

# A Mutual Cooperation, LO (Law & Order) on the National Territory and in Overseas Operations

The latest geopolitical developments have led to a **development in the commitment of security forces**. The armed forces are committed on the national territory within the framework of the “VIGIPIRATE” program, thus reinforcing the organization of the gendarmerie and of the police services; it contributes to overall peace and LO missions. At the Minister of Defense behest, the Gendarmerie carries out operations in overseas theatres, where it implements its expertise in the area of LO.

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Within the framework of civil defense, **according to ordinance dated January 7, 1959, dealing with defense's general organization, the armed forces have no LO role on the national territory**; it is in this sense that inter-service ministerial directive Nr 500/SGSN dated May 9, 1995 supervises the participation of the armed forces in LO operations. The new position of the armed forces toward homeland security means that the government intends to increase the anti-terrorist structure with available assets. Within their public service role, the French Air Force and the French Navy already take part in the protection of the national territory through their actions in the areas of air cover and maritime protection. Coordinating their actions with all other homeland security players enables us to optimize the role of the government in meeting all kinds of attacks.

In exceptional conditions, the commitment of the armed forces within the framework of the government's program for “close watch, prevention, and protection to meet terrorist threats” (VIGIPIRATE program) and

within the framework of the protection and intervention programs against terrorism (PIRATE plans) contributes **to increase the vigilance level of the country to meet current threats**. Similarly, any commitment of the armed forces on the

national territory, to take part in increasing general security of the VIGIPIRATE plan and out of the protection and intervention programs against terrorism requires the enforcement of measures appropriate to the unaccustomed size of



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the organization to be set up. This is the case when there are massive events, such as the organization of the G8 summit in Evian in 2003 or the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the allied landing in Normandy in 2004. The variety of expertise and the specialized or rare support provided by the armed forces - normally unavailable in the gendarmerie or police forces - enable the administrative or judicial authority **to secure themselves the support of military authorities to carry out government missions**. However, the implementation of these measures should remain subordinated to political arbitrations owing to the specific purpose of the armed forces consisting in being committed out of the national territory.

Decree Nr 96-828, dated September 19, 1996, specifies that **national police and national gendarmerie are responsible for LO missions and they carry them out** in their respective areas of responsibility. In these conditions, under the prefect's authority, the armed forces committed on the national territory should coordinate with homeland security forces. By enforcing such a principle, we are assured of unity of effort for operations carried out by all committed forces. An exchange of information is the most convincing proof. The gendarmerie provides the armed forces with data enabling them to optimize the mission they have been tasked within their legal commitment framework. In real time, the armed forces provide the gendarmerie with gathered or notified

data, and they possibly take advantage of its commitment or of its expertise. For the gendarmerie, the operations carried out by the militaries should take place within an optimized and coherent structure of general security; it should favor an exchange of data. However, **we have to regard and respect the fact that the armed forces want to be considered as a security partner and not only as an asset provider; thus their initiative margin and the increase in value of their commitment will be appreciated**.

The increasing commitment of the national gendarmerie out of the national territory reflects the changes occurring in security and defense areas. The increasing interaction of homeland and external security sets the gendarmerie at the junction of the global security concept. 1,300 gendarmes are currently assigned out of France. More than 800 take part in operational missions in crisis areas, either within the framework of United Nations Security Council resolutions or to reinforce the security of diplomats and diplomatic facilities. Better known as an armed forces provost marshal - with its missions of common police, criminal investigation police for military matters, military traffic control police and intelligence police - it has been increasingly committed for all security roles in Lebanon, Haiti, Algeria, Bosnia, Cambodia, Kosovo for about twenty years and currently in the Ivory Coast. Thanks to its riot control culture, it provides a global, coherent

and specific answer to all the security issues that could occur in crisis areas. LO, criminal investigations, crowd control, VPs' (Vulnerable Points) protection, close protection, intelligence, counter-terrorism, and specialized commitments are representative examples of their action. In overseas theaters of operation, the gendarmerie appears to be a key and efficient player throughout crisis monitoring. Above all, a crisis transition tool from military management to civilian management, its status, its expertise, its projection rapid deployment capabilities to operate efficiently within the whole range of crisis management.

Within the framework of the EU's foreign defense and security policies, the agreements signed by the fifteen in Feira (Portugal) in June 2000 sanctions the commitment of each country to provide **police forces in order to have a global commitment capability outside the EU** - including a rapid deployment capability. The national gendarmerie

provides 600 gendarmes (of whom 300 are rapidly deployable) and suggests the setting-up of a deployable headquarters, enabling France to command and control a police operation on EU request.

On the initiative of the Minister of Defense, a statement of intent was signed at Noordwijk (Netherlands) on September 17, 2004, by the Spanish, French, Italian, Dutch, and Portuguese Ministers of Defense pertaining to the setting-up of a **European gendarmerie force (EUROGENDFOR)**; it complements the available range of military assets for crisis management. This force - fitted with a standing and deployable headquarters and composed of units from member countries with gendarmerie-like forces - could deploy 800 troops rapidly; they include 300 French gendarmes able first and foremost to operate in the aftermath of armed forces in overseas theaters and subsequently to ease the transition towards a civilian management of crises.

**Conducting LO operations on the national territory or overseas requires expertise, professionalism, and in any case an outstanding coordination of all committed players; it also requires commanders to be fully aware of everyone's know-how and to respect everyone's role. In these conditions, optimized efficiency and credibility will best support France's objective regarding the global security concept.**