

# THE FRENCH MILITARY AND PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS IN AFRICA

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## INTRODUCTION

'Peacekeeping' makes the headlines repeatedly. Armies that used their time in preparation for war are now faced with a new role, consisting of humanitarian and law enforcement tasks, but at a time when the military concept for such a role has not yet been adequately designed. It is in this new context that the French armed forces have to perform, even if France has had substantial applicable international experience. The French armed forces have acquired considerable expertise in dealing with crises in post-colonial Africa in particular and have made this experience available to the United Nations, whose role in crisis management and control has suddenly taken on added importance as a result of the end of the East-West confrontation. The French have also played a leading part in contributing to UN peacekeeping forces: at the beginning of 1991 France was the fourteenth largest contributing state, but by 1992-1993 it had become the main contributor. France has therefore developed a specific concept of this role, as well as influencing the development of concepts adopted by the UN.

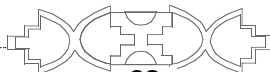
This article will address:

- the principles underlying French action in Africa;
- the military actions and forces used for different missions;
- UN, international and national forms of engagement;
- implementation; and
- management of crises, particularly in an African context.

## PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING FRENCH ACTION IN AFRICA

The legal basis for France's actions in Africa is the following:

- *Defence agreements* - France has signed defence agreements with certain African countries, according to which France are entitled to intervene on a military level, in conjunction with local armed forces, to protect those countries against a threat or an action from outside their country, provided that foreign elements are involved. Intervention in internal affairs and taking part in national law enforcement are not included in these agreements.
- *Co-operation agreements* - similarly, France has numerous military co-operation agreements with African countries. These agreements include, among other things, the presence of French military "*coopérants*"



within the local armed forces and government bodies acting mainly as advisors, instructors or specialists; the presence of African trainees in France, or in certain inter-African schools supported by France; and the provision of military material.

- *The United Nations Charter*
- *The United Nations Special Resolutions* - France is normally engaged under the auspices of the UN, except in rescue or recovery situations where French nationals find themselves in threatening situations.

When engaged in these operations France will observe the following principles of engagement:

- The need to keep or make peace should clearly exist.
- There will be no interference in the internal affairs of states.
- A request for intervention should have been made by legal governments of states or by international organisations, primarily the UN.
- The action will preferably be of a defensive nature.
- Negotiation and diplomatic, escort and humanitarian actions should complement more direct actions.
- The actions are conducted 'at the lowest possible level', in other words with the minimum force and military means required to fulfil the mission assigned by the political authority.
- The action will be carried out as quickly as possible, in order to prevent the conflict from spreading.
- It is in compliance with the defence or co-operation agreements signed with African countries.

## **MILITARY ACTIONS AND FORCES USED FOR DIFFERENT MISSIONS**

France's military actions in Africa are based on three main pillars, namely military technical assistance and co-operation, a number of pre-positioned force units that could be referred to as African-based French troops, and specially trained units or Rapid Reaction Forces, stationed in France and at varied and sustained levels of preparedness.

### **MILITARY TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

France has approximately a thousand technical assistants in Africa, plus 250 staff on short term missions in about forty countries. They are integrated into the local armed forces, armed forces staff organisations or act as advisors in some military or paramilitary state bodies. The short term assistance parties are sent upon request to fulfil certain specific missions, like mine clearance training, aid with the reparation of a motor vehicle pool or various and specialised training courses. The presence of such assistants is a means of maintaining a permanent relationship based on trust with all African correspondents. It also simplifies matters for France to carry out the actions they may be called upon to conduct in those countries, when the need arises.

## PRE-POSITIONED FORCES

A certain number of French units from all three arms of service (Army, Air Force and Navy) are temporarily or permanently stationed in African countries, according to the type of agreement that has been entered into. France has forces in Senegal, the Ivory Coast, Gabon (battalion-size), Djibouti, the Central African Republic and Chad. These pre-positioned forces are there to fulfil several specific missions, apart from the fact that they often provide host countries with very substantial economic support. By their presence, these forces provide the host country with a certain stability and act as deterrents for those of its neighbours who might be tempted to embark on destabilisation or open warfare actions. Furthermore, the presence of these forces contributes to ensuring greater regional stability, as far as possible. They represent an important contribution to the local armed forces on the level of cadres and expert training to assist with logistics and instruction. They also represent a reservoir of forces that can be projected immediately over the African continent in case of need. France's actions in Africa are primarily carried out by these pre-positioned forces, that are only reinforced if the action engaged in exceeds their capabilities. These pre-positioned forces are a key asset for France's military policy in Africa, in terms of crisis prevention and the speed often required for intervention to succeed.

## RAPID REACTION FORCES

These units are stationed in France and are trained to carry out actions outside their country of origin, particularly in Africa. They are equipped with appropriate equipment and material, are at various stages of readiness according to the possible risks and to the manner in which the situation develops and they carry out joint exercises with African armies annually. They represent, within the three services, a very important part of France's ability to make a contribution in intervention situations and always maintain their dual ability to intervene both in the European theatre and overseas.

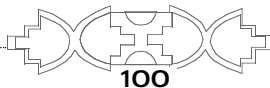
These are the three tiers of the military apparatus intended for deployment in Africa. Added to this is the central part played by officers who are appointed as defence attachés in most embassies in Africa, especially in countries where there are no pre-positioned forces. They act as military advisors to the ambassadors and command all the military personnel nominated by the French Ministry of Co-operation for military technical assistance.

## **UNITED NATIONS, INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL FORMS OF ENGAGEMENT**

France has conducted various national and multilateral military actions. Within the framework provided by the UN for each separate operation, the mandate of the forces involved must be clear.

## NATIONAL ACTIONS

National actions mainly refer to the protection and evacuation of French citizens when the need arises. In cases of crisis and when foreign governments are no longer in a position to guarantee the security of French



citizens, France organises military action to recover its citizens, if possible with the agreement of the local authorities. It often acts in emergency situations without an international mandate. It should be noted that the French troops protect and evacuate, when such an occasion arises, all foreigners who may be in danger. In all high risk countries where there are large numbers of French citizens, protection and evacuation plans are developed and updated regularly and with the greatest care. Sometimes these rescue operations are carried out in conjunction with other countries, depending on the number of citizens residing in such a country when a crisis develops and erupts.

## MULTILATERAL ACTIONS

Apart from being ready to rescue and evacuate its own citizens in other countries, France is always prepared to carry out multilateral actions with the endorsement of international organisations, in particular the United Nations. In the case of multilateral action, the operation is led by the country that has taken the initiative and that has the largest number of forces engaged. France either joins in command of the operation by being involved at every level with the foreign partners engaged or takes part in the action by providing troops and command and logistics elements.

## ACTIONS WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Missions undertaken under the auspices of the United Nations are the most frequent and vary in nature:

- Peacekeeping operations consist of the establishment of a UN military and civilian operation in the field, after consent has been reached with the warring parties. It can take the form of several different missions, such as being positioned between the warring parties, land and sea surveillance, escorts, air space control, embargoes, etc. (Chapter VI of the UN Charter).
- Peacemaking represents a second type of operation. When the United Nations has decided to enforce peace, it may support one of the warring parties who is normally the legal government, and impose a conflict settlement it has designed, if necessary through the use of force (Chapter VII of the UN Charter).
- The UN is the only organisation which can *legitimise* a peace operation. The decision to launch an operation is either taken after the declaration of a UN Resolution, or the UN has consented to a regional organisation to lead such an operation. The UN may also authorise a specific country or a temporary coalition to undertake such an operation.
- France insists that peacekeeping operations should be consented to by as many parties involved as possible.

It is furthermore essential that the specific *mandate* of troops who are entrusted with a peacekeeping mission should be clearly defined. This mandate must be supported by the international community and should be regarded, due to the involvement and approval of the UN, like an international law which should override existing national laws. This is a very important concept in terms of the



actions being allowed during a peacekeeping mission. The mandate should be regarded as a law which provides legitimacy to actions undertaken; everyone concerned is under obligation to adhere to this mandate, including the peacekeeping forces. Problems unfortunately arise as a result of the fact that such a mandate is not always clearly defined and stated.

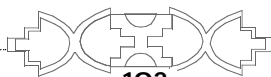
## RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

Military operations are conducted in agreement with the provisions of national and international law. Within this legal framework, the United Nations defines the parameters determining the action of the forces assigned to them. The rules of engagement (ROE) provide directives and policy orientation to commanders controlling the use of forces at all levels. These rules are approved by the UN and may only be modified on its authority. When the action takes place in the context of Chapter VI of the UN Charter, the use of weapons is particularly restricted and normally may only take place within the framework of self-defence. Deterrence and retaliation are thus forbidden. Nevertheless, the concept self-defence includes resistance to forceful actions intended to prevent the UN force from carrying out the task assigned to it in its mandate. The Force Commander thus defines specific rules of engagement, taking into account as many different situations that may arise as possible. These rules consist of prohibitions and permissions. They apply to all nations participating in the operation and are specific to the theatre of engagement and to the specific time period. They form an important and often lengthy paragraph in the field order and are defined to provide for the specificity of each arm of service, namely Army, Air Force and Navy. In the case of the latter two, these rules are often particularly complex.

## MILITARY CONCEPTS

After having elaborated on the principles underlying peace support operations, the military concept of these operations needs some explanation.

- Forces involved in peace support operations must be impartial. This does not imply that they must always be neutral or even that they can be neutral at all times. They should be neutral towards stated political aims, while they cannot always be neutral towards the behaviour of the warring parties.
- They must be in a position where they are in perfect control over the capabilities of their weapons and must know at all times how to use them.
- France argues that the use of weapons should not be limited to self-defence in practice. It should also be considered in the case where *“someone resorts to force to try and prevent personnel responsible for peacekeeping operations, from fulfilling the missions given to them by their superiors.”* (UN Handbook, 1994). Otherwise, the effectiveness and credibility of the forces are damaged.
- The training of engaged forces should therefore mainly focus on the control of fire in the field. It is necessary to consider and review all the options that could involve the use of force in the implementation of the mandate at every level of planning.



- Impartiality and a desire to get directly involved, as well as controlled and directed use of minimum force together with the techniques of negotiation, seem to be the most important rules that all military players involved in a peacekeeping operation should comply with.

## **DIFFERENT MISSIONS AND THEIR IMPLEMENTATION**

The definition of the operational concept lies within the framework of a range of missions. These missions may be of an operational, technical or logistic nature.

Operational missions may include the following:

- separating or being positioned between warring parties;
- disarming the opposing forces;
- monitoring specific lines or land areas;
- escort and surveillance at sea and on land;
- controlling air space; and
- ensuring safe movement of the local population.

Technical missions are defined as:

- mine-clearance (on land or at sea);
- construction or repair, such as the restoration of transport infrastructures, creation of airstrips, or the re-opening of existing harbours and airports;
- implementation and operation of communication systems or a radar detection network.

Logistic missions include:

- health care support: the evacuation of injured, help with basic health care and provision of preventive hygienic support;
- ground, sea or air transport;
- provision of necessary supplies;
- preparation or provision of support for personnel and material involved in peace support operations.

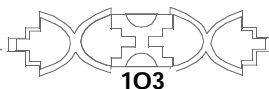
In the force structures provided and expected to fulfil these missions, certain combinations of functions will always be required, such as:

- a command function;
- an intelligence function;
- a transport function;
- a logistic function; and
- an operational function.

It is on the basis of these functions that the structures and size of the forces to be engaged are defined.

## **STRUCTURES**

The composition of French components in peace support operations relies on



finding the right balance between the contributions requested by the UN and the national requirements or objectives of France. On receipt of a request for support, the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Secretary-General of the UN discuss the request thoroughly to make sure that the mission is viewed in its entirety. In other words, these discussions are aimed at ensuring that all the categories of forces required for the achievement of the mission will be provided.

The command and administrative capabilities of the national force should be suited to the mission. The logistics directorate should be given priority and should be manned by a true specialist, who is conversant with all UN procedures. The administrative function is important in order to ensure that the forces engaged in the field will be effectively managed. The staff must also include specialists competent in all the areas connected with the resumption of activity in a war-ravaged country once the main fighting has stopped. These would include legal and judicial experts, civilian infrastructure experts, and disaster or aid logistics experts. Moreover, the constant convergence of political and military aspects in this kind of operation often requires the presence of a diplomatic or humanitarian aid advisor in the office of the Force Commander.

The operational contingent should at all times also include engineering units, defensive and/or retaliation means specifically adapted to the threat, efficient transport and means of control and communication, while simultaneously taking account of the existing environment and infrastructure. In terms of logistics, the force must have, from the outset, a separate logistics support party able to provide for its support and, also possibly, able to deal with providing humanitarian aid.

## **COMMAND**

It is generally difficult to develop the command relationship for a peacekeeping operation and sometimes involves laborious methods. The organisation of command involves, amongst others, the establishment and organisation of the theatre staff from scratch, the definition of the Force Commander's role and the formation of a relationship and proper liaison between the theatre staff and the UN Secretariat in New York. Organising the theatre staff is the responsibility of the UN Secretariat, once the military planning of the operation is completed and the needs in terms of men and material have been identified. This should take into account an equitable distribution of posts among the various countries and the level of participation of contributing countries. The higher a state's level of contribution, the more posts it will have.

## **THEATRE STAFF**

Once the authorised quota per country has been determined, the UN Secretariat will request the governments involved to provide the forces required. This procedure is not carried out on the basis of considerations of inter-operability. In fact, it often leads to the creation of disparate staff, consisting of officers of diverse levels of expertise, with different military cultures, who are not used to working together. In order to avoid complications arising from these differences, there is a new trend of asking the contributing states to provide already functioning sections or a complete operational



headquarters. This allows for a more organised structure, with already trained supervisory staff sections, capable of training the troops assigned to them. Currently France's efforts focus mainly on trying to control a given number of key posts within the Headquarters staff section, in particular those held by operations officers, since experience has shown that the lack of skills in this area can have dire consequences.

## THE ROLE OF THE FORCE COMMANDER

The UN Secretariat delegates the command of troops in the field to a Force Commander, who has operational control over the operation. This means that he is responsible for translating and applying the UN Security Council Resolution, which forms the basis for the UN force's mandate, in the field. This relative freedom of action given to the Force Commander implies that the actual mission may necessitate operational assessments from time to time, since the terms of the Resolution that have resulted from a compromise between the members of the Security Council are often vague.

## THE ROLE OF THE NATIONAL (FRENCH) COMPONENT COMMANDER

In the context of an engagement under the aegis of the United Nations and as part of a multinational force, the National Component Commander has a well-defined and clearly limited role. As a rule, he can only have operational command on a strictly national basis. The national units or battalions are directly under the orders of the Force Commander, possibly through a sector or area commander. The responsibilities of the separate French Component Commander (COMELEF), or other national commander, are in fact largely restricted to supervision of and advice on troop management, morale and discipline, taking into account the differences in countries' regulations. The component commander is, in principle, the most senior officer of a specific country or contingent having an official position within the force. Initially, it was not foreseen to be a specific position, neither for such an officer, nor for the personnel helping him in his task. However, after problems were experienced in the field, it was decided recently to give permission for a given number of personnel, officially on duty in one of the units, to work exclusively for the COMELEF. Problems are otherwise circumvented when the French component commander is at the same time one of the senior operational commanders of the forces engaged.

## LIAISON BETWEEN THE THEATRE STAFF AND THE NEW YORK SECRETARIAT

The Force Commander takes his orders from a liaison officer based in New York, to whom he reports. Normally therefore, contributing countries have no direct contact with their troops in the field. However, the shortage of information available from the Secretariat until recently, was such that the countries that were able to, have set up direct communication networks, notably through satellites, to keep in touch with their troops. The newly agreed creation of an operations monitoring centre in New York should improve this area considerably.



## CONSTITUTION AND DEPLOYMENT OF A FRENCH FORCE

The constitution and deployment of a French Force for UN peace support operations progress as follows. After having defined the composition of the party, the contributing units need to be identified, prepared and dispatched. The nomination and preparation of these units imply a thorough knowledge of the *conditions under which the force will have to function*, as a result of the varying skills of personnel required, the equipment of units in terms of specific material characteristics, the logistic independence envisaged for each detachment, etc.

At staff level the state of readiness and the preparation involve the production and distribution of orders and directives, such as field orders, administrative and logistic orders, standing orders and command relationship. At troop level it involves providing information, 'creating an ambiance' (the feeling or approach to peacekeeping), tactical preparation, including regrouping and 'marrying' of different elements, etc.

Dispatching the force takes place in three phases. Firstly, units are concentrated or assembled by movement from garrison sites to harbours and ships or airports, in all cases on a national basis. Thereafter, inter-theatre transportation of material by sea and personnel by air or by sea is carried out. This is normally the responsibility of the UN by charter or separate other arrangements. Lastly, deployment in the theatre of operations to the actual deployment sites occurs, according to local UN command directives. The deployment processes seem structured and relatively familiar and consistent. In reality, however, difficulties often arise at every stage of the process.

## PROVISION OF RELIEF FORCES

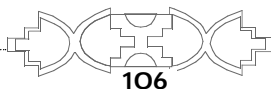
Once the initial deployment has taken place, decisions need to be taken on how personnel are to be maintained indefinitely. For this to be achieved, it is necessary to plan and organise relief forces for the detachments. For France, the normal duration of deployment for all personnel is six months. However, to allow for management requirements arising from the qualifications of some personnel, the following specified duration of deployment have been determined for different kinds of staff:

- Air Force flying personnel: six weeks;
- all Army Aviation crews and non-flying personnel of the Air Force: four months;
- the bulk of the forces: six months;
- some senior staff positions: one year.

These provisions may vary according to the length of the operation, stipulated in the mandate and may be affected by unforeseen emergencies arising in the field.

## LOGISTICS

Normally, all logistics and support are undertaken for 'authorised' personnel and material by the United Nations. To allow for known and unavoidable



difficulties, national components should be self-contained for at least a minimum period of autonomy after arrival (normally estimated at two months). In case of an emergency, the national logistics may take over, but this occurs at the financial expense of the country in question. Regardless of insufficiencies on the part of the UN, it must be ensured that when the force is being established, the equipment to be employed is as suitable as possible to the working and living conditions in the theatre of operation. Indeed, any later change to the structure or equipment will require major lead-times and approval at the level of the UN, resulting in the development of further logistic problems in the field.

## **CRISIS MANAGEMENT IN AN AFRICAN CONTEXT**

France has been involved in Africa's history for many decades and several thousands of Africans have taken part in the liberation of France and in the colonial wars. As a result of this involvement France's role in peacekeeping operations on the continent cannot ignore long-standing emotional, evolutionary and, although sometimes conflicting, supportive relations between the African and the French people. This is even more the case with the relationship between the militaries, as well as the administrators involved. The continent is riddled with complexities, difficult to grasp, rich and diversified in terms of population, landscape, culture and history. Before any action is considered in Africa, albeit for military, humanitarian or other reasons, it is imperative to have knowledge of its peoples, ethnic groups, history, languages, customs, religions and beliefs, geography, economy, seasons and cultures, statesmen and their motivations. This implies a lot of patient intelligence work and gathering of information that should be complemented with numerous trips and visits in the field and permanent contacts on the spot. Knowledge of and respect for African countries and their people constitute an important prerequisite for a successful engagement on the continent.

The second condition to fulfil concerns the correct attitude to adopt when intervening. Intervention should be as modest and as discreet as possible. Advice in some areas and on certain occasions should be offered and contributed, but without ostentation and without prescribing to anyone what they should do and how. Modesty and discretion will guarantee success in any action carried out. For example, ways of adjusting all military actions to the minimum level in local situations, through the determination of the size of the forces absolutely necessary to intervene, should be considered. Similarly, the lightest possible weapons, equipment and a logistics system that is not a provocation in the face of the destitution suffered in the 'host country' and among its people, should also be considered.

The third condition to adhere to is the fact that providing equipment, food, drugs and other necessities is not in itself adequate aid for the restoration of a normal situation in any country ravaged by conflict. Indeed, emergency aid and the restoration of security through the use of force if necessary, are indispensable at the beginning of any peace support operation. Expeditious aid to the state, the government, societies and ethnic groups to rebuild the political, social or economic structures that will provide them with the means to 'start again' is imperative. This will boost the necessary activities when the outside action has ended, to get back to normal conditions, even if 'normal'



does not represent the most satisfactory state of affairs. The aim of any outside action in an African state, following the initial emergency, must be to provide the country with the means to restore a normal situation as quickly as possible and not just to feed and treat a population that will eventually have to be left behind. At some time, though, it must be borne in mind that the emergency will and must end, that the UN forces will leave and that the provision of special financial aid will be terminated.

The fourth condition is that there must be consensus between the political aims that are pursued and the means used to achieve these aims. This should be in the form of operational instructions given to the troops. Throughout the planning stage of an operation, the political and diplomatic aspects must be commensurate with the military ones and vice versa. Thus, if the political authorities decide to launch a humanitarian operation without prior consultation with the military authorities in order to determine local security conditions, one of these groups is bound to encounter difficulties that will lead to failure. In Somalia, for instance, some people tried to carry out a humanitarian action, without equipping themselves with the means to restore a certain degree of security, for example, by disarming the militia. The result was that the armed militia looted humanitarian relief supplies and negotiated ways to buy weapons and resume the conflict. There must be a large degree of trust between the civilian and military authorities. The politicians should be aware of ways to involve the military at every stage of the studying, planning and design of an operation and the military must in turn understand the internal and international requirements of, amongst others, politicians, financiers, non-government organisations (NGO's). There has to be a complete exchange of ideas and information even before troops are deployed and, furthermore, throughout the entire operation.

These four principles are characteristic of the manner in which France wants to conduct itself and its actions in Africa. To summarise, France's attitude is ruled by the following:

- the desire to acquire as much knowledge as possible about the countries and peoples of Africa, to increase the number of contacts in order to enable it to regard and analyse African problems in an almost instinctive manner, and to subject itself to the obligation to respect the continent;
- the commitment to a modest, humble attitude, suitable to each particular case, in order not to offend or provoke those who, also, possess the ability to teach the external troops involved;
- the determination not to replace the social and political structures of these countries and not to impose solutions to their problems, but to empower them and give them the means to restore their capabilities and authority to regain control over their own affairs; and
- finally, to provide for thorough co-ordination between the political and humanitarian purposes sought and the military means and the rules of engagement implemented to achieve them.



In the area of military organisation, matters are simpler and common to modern military operations. It is necessary to plan for as many different scenarios as possible, in the knowledge that numerous adjustments will constantly have to be made and that even the best plans sometimes have to be changed. The commander in the field must be given enough room for flexibility and manoeuvre and must be able to find within his own national headquarters the support, advice or further analyses he may need at all times. The communication network must be as efficient as possible, since the exchange of information and orders, and quick reaction to developments in any situation are dependent on it. The policy guiding the provision of information to the international media is a key to the success of any operation. Transparency is of paramount importance, especially when considering the insistent journalist who will eventually get behind the truth, or even worse, will present a distorted account of events.

## **FRENCH NATIONAL CRISES PLANNING**

In France, the President of the Republic functions as the highest official in charge of the country's defence, and acts as the head of the Armed Forces. His authorisation of any engagement of troops abroad is essential. The Prime Minister ensures that the decisions made in respect of defence are implemented. The Ministry of Defence is responsible for the implementation of military policy. The Chief of Defence Staff is both the government's military advisor and responsible for the conduct of military operations. The management of a particular crisis in Africa will involve the co-operation of the following French government agencies and bodies:

- the President of the French Republic, who has at his disposal an African civilian task force in the *Elysée*, and a specific military staff;
- the Prime Minister, who has no specific task force for Africa, but is represented by a diplomatic advisor on crisis management bodies;
- the Minister of Foreign Affairs, who has a Directorate for African and Madagascar Affairs, that include a large and specialised staff component;
- the Minister of Co-operation, who deals with military and economic co-operation;
- the Minister of Defence; and
- the Chief of Staff for Defence.

As soon as a major crisis or a dramatic change in tension is perceived in Africa, the task force dealing with such crises meets at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs upon request of or resulting from a proposal by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the *Elysée*, or often, the Chief of Staff for Defence. This task force consists of approximately twenty people, including the representatives of the various ministries and government officials specialising in each of the areas involved. The situation is considered during the meeting and the various political, diplomatic and military solutions are reviewed. Joint proposals, often drafted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Defence Staff, are made to the President of the Republic and to the Prime Minister. When involvement is decided upon, the necessary action and follow-up operations are planned by this crisis task force. This task force meets on request, sometimes on a daily basis, according to the nature of developments in the given crisis situation.



The general action and ways of undertaking it are permanently defined by this task force, with each Ministry taking specific responsibility for its own focus area. For instance, the diplomatic component is dealt with by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the military is the subject of the Chief of Staff for Defence. The flexibility within the crisis task force makes provisions for representatives from all the Ministries involved in the development of operations and allows for a constant and confident co-operation between military and civilian authorities. It acts as a working tool and assembles 'experts' who are familiar with each other, who appreciate each others' expertise and who are constantly communicating with one another. This ensures to a large extent the overall consistency when decisions need to be made within a crisis situation.

## **CONCLUSION**

France is convinced that South Africa has a major role to play in Africa in the future, not only as a result of its demographic and industrial power, but also because of its political dimensions and the role model it can provide. Finally and contrary to the advice of those who would prefer South Africa to solve its own internal problems, France would urge the country to become involved in Africa as soon as possible. Any major country can only show the true dimensions of its people if it has the ability to become involved in its surrounding world. Involvement in Africa will be a first and major step for South Africa. The example and hope represented by South Africa must be shared with those who are still painfully searching.

