

# The Commitment of Land Forces in Operations

In the beginning of this year 2005, it is suitable to draw conclusions: 2004, was an intense year for French land forces, both in the homeland and overseas: Haiti in February, Kosovo in March, 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration for the Normandy landings and first riots in the Ivory Coast in June, then Bouaké and Abidjan in November, Afghanistan and the "VIGIPIRATE" plan as a "recurrent theme"...

**The common feature for all these events was the commitment of land forces alongside other armed forces to assist LO (Law and Order) enforcement, in France or overseas,** in close cooperation with police forces. Either to protect our fellow-citizens, meet their expectations, evacuate them or preserve peace within their environment, land forces are committed according to specific criteria that should be clearly explained.

- Even if some militaries have forgotten it, because of the increased number of overseas operations, **the defense of home territory and the protection of our population -wherever it lives - remain a top priority for the armed forces and in particular for land forces,** as these populations do not live in the air or on the sea.
- **Land forces can operate on home territory but only in exceptional circumstances,** for a basic reason linked to the democratic nature of our Republic. For technical and legal reasons that can easily be understood, an airman is responsible for air defense and a seaman tasked for carrying out coastal police along our borders. But there is no "current" legitimacy for a soldier to be a LO representative, in particular on homeland territory. Police forces carry out this duty, receiving orders from civilian authorities; and only in unusual circumstances (such as a terrorist threat, an exceptional and serious urgency) a force should intervene in camouflaged battle-dress and under military command, according to very restrictive rules.
- In these exceptional circumstances, corresponding to a specific arrangement in the ordinance of 1959 (we'll come back to it) **land forces are then committed as an additional force, and not to replace police forces:** with specific command and control and COAs (Courses of Action) under the orders of a military commander, to conduct self-contained operations. Then, the Army's specific capabilities gain in importance, all the more as "land" know-how and expertise, provide them with a major role to safeguard France and the French people.

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Land forces' specific capabilities and assets, sophisticated commitment environments, decrease of resources to meet requirements, all contribute to specify and improve<sup>1</sup> the Army's specific capabilities and ROEs (Rules of Engagement) on homeland territory when facing hazards and threats.

Indeed, even if aiding in LO operations, especially on homeland territory, is currently an exceptional mission for the armed forces (as it is not a standing mission) it has become a major mission for it over the years.

LO (Law and Order) "includes all the rules and services aimed at protecting individuals. It is considered as a general police mission and it globally consists of protecting people and assets". **On homeland territory**, it aids in carrying out protection (defined as "all protective postures within the framework of the defense of homeland territory in order to enforce public peace, i.e. institutions, government services, economic activity operating normally, protecting people, facilities and public buildings, as well as carrying out LO operations". See joint glossary.

## Which Hazards and Threats and within which Environment ?

**The environment of overseas theaters** is well known because similar and yet very different situations are daily encountered by committed land forces: crowd control<sup>2</sup>, coordinating with French gendarmes - but also with foreign forces - to plan and carry out operations, within the framework of multinational coalitions; but also coordinating **with local or international police forces** - currently being set up or reconstituted - **carrying out LO operations** alongside them to support them, to give them credibility or to deploy them after a commitment phase... There are very different situations but one single reaction has to be safeguarded from now on: the ever closer cooperation of soldiers and gendarmes, so much our specific national feature is an advantage to meet the threats encountered in Mitrovica or Abidjan; but especially to carry out stabilization operations properly by shifting from a military command and control to a civilian control - a shift that is perfectly symbolized by the gendarmerie - both a military and police force.

**In front of us**, in first echelon: agitators manipulating excited and consenting or manipulated crowds, subversive groups carrying out guerilla warfare, disinformation warfare or specific attacks. In second echelon, more inconspicuous individuals or structures - terrorists or dealers - endeavoring to carry out more diffuse, more continuous and less

visible operations, except for striking more radically and more brutally and generally more specifically.

In a first phase, all these threats aim to outflank, to weaken and to undermine the credibility of allied operations - and first of all of police operations - if possible in front of the media's cameras in order to ruin all the efforts carried out to relaunch the political, economic and social life of the troubled country. In order to avoid destabilization or the appearance of anarchy - even temporary and localized, the commitment of the deployed force is then necessary to rapidly establish a state of calm after the chaos which is likely to ensue: Haiti or Kosovo are two examples for this spiral of violence that has become commonplace when being committed.

However, a major armed confrontation, **on homeland territory**, has been discredited since the late 80s and the armed forces' enemy is not located within national borders. Yet, **terrorist threats** are still there, as well as **potential insurrectionary situations** that are likely not to be swept with the back of our hand: in these conditions, we see that armed forces - in particular land forces - will be able to provide police forces with an essential tool: a few examples of actual or potential hazards to shed light on these issues: Rennes street, Châtelet: limited bomb attacks, not requiring sealing-off, medical or environment assets other than those normally allotted to such disasters, either natural or



non-natural ones. But the 03/11 bomb attack in Madrid (nearly 1 000 casualties), a “dirty” bomb, the release of a gas bottle or bioterrorism, all these threats - so credible that Mr. de VILLEPIN recently made a proposal on the international scene - require such extensive responses that **the Army is undoubtedly called upon, in a very logical way owing to its specific features, as regards C2 (Command and Control), reactivity, CBRN (Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear) characteristics or others !** And these players, unable to face us directly because of our technological advantages, will then manage to cause the armed forces to get committed on homeland territory in an indirect way that they will always favor to influence our government or punish our population.

## Army's Strong Points

**The Army is an essential police forces' partner,** obviously with some adaptation, in homeland territory commitment, as it knows and masters the air-land environment, because of its specific capabilities and its COAs, as well as its capability to operate within civilian populations.

**Overseas, the Army is tasked with an essential role,** because of its presence on the terrain, its knowledge of the environment and its protracted contact with populations. This is its natural AOO (Area of Operation), more than the surrounding countryside, desert or mountains, and it masters it, in particular thanks to the knowledge of

local authorities or of public life officials that it takes into account. Thanks to its unremitting commitments that it has carried out for 15 years, it knows how to adapt itself to rapid changes of situations, to different cultural environments, which differ considerably from one country to the other. Present as early as the early stage of conflicts and always with a wide sustainability experience, knowing how to concentrate its actions - among others to gather intelligence on urbanized terrain - it is accustomed to sudden environment changes and to other abrupt situation changes, in order to prevent incidents or to react to aggressions and to breaches of peace and order.

**As it makes up the bulk of stabilization forces after any commitment,** a phase during which breaches of peace and order are likely to occur, the Army quickly sets up C2 (Command and Control) assets to bring about required synergies with organizations as different as IGOs/NGOs<sup>3</sup>, local warring factions, or joint CS (*Combat Support*) and CSS (*Combat Service Support*) assets. It remains flexible - through its organizations, standing anticipating measures and required assets - to shift from a return-to-normal-life situation to an “interposition-type” - even coercion-type - situation, to suppress troublemakers.

**Overseas as in France,** the presence of soldiers in camouflaged battle-dress deters, but also reassures: they are being committed for this very symbol, which calms concerned

populations. Military patrols in airports, in railroad stations and in the subway, at the bottom of the Eiffel Tower no longer surprise anyone and are perfectly accepted by the population and moreover by police forces. Thus, the French can notice that the Services concretely and directly take part in their protection. Through their attitude, their dress, their activity, their behavior, soldiers are a “media”; they let a clear message get through: they can be kindly but watchful, even threatening. These quick and coordinated changes of posture are as many strong messages.

Seasoned to patrols, to *check-points*, to area control operations - even crowd control<sup>4</sup> operations for infantry units - during overseas operations, Army units are naturally ready to carry out such missions on home territory by adapting themselves to the environment. Its task-organization in companies and PROTERRE TFs (*Task Forces*), tasked to implement a common mission basis - Army Common Missions<sup>5</sup> - make homeland operations easier: Évian or the 60<sup>th</sup> landing anniversary showed the relevance of this concept, which enables to carry out self-contained operations in addition to police forces, with all the units of land forces within overall joint organizations. Thus, in June 2003, the French Army provided most of the troops (1,750 troops out of a total of 2,550 committed troops) protecting the Évian G8 summit.

Above all, more than strength that has become in short supply, the French

Army has invaluable capabilities within this kind of environment. In addition to vital, deployable coordination and C2 capabilities, as well as reconnaissance, and various expertise and anticipation capabilities linked to them, it has an array of very different assets: CBRN defense assets, medical evacuation capabilities, engineer assets (mine clearing, BAC (*Battle Area Clearance*), works, commitment into flooded areas, setting-up and fitting of refugee camps, water treatment, power supply...), transportation in difficult areas, communications, HUMINT (*Human Intelligence*) and SIGINT (*Signal Intelligence*), anti-aircraft protection, etc... Indeed, CPs - especially “level-2 and -3” CPs - are perfectly trained for commitments; and they are able to plan and control unusual situations as they normally do it when they are actually committed. Consequently, they are able to set up “*joint-fitted*” land command CPs - in particular within multinational environments - as it happened for the Nantes Land Command CP during the 60<sup>th</sup> landing anniversary.

## Army's Position and Role

**Within the framework of overseas operations,** after an intervention phase or just a deployment, land forces should create a favorable climate to enable the achievement of the end state. Thanks to their daily operations, **it will be possible to restore LO.** To this end, a force commander could be tasked or not be tasked - in his mandate - to carry out LO

operations. In the first case, he will be responsible for LO in his AOO and he will be supported by a "police" advisor and by a "police" augmentation force. In the other case, a local civilian or international authority will be responsible for LO; he is likely to require support from forces in the theater. However, should serious troubles occur, the forces' commander can decide to restore LO.

**Within this environment, the Army's role is obvious.**

It will set the necessary conditions to return to peace - conditions enabling police forces to establish LO. Should the situation drift off, it will be able to operate in addition to these forces - or to take over from them - with its own assets and its specific COAs. Indeed, it will take part in stepping up efforts by shifting into high gear if necessary and if deterrence was not enough. Eventually, it can - through its presence and its contact with the population - gather intelligence and anticipate coming events.

**More specifically, as regards homeland territory, the Army already takes part in protection**

through its units being permanently in a security posture (protection of military facilities, units on alert, prepositioned troops...) and through its units deployed overseas within the framework of global defense. Nevertheless, it can do more by offering specialized services under civilian authorities' command. In case of emergency), the Army can set up units and specific assets better than others can; however some specific rules and limitations should

be set. Above all, its action should take place in a serious and urgent context or when other government services do not have enough assets. Indeed, **the Army cannot and must not do everything; it cannot replace existing and available assets, but it cannot be away when the population requires it - which is its raison d'être.**

The conditions for its commitment must be clear and sufficiently planned. Under civilian authorities' command at the highest level, it should afterwards keep its conventional organization and, under no circumstances, become back-up troops for various

services or organizations.

**As it has an additional role, its end state must be set; it should not be requested to provide strengths and means, but tasked with some effect to achieve for which are then assigned assets and defined COAs by its commanders at various levels,** as it can do for overseas operations. Within the framework of the Joint Territorial Defense Organization, the homeland territory is broken down into defense areas - under the command of flag officers<sup>6</sup> - to which the Army makes its contribution. For coastal and air protection, if the French Navy and the French Air Force

undoubtedly and respectively play a leading role, as it is obvious from a technical and legal point of view, it is also obvious that on homeland territory (i.e. on the terrain) as overseas **and for all these "extraordinary" conditions, the French Army has a leading role within the armed forces.**

**ROEs** should be accurate and clearly understood in order to avoid any incident, while enabling action, if necessary. This is true **for any theater, but among others on the French territory;** as it is very tricky, after having been deployed onto an overseas theater within a hostile environment, to be back on homeland territory to carry out a protective mission, where hostility could be merged among one's own citizens.

**Appropriate and clear rules**

should correspond to these various environments. If Army's soldiers can adapt themselves to sophisticated situations that they are likely to face, thanks to their high-level expertise, we have to make their task easier, i.e. give them easy orders ! And then, they are able to operate - fully aware of the situation - and without questioning their initiative capability and their experience: **i.e. not necessarily putting a corporal, with 10 years of service and having served in Mitrovica, Abidjan and elsewhere, under the command of a young**



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**police officer with only a few months' training...** It occurred sometimes; happily, it is no longer true!

Eventually, **let us not forget the other kinds of action for existing land forces within the array of tools available to the government.** First of all, LO operations within which the Army could be committed - under the scheme of "third-category" force requisitioning, by prefectorial authorities.

Afterwards, homeland defense, still in force with decree Nr. 73-235, dated March 1, 1973. Then, it is a matter of meeting a threat on homeland territory by carrying out military operations to intercept and neutralize armed hostile groups. Then, the Army would be in first line to carry out this kind of operation, because it would carry out its conventional COAs. Tasked commanders would then get the required

authorizations to carry out their missions, including the use of weapons. It does not mean a transfer of authority from public authorities to military authorities, which is the ultimate possibility granted in the ordinance of 1959, by the way in a paragraph dealing with prefectorial authority - which can authorize a military commander to command and control a specific operation in a given area.

1 For this purpose, see Colonel Vergez in-process article dealing with joint land security concept.

2 Committing land forces **in overseas operations** to meet hostile or non-hostile players, early considered as non-combatants. Carried out within the framework of tasked missions and ROEs, this commitment aims to meet any individual or collective action to a right standard, requiring self-protection measures, operations in direct contact with crowds, even operations on urbanized terrain. It takes place at any stage of a crisis, most often but not exclusively during

stabilization phases, when local - police or legal - organizations are lacking, poor or failing (see the commitment of land forces for crowd control Nr. 426/EMATBCSF/CTC, dated 05/24/04).

3 IGOs/NGOs : International Intergovernmental Organizations/Non-Governmental Organizations  
4 To be clearly set apart from **LO operations**, carried out on homeland territory within the framework of requisitioning.  
5 Army Common Missions.  
6 Defense Area Flag Officer.  
7 From now on, the Army is considered as carrying out the most important role for our defense. Thus, the people polled were asked to sort out the different Services in order of priority, according to their importance within our defense system; for the second year in row, they give the top priority to the Army (**39%**, 36% in 2003, 36% in 2002, 29% in 2001) before the Air Force (**33%**, 33% in 2003, 36% in 2002, 42% in 2001), the Gendarmerie (**13%**, 11% in 2003, 11% in 2002, 11% in 2001) and the Navy (**10%**, 14% in 2003, 12% in 2002, 12% in 2001) - extract from the opinion survey "the picture of the Services", 2004.

**Everyday, the Army takes part in LO operations, either in overseas theaters or on home territory;** both kinds of operations being closely linked to each other. Its major role should be neither forgotten nor reduced. It has capabilities; it should exploit them, make them known and get ready for any kind of commitment, in particular on home territory. Hazards are pending and the Army should get ready for them! **The French trust it**, as shown by various opinion surveys<sup>7</sup> that take place every year. **More than any other Service, the Army is their armed force** through its closeness, its human aspect, its presence on the whole of the territory. They are aware of the fact that they can rely on it, should floods, oil slicks, forest fires occur, and similarly, they will expect it to be there in tragic situations.

Yet, cooperating with police forces is essential, as an interagency operation on homeland territory or with (inter)national organizations on overseas theatres; but everyone should know its place and above all, it should never hide the important role carried out by land forces.

Furthermore, **the increasing commitment of the French forces for protecting homeland territory** can no longer be considered **within the sole national framework**, but **training and command and control should be carried out within a European, transatlantic - and, if necessary international - framework**, as for defending oneself against a conventional enemy.

## Note from the publication directorate

From now on, the term "**homeland missions**" replaces "**interior operations**". However, owing to printing deadlines, this amendment was not taken into account for this issue.

## Texts Pertaining to Land Forces within the Framework of Public Security

- Ordinance Nr. 59-147 of 01/07/1959 - Defense General Organization.
- Decree Nr. 62-808 of July 18, 1962 - Defense General Organization.
- Decree Nr. 64-11 of January 3, 1964 - Organization for Territorial Defense Responsibilities within French Overseas Territories.
- Decree Nr. 73-235 of March 1, 1973 - Homeland Defense.
- Decree Nr. 73-236 of March 1, 1973 - Security areas of Critical Infrastructure Facilities.
- Decree Nr. 86-1231 of 12/02/1986 - Defense Operational Centers.
- Decree Nr. 88-622 of May 6, 1988 - Emergency Plan.
- Decree Nr. 95-573 of May 2, 1995 - Crowd Dispersal.
- Ministerial Directive Nr. 500/SGDN/MPS/OTP of May 9, 1995 - Commitment of Armed Forces for Law and Order enforcement.
- Decree Nr 95-523 of May 3, 1995 - Appointment and Authority of Regional Defense Areas Delegates and their Counterparts.
- Joint directive Nr. 00519/DEF/EMA/EMP.3/NP of 05/12/1998 - ROEs and Rules of Behavior for Land Defense.
- Decree Nr. 2000-555 of June 21, 2000 - Defense Territorial Organization.
- By-law of June 28, 2000 - Joint Territorial Defense Organization.
- Memorandum, CIMIC (Civilian-Military Cooperation) and Crisis Management; November 2000 edition.
- Directive Nr. 000674/DEF/EMA/EMP.4/NP of 07/03/2001 - Joint Standing Command and Control Organization for other than Continental France.
- MOU (Memorandum of Understanding between the MOD and Interior Minister - Availability of CBRN assets for Emergency Aid to Populations on Homeland Territory, dated 10/22/2001.
- Provisional Directive Nr. 496/DEF/EMA/EMP.1/NP, June 12, 2002 - Armed Forces Contribution to Public Security missions within the framework of PSOs (Peace-Support Operations).
- Government Security Program against Terrorist Threats “Operation VIGIPIRATE”, March 2003 edition.
- Specialized Programs against Terrorist Threats, March 2003 edition:
  - Operation PIRATOX (chemical).
  - Operation BIOTOX (biological).
  - Operation PIRATOME (nuclear and radiological).
  - Operation PIRANET (attacks against ADP systems).
- Study, Land Protection Concept (Note Nr. 5/DEF/EMAT/BPO/EO/10 of January 5, 2004).
- Joint Doctrine on overseas ROE's: ROE's and Rules of Behavior (PIA Nr. 05-203).
- FM 950: Use of Land Forces for Crowd Control on an Overseas Theater of Operations (2004 edition).