

**“ Perspectives of National and European Cooperation and the Enhancement
of Joint Capabilities : Possible Capability-Sharing and Consequences
for the Army ?”**

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MARCH 2007

Étude réalisée pour le compte de la DAS au titre du marché public passé selon une procédure adaptée
n° 2005/122

Synthesis

The end of the Cold War signaled a veritable rupture in the mission of armies. The new international order that should have been established after the first Gulf conflict never came about. Instead, the United States, taking advantage of its military supremacy, practiced an increasingly unilateral politics. Even in these conditions, they sought to set up the largest possible appropriate coalitions for both political and economic reasons. The Europeans were quick to find themselves confronted with the conflicts in the Balkans for which it was necessary to develop a common response in the European Union. On this occasion, they took the habit of working in unison – an event that never occurred during the Cold War. The Franco-British St. Malo Summit

in December 1998, which should have formed the bases of the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP), is explained in large part by the military experiences that the French and British soldiers shared in Bosnia. Whether it is within the actual framework of the United Nations or simply with the approval of this organization, peace-maintaining operations and humanitarian operations have greatly multiplied in the past few years. By the year 2005, the European Union had to take on four new missions. France found itself soliciting to take part in the UNIFIL in Lebanon on the basis of the UN Security Council's Resolution 1701 on the side of a number of European countries. Whether it is for peace-maintaining operations, peace-intervention missions, humanitarian missions, or for counter-terrorism operations, the function of acting in a coalition, notably between European partners, has become the standard ever since the interests of common security have been at stake for more than 15 years.

Joint and international coalitions are almost as much of a rule today in operation, leading to certain adaptations in the structure of a country's defense policy (enhancement of a joint army, approaches and advancements to the ESDP,...), but also leave open a number of questions. It is within this context that this study entitled "The Perspectives of National and European Cooperation and the Enhancement of Joint Capabilities: Possible Capacity-Sharing and Consequences for the Army" is carried out.

A joint army can be defined as putting to common use the means of at least two of the three armies (Army, Navy and Air Force). There exist two types of such collaboration: Operational and Organic. The first came to light after the first Gulf War, where it was seen that the resources of at least two armies would be used more often simultaneously in operation and therefore that the forces should be both more modifiable and more operational than in the past. Organic inter-army collaboration is derived from these evolutions while responding equally to the

principles of financial rationalization. It consists (or should consist) of progressively integrating certain services present in the three armies into one single army and even a joint inter-army department (i.e. SIMMAD¹ for the maintenance of aviation/aeronautic equipment in operational circumstances, DIRISI² for communications or even CICDE³ for the doctrine). This approach to inter-army collaboration persists today but in a noticeably different context than before 2005, in particular with the decree 2005-520 of the 21st of May 2005. The aforementioned decree redefined not only the prerogatives and responsibilities of the Chief of General Staff towards army generals but also their influence and role vis-à-vis both the three Chiefs of Staff and the DGA⁴ or the SGA⁵.

The numerous operations carried out in coalitions over the past few years are a result of the great increase in crises throughout the world following the Cold War. These operations, however, present themselves more so in the form of a superimposition of contingents from various nationalities than as a true integration of forces. The seeming lack of integration presents further problems specific in regards to the command, support and the global cost of these various operations. Additionally, in the organic domain, the experiences of cooperation remain rare, making clear the political stakes of such a question but also the difficulty and the limits of multinational integration in the domain of defense. The European countries have, however, over the past ten years, tried to improve their cooperation in order to equip themselves with the means to lead certain missions under the framework of a European Security and Defense Policy. Even if the questions of sharing or pooling capabilities are no longer directly asked within the European

¹ Integrated Structure for the Operational Maintenance of Defense Aeronautical Equipment

² Inter-armed Direction of Infrastructure Networks and Defense Information Systems

³ Center for Inter-armed Concepts, Doctrines, and Experimentations

⁴ General Delegation for Armament

⁵ General Secretary for Armament

body, the approaches taken on drive certain countries to certain initiatives on this matter thereby opening the debate on this thematic.

Even if the enhancement of a joint army, as well as the other types of cooperation, are today fundamental factors in the strategic reflection of European armies, since they correspond to the evolution of the armies' missions, global integration would never be possible and would lead to a dead end. There exist multiple domains of intervention and of action that are not capable of being integrated neither from the inter-army's perspective, because these domains are too specific, nor from a cooperative perspective, for both political and operational reasons. Within the organic domain, the inter-armies should have as an objective the execution of a common basket of resources all while obtaining an identical result. This appears relatively difficult to put into place but such is the case with the inter-armies which, at least in the short term, remain resistant to any changes that would not allow it to reach the end goal of inter-army collaboration. This is also the case on the multinational front because of linguistic and cultural differences as well as because of political, strategic, or national industry issues among others

A joint army has important impacts on the progress of missions as well as on the nature and organization of its engagements on the ground. Such cooperation reconsiders the autonomy of such an army in certain domains (military command, deployment of troops, support and logistics, communications, etc). Yet it also requires clear proof of the important adaptations needed, ranging from the future planning and organization of the missions of the ground forces, to the choices of equipment and the training of the militaries.

It seems essential, however, not to be dogmatic and instead, to define clearly the stakes and the objectives that are either planned or unforeseeable. The question of the method will be essential to the future not only in regards to the pursuit of inter-army collaboration but also for determining the sharing or the pulling of its assets.

The decree 2005-520 of the 21st of May 2005 clarified the responsibilities of Chief of General Staff and gave it the means to arbitrate between the armies' choices, thereby reinforcing the broader outlook that was introduced with the creation of the OCO/ASF brace. This inter-army collaboration should have equally beneficial effects on the budget plan. It is with an organic layout that this decree has the most implications, since it places the "inter-armed" dimension not equal with but rather above the tasks of the three armies.

Eventually, this should generate consistent concepts and doctrines between the three armies and should rationalize (or even outsource) more sufficiently certain supportive or administrative functions, the consequences of which would be important regarding the format and organization of the armies. Nevertheless, this reform runs the risk of imposing an inter-army collaboration that would not integrate the risks involved in the wear and tear of service and the weakening of both responsibilities and competencies within the armies (even if, fundamentally, keeping three significant Staffs pleaded for the opposite). What's more, this reform aims to increase the interdependencies between the three armies because it leads to realignment both of their tasks and of the command of their respective environments. The reform thus leads to a larger transparency through increasingly common exchanges.

From this perspective, it appears vital to be able to coordinate the actions of the three armies in terms of joint army with the action of the French General Staff. For this to occur, more systematic structures of cooperation must be put into place between the general staff of the three armies. A common methodology of joint army needs to exist as well. The committee of the Chiefs of Staff should therefore be the place where the three Chiefs of Staff evoke their common undertakings and submit the proposals to Chief of the General Staff.

The matter is much more complex and the progress much slower in the cases of multinational, notably European cooperation, yet the issues remain rather similar. Indeed in terms of cooperation, the choice of the method is less successfully completed. NATO started out working on improving the interoperability among the allies then later reoriented itself towards researching collaborative loopholes existing in the European Union and elsewhere. The questions of sharing or pooling assets remains the result of rare or rather isolated initiatives (i.e. pooling assets of aerial observation with the *Awacs* of NATO, tactical European groupings that allow several European countries to pool pre-identified resources, bilateral or trilateral initiatives concerning certain capabilities, specialization of smaller countries on collaborative positions). Within a more specific and more successful framework of the European approach (European Union Military Staff and European Defence Agency), it appears nonetheless necessary today to systematize this approach and to determine how and for what purposes the European forces should be integrated. All the while the financial means of the European armies will not be increasing. In this context, one of the means of exceeding these limits involves strengthening the various bilateral or multilateral initiatives in Europe and having them rely more directly on the pledged approaches of the ESDP within the European Union, notably the level of the general staff of the European Union or of a future general staff of forward planning. This would presumably implement the structure of the EU Military Staff all while having the worry of copying NATO's structure.

In terms of sharing or pooling of capabilities, one must impose the idea of a method at the European Union level by the intermediary of the EDA so as to allow for a true coordination of a common political environment to exist among the member states. Today, the EDA works in two directions: firstly, filling the gap of capabilities, after the works of the EU Military Staff and the

catalogue of capabilities; secondly, trying to reach a harmonization of the future strategic plans of the member states. From the long-term vision the EDA could equally proceed to a sort of cartography of capacities in Europe allowing it to identify the overcapacities and the collaborative loopholes existing in its global nature. This mapping could allow states to have a more complete vision of cooperation, collaboration and capacity-sharing that they could put into place amongst themselves. This would also accommodate for the top-down and bottom-up approaches foreseeable within the EDA, thereby reinforcing the confidence of this organism.

In the future, the perspectives of European cooperation could be seen as a possible means for the army to redefine its tasks in a multilateral context and to better-define its priorities while at the same time taking into account a restrained fiscal environment. The EDA has a duty to coordinate its shared and pooled collaborative exercises in offering to the states of the EU a global vision of the capacities required of all member states. Yet this does not have to prevent the army from multiplying the contacts with its foreign counterparts so as to define the most rational axis within a bilateral framework.