objective, generally based on the advent of a new society.

## 2 –A New Use of Force

By changing its purpose, the use of force adapts to the changes in international relations. Since it no longer conquers but works in the service of the rule of law and peace, force acts at the very heart of life: human society. While always necessary each time an army needs to fight, the defeat of the enemy is no longer enough to ensure the success of the engagement, nor does it constitute the main objective of the use of force.

The objective is therefore not so much to destroy an adversary but rather to act on his will and to restrict him so that he does not or no longer uses the strengths he possesses. The “trial of strength” has been replaced by a “confrontation of wills”. Even more so than in the past, the use of force cannot be an end in itself, but must constantly remain strictly subordinated to the strategic objectives.

### 2.1 The Web of Actions

When deployed in theatres of operations, armed forces are confronted with an intricate web of actions. Even though they partially overlap, the succession of the phases (intervention - stabilisation - normalisation) allows the identification of the dominant actions for each: use of force, security, support to the population, to the public services, the re-establishment of the rule of law etc... These require multi skilled combat units, different and varied levels of force, structures, training and equipment. All the same, at any time during a particular phase, forces also find themselves confronted with different methods and multiple tasks, requiring of them to be flexible and versatile. One unit may have to use all available force or confront mindless violence, while another unit, sometimes in a same zone, has to support a wounded population or raise and train local forces in order to take over later on.

Moreover, more so than before, the opponent one sometimes has to fight, often becomes tomorrow's partner and will need to be involved in the resolution of the conflict: it is in the village that has been secured by force that one will need to re-establish normal living conditions, recreate markets and send children to school. The fickle crowd that welcomes or opposes has the capacity to change sides as the result of a sign, image or order. On the spot diplomacy and military action are closely interrelated and form two aspects of the soldier in operations.

In a same theatre, an **intricate web of actions** (support to the population, combat, support to the public services...) has become the rule for **Army soldiers, who see their job taking on new dimensions.**

## 2.2 Dominating Urban Areas and Controlling Spaces

In operations, armies have often had to choose between defeating the enemy forces and conquering the seat of power: the city. In most cases, they have chosen the first alternative, only embarking on the second if the mission demanded so. Because armies can more easily deploy and act in open spaces than in urban areas, they have been equipped, structured and trained to act in such spaces. Yet today, with the forces acting primarily in a human environment more and more often concentrated in urban areas, the city has supplanted the countryside as the principal zone of action. Both the stakes and theatres of conflicts, cities have become the field of combat and the names of recent battles are mainly those of cities: Sarajevo, Grozny, Beirut, Baghdad, Mitroviza, Basra, Abidjan, Kabul, Bint Jebel...

But cities are costly to take, hold and control. They confine those that fight within them in an enclosed space and force them to operate differently than in the open. Concentrating violence, they focus attention. As the battlefield of choice in asymmetrical warfare, the city is therefore one of the last areas where determined guerrillas can hope to defeat or resist a modern army. It provides them with suitable ground and multiple

support. Attacks, ambushes, shootings, infiltration, disinformation and crowd manipulation are the weapons they use, which armed forces need to fight and against which they need to protect themselves.

Moreover, regions which are difficult to reach sometimes remain essential zones of action and, like urban areas, a favoured environment for asymmetrical combat. Mountains, forests and arid or marshy expanses remain the bastions of determined enemies who use these areas for training, to rebuild their forces and to control the trafficking that develops in grey areas, sometimes spanning a number of borders. The armed forces need to know how to fight in this terrain and exercise pressure on a fleeting adversary well-adapted to the terrain in order to deprive him of his freedom of action and prevent him from taking the initiative.

At the same time, however, armies deploy into increasingly larger zones and conduct campaigns that may seem open-ended. While initially concentrated on military objectives during the intervention phase, armed forces subsequently have to considerably expand their actions. Present in different cities, prioritising certain areas, they need to achieve a minimal control over the vast expanses which connect these different areas. Armed forces need to possess the means of ensuring their freedom of action.

Compelled to control increasingly expanding zones of operation and to act in areas which are difficult to reach, military forces nevertheless concentrate their **operations within urban areas**. These are the preferred battlefields of asymmetrical warfare and one of the last areas where determined guerrillas can hope to defeat or resist a modern army.

## 2.3 Populations at the Heart of Military Concerns

Civilian populations affected by conflicts can be opponents or allies, sometimes one or the other successively and hence are both actors and stakes in the conflict. Populations are the objectives it is necessary to influence and whose reactions contribute to the final result.

There is not one single conflict where the civilian population does not find itself at the heart of the military concerns of all parties involved. Thus, changing from a world where the civilian population constituted “the rear” - as opposed to the front, in essence a military zone - nowadays, the armed forces operate among and in reference to it. Military forces have entered an age of conducting **war operations among populations**.

Since the stake is human society, its governance, its social contract, its institutions, rather than such and such a province, river or border, there no longer exists a line or terrain to conquer or protect. The front is multidimensional and encompasses the whole theatre of operations. To be effective, the use of force cannot be dissociated from what the people, plunged into disarray, chaos and arbitrariness, expect of it. Thus, if the victims of conflict hope, first and foremost, for protection, security and order, they also expect some form of respect and freedom.

When ignored, these essential demands may lead to failure. They impose considerable constraints on the use of force and influence objectives. They also constitute a major ethical dimension in conflicts where part of the result involves psychological confrontation.

By becoming key actors and stakes in the conflict, populations are at the heart of the concern of military forces. The latter have entered an age of conducting **war operations among populations** who aspire to order, security and respect.

## 2.4 Use of Force Centred on the Land Environment

Since the use of force applies mainly to the field of human society, it is in the land environment that it finds, as in the past, its main field of action, as it is here that crises blow up and unfold. Indeed, if military forces use and exploit the whole physical and ethereal environment in which they operate or on which they have a hold, it is through an enduring physical presence on the ground, in the contact with the other protagonists that the action undertaken bears fruit. It is on the ground that the decisive action to achieve the strategic effect takes place.

On the ground, the use of force in contact with the population relies on the control of the environment, which constitutes the link between the military success (the tactical knockout) of the intervention phase and the strategic success of the normalisation phase. The ways used to achieve this control of the environment must continuously be adapted to changes in the situation and to defined intermediate objectives.

The control of the environment in both time and space is the heart and essence of the stabilisation phase. It allows the transition from the military objective to the political aim. This transition is long, necessarily long. The fast “real time” activity favoured during the intervention phase is replaced by in-depth “useful time” activity. It implies resilient forces, able to be relieved and to adapt to changing circumstances. The stabilisation phase thus needs qualified personnel.

Mainly land-based, theatres of operations are often in far away areas. The force must be built up, deployed, maintained and supported at long distance in a constant joint framework. The logistic support capability is one of the elements essential to the success of a force. This capability of an increasingly complex and heavy nature must be strong enough to support the intervention phase, that is to say, include the rapid deployment of at least part of the force, as well as the capability of the assets and the ability to support the battle. It is also key to guaranteeing the sustainability of the deployment, sometimes for several years, following the tactical success.



BATNIF 4 was raised as part of UNPROFOR to defend the Bosnian enclaves surrounded by Bosnian Serb forces. Deployed at short notice, the battalion took over a particularly sensitive area, Skanderja. Located in the Gorbavica neighbourhood's line of fire, where numerous Bosnian Serb snipers were active, the sports centre was situated at the heart of a zone dominated by the most independent of the Bosnian militias defending the town. On arrival, the advance party lost a man, badly wounded in an ambush. From that time on, the battalion lost a man every three to four days by the fire from one side or the other.

The commanding officer decided to regain his freedom of action by choosing a dual strategy: attacking the aggressors and gaining the support of the population. Each attack was answered by an immediate and measured reaction complying with the rules of engagement. The effectiveness of these methods relied on a permanently deployed anti-sniper layout and on the trust placed in everyone in the use of force for self-defence.

Simultaneously, an area of responsibility was assigned to each sub-unit with the mission to "foster the love of France". Sections and platoons engaged in numerous aid projects for the local population.

After a few months, this double policy of an iron fist and a velvet glove bore fruit. Attacks diminished considerably. There were no more losses and the battalion regained its freedom of action at the same time as winning the trust of the local population.

**The land environment** remains the principal domain for the action of the armed forces, which is manifested by the control of the environment. This forms the essence of the stabilisation phase and implies large resilient forces and an ability to be relieved.

## 3 – A New Role for the Soldier

### 3.1 The Soldier in an Evolving Society

#### 3.1.1 – *The Requirement of Increasing Security*

French society is showing an increasing demand for individual and collective security which it expects from public authorities. This need for security, sometimes wholly subjective, applies to armies and affects their method of operating in two important areas: the security they provide the country and the security the members of the armed forces themselves can reasonably expect.

The age of asymmetrical conflicts increases the potential threats that are no longer limited to military action alone and accentuate society's vulnerabilities. At the same time, society is less and less willing to accept potential risks - natural, technological or health-related - from which it believes it should be protected by those who govern them. Citizens and politicians expect the armed forces to act in the service of homeland security when circumstances require: civil or collective security with the support or participation of military means.

Soldiers, too, benefit from the French people's increasing demand for security. Whether in barracks or in operations, their protection is becoming increasingly important. This legitimate trend involves sometimes heavy, financial constraints and exercises obvious influence over decisions and risk management in both the organisational and operational fields.

#### 3.1.2 – *The Omnipresence of the Rule of Law*

This increasing demand for security is in direct relation to the predominance of the rule of law which affects all social activities. The soldier is an ordinary citizen in the eyes of the law despite the kinds of tasks and the extraordinary situations which he has to face.

Besides, by developing the notions of the law of armed conflict, *jus ad bellum*, and the rule of law in warfare, *jus in bello*, Western

morality forbids the immoderate use of violence and imposes very strict constraints on the very act of war. This is often not the case with enemies who often operate according to very different criteria. Consequently, not only does public opinion increasingly scrutinise the conditions of military interventions and is quick to denounce excesses, but also international criminalisation processes spare no participant, including those who act in the service of what is considered to be a legitimate cause.

The soldier is thus not only subjected to domestic law but, more than others, also to a constantly evolving international law. He is responsible for his actions and, to a certain extent, also for those of his subordinates, before national and international criminal courts.

The part played by rule of law in the conduct of operations will, no doubt, continue to increase and will generate, in this field as in others, principles of "caution" and "accountability".

### *3.1.3 – Instant Information*

New technologies contribute to the acceleration and dissemination of knowledge. They make impossible any control information flows which favour the immediate and the sensational. The weight of the media influences the understanding of crises and the manner in which they are handled. It increases the emotionalism of a public which always prefers the immediate to the long-term, urgent and visible intervention to in-depth but long term actions. Moreover, while already difficult in the theatre of operations, this impossible degree of control turns the soldier into both an actor and a spectator of a scenario broadcasted directly into millions of homes throughout the world. Fighting in the morning, the same day, the soldier witnesses his actions laid bare in the crude and partial light of a news item which lacks emotional distance and is final.

### 3.2 An Aptitude for Dialogue with Multiple Actors

Acting to establish the minimal conditions for political success, armies are thus no longer the only protagonists in the conflicts in theatres of operations. At all levels, the military have to integrate the activities of various interlocutors whose objectives, methods or interests, though usually focussed on a common aim, may considerably differ from one another. Increasing multinational, interagency and inter-organisational management of conflicts and the involvement of numerous actors taking part in the stabilisation and normalisation phases require the development of an essential dialogue between civil and military actors. This ability to engage in a dialogue with a number of interlocutors and to take into consideration numerous non military constraints needs to be commonplace and cascade down to the lowest levels.

### 3.3 Proximity and Distance, or the Necessary Balance

Acting within societies which are culturally diverse requires a good understanding of the human dimension in which the forces operate. It is a question of operational efficiency which is as important as knowledge about any enemy army: its structures, its methods of operating and the performance of its equipment. In conflicts where asymmetry quite often puts our forces in a reactive posture, it is essential for them to understand, predict and anticipate. It is also a guarantee of overall effectiveness by developing the best possible integration of forces new to the zone, thereby preventing an inevitable rejection, sometimes reinforced by the duration of the conflict and errors made.

This knowledge of the environment in which the force operates can only come as the result of cultural awareness and physical proximity. It is not innate and has to be planned, cultivated and be the object of specific actions. In order to establish the conditions necessary for peace, order and security, it is firstly a case of understanding the sense of where we operate, and what the expectations of the local population and its leaders are, and

it is also to require what is possible and only that. Part of French culture, this ability to relate to a population torn apart by war contributes to facilitating our actions by reducing the level of hostility towards our forces.

However, though soldiers need to cultivate a certain proximity to the other, they also have to maintain a certain distance in order to preserve their operational effectiveness, and, above all, the country's interests. While it is good for a soldier to remain sensitive to human misery, he also needs to maintain his vigilance. The great variety of humanitarian tasks which are now entrusted to him, restraint in the use of force, a necessary willingness to integrate in his environment, cultural awareness, - all these features must not distract him from a task which requires impartiality and the permanent ability to use force. Possessing an indispensable sense of distance, each individual needs to know how to remain both close and be able to stand back at the same time, and to act without hesitation against those who stand in the way of the accomplishment of his mission.

### **3.4 Staying a Soldier First and Foremost**

Aware of change in the modern era, in combat, the soldier nevertheless remains confronted by intangible difficulties which manifest themselves in what Clausewitz called the “phenomenon of friction”. This is the basis for the differences that exist between planning and action. It is much more pronounced in the land environment, the heterogeneous nature of which is greater than found in the others.

*Danger* is inherent to war and spares no one. For the troops on the ground, danger is ever present and can appear unexpectedly in many different forms. The restrictive nature of the environment and the necessity to operate in close proximity to the population prevents the soldier from avoiding it as much as he would like and to fight from a distance. Only the forces of morality, group cohesion and confidence in those around him, his equipment or the just nature of his cause, protect the soldier from psychological pressure and the effects provoked by his awareness of the danger.

*The physical and psychological effort* produces a fatigue and stress that spare no one, diminish performance, lead to mistakes, and impair judgement, analysis or the ability to make decisions. For land forces, the continual proximity to danger and the inability to relieve crews and teams increase the weariness of soldiers.

Lastly, *luck and uncertainty* dominate in warfare, where nothing ever happens as it was planned, even when the supposed technical performances give the illusion of successful planning. Surprise is not only the product of : multiple variables, the free judgement of some individuals, and/or mistakes made. It is essentially the result of the clash between intelligence and the freedom innate to all adversaries to "dictate the law to the other" according to Clausewitz.

As for his predecessors, the brutality of the situation, the paroxysmal increase in violence, stress and continual waiting remain the soldier's lot. Whatever the nature of the deployment, he is faced with difficult conditions. These are not the prerogative of current conflicts where the apparent simplicity of yesterday would have been replaced with today's complexity. From the Argonne to the Battle of Algiers, from Indochina to the African Great Lakes or from Sarajevo to the fighting in Beirut, everywhere, soldiers have been confronted with violence, drama, death and doubt. There has never been a time where our soldiers have not had to fight without needing to face up to the test or dilemma of choice.

This persistence of a perpetual friction and a brutal reality will remain at the heart of the life of soldiers who, trained to confront extreme situations, need to be able to address them with a clear conscience underpinned by a common ethic and an enduring moral strength, the latter very often remaining the guarantee for success.

The French soldier belongs to a society whose demand for **increased security**, the **predominance of the rule of law** and whose thirst for **instant information** impose considerable constraints on him in the exercise of his duty.

Operating in tandem with numerous actors during the stabilisation and normalisation phases, **the soldier** needs to develop an **aptitude for dialogue** and to take into consideration numerous constraints at all levels.

He always needs to maintain the balance between a necessary **proximity** and **distance** which remains the guarantee of the effectiveness of his actions. He is inevitably confronted with difficult conditions and **extreme situations**. Hardship, luck, fatigue and doubt remain the constants of any deployment.



Beside my team of elite marksmen and protected by sandbags, on the 14th floor of a destroyed building in the heart of Sarajevo which was under siege, I observed a nest of Serbian snipers from the Gorbavica area. There wasn't a sound, the sky was magnificently blue, and the view from the blown out window was impressive. I felt rather relaxed. At that point I made the mistake of passing in front of the opening that gaped at the emptiness. A deafening bang was heard and I was thrown backwards. A sniper was waiting. I fell back, somewhat stunned, while my surprised men were now frenzied. I heard "Fire back!... Fire back!" followed by the blast of the Famas assault rifles. Why were they firing their Famas? What were they shooting at? That was a mystery. In the midst of the commotion, I could hear a non-commissioned officer shouting in his radio "the lieutenant is hit...the lieutenant is hit" I lift my bullet proof jacket. The bullet, probably a 7.62 mm caliber, had entered my right side just under the resin sheet. There was just a trickle of blood, it did not look serious. I felt my back and found a mess of loose flesh. I had been pierced from front to back. I panicked. The soldiers pulled off my helmet and my jacket but no one, including myself thought of putting a dressing on the wound. I therefore pressed my hand on the wound to stem the hemorrhaging, and, assisted by one of my men, I walked down the 14 floors. It was endless. Once I got to the ground floor, the VAB armoured Medevac had not arrived yet. A civilian stopped his car and offered to take me to the local hospital. I refused, preferring to leave in a VBL light armoured vehicle. I settled as best as I could in the back of the vehicle and we rushed towards the military hospital. It could have been almost twenty minutes since I was hit, and I began to be frightened. I thought of my wife and daughters. I was still conscious a few minutes later when a surgeon leant over me wearing a mask and said: "Now we must sleep".

Account by Lieutenant V. (BATINF 4) - Sarajevo 1994

# Conducting the Operation and Achieving Peace

The variety of engagements places the land battle in a **joint and multinational framework** within which it generally maintains a leading role. The change in the types of conflict strengthens the **need for combined-arms action** which is consubstantial to land action.

The need to operate among populations, the contribution of new technologies, the opposing *modus operandi* and the constraints of the rules of engagement shape the manner in which land forces operate and within which the **individual retains an essential role**. The land forces need to possess a **similar ability to act in emergency situations and in the longer-term** in theatres of operations where they need to be able to adapt the nature and the capabilities of the command systems and those elements deployed in the field.

Multi-faceted violence forces troops on the ground **to protect themselves without withdrawing** and to **attempt to control it** through the use of a large choice of means suitable for possible use in close proximity to crowds.

In order to understand asymmetry and better dominate the opponent, intelligence is a key function in which the complementarity between strengthened human intelligence and technical research is vital **since the objective now is to understand as much as it is to know**. As a combat weapon, the management of information supports land operations.

The stabilisation of the environment requires the introduction and the provision of support to specific actions where land forces harmonise with a number of parties in order to **contribute to the return of a stable social and political system**.

## 1 – Acting

### 1.1 Combined Arms Operations at the Heart of the Air-Land Battle

The air-land battle is inherently combined in nature. The characteristics of an extremely varied and segmented environment do not allow for the concentration of all the means necessary to conduct a particular operation within the same unit or weapons platform. Combined arms operations combine within structures at tactical levels the effects of operational functions (i.e. the branches) which are usually split into separate and distinct units. Key to joint integration, their mastery allows the commander to possess an air-land force that operates coherently both close to and on the ground while also ensuring the necessary complementarity with the other components.

Combined arms operations respond perfectly to the increasing importance of operations in built-up areas which make the coordination of effects even more necessary. In this enclosed environment with limited space, there can be no success without a temporary integration of a number of capabilities. In the course of a conflict, the diversity of situations and the change in conditions for the use of force only reinforce the need for combined arms action.

While they have long been limited to brigade and battlegroup levels, i.e. battalion or regimental groupings, combined arms operations now appear to be required at lower levels. Infantry companies and armoured squadrons need to form the nuclei for combat teams able to incorporate the combat or combat support functions required for a given mission. Furthermore, it is often useful to form small combined-arms teams, at platoon or, even section levels, particularly when acting in an enclosed environment.

Lastly, from an initial intervention where optimised operational functions are involved, to a stabilisation phase aimed at creating the conditions for peace, land forces experience a change in

their capability requirements. It is characterized by a large increase in means of environmental control, in terms of security and of mobility, at the expense of those designed for destruction and aggression. Nevertheless, though weapons of destruction should remain in the background if possible, they still need to be immediately available as they remain necessary to dissuade an opponent or restrain him in case violence breaks out again. Hence all units need to be able to carry out combined arms operations adapted to the stabilisation and normalisation phases and to possess a common basis of training which reinforces the adaptive and reversible capabilities of land forces in theatres of operations.

Inseparable from land operations, **combined arms operations have become increasingly necessary** because of the importance of operations in urban areas and the variety of situations or conditions for the use of force.

Long restricted to the lower level of tactical groupings, combined arms operations have become **increasingly necessary at the lowest tactical levels**. Moreover, the capability requirements of the land forces now involve a reduced need for means of destruction and aggression and an increase in those for the purpose of control of the environment and security.

## 1.2 A Permanent Joint Framework

The variety and types of deployment place land operations in a permanently joint environment that transcends the specific capabilities of each Service. Land forces operate within a joint environment in which the interdependence of the various components becomes daily more important.

The command of an operation is always joint at the strategic level, whether within the joint staffs or within an alliance or international organisation under whose authority it is operating. Similarly, it will be so at the operational level in every theatre and the force commander, COMANFOR, has a joint headquarters. It can also be joint at the tactical level when the size or the characteristics of the force justify deeper integration or within

Following an air attack on the Licorne forces in Bouake on November 6th, 2004, and France's response to the attack, civil unrest exploded in Abidjan directed against French nationals and French symbols. The 43<sup>eme</sup> BIMA was deployed to defend the camp and to secure the airport in order to maintain the use of the runway, receive reinforcements and permit the evacuation of thousands of victims of pillage. At the "Akwaba" crossroads which controls access to the Port Bouet zone, the first battalion, a combined arms tactical grouping, closely confronted an ever growing number of insurgents for nearly fourteen hours. Using all of the means at their disposal: armour, army infantry, French Marines, engineers... they fought to keep the upper hand, to prevent the inflow of insurgents from joining those who were fighting against the remainder of the battalion forces within the airport zone. The platoons and troops of the battalion manoeuvred permanently in the smoke of teargas and in the noise of machine guns firing above the crowd in order to dissuade it from moving forward, and using projectors of ERC armoured cars to pierce the darkness. The success of the others depended on their own success. The captain, forced to lose ground, pulled back his forces to a line of containers marking the last possible point of defense required to prevent the whole layout from being overwhelmed.

In the distance, helicopters managed to disrupt the flow of the crowd at the level of the bridges over the lagoon. At dawn on November 7th, after a vigorous counterattack, the squadron regained the crossroads lost to insurgents during the night. By late morning, reinforcements arrived in the airport zone to hand over the battalion units, allowing them to move towards the bridges and to take control of the southern side of the city, and enabling evacuation of thousands of foreign and French nationals.

the context of establishing joint components for amphibious, airborne or special operations.

Moreover, the increasing coordination of certain functions, the sharing of equipment of the same types or operational and organisational requirements may extend joint integration to even the lowest levels of command in certain areas. While, during the course of an operation, the supported component may vary, the land component almost always occupies a central place.

In the intervention phase, the principal role falls to one or other of the components depending on the objectives and the capabilities required. This is the case, for example, for air or naval air forces when the need is to reduce opposing capability with fires prior to a ground offensive or an amphibious or airborne assault. The air and naval air operations in the 1991 Gulf War, in Kosovo in 1999 or Afghanistan in 2001 illustrate this perfectly. But the destruction of enemy capabilities or the denial of such and such a zone are not enough to guarantee success. The moment always comes when a ground offensive proves necessary. Despite the ability of the other components to inflict severe damage upon the opposing force, only land forces are able to conquer and hold an objective, ensure the security in secured areas or beat enemy ground forces and ensure final victory.

In the stabilisation and normalisation phases, the ground engagement of land forces plays a major part in the dissuasive effect of the joint force in the human environment or in guaranteeing the access of international organisations or NGOs to the area. Their presence is also proof of the country's political will. Men and women on the ground play a key role given their ability to permanently adapt, to get to know the environment and above all to make a relevant assessment about it.

More than ever to the fore, acting with the support of the other components, land forces operate during almost the entire conflict in a true joint land battle.

The variety and types of deployment place land operations in a **permanently joint environment** which transcends the specific capabilities of each Service and has become daily more and more important.

While the other Services may play a major role during certain phases of the operation and act with the support of the land component, the latter, more often than not, plays **an essential, if not dominant, role throughout the conflict**. During the intervention, only land forces have the ability to secure and control an area or to defeat the enemy forces. In the stabilisation phase, their deployment on the ground in close proximity to other actors and their ability to discriminate in the use of force are essential for success.

### 1.3 Multinationality, Legitimacy and Constraints

The deployment of forces within a multinational framework has become the norm since the international community no longer views conflict management as occurring outside a multilateral framework whose legitimacy is generally guaranteed by the United Nations. Moreover, deployments on a multilateral basis reinforce the legitimacy of the operation, whereas single unilateral action may raise doubts about political intentions and objectives. Experience has shown that the success of an operation and the exit process are closely linked to the legality and legitimacy of the armed intervention, as well as to the internal and external support involved. Lastly, the cost and proliferation of military operations lead the states involved to seek to share the financial burden within the coalitions.

For our country, increasing European integration will multiply the number of deployments of the different member states' ground forces in operations, as were the cases of Concordia in Macedonia (2002), Artemis in Ituri (2003), EUFOR in Bosnia (2004) or the establishment of a European force in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 2006. Moreover, the political and economic requirements of this integration lead to a relative similarity of equipment for the land forces, which is a source of operational coherence and cost control. At the same time, being

still the framework of our collective defence, NATO remains, in part, the framework for our training and for the definition of the interoperability of our forces.

But states are increasingly averse to automatic courses of action, while wishing to become involved in crisis management. Hence, coalitions of the willing may become the preferred framework for future operations. This could lead the French Army to undertake stabilisation operations, on the one hand, in the framework of coalitions of militarily and technologically advanced nations and, on the other, in that of heterogeneous coalitions with different levels of capability.

Nevertheless, whatever the type of alliance or coalition, the multinational character of operations, even when responding to political necessity or driven by a concern over the legitimacy of the operation, causes certain difficulties. The requirements of different partners wishing to promote areas of expertise in order to ensure their influence within the coalition can unbalance the composition of the force. Furthermore, technical and operational imbalances, between a digitised and a non-digitised force for example, are liable to create interoperability problems and inconsistencies in capability which a clever opponent would be able to exploit. Even though multinationality has become unavoidable, it sometimes weakens the military effectiveness of the force, requires the pursuit of a degree of interoperability, costly both in terms of equipment and procedures and makes the management of the rules of engagement more complex.

Increasing **European integration** will multiply the number of joint engagements while **NATO** remains, in part, the framework for the definition of the **interoperability** and **training** of our forces.

Coalitions of the willing may become the preferred framework for numerous future operations.

However, multinational operations present multiple **constraints**. Though an important factor in terms of **legitimacy**, it is not, intrinsically, a guarantee of military effectiveness.



## 2 – Controlling

### 2.1 Managing the use of force

#### 2.1.1 – *Necessary Force, Essential Control*

In the course of a conflict, the use of force remains intimately linked to the political and military objectives. It needs to be adjustable at all times and adapted to the phase of the conflict, to the level of violence and to the soldiers' environment.

When intervening through force, ground forces must dominate the opposing forces in order to attain the objective by forcing them to stop fighting. Hence, they use all the force necessary to dominate the enemy, to shatter him and to gain the military victory at the lowest cost. Once the combat phase is over, the use of force loses part of its effectiveness because of the change in situation and the definition of new objectives. Therefore, during the stabilisation phase, a limited and discriminate use of force is more likely to lead to success than an immoderate use would. Careful not to feed the violence they seek to contain, troops must seek to impose their power, if possible without using it.

However, reversibility must be permanently maintained. In the heat of combat, it may seem useful to cease using weapons in order to allow success to lead to peace; in the end, a sudden or progressive return to the use of force is sometimes necessary and should not be excluded. Whether it is by choice or imposition, the means to do so need to be available at all times.

By its very presence, a land force allows the situation to develop in the desired manner and influences events, in order to avoid, when this is still possible, that instability develops into a situation of general confrontation. This capacity for appeasement is, most often, based on the dissuasive nature of a destructive force placed at the service of peace. It nevertheless requires that the force deployed retains, in the eyes of the outside world, its credibility at all times. It is based on power and the willingness to use it, if necessary, and within clearly defined limits which are understood by all the protagonists. It also relies on rules of

engagement that are understood by all. However, this dissuasive effect only applies to those who recognise it as such. In contrast, the asymmetrical opponent, in fact, places himself beyond common rationality and attempts to bypass it.

But the control of force does not mean timidity in action. The engagement of a land force requires the possession of sufficient means to attain the defined objective. Intervening by force and stabilising by the means of force, means to be able to dominate an opponent through tactical superiority, the quality of the combatants - their endurance, their training, their determination - the performance of the equipment and the control of both information and the environment.

At the end of the combat phase, the use of force loses part of its effectiveness. A limited and measured use of force based on its **dissuasive nature** has to be the preferred option so as to **avoid feeding excessive violence**.

### *2.1.2 – Win Over the Population, Isolate the Opponent and Fight the Enemy*

The population constitutes the centre of gravity for most operations or, at least, one of the keys to success. Hence, it always has to be at the centre of the planning and conduct of operations. It is essential to separate it from the declared opponent, to win it over -or at least, not to alienate it- and to avoid creating obstacles to legitimate expectations. Similarly, it is essential to be able, in increasing coordination with other actors, to respond quickly to the demands of the populations who often want nothing more than to be able to live in dignity and safety.

- *Isolating the Opponent*

As much as defeating and undoing the opponent during the intervention phase or the combat missions in the stabilisation phase, one of the objectives of ground units is to persuade the population to not support, or even reject, the opponent. Resisting the traps set by the enemy, the spiral of violence it seeks to feed, the population must be convinced of our success by hitting the opponent with determination each time that it is

“A number of situations obviously require military intervention in its classic and traditional form: when a specific objective needs to be reached before anything else, when the enemy's assets and morale must be destroyed, when key leaders must be removed... When a military action is required, it must be carried out using all the elements of modern tactics and science, based on detailed preparation and with utmost vigor. This is the optimal way to save time, human resources and money. It is imperative that there be no misunderstanding on this issue.

A different approach is used in securing a zone in which it is believed that economic activity will be conducted shortly thereafter.

Do you think that a soldier, knowing that the village that is being taken will become his garrison for weeks or years to come, will torch it willingly? Will he mistreat its inhabitants who will shortly be working at his side? No.

Does it not take more leadership, calm, judgement and rectitude to maintain under submission, and without firing a single shot, a hostile and angry population, than to crush an insurrection using heavy artillery?”

Marshal Lyautey

*Letters from Tonkin and Madagascar - 1921*

necessary. It is also important to protect the population from the sufferings of combat, in order for it to find advantages in our success and, thereby, side with us.

- *Limiting Destruction*

The constraints imposed on the use of force in order to protect the population, infrastructure, religious and cultural sites are the guarantees of future success, as the suffering of a civilian population caught up in the middle of an urban combat under the eye of the world's media always influences public opinion to the detriment of the intervention force.

Conducting a war in the midst of the population, land forces must ensure they contain their destructive power for political, economic, human and operational reasons, and they must also ensure a necessary speed of reaction in order to avoid being disowned and losing the support vital to their operations.

- *Producing Security*

For those who, in a theatre of operations, live in fear of violence, exactions, of massacres sometimes, the soldier who stands guard on the corner of the street, the patrol that criss-crosses the area or the platoon sitting in the post dominating the neighbourhood, are seen as the guarantors of their security. Plunged into war and misery, populations demand order and justice which, for them, first and foremost mean the security of their properties and lives. They expect this from the troops who, after having intervened, live amongst them, even though the forces also rapidly run the risk of being considered an occupation force and can become favoured targets.

The security of the population can be an explicit task for the forces or only the consequence of their presence. It is up to the units, therefore - and primarily for the chain of command- to correctly assess the need for it as well as to define the relevant courses of action and their limits. Every failure, even isolated acts - intrusion in a protected enclave, an attack on a member of a minority, an attack on a village, a killing - have a negative impact on the whole force and may call into question the legitimacy of its mission.

As a primary concern of the population, in particular after the initial fighting during the intervention phase, security presents

the greatest challenge to land forces. It is the prerequisite condition for all political and socio-economic reconstruction. Confidence building between belligerents, and thus the dynamic which leads to peace, is always linked to the general security of the area and to the sense of vulnerability of one or the warring parties. Moreover, the difficulties in imposing of maintaining this security, the setbacks, and the impressions of failure profoundly affect the morale of the soldiers on the ground and may have an influence on their commitment.

In fact, beyond personal security, which is desirable, but always relative and not only dependent on military force, the population needs to have a general feeling of security which relies on the joint action of the military and police forces (local or international), as well as on that of the legitimate authorities.

- *Facilitating the Improvement of the Living Conditions*

The improvement of the general situation of the population is an important factor for the progressive return to stability. By favouring an increase in security, land forces indirectly influence non military lines of operation (economic, humanitarian...) by allowing others to re-establish the services essential for the population's daily living conditions (water, energy, transport, medical support). Once initiated, this tangible improvement of everyday life reduces people's despair, that breeding ground for revolt on which the enemy thrives thanks to the support and recruiting pool it provides him. Moreover, the re-establishment of basic services supports the recognition of the legitimacy of the local authorities and the restoration of the rule of law.

The land force seeks to both **win the population over to its cause** and defeat the enemy. To this end, the constraints imposed on its use of force are the guarantee of the success and the assurance of support given to its activities. It is in the field of **security** and the **improvement of living conditions** that the expectations of a desperate population towards the intervention force are the greatest. They represent a real **challenge**, the failure of which could call into question the legitimacy of the mission.



### 2.1.3 – Rules of Engagement and Conduct

There is a great range of conditions for the use of force: defeating the enemy and winning the battle, fighting an opponent who uses ways of operating which are fundamentally different from those of military forces, controlling unpredictable degrees of violence, guaranteeing the protection of the forces, improving the security situation for the population, while retaining the ability to confront it, etc.. All these conditions for the use of force impose the need to define clear standards of behaviour, i.e. the rules of engagement and conduct which allow each soldier to act within the complexity of the situation and of the legal environment.

It is necessary for the forces on the ground to be able to rely on simple rules which remain applicable whatever the extremity of the conditions or isolation that the soldiers and their

commanders experience. Moreover, these rules need to be sufficiently flexible to allow forces to fulfil their mission within a legal framework, to permanently ensure their own protection and to maintain the dissuasive nature of a possible use of force.

The sometimes ill-defined legal framework of conflicts which do not fall under the conventional norms of the laws of armed conflict may make the development of rules of conduct more complex and influence their daily application. Because of the vagaries of operations, the treatment of individuals captured by the forces or temporarily detained under their authority, in particular, poses a real challenge to those confronted with it; it is at the root of a number of questions which no theatre of operations is spared.

The management of the rules of engagement and standards of behaviour is a real challenge for land forces. Faced with the complexity of the situations and regulations, as well as the consequences that one person's mistake can have, control relies on everybody's ability to confront exceptional circumstances without forgetting the common ethical rules shared by all and which remain the foundation of individual and collective training.

The use of force is based on **rules of engagement and conduct**, the management of which is a key challenge. In spite of the complexity of given situations, these rules need to be simple and applicable to all.

## 2.2 Controlling technology

### 2.2.1 – *Technology, a Multiplier of Effectiveness*

Technology multiplies the effectiveness of our land forces and allows them to keep ahead of any opponent. It provides the most significant advantages in the context of dissymmetrical warfare and facilitates military victory thanks to the additional power and the superiority it provides.

The control of information technology is the most fundamental and promising aspect of this. It allows the integration of systems, the network of means of acquisition, assessment and aggressive response as well as a continually growing capacity for the sharing of information. The significant reduction in time in order to react and strike as well as the capability of systems which now can act simultaneously rather than sequentially, allow land forces to benefit from an increased joint integration. It gives them the ability to reduce, even annihilate, the ability of the enemy's forces to react. The use of new information technology maximises manoeuvre and facilitates the disintegration of the opposing forces.

When at the service of protection, technology can greatly reduce the vulnerability of troops. It reinforces the effectiveness of protective and armoured equipment, thereby ensuring greater survival prospects for individuals and armoured and air crews in the face of all types of threats. Moreover, the removal of certain functions from direct threats and, when this is possible, the replacement of humans by machines (drones, robots) contribute to the preservation of the lives or integrity of the combatants.

However, the high technological level of a land force can sometimes create interoperability problems within coalitions in which the allies may have different standards. This limits the scope for joint action and restricts them to operating short of the full potential provided by the equipment of the most technologically advanced units.



“I thought to myself that something had to be done or else Aïded's soldiers would gain a psychological advantage over us. The problem was that enemy gunmen used women as shields. Women were placed as a “curtain” in front of a window; they would move apart suddenly for a gunner to spray machine gun fire, and then close the space again. The gunmen, of course, also changed location. Coming from Djibouti, we were very familiar with the Somalian culture. We were well aware that they thought it normal for women and children to be in combat because in clan wars the entire clan participates. They knew that this practice was shocking to us, and took advantage of it. Nonetheless, we always behaved according to Western standards and would not fire on women and children. This was an ethical matter, but I also knew that in the long run the operation would continue and the Aïded clan would never forgive us for massacring women and children. However, I needed to solve an immediate problem without fail. I therefore gave orders to the ERC armoured cars to fire their machine guns directly at the walls. In that way I was signaling that we were capable of hitting hard if matters were to escalate. We had the means and the will to return fire. Both sides seem to have understood the message. We will fight, but we will refrain from certain actions.”

Colonel de Saqui de Sannes,  
Commanding Officer *5<sup>ème</sup> Régiment interarmes d'Outremer*

### *2.2.2 – Technology and the Challenges Posed by Asymmetry*

The current preponderance of asymmetrical conflicts and the importance of the stabilisation phases no longer permit the measuring of the capability of land forces solely on the sophistication of their weapons. Confronted with the sometimes overwhelming superiority of a military force, the opponent generally switches to a different type of combat which tends to negate the technological supremacy that he faces. By melting into the environment, refusing to hold ground or to act as an objective, the opponent negates the increasing capability for acquisition and targeting by the armed forces, often constraining the latter's ability to make full use of their most effective equipment. He develops the fight in areas other than those in which land forces endeavour to operate. Hence, without denying the clear advantages that new technologies can bring, we must, at the same time, correctly assess the contribution of new technologies and focus their use in the service of the fight in the asymmetrical context.

Potential opponents and declared enemies also benefit from technological progress, including in the military domain, the large spread of which changes the aspect of some deployments. The routine presence and proliferation of modern weapons in all theatres of operations increase the direct or indirect threats to the forces involved. In addition, in the classic constant struggle of the spear and shield, those who oppose military forces exploit civil technology which they manage to turn to their advantage.

Temporarily outsmarting the military forces, they succeed in establishing a form of local supremacy and in forcing them into expensive and difficult adjustments, as demonstrated by the increasingly widespread use of remote-controlled explosive devices.

However, by supplying answers to new threats, technological progress allows the forces to operate in the same fields as the opponent, thus reducing the asymmetry. The lessons learned process strengthens this capability. It is based on a cycle, the control, continuity and rapidity of which contribute to the

development of a reactive response capability focused on satisfying the operational needs of land forces and, in particular, of the troops fighting on the ground. Sometimes conflicting with strictly regulated equipment and means of weapon acquisition, this capability is necessary to keep ahead of a constantly evolving opponent.

### *2.2.3 – Man and Technology*

Technology does not do away with the fundamental role of the individual in solving conflicts and there even seems to be a paradox of a strategic modernity according to which technological progress reinforces personal responsibility. Certain individual errors may influence the strategic environment. This is the case when a lapse in the conduct of one individual forces the military chain of command or the political authorities to become publicly involved or when the use of the Internet results in the accidental or mal-intentioned distribution of operational documents. The increasing interconnection of joint systems and the digitalisation of the battlespace sometimes result in the levelling down of the decision-making process. They can also lead some individuals to act at levels far superior to their own, e.g. the observer on the ground who is given responsibility for the delivery of powerful naval or air fire support.

However, made up of men and women plunged in extreme violence or operating among the population, land forces are, more than any other force, confronted with a human dimension which often takes precedence over technical means. In the harsh environment of operations, in battle sometimes, soldiers find themselves more often confronted with their own physical and psychological limits since the violence and misery they are the witnesses of, the fatigue, stress or fear that stalk them are far removed from their usual way of life. In particular, at all levels, the leaders are the most exposed to situations where the necessary initiative and decision-making go hand in hand with isolation and nervous pressure.

Moreover, the multitude and diversity of missions needing to be carried out in cities or in much wider spaces require large forces, while technological advances generally do not always allow any sizeable savings in force levels.

However, the issue is not to choose between individuals or equipment to the detriment of one or the other. Man and technology are equally necessary to enable land forces to confront current conflicts. They need to maintain an essential balance between their ability to deploy large amounts of troops and their capacity to acquire highly technological but correctly assessed equipment.

Technology is a multiplier of **effectiveness** which allows land forces to gain and maintain ascendancy over an adversary. Information technology is the field in which prospects are most promising for the increase of force protection. However, also benefiting from technological advances, the asymmetrical opponent endeavours to turn its use to his own advantage.

Though necessary, technology does not do away with the **increasing role of the individual** and the importance of sufficient numbers of troops for operations in urban areas and in close contact with the populations.

## 2.3 Controlling Time

The uncontested military superiority of Western armies, and in particular the United States Army, has led to the disappearance of the symmetric mode of action due to a lack of enemies. Moreover, while all dissymmetrical conflicts at some point tend to slide towards asymmetry, the shortening of the intervention phase to the benefit of the stabilisation phase appears to be a solid trend. Hence, for the land forces, action follows a new rhythm which does not only correspond to the accelerated time frame of modern conventional operations. The management and control of time have become essential.

### 2.3.1 – *Emergency Action*

Independent of the time frame of political decision-making, the time frame of a deployment is generally marked by urgency, at least for part of the forces and is based on qualities acquired over a long period of time and maintained on a daily basis.

The reactivity of land forces is the first such quality. It is a component of the general reactivity of joint forces, within which they need to remain coherent and it is closely linked to that of the other Services. A system of alert on the national territory, permanently deployed units overseas and in areas of interest or forces temporarily deployed in proximity to a crisis spot are vital aspects of this. Nevertheless, appropriate procedures in the fields of support, transport or equipment are also essential elements.

Advanced planning allows for the full expression for the reactive nature of land forces. It must be based on a detailed planning capability and an organisation that enable the Army to commit a proportion of its strength without dismantling its entire structure.

Flexibility is an indispensable capacity not only for tailoring the force to its mission and to the political and military contexts; it also provides the public authorities and the chain of command with the constant option of making necessary choices in the commitment of its forces. This requires that diversity and availability of the operational functions (i.e. combined branches) be maintained. However, urgency cannot be divorced from the capacity for endurance required by troops involved in such a framework. Toughness is the foundation of this, since it alone allows a force to maintain itself at the highest level and to retain its operational superiority in spite of the testing conditions of the initial deployment, which is often characterised by a lack of support structures.

Lastly, the ability to adapt allows land forces to evolve from an emergency deployment into a force capable of carrying out a longer term or expanded mission. This requires a reinforcement capability and the development of the operational structures.

The French Army has developed these capabilities and maintains them at the highest level in spite of the constraints that this creates. Present in numerous theatres, it has an operational capability founded on its capacity for rapid deployment. Relying on a permanent alert mechanism that provides the military chain of command with a wide spectrum of operational capabilities, it is able to act swiftly with a force, configured not just to do the essential, but in accordance with the objective and the uncertainty of the war. It can be part of an initial entry force with offensive, command and support elements and with a permanent ability to join a multinational force or to integrate elements of allied forces. In the French Army there is quite a number of different specialised units which are trained for increasingly joint operations, vital for entry or operations in theatres difficult to access: amphibious operations, airborne operations, special operations, etc. Lastly, it also acts in coherence with the capabilities of the other Services and agencies which set up the means necessary for strategic and theatre projection and support to the ground forces.

However, the limitations in national means of projection require that the right balance be sought between the strength of the rapid reaction force, the deployment timeframes required and the level of readiness. Although every minute counts in an emergency, the imperative to respond should not lead to precipitate action or to the maintenance at high readiness of a number of troops disproportionate to the needs. Emergencies have a human and financial cost. The aim to be achieved and the strength required are often better served by a long-term action. It is often better to swap superfluous haste for necessary force protection, strength and adequate support for the troops.

The operational capacity of the French Army is founded, in part, on a capability for rapid intervention which relies on a structured organisation and can only be maintained through constant effort. But **speed of reaction has a cost**; it should not lead to a large number of troops being held at high readiness levels which are disproportionate to the real needs.

“Guerilla warfare is always characterized by disproportionate forces and by the aggressive attitude of the weaker. It is an act of force, a war; but to treat it as a classic war would lead to disaster. Enemy superiority will allow him to amply defend against our attacks and crush us at the time of his choosing. (...) First, disrupt the enemy's plans, throw him off guard with camouflaged operations, bluff him and act in a way that is both unpredictable and prepared with the utmost cool: neither do what is expected, nor its opposite, but something totally different yet. (...)”

Mobility and nomadic movements alone can provide safety. (...) For a month, the company will be active on all roads leading to Grenoble: ambushes of convoys of up to 40 trucks, reinforced by local inhabitants. This is a very efficient period: the enemy suffers repeated and important losses, he is delayed, will retrench in Grenoble and will call back his isolated forces. (...) Letters seized in Grenoble reveal the Germans to be obsessed with being surrounded, a paradox when comparing the relative size of opponents.”

Captain Etienne Poiteau, Code Name 'Stéphane'  
*Mountain Guerilla - 1952*

### 2.3.2 – Long-Term Engagement

Operating in emergency situations and using all available means over a short period, land forces are also involved in conflicts which last for years. This can be the case within a same theatre, characterised by the successive phases. It can also occur simultaneously in different theatres: while involved in stabilisation in one place, the Army has to undertake an emergency intervention in another, and be prepared to stay. It therefore needs to have the ability to change the shape and capability balance of the combined branches of an element in a theatre according to the situation at the time.

But the duration is also, and above all, measured in light of the available means. Continual involvement in drawn-out conflicts requires having a sufficient number of men and women just as much as having technically available and correctly maintained equipment.

But because it is now used intensively, over long periods of time and in extreme conditions, equipment wears out more quickly and requires more numerous maintenance tasks than would be the case in the context of brief and violent conflicts. Consequently, the ability of equipment to last has to be based on an accurate assessment of their intended use and on an organisation with the means necessary to absorb the highs and lows of an unpredictable operational tempo. It can also lead to change in the daily management of expensive fleets even if this presents a major challenge and directly affects overall operational capability.

But it is the soldiers themselves who are pivotal to this capability. The number of combatants deployed stands in direct proportion to the ability to influence the resolution of crises based on a clash of wills and action in the human environment. When the French Army becomes involved in a conflict, it has to be able to organise the relief of its soldiers according to a cycle that preserves the maintenance of the operational efficiency of the force, the preparation of units still in France and the balance of everyone's personal and family life. Training and the physical and moral endurance of sufficient numbers of men and women are guarantees of the ability to endure.



Often forced to intervene unexpectedly, land forces are also involved in conflicts which last for years.

In protracted conflicts, **equipment wears out quickly**. It is important to adapt their design and management to the irregularities of an unpredictable operational tempo.

**It is the men, above all, who remain pivotal to the ability to endure.** Their training, their endurance and the organisation of reliefs which preserves operational efficiency and personal stability act as guarantees.

## 2.4 Controlling Violence

### 2.4.1 – A Multifaceted Violence Directed Against Everyone

Apart from the phases of combat, violence may be directed against land forces or against the other actors involved in the conflict. Often isolated and sporadic, its rationality is often hard to decipher for the troops.

Based on the use of terrorism as the main means of operating mode of action, urban guerrillas constitute the easiest and most effective, *and therefore the most probable*, response in the struggle of the weak versus the strong. It is with this type of warfare that land forces are confronted each time an enemy opposes them. The opponent's objective is to defeat us by influencing the political will of France rather than being able to defeat its forces.

The hostility of the population, or part of it, can be manipulated or occur as a result of incidents involving the forces committed. This can manifest itself through obstructions to the missions of the land force or through explosions of hatred and mob violence against everything that symbolises foreign intervention: deployed forces, diplomatic missions and international representatives, national interests (businesses, schools, shops) or expatriates. These acts can be spontaneous. More often than not, they attempt to discredit our forces or to force them into making an error by provoking a disproportionate response which can then be exploited.

Interfactional strife based on ethnic, political or religious grounds is translated by assassinations, bombings, attacks against the civilian population, massacres and kidnappings which may take place across the whole theatre of operations. Barbarity characterises a number of these actions which aim to ensure a maximum number of victims. Their consistency and the difficulty of preventing them present a formidable challenge. Here again, the intent may be to undermine the credibility of the force or the legitimacy of its presence. The aim may also be to influence the exit strategy, undermine a positive development or force certain elements to flee the area.

The rejection, or lack of knowledge by some, of the laws of armed conflict characterises the general use of a kind of violence often exacerbated by fanaticism and the denial of Western values by opponents operating outside any form of national framework. The forces have to keep on rejecting such logic and exerting great vigilance.

Land forces are confronted with **numerous kinds of violence**, often exacerbated by fanaticism and the rejection of Western values. These forms of violence spare no one involved in the conflict.

Urban guerrillas, obstruction, explosions of hatred from a hostile population or the barbarity of merciless internal strife are the most frequent manifestations of this. Their consistency and the difficulty of preventing them may undermine the **credibility of the force** and present a formidable challenge.

### *2.4.2 – Confronting Violence*

Controlling the level of violence in a theatre of operations consists, above all, in being able to assess its nature and the risk of it happening. These depend on the situation and objectives of each group, but also on the means available to the land forces to oppose it.

Since this violence may naturally be directed against the force, its protection becomes increasingly important. Operations among the people and the absence of a frontline multiply the

forms of aggression and change the concept of protection that now involves the entire force. While this task may seem relatively easy for combat units equipped with a large number of armoured vehicles, force protection is more difficult to achieve for headquarters and logistics units, isolated elements, liaison teams as well as for civilian organisations working for the force.

The protection of individuals not only preserves their physical integrity and lives but, because of Western public opinion's great sensitivity to casualties, also guarantees the political ability to deploy the force. Tactically, it contributes to dissuasion, encourages audacity and allows the reduction of the levels of violence by avoiding pointless response. However, if the force is to protect itself, it needs to undertake a reasoned risk analysis and avoid withdrawing inside itself and cutting itself off from its surrounding environment, since a good understanding of the latter contributes to enhance security and cannot be achieved without necessary openness. Moreover, operations in armoured vehicles, the protective equipment of soldiers and the creation of fortified camps, while sometimes necessary, isolate land forces from a population that, generally, understands neither the aims nor the reasons for it.

Considered from the very beginning of the mission, force protection is a command choice between allocated equipment, units in charge of this mission, an adapted organisation on the ground and/or the implementation of dynamic methods of operation. It is also linked to compliance with appropriate rules of behaviour which allows an increase in the degree of acceptance of the force by a population which is always quick to demonstrate its hostility to a foreign force.

Far from reducing their activities to solely that of their protection, land forces must act against violence each time they are able to do so in order to eradicate it or, at the very least control its effects, either locally or over the course of the conflict.

The use of force is sometimes necessary, but care should be taken to avoid excesses fuelling further radicalisation of an

unrestrained enemy. It is always difficult and precarious for a military commander to achieve balance between a necessary, and sometimes brutal, use of force and excessive violence used against an opponent.

When facing a crowd, it is necessary to be able to prevent it spilling over and to act despite, or against, it. This may mean offensive action, but it could also be defensive or reactive in nature when isolated elements find themselves unexpectedly faced with hostile intent. To this end, soldiers have to make use of the whole range of techniques and means available to them. The adoption of appropriate land operations tactics, techniques and procedures, the provision of specific equipment and necessary training are vital in order to allow forces to constantly adapt the nature of their response to the hostility of a crowd and to the emergence of threats. The development of reduced lethality weapons and ammunitions reinforces the operational capability of troops operating among civilian populations.

Considered from the outset, the protection of the force is a necessary balance between the equipment and units deployed for the mission; it demands the adoption of appropriate tactics on the ground. Although protection is vital, it should not lead the land forces to isolate themselves from their environment, a sound understanding of which contributes to their security.

In order to attempt to eradicate violence or control its effects, **the use of force may be necessary**. When facing hostile crowds or when attempting to control their excesses, land forces need a broad range of **means** and **options**. The development of crowd control techniques and of reduced lethality weapons and ammunitions reinforces the operational capability of troops operating among civilian populations.

“I just lost 61 of my guys, killed by NOBODY. Hard thing for a soldier (...) We are posted in the city. We can't stop traffic without stopping daily life... yet, we are there to foster life.”

General Cann - *Letter to the chief of the Army on the evening of the Drakkar terror attack on October 23rd, 1983*

“That mission, which was suitable for Diodon I and Diodon II, became difficult to fulfill at the end of Diodon III and virtually impossible in the midst of Diodon IV. Indeed, it has become difficult to provide support, in the strict sense of the word, to an army whose mission is becoming maintenance of civil order and who sees its objective publicly challenged by well-organized insurgency. It is no less difficult to protect the population as a whole without taking sides for a particular community, and to lack elementary police power such as the ability to disarm lawbreakers and motorists. We were never able to guarantee the safety of the people against terrorism and kidnapping. At best we were able to contribute to the security of the populace during the initial phase of our mission. Later, insurgents attacked our posts violently, deliberately hitting neighboring houses; they successfully cut us off from the local population, which grew leery of our presence in their midst: a Machiavellian dialectic that negated the noblest part of our mission (...) The situation evolved to the point where our mission was put into question, as most of our energy turned toward increasing our safety and strengthening our security.”

General CANN,  
*End-of-mission report, Diodon IV, September 1983 - February 1984*

## 3 – Adapting

### 3.1 From Waging the Battle to Setting the Conditions for Peace

#### *3.1.1 – From Intervention to Stabilisation, a Change from Tactics to Strategy*

Moving from the intervention phase to the stabilisation phase means moving from a tactical objective - winning the battle - to a strategic objective, the achievement of which is not only dependent on military force. It most often also means moving from an essentially dissymmetrical opponent to an asymmetrical one. Hence it means a rapid change in tactics for a force (command elements, combat, combat support and combat service support units) still organised and equipped for combat. The period when firing has ceased that immediately follows the end of combat has profound implications on the outcome of the conflict. Operational decisions, objectives of the units, the reaction and behaviour of units, the response to the essential needs of the population have a long-lasting impact on the future course of events. They make the transition a decisive period and can speed up or delay the moment when the conflict is settled. Prior to intervention, the preparation and planning of the stabilisation phase in concert with all the participating actors ensure a harmonious transition to it and paves the way to success. Very often, the all important demands of reconstruction will impose limits on the level of destruction undertaken in the initial combat phases.

Command flexibility is vital. The functions of a headquarters (HQ) in the stabilisation phase are significantly different from those of an HQ conducting an operation to neutralise or destroy an enemy. While there is a strong correlation between combat and stabilisation HQs, if only to ensure that the decisions taken by the former enable the success of the latter, key differences remain and have to be taken into account. Rather than having permanently specialised staffs for each phase of the conflict, the

necessary development of command elements in theatre relies on the military staff having the necessary flexibility to evolve from one method of operating to another. This involves cultural adaptability and the ability to incorporate the necessary cells and functions into an intangible central core - and also of disbanding them in order to avoid just adding them and risking developing over-elaborate command systems.

On the ground, the units have to refocus their methods of operation in accordance with their new missions. Their skills have to be able to evolve from one phase to the other. While necessary in combat, destructive force is much less necessary in building peace, where the human presence, relationships and general security become much more important. Moreover, while it sometimes seems preferable for the same units to manage this change, certain circumstances may lead to a specifically planned changeover in response to a new situation in theatre.

Moving from the intervention phase to the stabilisation phase is moving from a tactical objective to a strategic objective, the achievement of which is not only dependent on military force. This entails a **change in tactics**. Planned as early as possible, a harmonious transition to the stabilisation phase paves the way to future success.

Command flexibility is vital in this. HQs need to adapt while avoiding a natural tendency to develop over-elaborate command systems. On the ground, the units have to refocus their methods of operation and their composition when destructive force becomes less necessary than **human presence, relationships and general security** in order to build peace.

### *3.1.2 – Opening Up and Understanding in order to Adapt to the Others*

Forces need to adapt not only to the change of the shape of the conflict over time but also to those they work with or to those they fight: populations, political authorities, organisations, belligerents and the enemy. Apart from some experts, it is not a question of transforming the soldiers in the operation into specialists of far away places and different cultures. It is, however, essential for them to have a capacity for flexibility, tolerance and openness which allows them to confront the unknown or the unusual.

Adapting to the local population means understanding that the latter thinks differently, does not have the same hopes, and does not have the same clan, ethnic or family relationships. It means accepting that the objectives of the local actors may be far removed from those of the force, our country or the international community. It means creating, even at the lowest level, local solutions in keeping with the environment.

Adapting to the opponent means knowing that he too has his own ways of thinking, sometimes extremely different from ours, and that he probably does not consider changing them. It means trying to discover his intents and objectives and understand his rationale.

This ability to adapt is principally based on proximity which enables the understanding of fluctuations in situations and attitudes, and thus the complexity of reality.

The land forces have to adapt to all those they come into contact with (populations, political authorities, organisations, belligerents, and the enemy) by developing the **necessary openness and understanding at all levels.**



## 3.2 Facing Up to Increasing Asymmetry

The fight against asymmetry cannot be restricted to the elimination of threats whose constant changes thwart the effectiveness of a never-ending struggle. It requires an understanding of its nature, sound intelligence and good information management.

### 3.2.1 – Understanding Asymmetry

Understanding asymmetry means understanding the actors involved in the conflict and the consequences of their actions. When hostile to the force, the enemy may set as his aim the failure of the mission of the force and hence directly fight it. Sometimes, some actors will only act in relation to their own aims and interests, without considering the military forces as the focus of their struggle. Others will concentrate on political aspects, ethnic opponents, crowd manipulation, or violence intended to cause problems for the force. They are usually horizontal organisations endowed with great flexibility which often are both political and military in nature and lack any formal hierarchy. Acts of a tactical nature - bombings, assassinations, the taking of hostages, attacks against a village or a unit, riots or demonstrations - directly influence the strategic level. Our weapons often seem little-suited to respond to such actions and risk being either under-exploited or used inappropriately and counter-productively, which will in turn be capitalised on by an opponent in an “active propaganda” approach.

- *Determining the Field of Action*

Determining the field of action is the first obligation at all levels of command. It is necessary in order to maintain the freedom of action for the commander who always needs to have a space for manoeuvre. He must identify its limits, the capabilities at his disposal and, most importantly, what he cannot risk doing. His scope of action and its limits flow naturally from his mission, the means at his disposal, the ability of the troops under his command - particularly in the case of a multinational force - or from ethical and legal constraints. The identification of this scope of action

allows the commander to stay within his field of action and to avoid inappropriate responses to sometimes unclear situations or unusual actions.

- *Adapting to Asymmetry*

The struggle against asymmetrical threats presupposes great agility by commanders and command systems in both the planning and the conduct of an operation. The ability of the force to adapt in theatres of operations, and of the Army in general, is one of the keys to success since the opponent is a living and thinking being who adapts to meet changing circumstances. Either we stay one step ahead of him or we are condemned to act only in reaction to him.

Ground units need to develop very quick innovative capabilities. The role of the lower echelons, of the basic cells, of those who are confronted with problems on a daily basis and hence never cease to come up with the most appropriate solutions, is essential. Initiative must be encouraged in order to facilitate the emergence of responses to asymmetrical threats. The work carried out in the field has to be supported by a central mechanism which controls the proliferation of ideas, focuses the gathering of experience and provides the reactivity necessary in order to supply immediate answers when the situation dictates.

Understanding asymmetry means understanding the **combat of an opponent** who is both political and military, aims to undermine the mission of the force, and who through his actions directly influences the tactical, operational and strategic levels.

In order to maintain his liberty of action, a commander has to define as correctly as possible his **field of action**, its limits and its imperatives.

The **agility of systems of command** and the **reactive capacity** of the French Army are essential to ensure that the force can adapt itself and imagine and develop, by relying on the lower units, the best modes of action in response to the asymmetrical enemy.

### 3.2.2 – Intelligence, Understanding as Much as Knowing

Understanding the opponent and the environment places the emphasis on intelligence which, more than ever, is an essential function of the operational engagement and a condition for success. But the search for intelligence is complex when it comes to establishing the conditions for a return to peace, combating asymmetrical threats or re-establishing trust.

Moving from symmetry to asymmetry, and within a same conflict from one phase to the other, the land forces have to evolve from intelligence where the search for material indicators allows the shaping of the enemy layout and the identification of his intents to a more subjective intelligence where the focus is on systemic analysis. Equipment, often unidentifiable and blended into the environment, no longer are sufficient signs to understand the intents of the opponent. It is the frame of mind and the aims of the other that have to be understood. The search for such intelligence faces the difficulty of having to choose only useful information. It also faces difficulties when the objective is to understand a fundamentally different environment. Hence the problem of language is critical for intelligence gathering in the stabilisation phase, as it is for all operations conducted in direct contact with the surrounding environment.

Technology occupies a central place in intelligence. The technological means used for research permit the development of instruments for analysis and synthesis and increase the capacity of the troops to fight a variety of threats. But technological instruments essentially allow us to **know** rather than to **understand**. Hence human research has to have specialists who not only have a solid military training but also have an extensive knowledge of the theatre, the societies and cultures, the opposing groups, that is about everything which enable us to understand, to “get a feel”.

Moreover, by their very nature, asymmetrical conflicts venture into non military fields which nevertheless need to be understood in the context of the operation itself and of current or future operations. Here, intelligence gathering has to rely on other actors, other networks, other ministries or departments. It

also participates in a larger struggle, since the information gathered feeds demands other than those of the deployed force. Intelligence is not only necessary in the phases of armed confrontation. It supports manoeuvre among the people in all its dimensions. Intelligence gathering must allow the commander to consider his courses of action, to anticipate constraints, to identify the difficulties when he needs to support an electoral process, disarm factions or allow freedom of movement...

More than ever, intelligence is a **vital element** in the conduct of an operation and is a key to success.

**Technology** offers possibilities which strengthen the intelligence capability of the land forces though it primarily allows us **to know rather than to understand**. Only the combination of the technical and human dimensions and the conduct of systemic analysis **give it meaning**.

### *3.2.3 – Fighting through Media*

The struggle for information is a constant necessity for land forces, particularly in the context of an asymmetrical conflict where an element of the opposing activity relies on the use of information tools and the manipulation of public opinion. What is believed is more important than what is true. Media hype and distortions can influence operational decisions and the course of events in a manner contradictory to acts of the troops on the ground. Often, for example, attacks by youths armed only with slings against heavily equipped soldiers only aim to show the world an unequal struggle and to make believe that their fight is just, since it is that of the oppressed, of David against Goliath.

Fighting through media is characteristic of the asymmetrical struggle. Therefore, because it is that of the opponent, it needs to be that of the land forces. Struggling against partial and biased information, presenting one's own version, broadcasting one's own film of headline events are all necessary for success. This can also sometimes help to prevent tactical successes from becoming strategic failures. Land forces need to be able to conduct

both offensive and defensive operations in the field of information and communication.

Information operations form an essential part of the asymmetrical struggle. The forces deployed in a theatre of operations have to make **fighting through media** a necessary dimension for their action of airland units.

## 4 - Mentoring

Land forces participate in the implementation of, or the provision of support to, specific actions which contribute to the stabilisation of the environment. As general security is progressively established, they extend their activity towards other actors and fields. It is often in the success or failure of this mentoring that ultimately, the legitimacy of the operation is built or destroyed.

### 4.1 Disarming the Combatants

The disarmament of combatants may occur very early in the operation or come as the result of a long and delicate process, the progress of which is linked to the development of the political situation or agreements between the parties. It is always an essential step on the road to peace and often, therefore, is at the heart of the operation.

Actual disarmament is the DDR process - Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration - which, based on a scheme developed by the United Nations, has become common in many conflicts, particularly in Africa. It requires significant means, particularly on a financial level and it relies on international or non governmental organisations. It has to be developed with all concerned parties and encompasses areas as diverse as security, social reintegration, training, employment and health. DDR is inherently multifaceted. It particularly concerns the land forces, although in various ways, depending on the theatre and mandate. In this process, they work with other actors with whom they need to establish a dialogue as early as possible. They have to understand the process and, at least in part, reorganize as befits the task.

The **disarmament of combatants** is always a vital step in bringing back peace. It involves the land forces that need to develop an **organisation adapted** to the task and establish a **dialogue** with the other actors involved.

## 4.2 Training Local Forces

Sometimes part of the DDR process, but often also undertaken independently, the training or refreshing of local defence and security forces is a vital aspect for the re-establishment of the rule of law in a country, which is wholly reliant on forces (army and police) entrusted with enforcing law, order and security. It is a particular area of expertise for land forces to whom all or part of the training of NCOs and officers (NCO training, sub unit command training, initial staff training) or the instruction of entire units (companies, battalions) may be entrusted. They are sometimes also tasked with mentoring these new armies by involving them in ongoing operations and, in time, handing over their tasks to them. Because the relief of the force can only really be carried out by local forces, the task of bringing them up to the standards required to carry out their mission is a vital aspect for the stabilisation force.

**The training of local defence and security forces** is vital in re-establishing the rule of law in a country. Land forces are heavily involved in this process. Their efforts determine the ability of the local forces to **relieve them** and, in part, to reinforce the success of the operation.

### 4.3 Supporting Nation Building

From the start of the intervention phase, and often in the early days of stabilisation, land forces operate in support of the local population in cooperation with the other Services and agencies. Beyond civil-military cooperation which aims to achieve the acceptance of the force by the local population, usually the objective is to deploy minimal assets in order to re-establish certain **basic services** for the population (health, water, power) or to provide support to specialised humanitarian, international or non-governmental organisations. With its assets intended primarily for its own sustainment, demand always exceeds the force's capabilities, the force itself primarily playing a catalysing role for other actors. However, in certain specific circumstances and in the absence of specialised civil equipment, forces can contribute directly to support the population if distress dictates; it is a question of availability in response to an emergency situation.

Other activities essential for **nation-building** generally have to be carried out in cooperation with forces on the ground. These can be the domain of a particular Service (i.e. air or sea transport in regions with little infrastructure), a specialized support service (i.e. medical service), or be joint in nature (i.e. civil-military cooperation). By their very presence on the ground, land forces play a key role that manifests itself in terms of control of the environment, security, transport support, etc. The organisation of elections, the deployment of government services, cooperation and development activities dependent on diplomatic authorities, the fluidity of some economic circuits, all form part of nation building.

At any rate, whether in this or another field, the commander needs to define the limits of his activities in order to avoid getting involved at a level beyond the capabilities of his forces and attempting to do what other organisations often can and know how to do better than the armed forces.



In 1999, devastated by a terrible six-year civil war, Sierra-Leone had fallen to last place on the United Nations list that ranks human development; in addition at the time of the Lomé Peace Agreement (July 7th), half of Sierra-Leone's population were refugees. As a result of this Agreement, a process of “Disarmament - Demobilization - Reinsertion” (DDR) was implemented, managed by a peacekeeping force (UNOMSIL and ECOMOG). Most of those in the opposing factions (fighters and auxiliaries) were offered the status of ex-combatant, giving them the right to participate in a reinsertion programme in exchange for turning in a weapon. Over the next four years, 72,000 combatants were demobilized and 40,000 weapons turned in.

More than 55,000 of these ex-combatants registered for the reinsertion programme financed by the World Bank and the British Agency for International Development. This programme included a payment of approximately 300 US dollars and offered the choice between a remunerated professional training or enlistment in the new Sierra-Leone Army. A specific programme involving therapy and reinsertion into the community was implemented for the child soldiers who were disarmed and demobilized at the same time as the other combatants. The end of the DDR programme in December 2001 paved the way to the May 2002 elections as well as the pull-back of a large portion of the foreign troops.

*Brief description DDR process in Sierra Leone*

Land forces operate in **support of the local populations** in cooperation with the other Services and agencies when the need is to locally re-establish certain vital functions or in response to distress or emergencies. Through their activities on the ground, they contribute to the re-establishment of **a stable social and political system.**

# Winning the Battle and Building Peace

Strategic change is the basis for organic and operational thinking in the French Army.

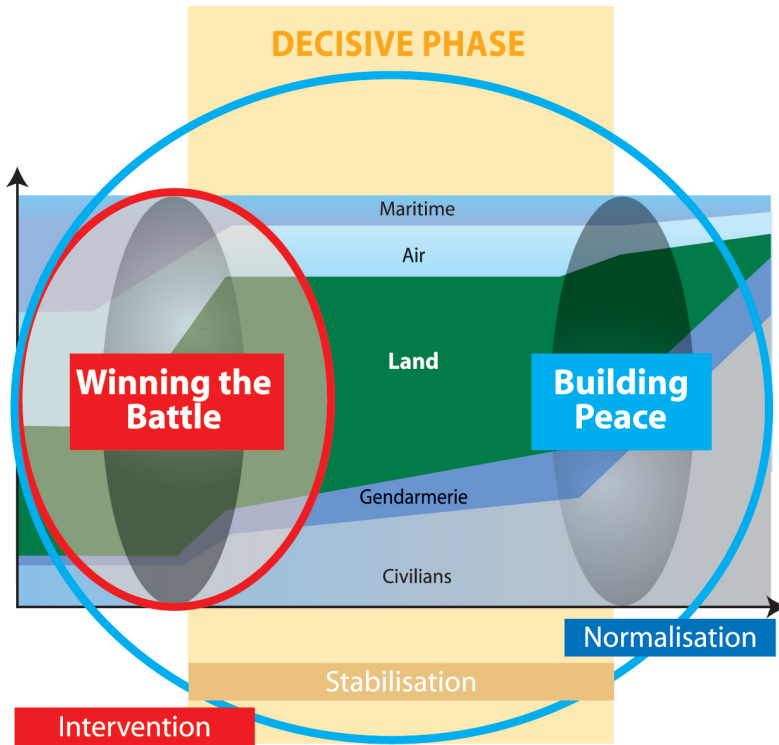
**Military action is evolving** and no longer suffices, on its own, to “win wars” whose forms have changed; it leads to the establishment of the minimum conditions for strategic success that develop in the **stabilisation phase, the new decisive phase in conflict.**

Operating in a joint environment, land forces are, more than ever, at the very heart of operational deployments, where the human factor predominates and where action on the ground and the capacity for discrimination in the use of force are vital for success. In operations taking place in the midst of populations, they currently face new opponents for whom asymmetrical violence, far removed from traditional military logic, is the norm. Endowed with power and an enduring ability to manage effects and versatility, land forces operate in close coordination with non-military actors in order to stabilise the environment and to contribute to the return of stable political and social systems in countries in crisis, which, most often now constitutes the desired strategic objective.

For a number of years, the French Army has been on a path of change that will allow it to fulfil its missions in a number of conflicts where violence and confrontation at the heart of society have taken the place of inter-state conflict.

The French Army has been adapting its structures, doctrine, training and equipment to current operations resolutely and continuously while pursuing the ongoing reflection on the change in terms of military efficiency, the new conditions for the use of force and the necessary developments of the military instrument, and basing its modernity on an understanding of the environment.

Within the French armed forces, and within an increasingly close partnership with our allies, the French Army is pursuing “the preparation of its forces for the reality of their operational commitments”.



“The act of war has only really been the means for the creative act, that is, restoring peace and life, and for that purpose, war has been an invaluable means.”

Marshall Lyautey

## Part One – The New Face of War

### 1 – New World - New Conflicts

- 1.1 Establishing the Conditions for Strategic Success
- 1.2 Stabilisation, the Decisive Phase in Today's Conflicts
  - 1.2.1 – *Intervention, an Indispensable Phase*
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  - 1.2.3 – *Normalisation, the Return to Peace Phase*
- 1.3 From Symmetrical Warfare to Asymmetrical Conflicts
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- 1.4 New Adversaries

### 2 – A New Use of Force

- 2.1 The Web of Actions
- 2.2 Dominating Urban Areas and Controlling Spaces
- 2.3 Populations at the Heart of Military Concerns
- 2.4 Use of Force Centred on the Land Environment

### 3 – A New Role for the Soldier

- 3.1 The Soldier in an Evolving Society
  - 3.1.1 – *The Requirement of Increasing Security*
  - 3.1.2 – *The Omnipresence of the Rule of Law*
  - 3.1.3 – *Instant Information*
- 3.2 An Aptitude for Dialogue with Multiple Actors
- 3.3 Proximity and Distance, or the Necessary Balance
- 3.4 Staying a Soldier First and Foremost

## Part Two – Conducting the Operation and Achieving Peace

### 1 – Acting

- 1.1 Combined Arms Operations at the Heart of the Air-Land Battle
- 1.2 A Permanent Joint Framework
- 1.3 Multinationality, Legitimacy and Constraints

### 2 – Controlling

- 2.1 Managing the Use of Force
  - 2.1.1 – *Necessary Force, Essential Control*
  - 2.1.2 – *Win Over the Population, Isolate the Opponent and Fight the Enemy*
  - 2.1.3 – *Rules of Engagement and Conduct*
- 2.2 Controlling Technology
  - 2.2.1 – *Technology, a Multiplier of Effectiveness*
  - 2.2.2 – *Technology and the Challenges Posed by Asymmetry*
  - 2.2.3 – *Man and Technology*
- 2.3 Controlling Time
  - 2.3.1 – *Emergency Action*
  - 2.3.2 – *Long-term Engagement*
- 2.4 Controlling Violence
  - 2.4.1 – *A Multifaceted Violence Directed Against Everyone*
  - 2.4.2 – *Confronting Violence*

### 3 – Adapting

- 3.1 From Waging the Battle to Setting the Conditions for Peace
  - 3.1.1 – *From Intervention to Stabilisation, a Change from Tactics to Strategy*







**CDEF** Centre de Doctrine  
d'Emploi des Forces  
*Par les forces, pour les forces*