

DRAFT MILITARY PLANNING LAW

2019 / 2025



SYNOPSIS

A MPL BASED ON RENEWAL

"I want a strong France able to control its destiny, protect its citizens and its interests, guarantee its defence and security and, at the same time, propose global responses to the crises we face. I want a France that helps and protects the victims of obscurantism or terrorism, that makes its voice heard beyond our borders. I want a France that is faithful to its commitments in the Atlantic Alliance, but which is also the engine of European strategic autonomy. To achieve this, we must have a full-spectrum, strong, modern and powerful defence apparatus, implemented by forward-looking armed forces with the capacity to respond fast."

Emmanuel Macron, President of the French Republic
New Year address to the defence community in Toulon, 19 January 2018



1 /// OUR AMBITION FOR FRANCE AND FOR EUROPE LOOKING TO 2030: ADAPTING THE ARMED FORCES TO THE CHALLENGES OF THE FUTURE

The world has entered an era of great turmoil, as shown by the findings of the Strategic Review delivered to the President of the French Republic in October 2017. Both France and Europe are faced with grave, diverse and lasting threats. In particular, the persistence of the terrorist threat, the return of power politics and the weakening of the international order are leading to a durably unstable and uncertain strategic environment. In this strategic environment, also marked by the emergence of new forms and spaces of confrontation, our armed forces will now have to deal with more challenging conflicts and increasingly well-equipped adversaries.

To respond to these threats and these future challenges, the President of the French Republic has approved a 2030 Ambition programme for our armed forces. It rests on a balanced and full-spectrum force model capable, sustainably and over time, of guaranteeing the fundamental operational capabilities that are essential for our defence (deterrence, protection, knowledge and anticipation, prevention, and intervention). Relying on modernisation of the armed forces and enhanced cooperations, this force model must also enable us to guarantee our national strategic autonomy, now integral to the development of a European strategic autonomy. To realise this ambition, the President of the French Republic, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, assigns to them the missions to be accomplished and the related operational contracts, which drive the definition of our forces model for 2030.

2 /// ALMOST 200 BILLION EUROS OVER FIVE YEARS: AN UNPRECEDENTED RESOURCE LEVEL COMMENSURATE WITH THE SCOPE OF OUR AMBITION

To realise Ambition 2030, the President of the French Republic has decided to make unprecedented resources - 198 billion euros - available to the armed forces over the first five years of the Military Planning Law, covering the period until 2023. Up until 2022, the budget will rise by 1.7 billion euros a year, increasing to 3 billion euros in 2023, taking the Armed Forces budget to 39.6 billion euros per year on average, not including pensions, between 2019 and 2023. Over this period, the resources made available will represent 7.4 billion euros a year more on average than over the 2014-2018 period (32.2 billion euros a year). All in all, the resources awarded to the armed forces will increase by almost a quarter (+23%).

This exceptional increase in the budget earmarked for the armed forces reflects the President of the French Republic's pledge to increase defence spending to 2% of national GDP looking to 2025. Considering the tensions resulting from the steady decline in defence spending over the last 20 years, notably in view of the recent intensification of engagements and the deterioration of the international security context, it is time to put an end to the slow erosion of military capacities. Hence, the 2019-2025 MPL puts requirements at 295 billion euros, covered definitively until 2023, taking defence spending to 1.9% of GDP versus 1.78% in 2017. Resources for years 2024 and 2025 will be defined in detail through a re-evaluation in 2021, based on the macroeconomic situation at that time, with the goal of increasing French defence spending to 2% of GDP in 2025.

This is an honest and fair budget for the armed forces, guaranteeing - from the start of the period covered - a better fit between the resources granted and planned spending, thereby preserving the investment capacity of the armed forces with no major risk of reducing orders or deliveries of equipment. Indeed, the planned spending, fully covered by budgeted resources, rules out any option of exceptional budget revenues. Likewise, the provision for overseas operations and homeland missions will gradually be brought to a level more in line with spending levels recently observed, rising from the 450 million euros previously set to 1.1 billion euros as of 2020. This process thereby secures funding for Ambition 2030.

3 /// FIRST STAGE OF AMBITION 2030, A 2019-2025 MPL BASED ON RENEWAL

Responding to the immediate needs of the armed forces and preparing for the future: these are the objectives of this Military Planning Law for 2019-2025, which will be the first step towards the balanced and full-spectrum military model advocated by the President of the French Republic in the framework of Ambition 2030. To realise this objective, this "renewal-based MPL" is structured around four complementary poles, responding both to short-term concerns (poles 1 and 2) and preparation for the future (poles 3 and 4).

- Pole 1, "a MPL that takes in the human factor"

Whereas previous Military Planning Laws focused their attention on production or preservation of equipment for the armed forces, this new law also places at the centre of its immediate concerns the soldiers, sailors, pilots and military and civilian personnel of the Ministry, together with their families. All of them have been asked to make great efforts, even sacrifices, given the intensity of recent engagements over and above planned operational contracts, in theatres of overseas operations and on the national territory.

The goal here is to guarantee the men and women of the defence community the means to fulfil their missions and thereby improve the conditions in which the military profession is exercised, through training, operational preparation, small equipment and military kit, whether used for training or operations. It also means guaranteeing the time required for operational preparedness, through a strong effort to ensure availability of equipment and access to the essential infrastructure (firing ranges and simulators, for example).

Another goal is to pay particular attention to the "soldier's daily life", i.e. to the living and working conditions of military or civilian personnel, and those of their families. This rests on a greater effort to improve the infrastructure of everyday life, support and living conditions for personnel (notably through the Action Plan on the Family - "Plan Famille" - decided in October 2017), but also through a targeted increase in personnel numbers, with 6,000 additional posts, thereby reversing the downward trend of the past 30 years. Half of these new jobs, i.e. 3,000 posts, will be in the fields of intelligence and digital technology.

- Pole 2, "Renewal of operational capabilities"

To counter the wear and tear of military equipment, the Military Planning Law provides for boosting the rate of modernisation of conventional equipment. The oldest equipment, subject to accelerated attrition due to the intensity of recent engagements, will be replaced more rapidly. In particular, 50% of the Army's new medium size armoured vehicles will be delivered between now and 2025, in the framework of acceleration of the SCORPION programme. The French Navy will benefit from more modern nuclear attack submarines and frigates, with the delivery of new BARRACUDA, FREMM and FTI vessels (respectively 4, 8 and 2 to be delivered by 2025). The French Air Force will benefit from the arrival of new refuelling aircraft, drones and new (28 Rafales) or upgraded (55 M2000 Ds) fighter planes. In parallel, the hosting infrastructure for this new equipment will be modernised.

At the same time, this acceleration of deliveries will enable a reduction of the capacity shortfalls that had become critical in certain segments. In particular, the number of refuelling and strategic transport aircraft will be increased from 12 to 15 looking to 2025, and delivery of the first 12 aircraft completed in 2023. In view of the challenge this represents in terms of sovereignty and State intervention at sea, the target number of Navy patrol vessels is increased from 17 to 19, of which 11 new-generation patrol vessels will have been delivered by 2025, versus 4 as initially planned. Likewise, the replacement of single-hull sea-refuelling tankers will be accelerated by 2 years, while delivery of 32 CAESAR artillery guns before the end of the MPL will contribute to greater standardisation of the Army's artillery fleet.

This MPL will also usher in the renewal of the two components of the French nuclear deterrent, in accordance with the decision made by the President of the French Republic.

- Pole 3, "Guarantee our autonomy and support the building of European strategic autonomy"

To this end, the MPL capitalises on high value discriminating capabilities, giving France the capacity to play a federating role in coalitions (intelligence resources, cyber capabilities, carrier battle group, command and control capacities, action in outer space, cruise missiles, extended air defence). These high value capabilities will enable greater flexibility and agility in the use of the armed forces, giving them the capacity to act both upstream and downstream of crises.

These high value capacities will foster increased cooperation and consolidation of a European strategic autonomy. They contribute to making the French armed forces a reference in Europe, reinforcing France's capacity to convince and unite our allies around common strategic interests. The goal is to encourage creation and strengthening of de facto solidarity in terms of industrial and operational cooperation or pooling of military capabilities. Reinforcing our interoperability in the event of engagement of our forces, it fosters emergence of a common, effective and proactive strategic culture between able and willing European States.

These same capacities enable the French armed forces to prepare for the evolution of threats in new fields of confrontation, as well as of strategic competition identified by the Strategic Review. Regarding the outerspace, surveillance, monitoring and detection capacities will be improved with the consolidation and modernisation of our space information system (SIS) notably. In the digital sphere, the number of "cyber combatants" will be increased from 3,000 to 4,000 and 1.6 billion euros (over the 2019-2025 period) will be invested in support of action in this new domain of confrontation.

- Pole 4, "Innovate to confront future challenges"

Through innovation, the Military Planning Law prepares for the future operational and technological success of the armed forces, which is crucial to France's strategic autonomy. In terms both of innovative uses or disruptive technologies, now more frequently derived from developments in the civil sector in increasingly short timeframes, innovation plays a major role in the armed forces' capacity to confront future challenges. This is why the budget for upstream studies and innovation in research and development will be increased from 730 million euros in 2018 to 1 billion euros in 2022.

In parallel, the Military Planning Law engages the preparatory phases of the major armament programmes that play a structuring role for the future. With an average budget of 1.8 billion euros per year devoted, from the start of the period, to design of the future major armament programmes, the MPL lays the groundwork for the technological excellence of our industrial defence base, thereby helping preserve our sovereignty but without excluding international industrial cooperation. Moreover, this effort constitutes a major lever for the economy and employment in France. On the operational level, it will enable us to carry out the studies required to design the future aircraft carriers, combat tanks and aerial combat systems that will be brought into service after 2030.

Lastly, innovation and digitization will be at the heart of the transformation and modernisation of the Ministry, which will be intensified during the period covered by this Military Planning Law. The goal is to improve the efficiency and performance of the Ministry's management, simplify it to the benefit of users and the agents serving it, and responding to a primary requirement, which is that every euro spent is spent on supporting our defence apparatus. In line with the interministerial "Public Action 2022" plan, 14 transformation and modernisation projects will be set up, including reform of the system for maintaining equipment in operational condition and transformation of the French Defence Procurement Agency (DGA), the aim being, notably, to allow the DGA to capitalise on the digital revolution in the development, production programmes and acquisition of armament. Any gains generated in the framework of these transformations will be reinvested to finance the most high-priority needs.

4 /// THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK: A LEGAL ENVIRONMENT TO SUPPORT THE AMBITION OF THE MPL

The legal framework of the MPL makes it possible, in particular, to improve the exercise of operational missions carried out by the Ministry for the Armed Forces, implement its transformation and modernisation programme and guarantee more effective management of its personnel. Hence, the MPL provides, notably, for the perpetuation of voluntary military service, extension of redeployment leave to all military personnel injured on active duty, the right of military personnel to exercise the responsibilities of municipal counsellors under certain conditions, the protection of cyber combatants against criminal proceedings and authorisation of biometric identification systems in overseas operations.

The report appended to the MLP describes in detail the orientations of France's defence policy for the next 7 years, notably as concerns its human, capacity-related, industrial and financial aspects.