



FRANCE'S DEFENCE STRATEGY IN THE INDO-PACIFIC



MINISTÈRE
DES ARMÉES

FRANCE'S DEFENCE
STRATEGY IN THE
INDO-PACIFIC



France is a nation of the Indo-Pacific. For the French Ministry for the Armed Forces, the Indo-Pacific is an area of operational responsibilities, which encompasses three military commands and two presence forces, and covers five maritime areas, of which two are ocean areas. Our main security interests in this wide and fragmented region are to protect our sovereign territories, secure our strategic supplies, ensure our freedom of action in the commons, and foster stable regional environments.

Three strategic dynamics characterize the geopolitical landscape in this area :

1. The structuring effect of the China-US competition, which causes new alignments and indirect consequences ;
2. The decline of multilateralism, which results from diverging interests, challenge to its principles and promotion of alternative frameworks ;
3. The shrinking of the geostrategic space and the spillover effects of local crises to the whole region.

These emerging dynamics have negative consequences in the defence environment :

- military environments become tougher, as regional countries develop new capabilities with higher ranges and greater lethality;
- nuclear multipolarity and strategic unpredictability increase, due to heterogeneous doctrines and means;
- strategic competitions are more and more characterized by the existing continuity between non-kinetic violence and military conflict. States use, or are incentivized to use, military or paramilitary means that, although violent, remain below the threshold of conflict.

Because of these security dynamics in the Indo-Pacific, France needs to reaffirm its strategic autonomy, the importance of its alliances and its commitment to multilateralism.

The French armed forces must also be able to act in a changing security environment. This ambition implies to preserve and reinvest in our prepositioned forces, which allow us to operate in the strategic depth, far from Europe. France's strategic priorities in the Indo-Pacific are :

1. Defend and ensure the integrity of our sovereignty, the protection of our nationals, territories and EEZ.
2. Contribute to the security of regional environments through military and security cooperation.
3. Maintain a free and open access to the commons, in cooperation with our partners, in a context of global strategic competition and challenging military environments.
4. Assist in maintaining strategic stability and balances through a comprehensive and multilateral action

These strategic objectives are translated at the political and operational levels to highlight our priorities and our strands of efforts in the Indo-Pacific.

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Introduction

France is a sovereign nation of the Indo-Pacific. French overseas territories include seven Regions, Departments and Communities (thereafter: overseas territories) which are home to 1.6 million French citizens: Mayotte, La Reunion, the French Southern and Antarctic territories, New Caledonia, Wallis & Futuna, and French Polynesia.

Spanning from the Indian to the Pacific Oceans, these territories account for 9 out of 11 million square kilometers of France's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), which make it the second-largest in the world. More than 200.000 French citizens also live in the littoral countries of the Indian Ocean, in Asia and Oceania.

France's commitment in the Indo-Pacific

The Indo-Pacific encompasses several hubs of global economic growth and includes several transit points of high strategic value. France and the Indo-Pacific countries are connected and economically interdependent. More than one-third of French exports to non-EU countries goes the region, while the latter represents more than 40 % of our imports from non-EU-countries.

Accordingly, France intends to assume fully its role as a regional power, in order to protect its sovereign interests, ensure the security of its citizens and actively contribute to international stability.

For the French Ministry for the Armed Forces, the Indo-Pacific spans from Djibouti to Polynesia. This space has a geostrategic coherence, inherited from long history. Vital maritime routes run from Indonesia to Madagascar, from Oman to Singapore, from Japan to Australia, and from China to Polynesia, and connect the largest demographic and economic bodies of the twenty-first century.

Acknowledging the importance of the area and its strategic continuity, most of the powers involved in the region, i.e. the United States, China, as well as Japan, India and Australia, have now adopted dedicated strategies.

For the French Ministry for the Armed Forces also the Indo-Pacific is an area of operational responsibilities. Five military commands, among which three sovereignty forces [FASZOI, FANC, FAPF] and two presence forces [FFEAU, FFD], cover five maritime areas, of which two are ocean areas [ALPACI, ALINDIEN]. These joint regional commands, as well as a network of 18 Defence Attachés accredited in 33 countries ensure a full geographical coverage of the Indo-Pacific, guarantee the protection and security of French nationals and territories, the control of our EEZ, and our regular participation in defence cooperation activities in all fields.

Foundations of the French Defence strategy in the Indo-Pacific

The White Paper on Defense and National Security (2013) and the Defence and National Security Strategic Review (2017) state that France's interests include all factors that contribute to its security, prosperity, and influence. Defending these various interests implies a very wide range of means and actions. Among those, our defence system constitutes the foundational layer of our freedom to act upon every kind of threat.

The present Defence strategy defines France's commitments in the Indo-Pacific and sets the Ministry for the Armed Forces' strategic orientations in this region. These orientations will then be implemented through dedicated military operational strategies.

France's main security interests are to protect its nationals and sovereign spaces, to secure its strategic supplies, to ensure its freedom of action in the commons, and to foster stable regional environments.

Considering this, France's overseas territories play a key role to secure access to vital areas and routes that could otherwise come under threat, such as maritime straits. They are, as such, assets for both France and its partners.

The French overseas territories host military bases and capabilities which allow for the securing of our sovereign territories as well as the commons around them. They also facilitate military cooperation, crisis anticipation and regional integration. They are essential to France's security activities in the Indo-Pacific.

Our overseas territories provide safe platforms for power projection in the whole region, including in areas where our allies and partners do not possess either capabilities or facilities.

France's commitments for strategic stability

In a changing geostrategic context, France's ambitions are first and foremost to retain its influence and ability to uphold an environment favourable to its economic and political activities, as well as those of its partners.

France's actions are underpinned by the following principles:

- to protect and promote a rules-based multilateral order, and to reject unilateral ambitions, as well as current or potential restrictions to freedom of navigation in the international air-sea commons;
- to preserve strategic balances, to combat transnational terrorism, to address the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and to counter influence operations aimed at eroding the legitimacy of democratic regimes.

France will pursue four strategic ambitions in the Indo-Pacific:

1. Defend and ensure the integrity of our sovereignty, the protection of our nationals, territories and EEZ.
2. Contribute to the security of regional environments through military and security cooperation.
3. Maintain a free and open access to the commons, in cooperation with our partners, in a context of global strategic competition and challenging military environments.
4. Assist in maintaining strategic stability and balances through a comprehensive and multilateral action.

In a region including seven out of ten of the highest defence budgets in the world (the United States, China, Saudi Arabia, India, France, Japan and South Korea), strategic and military imbalances constitute an underlying danger with global consequences.

While several open crises persist and new rivalries emerge, the breakdown of strategic stability, or a lasting deterioration in the regional security environment, would have an immediate impact on France's political, economic, and sovereign interests.

In this context, France, as a sovereign power of the Indo-Pacific and a permanent member of the United Nations' Security Council, is seeking to defend its national interest and contribute to the regional stability by upholding a rules-based and multilateral international order.

1. A. The Evolution of the strategic dynamics in the Indo-Pacific

Nowadays, the Indo-Pacific is riddled with tensions and open crises, against the backdrop of the global strategic competition between the United States and China. Those dynamics lead to a decrease in multilateral efforts and pave the way for self-help and self-interest.

In the meantime, globalization induces a shrinking of the geopolitical space. The rise of new interdependencies causes an unprecedented proximity, even between distant events. Crises are no longer contained to a specific area and their propagation effects are as swift as they are unpredictable.

1.1. The structural impact of the US-China strategic competition

After decades of economic growth, the People's Republic of China (PRC) has become one of the world's leading powers, as well as a major diplomatic and military player. The Chinese regime is expanding its political reach to a global scale.

China's growing influence abroad substantially shifts the balances of power in Northeast and Southeast Asia, as well as in the Indian Ocean and the South Pacific.

China's close relation with Russia in challenging democratic values, its enduring support to North Korea, its strategic partnership with Pakistan, the ongoing border issues with India as well as the territorial disputes in the East and South China seas generate deep-seated concerns regarding the implications of China's actions.

Access to the global commons has become a priority for China. Relying on its new military capabilities, it seeks to redefine the balance of power. This objective collides more directly with American interests, which has led Washington to accelerate its pivot to Asia after more than a decade of military engagement in the Middle East.

Despite their financial and economic interdependence, the United States and China are engaged in a global strategic competition, the effects of which are mainly visible in the Indo-Pacific. Initially focused on the economic and technological fields, this competition now extends to the military domain. As such, it will shape most of the strategic issues in the Indo-Pacific and beyond.

US military posture in the Indo-Pacific will therefore evolve. Refocused on the Pacific and the South China Sea, US military posture is meant to adapt to these new strategic challenges.

Given the unprecedented increase in the North Korean threat, US alliances with Japan and South Korea remain, through the implementation of extended deterrence, the best stability guarantee in Northeast Asia.

In such a context of competition, the possibility of revoking any commitment regarded as too binding, and the will to scale down the resources allocated to multilateral bodies (UN, contributions to peacekeeping operations) undermine the credibility of multilateral efforts. Major competitors are spurred to act more unilaterally.

This overt strategic competition now overlaps with older regional rivalries that endure and rearrange themselves. The competition between Iran and Saudi Arabia now extends into the Indian Ocean, potentially impacting freedom of navigation in the straits, as well as regional balances. The enduring conflict between India and Pakistan now extends into the naval domain. In the meantime, the current rapprochement between Islamabad and Beijing makes the regional security equation more complex.

1.2. The Decline of Multilateralism

Over the last decade, the strategic context has been impacted by the rise of multipolarity and unilateral challenges against the rules-based international order. Because of Post-world war II international rules and institutions, first of which the United Nations, have been

gradually questioned and undermined by diverging national interests and a growing asymmetry in capabilities.

These unfavourable developments hold true in the Indo-Pacific as well. As States' ambitions become more and more self-directed, bilateral balances of power re-emerge at the expense of multilateral coordination efforts. In return, this trend fuels uncertainty, which becomes a factor of instability in the context of ongoing disputes or enduring tensions.

Nevertheless, the need to consolidate stability has made it possible to institutionalize multilateral security efforts, albeit at varying degrees. Initiatives such as the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) or the South Pacific Defence Ministers' Meeting (SPDMM) are, among others, important consultation instruments. Be in the Indian Ocean, in Asia, or in the Pacific, the fragility of regional security architectures feeds uncertainty.

Past efforts of the last decades do not compensate for the poor regulation and the lack of multilateral consensus regarding the conditions of access to and use of commons, however. This situation has made it easier for States to engage in power politics between themselves or with non-State actors. In a region fraught with heterogeneous political systems and ambitions, such dynamics contribute to the erosion of multilateralism.

1.3. The shrinking of the geostrategic space

In a globalized world, regional powers feel the need to extend their influence and capabilities beyond their periphery. This requires considering how much time and distance have shrunk from a strategic point of view.

The will of regional powers to increase permanently their reach now prevails over the geographical segmentation of the Indo-Pacific. The security of the maritime commons and of the SLOC has become again an issue. Monitoring and securing them is a challenge that goes beyond notions such as borders and geographic limits.

Along the sea-lanes of communication connecting Europe to the Pacific through the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea, high sea constitutes a specific strategic issue in connection with ports and support facilities networks.

Harbor cities and port facilities are high-value assets enabling connectivity into the continental hinterland through, notably, inland corridors like in Africa or Central Asia. China is, with the implementation of its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), one the driving forces behind the contraction of the geostrategic space.

The stability and security of these hubs now represents a growing challenge. The interplay of economic interests,

resources access and power competitions have increased their strategic relevance. This trend increases the military value of those locations at the crossroads of air, sea and land domains, which have to be conceived as fully integrated.

These interconnections across the Indo-Pacific allow the rapid propagation of crises. The unfolding of a security issue in Southeast Asia may have an immediate impact on the Northeast of the Indian Ocean. Strategic rivalries in the Indian Ocean could be exported to Africa. In a sense, distant actors like European countries, are not immune to the potential effect of any crisis happening in the region.

From the Mozambique Channel to the South Pacific, the continuity of air and maritime commons allows new interactions. New military cooperation emerges or strengthens. This dynamic reshuffles strategic relationships across the Indo-Pacific, resulting in renewed or unprecedented military interactions.

France and China are now linked by the co-location of their forces in Djibouti. The Chinese military presence in Doraleh is a major development in the regional context. Whereas China was absent from the Indian Ocean until 2008, it is now permanently present, and will probably increase its military footprint in this area in the medium term.

The new projection capabilities of China's People Liberation Army (PLA), in particular, will bring major changes in the balances and military environments. Already capable of operating across the whole Indo-Pacific, the Chinese Navy now deploys in the Mediterranean and the Baltic seas, where it carried out naval exercises with the Russian navy.

The global reach of China's ambitions leads to the export of issues and challenges that were until then more confined. Even if it is not the only driver, the scale of China's action and ambitions redefines a whole set of balances and military relations across the Indo-Pacific.

Today, in the entire Indo-Pacific, rivalries and competition are no more bounded by distance effect. All the major regional actors seek to increase their reach, which in return alters the security balances.

1.B. The new security configurations in the Indo-Pacific

The evolution of the strategic dynamics in the Indo-Pacific induced new alignments and spurred the need for regional powers to rethink their defence policy.

In this context, and while most of the European countries scaled down their military capabilities in the 2000s, the majority of Indo-Pacific countries have significantly

reinvested in their defence assets, which have gained both in volume and sophistication.

Paired with the global evolution of high technologies, this trend makes military operational environments more dangerous and demanding. In the meantime, any significant regional military imbalance will have global consequences. But, above all, the strategic equation is now more complex with the rise of nuclear multipolarity.

The globalization of economy and information-based technologies extends the possible areas of confrontation to new fields. States and non-State actors now have a whole set of new options to operate in those domains. The combination of several modes of action – involving both military and non-military means – is extensively used in power competition and contested areas.

1.4. A new set of unfavourable military environments

In order to cope with the ongoing strategic changes and specific issues in the maritime commons of the Indo-Pacific, a lot of littoral States have sought to increase their coastal defence capabilities as well as their operational range from there. In the meantime, some of them have invested in long-range capabilities and blue-water naval assets.

However, there is still a strong gap between US and China naval capabilities and those of the regional powers. The most advanced naval assets in the Indo-Pacific are concentrated in North Indian Ocean and in North and Southeast Asia.

Most countries chose to strengthen their low-end assets in order to secure their maritime approaches. Some of them have nonetheless been significantly increasing their blue-water capabilities.

Four common trends underpin this rearmament:

- the qualitative and quantitative strengthening of submarine forces ;
- the development of anti-ship and land-attack cruise missiles, with a focus on traditional area denial capabilities like mines ;
- the implementation of better C4ISR surveillance systems (satellites, radars, UAVs) intended to increase naval forces' vulnerability ;
- the deployment of air forces able to operate against more remote targets.

The spread of such military capabilities of signalling, intimidating or denying access will significantly affect the overall security balance in the region.

By 2030, the ability of both China and India to deploy carrier battle groups in the Indian Ocean and in the Pacific (in the case of China) will particularly set a completely new operational environment.

These trends go hand in hand with a significant development of regional capabilities in the air and air-sea domains. On one hand, the spread of surface-to-air systems allowing area-denial and anti-access now extends from sovereign to international areas, specially maritime ones; on the other hand, air combat (aircraft, UAVs, fighters) and air defence systems become more efficient, increasing the technological level of many militaries, and therefore increasing the scope of unfavourable military operational environment.

Across the whole region, the development of detection capabilities and the increased quality of information and intelligence gathering assets allow a more efficient surveillance of air-sea and land domains.

The enhanced transparency of the battlefield, the growing number of precision weaponry and their increased ranges contribute to making these systems more lethal.

Alongside with the gradual unfold of unfavourable military operational environment, this important capacity building could increase the risk for conflict escalation. The progresses made in the speed and range of delivery systems requires more efficiency in the chain of command and decision-making processes in times of crisis.

The political fragmentation of the region and the resumption of more affirmed, but also more asymmetrical power relations, create a risk of misinterpretation and protracted escalation.

1.5. Nuclear Multipolarity and the Enduring Challenge of Proliferation

France faces the strategic challenge of military nuclear multipolarity, with a centre of gravity located in the Indo-Pacific.

The heterogeneity of actors and their disparate capabilities and doctrine complicate deterrence policies.

First, the strategic challenge posed by North Korea changes the regional balance and generates a proliferation crisis. Pyongyang's new capabilities are intended to erode US security guarantees and to decouple regional alliances by raising the threat to the level of nuclear blackmail. So far, DPRK's regime has been unwilling to engage in complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization.

In the meantime, the development of North Korean capabilities increases the risk of proliferation to the Middle East (weapons of mass destruction [WMD] and

their delivery systems), which represents a direct threat to Europe.

The significant development of the Pakistani nuclear arsenal presents a second major challenge. The growing number of tactical warheads leads to uncertainties about lowering the threshold for the use of nuclear weapons, and raises questions regarding their security and safety. At the same time, Islamabad's will to increase the range of its missiles beyond the sub-continent revives the speculations about the regime's deterrence goals.

China is engaged in an extensive modernization of its nuclear capabilities. It specifically seeks to increase the number of warheads (MIRV) as well as the range of its delivery systems and to build-up its sea and air components. Up until now, these developments have not brought any noticeable change in the PRC nuclear doctrine, which remains voluntarily opaque, despite an historic commitment to No First Use.

The US withdrawal from the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces treaty (INF) will impact the nuclear strategic balance with China and North Korea. While the PLA possesses a wide range of systems in which the US had not invested pursuant to the treaty, the removal of this restriction could lead to a development of capacities by both parties.

In this evolving and unstable context, the fight against proliferation must remain a priority. The existing regime must be preserved to avoid an increase in proliferation and the spread of WMDs, which could affect the security of Europe, which is now within range of such systems.

Regarding Iran, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) adopted in 2015 imposed severe restrictions to the Iranian nuclear program, at least until 2025. Nevertheless, Tehran still possesses and upgrades an operational and diversified ballistic arsenal. In the absence of any other reliable option, the US withdrawal of the JCPOA is detrimental to this multilateral agreement. Teheran's ballistic capabilities are still a security challenge.

The availability of high-end systems and the transformations generated by technological innovation increase the risk of proliferation of WMDs in the Indo-Pacific. The large number of available technologies provides new means of aggression, disruption and blackmail to regional powers and non-State actors.

While the Syrian conflict has trivialized the use of chemical weapons (use of mustard gas, chlorine and sarin since 2013), Kim Jong-nam's assassination with the help of neurotoxin in a public place (airport of Kuala Lumpur) meant a dangerous lowering of the acceptability threshold for the use of such weapons. This blatant violation of international efforts of interdiction and counter-proliferation aggravates the threat even more. A more uncompromising posture and more coordinated efforts

are required to punish this lowering of the threshold and the use of such weapons.

The fact that chemical and biological agents are now (and still) used in military and non-military warfare increases uncertainty. If accessible to non-State actors, those weapons could increase the risk for a terrorist attack. Used by a State-actor, the use of those weapons could be part of a strategic blackmail or intimidation.

1.6. From Transgression to Coercion: Grey Zone Activities

Strategic competitions are more and more characterized by the existing continuity between non-kinetic violence and military conflict. States use, or are incentivized to use, military or paramilitary means that, although violent, remain below the threshold of conflict.

In the Indo-Pacific, the global development of military assets has redefined the military thresholds. It has also increased the uncertainty in the escalation management process. Strategic intimidation and transgression are now part of power competition during peacetime.

Strategic intimidation takes several aspects such as the movement of troops in border areas, ballistic missile tests, repeated incidents in the commons or repeated flights of military aircraft into national airspaces of neighbouring States. Through this process, the goal is to show a capability and a will to implement a military constraint.

Such signalling is frequent and regular. The visibility of means contributes to a credible intimidation process. It also aims to change a situation (in disputed areas) and to increase the cost, for the adversary, of retaliating by using military assets.

The subtle mix of pressure and incentives within a bilateral framework, combined to frequent military signalling, seems to be the new strategic grammar in the Indo-Pacific. It leads to a decline in multilateral consultation mechanisms and paves the way for more direct coercive actions.

Grey zone activities are often displayed in disputed areas. The competitive interactions taking place in those areas allow the use of legal non-kinetic and non-military actors (such as coast guards and paramilitary forces). Because they provide leadership with a greater flexibility in the implementation of coercion (modulation of violence, rollback), those grey zone activities are more and more implemented.

This long-term trend complicates the assessment of the situation and the elaboration of political responses. The difficulty to discriminate between pressure, constraint and coercion will fuel the debate about the appropriate

and relevant measures to be taken; especially if it involves military capabilities.

Nowadays those grey zone activities and "hybrid warfare" have irreversibly spread into cyber and outer space domains.

Cyberspace is now a military domain. The criminal activities and regular aggression perpetrated both by State-actors, such as DPRK, and non-State actors, such as terrorist groups, increase the need for better defence, identification and attribution of hostile acts in order to better prevent and deter them.

Technological components also entail new vulnerabilities. Power grid and energy supply networks (pipelines) as well as information network infrastructures, such as underwater cables, are now specific security issues. Today, 95 % of the intercontinental internet traffic runs under the oceans through a sub-marine network of more than 1.2 million kilometres, almost half of which located in the Indo-Pacific.

The strategic competition also spilled-over to the outer-space domain. The new ways of designing and operating space systems (New Space), the emerging competition between the navigation services providers (Chinese system Bedor versus American GPS) make it of a strategic interest. The progress made in satellite observation, detection and monitoring of sea and land activities increase the military importance of outer space, especially regarding the strategic issues in the Indo-Pacific.

Being able to monitor those wide maritime and land areas in all-weather conditions is a major challenge. The ability to deny such services (jamming or anti-satellite systems) has, in the meantime, become an extension of the ongoing military competition.

Thus, the growing deployment of civil-military dual systems in the outer space exacerbates the competition and extends the continuity between coercion and conflict.

2. France's Challenges and Priorities in the Indo-Pacific: Strategic Autonomy and Multilateralism

In his 'Garden Island' speech in 2018, the President of the Republic stated France's four key commitments in the Indo-Pacific: 1) the support to peaceful resolution of conflicts through dialogue, 2) French contribution to regional peace and security, 3) French involvement to sustain regional States sovereignty, 4) the need to take actions against climate change. The involvement of the French Ministry for the Armed Forces will substantially contribute to implement these orientations.

Because of the evolution of the security dynamics in the Indo-Pacific, France needs to reassess its strategic priorities

in order to cope with the new risks and threats facing its interest and those of its partners. In accordance with the principles and values underpinning its international engagement, France intends to carry out an autonomous and sovereign action from its territories, while actively contributing to multilateral efforts in the commons.

By being able to carry operations from its overseas territories as well as its forward bases in Djibouti and Abu Dhabi, France will remain a partner committed to the security and stability of the areas in which it has interests.

The French armed forces must be able to act in a changing security environment. The five strategic functions will be mobilised. The development of regional military capabilities throughout the full-spectrum potentially increases the violence of armed conflicts. The use of hybrid action increases the risks of serious incidents and unintended escalation. Strengthening the strategic functions is therefore essential to guaranteeing the continuity and credibility of our action in the long term.

This ambition implies to preserve and reinvest in our prepositioned forces, which allow us to operate in the strategic depth, far from Europe.

In addition to those forces, the need for knowledge and anticipation will require regular deployments of air and naval assets. These operations will restate our commitment and will support the efforts of our allies and partners in stabilizing areas of tensions.

2.1. Defend the Integrity of our Sovereignty and Ensure the Protection of our Nationals, Territories and Exclusive Economic Zones

Protecting the national territory and the French citizens, and preserving the Nation's essential functions are at the core of our defence and national security strategy.

The overseas territories in the Indo-Pacific are protected by a military system that is optimised to meet the two major threats directed to our territories:

- enduring transnational threats such as jihadism-inspired terrorism and organised crime;
- challenging and undermining of our sovereignty, in a context of regional strategic developments.

The Indo-Pacific is characterised by the scope and the integration of the trade, human and political flows that run through it. Jihadist and criminal networks exploit these dynamics. Their activities, which are usually distinct, tend to converge. The ramification and resilience of these organisations are a constant challenge to regional security efforts.

Jihadist-inspired movements may realistically leave the Levant, where their main political and military effort remains for now, and spread all or parts of their networks to the Indo-Pacific, in particular to West Indian Ocean. The weakness of State authorities, the fragmentation of countries, the marginalisation of populations and protracted conflicts help the reconfiguration of jihadist networks and enrolment. This may lead to a rise of the jihadist phenomenon. The disintegration of jurisdictions, governance crises and poor means of control also facilitate the development and activities of transnational criminal organisations.

In the meantime, the Immensity of natural resources and an increasing demand, boosted by the growing number of illicit markets, contribute to the profitability of these criminal activities. Criminal actors are incentivized to take more and more risks to increase their profit.

In this context, the control of our overseas territories' immediate environment, and the monitoring of our sovereign spaces require the deployment of means and expertise, which are specifically military. These efforts are complementary to those of other public administrations, which aim at monitoring and protecting the national territory.

They require an incessant and uncompromising fight against drug trafficking, clandestine immigration networks and natural resource looting activities. This endeavour complements the incessant surveillance and protection of our borders and EEZ, through which these more and more sophisticated activities take place.

These missions may require the temporary deployment of high-end capabilities, to address threats such as maritime terrorism or counter the incursion attempts and recurrent transgression of our territorial waters.

In a context of changing regional balances, grey zone activities pursued by non-military or paramilitary actors become means of pressure and of contestation of our sovereign prerogatives. The regularity of such actions, in addition to illegal activities, may contribute to the erosion of the State's authority.

The French forces must therefore remain capable to signal their willingness and their resolve, in support of a political will, to protect our sovereign territories and areas against grey-zone operations or any act of coercion.

France will carry out these missions and guarantee the integrity of its prerogatives only if it maintains a level of ground forces as well as a credible air-sea capability in these areas, in accordance with the orientations of the 2017 Strategic Review.

2.2. Contribute to the Security of Regional Spaces Around Overseas Territories through the Promotion of Military Cooperation and Synergies

The defence of French sovereign interests in the Indo-Pacific is closely linked to our regional security efforts.

The French armed forces significantly contribute to the stability of areas that are relevant to our security interests. Beyond their activities in our sovereign territories, they operate in regional environments where they commit in crisis areas, provide safety guarantees to our partners and maintain a defence cooperation based on reciprocal interests.

The partnerships and operational cooperation formed by France in the Indo-Pacific aim at facilitating joint deployments. They rely on political convergence and de facto solidarities that take into account our respective priorities.

In several areas in the Indo-Pacific, France seeks bilateral and multilateral partnerships in order to better fulfil its missions, while enabling its partners to do the same.

Through this global, although differentiated action, France intends to promote regional stability and the security of the commons surrounding its overseas territories.

The French Armed Forces in Southwest Indian Ocean (FAZSOI), deployed in La Réunion and Mayotte islands, ensure the protection and safety of the French territories as well as their surroundings.

These sovereign forces play a major part in the regional security cooperation as they participate in a large number of joint operations and trainings. Thanks to their rapid response capacity, the FAZSOI uphold the permanent surveillance of our territories and EEZ against piracy, illegal maritime activities or illegal immigration.

They also play an active role in the case of evacuation of our nationals or humanitarian aid and Disaster relief operations. The FAZSOI enable France to keep an air-land and sea force projection platform in a region exposed to strategic competitions, and where our allies and partners have limited capabilities.

In the South Pacific Ocean, the French Armed Forces in New-Caledonia (FANC) and in French Polynesia (FAPF) ensure the protection and surveillance of our territories, EEZ and airspace.

In accordance with their permanent area of responsibility, their mission of protection and surveillance is extended to Melanesia and Polynesia. The FANC enable France to fulfil its regional missions beyond its territories, in close

cooperation with Australia and New Zealand, and for the benefit of the Pacific Island Countries.

The French Armed Forces in the Pacific closely monitor regional strategic evolutions and changes in the defence environment. This analytical capacity fosters the cooperation with our partners (Pacific Quadrilateral Defence Coordination Group or Pacific QUAD, which includes Australia, New Zealand and the United States). Our permanent capabilities and facilities, as well as the unique expertise of our forces in the Pacific Ocean, ensure the credibility of our presence, sustain our contribution to security and our support to our partners.

2.3. Maintain, with our Partners, a Free and Open Access to the Commons

The integrity of the air and maritime routes, as well as of the terrestrial hubs, that connect the entire Indo-Pacific is a major security issue for France and Europe.

France has a direct interest in these international sea lanes of communication (SLOC), due to our fundamental need to safeguard our strategic supplies and the necessity to keep them open for Europe's economic and trade security and prosperity.

In the case of potential appropriation, disruption or security blackmail upon those SLOC, France will oppose any attempt of fait accompli, any unilateral change of existing systems and violation of international law by use of force.

As a founding member of the European Union, France will specifically ensure that international straits and gateways remain free and open. France will oppose any changes or initiatives that could disrupt the SLOC and induce vulnerability for European countries. France will encourage its European partners to contribute to that effort.

This objective implies an active contribution to the security of these common areas. France's operational involvement relies on the actions of its presence forces and its participation in multilateral operations.

This strategic goal explains that France agreed in binding defence agreements with the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Kuwait, in addition to a long-standing and trusted relationship with Djibouti. The operational contribution of our armed forces consists in a multi-level engagement that seeks to foster safe environments and ease regional tensions.

From Djibouti, France deploys joint capabilities designed to secure the SLOC and to fight against piracy. Within the framework of the EU-mandated Operation Atalanta, multilateral efforts, supported by the joint action of diplomacy and aid actors, allowed a significant diminution of this phenomenon. Our contribution should nevertheless

be maintained in order to avoid its resurgence. France also autonomously contributes to maritime security with the permanent deployment of a navy ship, either in partnership with our US ally or within the multilateral framework of the Combined Maritime Forces.

France will maintain its efforts to ensure the full integrity of the commons and to counter any destabilization attempt. It will continue to support its allies and partners in such endeavour.

In the areas where it has, or share, jurisdiction, France will fight together with its partners against any disrupting initiatives coming from State or non-States actors designed to weaken international law.

Our action in favour of freedom of circulation is framed by our commitment to safeguard a rules-based order.

France's strategic involvement in South-East Asia seeks to promote international law and multilateral dialogue, and embodies our commitment to the peaceful settlement of disputes. It is supported by regular deployments and extensive bilateral cooperation.

France's influence in areas where it does not have any sovereign support facilities and where military cooperation is structurally loose relies on a more comprehensive approach. In this context, armament cooperation plays an important role, since they create reliable and long-standing relationships. Such cooperation allows building common basic interests, which will become the groundwork for future military cooperation and interoperability.

France, a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, intends to use its operational expertise to contribute to reducing regional tensions, in coordination with its partners.

Already active in multilateral organisations in the Indo-Pacific, such as the South Pacific Defence Ministers' Meeting (SPDMM), France seeks greater cooperation with the Asean Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus).

2.4. Maintaining strategic stability and security balances through a global multilateral action

France deploys high-end operational assets to contribute to stability in Northwest Indian Ocean. French military presence relies on an advanced regional cooperation. It seeks to preserve our capacities of engagement and our freedom of movement, from the Gulf to the Suez Canal.

The French forces in Djibouti and the UAE are vital to the full implementation of our defence cooperation and to our action for regional security.

The operations against Daesh in the Levant, which are launched from our forward base in Abu Dhabi, are the concrete example of our involvement to fight against a common threat alongside our partners.

The evolving threats in this part of the Indo-Pacific require that France maintain its level of engagement alongside its partners to maintain balances of power and to guarantee stability.

Our action is rooted into the political principles underpinning multilateralism: the defence of the democratic values of freedom and human rights, the promotion of dialogue to settle disputes, and the guarantee of free movement of goods and people, pursuant to international law.

In a context of challenged multilateralism, tougher strategic competition and harder military environments, France intends to contribute actively to stability through the promotion and the respect of the values and principles of multilateralism.

Maintaining strategic stability in the Indo-Pacific means reviving the fight against proliferation. Our actions will primarily focus on the respect and the implementation of international sanctions, the participation in multilateral security operations and the strengthening of our partners' capacities.

France specifically intends to fight against ballistic, nuclear, chemical and biological proliferation networks, from its military platforms in the overseas territories and with its presence forces. We will uphold the current cooperation with our allies and partners in structures such as the G7, the Nuclear Supplier Group (NSG) and the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), among others. The French armed forces will also occasionally deploy assets to support our allies' efforts, for instance to implement the resolutions of the United Nations Security Council against North Korea.

France is committed to multilateralism and will therefore maintain its support to and take part in operations under UN and EU mandate in the Indo-Pacific.

Because of its capacities of action in the Indo-Pacific, France has the opportunity to mobilise its European partners, and intends to seize it. France will thus encourage the EU partners to get more involved into this strategic area where they have interests. The tougher strategic competition in the Indo-Pacific could have a direct impact on the European security. Consultations among Europeans on that matter must therefore be developed. This could be done through a dedicated working group of the European Intervention Initiative (EI2), which would allow monitoring and analysing the strategic evolutions in the region.

Building on its activities and operational engagements, France seeks to develop defence relationships that could

lead to a true interoperability with our partners, in Europe and in the Indo-Pacific.

In accordance with the orientations defined in the White Paper and the Strategic Review, France's contribution the security and stability in the Indo-Pacific will rely on a concerted multilateral action and a consolidation of our defence partnerships.

In this perspective, France will deepen its armament policy, albeit in a controlled way. It will open up its industrial cooperation and the control of transfer of technology and expertise, which will be accompanied by training and logistical support.

3. France's Commitments and Their Implementation

France, a European power with global responsibilities and nation of the Indo-Pacific, intends to act in this space to continue to promote its values and defend:

- its fundamental interests, so as to ensure the integrity of its overseas territories as well as of its maritime and air approaches, the free exercise of its sovereignty and the protection of its population;
- its strategic interests, so as to guarantee freedom of trade and access to the common spaces that are essential to the security and prosperity of the country, while supporting the stability and development of its neighbouring regions;
- its power interests, which arise from its duties as a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council and as a nuclear-weapon State, particularly in terms of counter-proliferation, compliance with international treaties and the maintenance of strategic stability.

Sharing defence and security issues in the Indo-Pacific with all its European allies and partners, France intends to mobilize them, as well as the European Union institutions, around a common vision.

These principles and interests are declined in the fields of defence and security according to several lines of political and operational efforts.

Given the strategic evolutions, France will strengthen the defence of its sovereign territories, in an inter-ministerial approach, to which the Ministry for the Armed Forces will significantly contribute. It will consolidate its security and defence partnerships according to a differentiated and inclusive logic, primarily with its major strategic partners. France will also support the development of regional architectures and multilateral arrangements. Guaranteeing strategic stability, these bilateral and multilateral partnerships will allow to identify, and

implement, collective responses adapted to regional and global challenges.

3.1. Reinforce the Protection of our Nationals, Territories and EEZ

Faced with the risks, threats and challenges that are increasingly affecting its overseas territories, their populations and resources, France intends to strengthen the protection of its sovereign interests, and its ability to act in all the areas where these would be questioned.

To that end, it will rely in particular on the means of the Ministry for the Armed Forces, and especially on the sovereignty forces, whose bases allow the routing and fast deployment of additional capacities, according to the circumstances.

These forces' activities will be strengthened in three areas in particular: knowledge and anticipation, protection, and prevention.

Knowledge and anticipation imply the exercise of increased vigilance with regard to regional security developments, especially those that might have a direct or indirect impact on our sovereign spaces. France will particularly pay attention to the involvement of external powers in all fields (diplomatic, economic, military, cultural and social). The establishment or development of radical and terrorist movements, including Islamists, will also continue to be subject to a high level of vigilance.

Protection will be ensured by a more assertive presence and better sharing of maritime information in our sovereign spaces. This will involve to better detect weak signals and to anticipate the development of new threats, while sending a strong message to deter strategies of contestation of our national rights or appropriation of our resources.

Prevention will involve closer cooperation with other departments of the State, to provide the necessary multidimensional responses to any risks and threats to our interests.

Essential to protection and prevention, France's overseas military apparatus and forces abroad are essential defence, influence and training instruments for engaging our regional partners. Temporarily supplemented by the enhancement of capacities and the projection of naval air-ground capabilities (e.g. Mission Jeanne d'Arc), this permanent system contributes to our credibility as well as the reassurance of some of our partners.

3.2. Contributing, with our European Partners, to Strategic Stability and Multilateralism

France strongly supports efforts to preserve strategic stability, in an area where most of the nuclear powers are present.

Prevention of tensions and risks of conflict or escalation between States, with potentially dramatic consequences, implies a strong commitment to international law, the rejection of power relations, the establishment of common norms and rules of conduct, as well as the fight against proliferation and the limitation of arms race.

For these reasons, France intends to promote multilateralism and to participate more actively in regional dialogue bodies. It also supports the increased presence of the European Union in these organisations.

3.2.1. Upholding the respect for international law

France will continue to uphold the respect for international law, which is the condition for maintaining freedom of navigation and overflight in all international straits and common spaces.

As such, it rejects any interpretation of the law that would not be compliant with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). It will continue to exercise its freedom of movement wherever law allows it, in particular in the Strait of Hormuz and in the South China Sea, where it supports dialogue between the parties and the establishment of a binding code of conduct.

It will also closely monitor the development of Anti Access/Area Denial capabilities of some regional powers.

3.2.2. Strengthening the non-proliferation regime

As a member of the P5, France actively participates in the fight against proliferation and in the implementation of the United Nations Security Council resolutions. It pays special attention, with its allies and partners, to technology transfers enabling to develop weapons of mass destruction, or potentially violating international regulations on radiological, biological and chemical weapons.

In particular, it will continue to participate in the Proliferation Security Initiative by carrying out exercises and interception activities. It will also play a more active role within the "Maritime Partners", a US initiative that aims at enforcing the implementation of the sanctions imposed on North Korea in the maritime domain by projecting air and sea surveillance capabilities.

In South Asia, France will remain vigilant with regard to proliferating initiatives likely to destabilise international security. It will support any effort of India and Pakistan

to conduct a bilateral dialogue to settle their disputes peacefully.

In Northeast Asia, France supports the efforts of the international community and South Korea to establish a lasting peace in the Korean peninsula, while recalling that North Korea's full, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization must be the ultimate goal. France, which is a signatory of the Declaration by the Sixteen, will maintain a presence within the United Nations Command. This position enables it to closely follow the evolution of the situation in the Korean peninsula.

3.2.3. Strengthen the multilateral dialogue and consultation processes

Considering multilateralism as a pillar of international stability, France participates in regional organisations and fora of the Indo-Pacific (Shangri La Dialogue, Seoul Defense Dialogue, Tokyo Defense Forum, Ulan Bator Dialogue, Beijing Xiangshan Forum, among others).

In the Indian Ocean, France will work, together with its major partners (India, Australia) and with the European Union countries, toward the strengthening of the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) that it will chair for two years from 2020. It will particularly focus on humanitarian aid and natural disaster management, as well as on the fight against piracy and illegal trafficking. It will also contribute to the strengthening of the Indian Ocean Commission. It will reiterate its willingness to become a member of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), of which it is currently a Dialogue Partner.

In Asia, France wishes to join the international bodies that are dedicated, among others issues, to maritime safety and security.

In the South Pacific, the FRANZ Agreement and the Pacific Quad are the operational arms of a regional security architecture, whose political governance must now be consolidated. The South Pacific Defence Ministers' Meeting (SPDMM), in which France sits, is its designated forum. France will also invest in regional initiatives on thematic issues, such as the future Pacific Environmental Security Partnership.

France will coordinate its actions with the European Union and its Member States, as well as the United Kingdom, with which it will promote the development of joint positions on the Indo-Pacific region. Within the European bodies, it will propose the creation of dialogues on security issues and cooperation in the Indo-Pacific.

3.3. Contribute to Peace and Security with our Major Partners

France shares with the United States, India, Australia and Japan the same values and concerns about emerging challenges. In addition to the particularly strong defence relationship with the United States, which addresses global challenges, the strategic partnerships that France has formed with these States are crucial to preserve stability in this region and to prevent unilateral logics.

The United States is an historic ally and a central partner in the Indo-Pacific, due to our converging security and defence interests and the high level of interoperability between our forces. Bilateral cooperation and coordination of our actions will be strengthened in many areas. The bilateral security and defence dialogue will primarily focus on the South Pacific and the Indian Ocean, which represent areas of common interests. While preserving its autonomy of assessment and action, France will support the United States multilateral initiatives dealing with our common security interests.

The community of values and interests that binds us to India, Australia and Japan is already reflected in regular, high-level bilateral dialogues. Facilitated by intergovernmental logistics support agreements, bilateral military cooperation will be increased to enhance our forces' interoperability. In addition to these strengthened bilateral relations, trilateral cooperation dialogues will be sought, if necessary.

Regarding India, France aims at maintaining a privileged defence relationship guaranteeing the strategic autonomy of both countries. France supports the "Make in India" policy implemented by the Indian government. In order to contribute jointly to the Indian Ocean's security, we will also develop our bilateral cooperation with India at both strategic and operational levels.

Security and defence cooperation with Australia is the foundation of our bilateral relationship in the Indo-Pacific. Deepening this relationship will contribute to consolidate our joint commitment to the South Pacific and develop coordinated actions in favor of strategic stability in Asia. In the wake of the Australian future submarine programme, the development of the armament cooperation will be sought. France also wishes to act together with Australia to strengthen the governance of common spaces (maritime, air and space) or shared ones (cyberspace), in order to ensure free, open and secure access to them, in accordance with international law.

Japan is a major partner for strengthening international law and freedom of movement in the Indo-Pacific. France wishes to increase the frequency of our exchanges and exercises. France can also assist Japan in developing its defence capabilities. Based on the first joint mine-

warfare project, France will propose new perspectives for cooperation in the area of technological innovation.

3.4. Contribute to the Stability of Regions where our Forces are Present Through Differentiated Cooperation

France maintains differentiated defence cooperation to ensure the protection of our sovereignty and interests, and to contribute to the stability and development of the regions where our forces are present.

In Northern Indian Ocean, from Djibouti to the Strait of Hormuz, France wishes to guarantee unrestricted freedom of movement, in order to preserve its freedom of action and that of its partners. France seeks to play a central role in the defence and protection of Djibouti, notably by contributing to the modernisation of its forces. France will explore possibilities to coordinate with our European and American partners in this domain. In addition, France is developing its bilateral cooperation with Ethiopia, and stands ready to support the eventual rebuilding of all the components of the Ethiopian armed forces.

The exit of the Arab-Persian Gulf is also a priority area for France. Faced with interstate tensions that might destabilize the region and undermine its national interests, France welcomes regional mediation initiatives.

In Southwestern Indian Ocean, France wishes to contribute to the establishment of regional consultation frameworks and the increase of its neighbours' capabilities. In this regard, it supports the strengthening of armed and naval forces of its partners.

In the South Pacific, France's political and military action will aim at supporting regional stability and the sovereignty of Pacific Island Countries. It will act in close coordination with its regional partners (Australia, New Zealand and the United States). It will seek more trilateral cooperation with Australia and New Zealand, especially on disaster relief operations in the event of natural disaster (FRANZ Agreement), and maritime security (Pacific Quad). France will pursue its bilateral defence cooperation with the Pacific Island Countries.

3.5. The Strengthening of our Southeast Asian Partners' Strategic Autonomy Within a Consolidated Regional Architecture

France will support the strengthening of its South-East Asian partners' strategic autonomy. It will develop a coordinated regional approach, and will seek multilateral cooperation opportunities within the existing regional security architecture.

France shares with Singapore a common analysis of the main challenges posed to South-East Asia. The high mutual trust binding our two countries will allow us to

deepen our already well-established and enduring defence relationship, in order to work together for regional stability. As far as possible, France will join with Singapore's regional cooperation initiatives. Bilaterally, France will pursue the deepening of strategic exchanges, of a privileged relationship in the fields of R&T and defence equipment, and of a mutually beneficial military cooperation, especially in the sea and air domains.

With Malaysia, the high level of cooperation - led by a ministerial-level committee- and the convergence of views on key regional issues, have led to the establishment of a leading partnership in Southeast Asia. France will seek to strengthen its defence cooperation with Malaysia through training activities, conducting regular exercises with Malaysian forces, and supporting the modernization of its equipment in the sea, submarine and air domains.

France and Indonesia share common interests in securing the international transit routes that run through and over the Indonesian territory and its immediate aerial and maritime approaches. France wishes to contribute to the development of the Indonesian forces, including in the fields of monitoring and intervention at sea. France will also accompany the modernisation of Indonesia's defence equipment. An enhanced strategic dialogue, as well as a regular bilateral maritime dialogue, will allow discussing issues relating to the surveillance of air and maritime spaces.

France has a long-lasting bilateral defence relationship with Vietnam in a number of areas. This relationship is based on similar assessments of the situation in the Indo-Pacific and a shared willingness to promote multilateralism and international law. This convergence of views justifies the search for increased cooperation between our two States, especially in the fields industry, maritime and air security, as well as training of the Vietnamese troops to PKOs.

France will also seek to deepen its bilateral relationships with the Philippines and Thailand. Our priorities in these regions are, among other fields, maritime security and environmental security.

3.6. Design a Consistent and Coordinated Indo-Pacific Maritime Cooperation Policy

As a leading maritime power, France's maritime security priorities in the Indo-Pacific are to counter piracy, illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, maritime terrorism and any kind of trafficking. France also intends to protect its maritime-related economic and environmental interests in the area. To this end, France implements a consistent and coordinated Indo-Pacific maritime cooperation policy.

3.6.1. Maritime cooperation as a major feature of bilateral and regional engagements

Acquiring the best understanding of the activities at sea is paramount. France therefore aims to develop, as a complement to its national arrangements, bilateral and multilateral partnerships in the field of Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA). Existing bilateral maritime dialogues with our partners (Japan, India) will be deepened. Others will be sought with willing countries, such as Indonesia.

France intends to facilitate maritime information sharing and fusion with its partners. It will contribute to the strengthening of the existing Information Fusion Centers (IFCs) in Madagascar, Singapore and India. France will also support the development of new centers, in connection with its national IFC in Brest (MICA Center). In this perspective, France seeks permanent naval cooperation agreements.

Maritime safety and security must also serve as a vehicle for strengthening the strategic autonomy of Indo-Pacific countries. France will present its high-performance model of State Action at Sea to its partners.

3.6.2. Stepping-up European endeavor in maritime safety and security

France supports Europe's growing commitment in many areas of maritime safety and security: State capacity-building, training, funding for maritime information structure and operational intervention in the Indo-Pacific. These projects are complementary to France's national effort.

In order to preserve the achievements of the European projects MASE (Maritime Security) and CRIMARIO (Critical Maritime Routes Indian Ocean), which were carried out in cooperation with the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC), France will promote, with the EU, the sustainability of the regional maritime security architecture within the IOC's framework.

France will also advocate a global Indo-Pacific approach for the European projects that will succeed to MASE and CRIMARIO. As the host of the EUNAVFOR ATALANTA Maritime Security Centre since March 30th, 2019, France will actively take part in the reflections on the possible extension of this operation's mandate. Finally, it will support the European actions conducted under the Partnership Instrument on security challenges in Asia.

3.7. Extend Cooperation to Environmental Security

As part of the implementation of the Paris Agreement on Climate, France is developing a policy of environmental security anticipation. The French Ministry for the Armed Forces contributes to this policy in three areas:

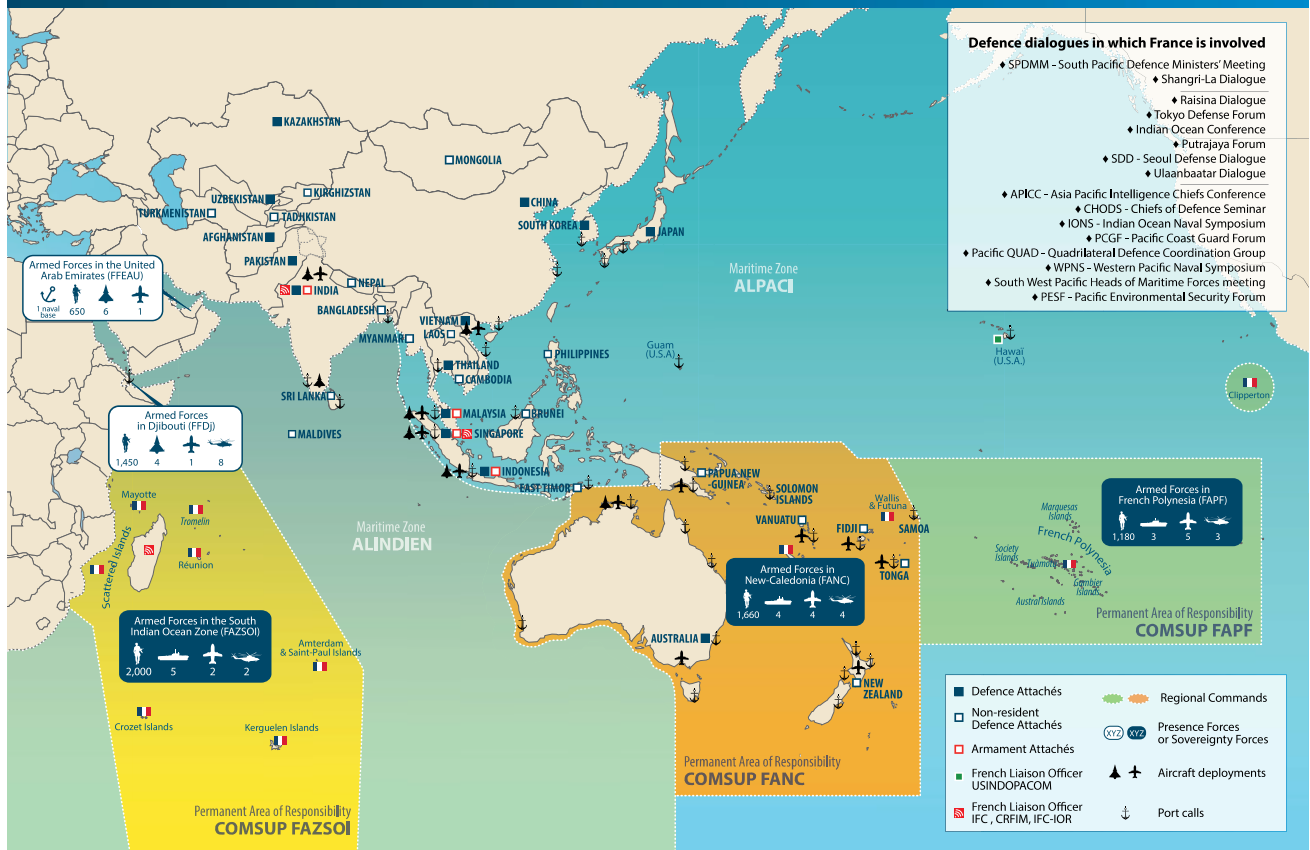
environmental risk analysis; support for strategic research and to targeted science programs; and the organisation of international events throughout the region. French sovereignty forces also play a central role in securing the areas impacted by ecological transition and in national natural heritage protection.

This policy brings new forms of cooperation, in particular in the following areas: adaptation of coastal military infrastructures, preservation and sustainable exploitation of overseas ecosystems, improvement of cyclone early warning, improvement of shoreline surveys and maritime surveillance coverage, military health.

France primarily wishes to discuss with stakeholders concerned with sustainable development and security in the Mozambique Channel, the South Pacific, Southeast Asia and the Bay of Bengal. The ecological and security continuum between these sub-regions justifies France's involvement in multilateral cooperation that is sometimes distant from the French territories. Partnerships with the all the riparian States in the South and Southeast Asian maritime basins (representing 10 % of global fisheries catches and particularly exposed to extreme climate events) will be sought after. Neighboring States of the Southwestern Indian Ocean will also be called upon to explore cooperation in the management of maritime and coastal areas. Finally, the changing situation in Antarctica will have to be followed closely to ensure the preservation of the natural resources of the region.

Associating our strategic partners to this policy will help to better identify and find collective responses to the security consequences of environmental issues, and to enhance the capacities of the most fragile States. In cooperation with Australia, France will continue to develop environmental risk mapping in the South Pacific and the Indian Ocean. Lastly, the global maritime dialogue initiated with Japan offers new perspectives.

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