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# Franco-British Council Defence Conference

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2020

**Ten years on from the Lancaster House Treaty**  
The future of Franco-British defence



# Executive Summary

The eighth edition of the Franco-British Council Defence Conference took place online on 26th November 2020. Despite the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic, members of the Franco-British community took the opportunity to meet and reaffirm, ten years after the Lancaster House Treaty, their commitment to their bilateral relationship.

**At the political level, ministers and officials emphasised the importance of the Franco-British cooperation**, rooted in shared values and common history as well as underpinned by joint interests. Forward-leaning language was often used to describe this bilateral relationship and its ambitions, while at the same time highlighting the unique elements that led France and Britain to work together, such as the expeditionary culture of their Armed Forces and their status as nuclear powers.

## The Franco-British Council Defence Conference

The **similarities in British and French outlook were seen most strongly in strategic discussions, which exhibited a high degree of convergence** on issues such as the future of Arms Control in Europe, NATO and the future technological challenges. There was also a sense that France and Britain could lead by example and help shape the European defence landscape, from sustaining the positive dynamics on defence budgets to spreading their nuclear and expeditionary culture. In that respect, the significant increase in UK defence spending, announced just before the Conference, featured prominently in the conversations, with many hoping that it could boost bilateral cooperation.

**Three key achievements of the Lancaster House Treaty** were highlighted.

- Mme Florence Parly, French Minister for the Armed Forces, and The Rt Hon Ben Wallace MP, British Secretary of State for Defence, announced the **production contract award for the joint Franco-British Maritime Mine Countermeasures Programme (MMCM)**. Launched in 2015, this autonomous mine hunting system successfully passed sea trials in 2020, despite Covid-19. While playing an important role in deterrence, the MMCM programme also helps refine expertise in key technological fields such as artificial intelligence.
- **The Combined Joint Expeditionary Force (CJEF) has reached full operational capability**. The sense of achievement was shared on both sides and there was even a keenness by some participants to be able to deploy it, should the occasion arise. The CJEF is more than a simple military tool. It is also a platform to further human ties, mutual understanding and interoperability between France and Britain. This role in institutionalising the operational relationship was notably highlighted by both Chiefs of Defence.

- **The creation of "One-MBDA" and cooperation in the missiles domain was hailed by both sides as a success**. This unique example of integration, embodied notably by the creation of industrial centres of excellence, led to concrete projects such as the General Purpose Long Range Cruise Missile (SCALP) /Storm Shadow upgrade or the Light anti-ship missile (ANL) /Sea-Venom anti-ship missile, which successfully completed qualification firing trials in 2020.

**What makes the Franco-British Defence relationship special is the willingness to cooperate in sensitive areas**, often pertaining to national sovereignty. In the nuclear domain, the 1995 Chequers Declaration and the Teutates Treaty are the clearest examples. The recent announcements continue this trend. The autonomous mine-hunters of the MMCM programme will play a key role in sea-based deterrence. The ANL/Sea Venom anti-ship missiles will be used to protect the recently launched Queen Elizabeth Carrier Group. The SCALP/Storm Shadow today and the Future Cruise and Anti-Ship Weapon (FC/ASW)/Future Anti-Surface Guided Weapon (FASGW) tomorrow underpin these key deep strike sovereign capabilities.

**Cooperation under the Lancaster House Treaty has also led to greater mutual understanding**. Expanded exchanges of officers, regular meetings, such as the Anglo-French Strategic Forum for officers, as well as a joint deployment, from the Sahel to the High North have helped further bilateral ties at the human level. Politically, the institutionalising of the relationship has acted as a reference point to incentivise further cooperation while the regular choreography of high-level meetings has helped keep the momentum. By comprising military fellows in each year class, the FBC's Young Leader Programme efficiently supports these dynamics.

**However, the relationship is not without challenges**. Brexit has raised some question marks regarding the preferred venue for cooperation, notably as the EU is developing defence industry instruments. Paris and London will have to navigate the apparent tension between furthering the European sovereignty agenda and greater transatlantic cooperation. Major capability programmes, notably the FMAN-FMC/FCASW, still need to see their path clarified while the shadow of the Future Combat Air System (FCAS)/Tempest divergence still looms.

As France and Britain consider how to reenergise their cooperation for the next decade, they should consider the following ideas.

- **At the political level, embedding the bilateral relationship in reinforcing networks, such as the E3 or the European Intervention Initiative (EI2) can help make it more resilient.** The past decade has shown the benefits of institutionalising the relationship. The next decade could draw on that lesson while addressing the issue of collaborating with other partners. As such, surrounding the bilateral relationship by other mutually-reinforcing ties could be beneficial. Investing more in the EI2, for which there is considerable interest on both sides of the Channel, would be a good place to start.
- **Ensuring long-term political support for the bilateral relationship requires bolstering its visibility.** Public opinion could be made more familiar with the benefits of Franco-British cooperation, notably by relying on symbolic joint deployments, possibly of the CJEF, and key industrial projects. As the Covid-19 pandemic somewhat hampered the celebrations of the Lancaster House Treaty 10-year anniversary, ensuring that commitments made for the next decade are visible could help sustain the bilateral relationship.
- **Increase the joint operational deployments.** Joint operational deployments have proved to reinforce interoperability and understanding while helping share the burden of collective security. With the CJEF ready, new British carriers, a keen and shared interest in the Indo-Pacific and a renewed fight in the Sahel, opportunities abound for joint deployments.
- **The conversations demonstrated a desire to cooperate further in space and cyber,** domains which will be critical in the context of renewed great-power competition, in which France and Britain have a sizeable expertise - and which have been explored less so far.
- **Moreover, the discussion on innovation shed a light on promising avenues for cooperation.** It highlighted that the United Kingdom and France were now in a similar mindset, notably regarding the key role played by civilian innovation, had adopted similar structures and built comparable tools, such as investment funds. They both also benefit from new budgetary margins of manoeuvres. This could pave the way for a more extensive cooperation on innovation.

## The Franco-British Defence Conference

The eighth edition of the Franco-British Council Defence Conference took place online on 26 November 2020 on the theme, 'Ten years on from the Lancaster House Treaty - the future of Franco-British defence'. Since the Lancaster House Treaties in 2010, the Franco-British Council (FBC) has regularly organised this event which has established itself as a networking platform of reference for Franco-British relationships in the defence sector. The conference brings together representatives from the most senior level of military, government, industry and academia from both sides of the Channel. Its objectives are to forge new relationships and reinforce mutual understanding between the two countries' defence communities. The event is supported by the UK and French Ministries of Defence and, in 2020, was funded by the French Ministry for the Armed Forces together with generous commercial sponsorship from Airbus and MBDA.

# Defence Conference 2020

Thursday 26th November 2020

**Ten years on from the Lancaster House Treaty - the future of Franco-British defence**

**ONLINE**

The 2020 Defence Conference hosted by the Franco-British Council / Conseil franco-britannique took place on Thursday 26th November online.

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**Welcome** by Hervé Mariton, former minister and Président du Conseil franco-britannique en France

**Keynote speeches** by Mme Florence Parly, Minister of the Armed Forces and The Rt Hon Ben Wallace MP, Secretary of State for Defence

**First Themed Discussion: What is our new operational ambition?**

Introductions by Général François Lecointre, Chef d'État-Major des Armées, and General Sir Nick Carter, Chief of the Defence Staff

**Second Themed Discussion: Building equipment for the future.**

Introductions by Jeremy Quin MP, Minister for Defence Procurement, and Joël Barre, Chief Executive of the Direction générale de l'Armement

**Keynote speeches by Airbus and MBDA: the industrial perspective**

Éric Béranger, Chief Executive Officer, MBDA  
Antoine Bouvier, Head of Strategy, Mergers & Acquisitions and Public Affairs at Airbus

**Online networking**

**An academic view: The evolution of Franco-British defence**

Dr. Alice Pannier, Research Fellow, Head of the Geopolitics of Technologies programme, IFRI, Paris

**Third Themed Discussion: A common voice in geostrategic debates.**

Introductions by Mme Alice Guitton, DGRIS and Angus Lapsley, Director General Strategy and International.

**The diplomatic perspective:**

Speeches by Lord Edward Llewellyn, British Ambassador to the French Republic, and Mme Catherine Colonna, French Ambassador to the United Kingdom

**Fourth Themed Discussion: Innovation: tackling tomorrow's challenges.**

Introductions by M. Emmanuel Chiva, Director of the Defense Innovation Agency, and Clare Cameron, Director, Defence Innovation

**Closing remarks** by Lord Peter Ricketts, Chair of the Franco-British Council in the UK

**AIRBUS** **MBDA**  
MISSILE SYSTEMS

# Ten years on from the Lancaster House Treaty - the future of Franco-British defence



**Hervé Mariton, Chair of the Franco-British Council in France opened the Conference**

**Hervé Mariton**, Chair of the Franco-British Council in France, officially opened the Defence Conference on the tenth anniversary of the Lancaster House Treaty. He spoke of the success and difficulties on defence cooperation in the last ten years and the importance of this conference in considering these as we look to the future. He warned of the need to

ensure that the mechanisms of cooperation do not get stuck and that no unintended distance between the two countries is created, especially following Brexit.

M. Mariton spoke of the evident close cooperation between France and the United Kingdom as two nuclear powers, two permanent members of the Security Council and two countries committed to defending our neighbouring territories, with shared views on the threats and strategic issues facing both countries.

Since 2010 the world has changed, and Franco-British cooperation is as important as ever. M. Mariton cautioned that we need to learn how this relationship will exist with the UK outside of the European Union with all of the political and industrial consequences which that brings but he welcomed initiatives such as the ministerial council for Franco-British Defence which was created in 2018.

The French Minister of the Armed Forces, **Mme Florence Parly**, opened her keynote speech by thanking the Franco-British Council for organising the virtual conference which she said was an important exchange to generate new ideas.

Mme Parly reminded the audience that the Franco-British defence relationship did not, of course, come about suddenly with the Lancaster House Treaty in 2010. It is based on a common history marked, over the past century, by so many wars and so many battles fought together to defend shared values.

At the operational level, she noted that the new Franco-British joint force, the CJEF, which reached full operational capacity this year. This is the culmination of a training and ramp-up programme initiated ten years ago, which now gives France and the UK the ability to intervene together, if required, on land, at sea or in the air.



**The French Minister of the Armed Forces, Mme Florence Parly**

Mme Parly referenced where French and British forces are already working largely together in the field: in the Sahel, the continued deployment of three British Chinooks in support of Operation Barkhane and MINUSMA, Estonia, where France will once again contribute to NATO's enhanced Forward Presence, and the Levant where both forces are deployed side by side as part of the international coalition against Daesh. Finally, both countries are increasingly coordinating maritime deployments.

Mme Parly underlined the good progress made in integrating MBDA between the two sides of the Channel. When in 2015, France and the United Kingdom signed the intergovernmental agreement supporting the implementation of the "one MBDA" concept, where two countries accepted a principle of industrial rationalisation never before seen in Europe. The Minister said this model has now proved its worth and gave the example, of the Sea Venom Anti-ship missile programme, which benefits fully from this industrial construction.

Finally, nuclear deterrence and cooperation are at the heart of the Franco-British partnership. There can be no greater proof of the value attached to the bilateral relationship than this willingness to work together in this highly sensitive area. The establishment of joint facilities at Valduc and Aldermaston is clear evidence of the high level of trust between the two countries.

These advances illustrate the strength of the partnership. And the need more than ever, at a time when both countries are faced with a deteriorating strategic environment. The terrorist threat continues to weigh on both societies, uninhibited strategic competition has become the new context for international relations, the erosion of the international order is accelerating: this can be seen in the questioning of the major arms control agreements or, in a less spectacular but even more insidious way, in the daily violations of international law in, for example, of the law of the sea.

Mme Parly called for both countries to continue and deepen the development of the bilateral defence relationship by being ambitious for the next decade. In current areas of cooperation, she said France and the UK could explore new synergies to strengthen the protection of both countries' interests in space and cyberspace.

The Minister recognised some of the challenges between both countries. At NATO, for example, the imminent submission of the report by the Strategic Reflection Group set up at the request of the President Macron should provide an opportunity for a lively debate within NATO and between the two countries. Mme Parly also said that it would be important to define the contours of a relationship between the European Union and the United Kingdom which allows both to contribute together to the security of Europe.

Finally, Mme Parly talked about the European Intervention Initiative, where she welcomed the United Kingdom being active. She ended by comparing the relationship between the two countries to a Tango: "it is rhythmic, the steps are never fixed in advance, it is up to us to sketch them together and repeat them over and over again, but we are moving in the same direction, with energy and desire."



**The Rt Hon Ben Wallace MP**, Secretary of State for Defence, opened his keynote speech by calling France the UK's most important defence partner in Europe.

Secretary Wallace noted that November 2020 marked ten years since the Lancaster House Treaties were signed,

and also 80 years since General de Gaulle's famous "L'Appel" speech from Broadcasting House in London. De Gaulle memorably vowed that: "Whatever happens, the flame of the French Resistance must not be extinguished and will not be extinguished." Secretary Wallace told the audience that the UK has always shared de Gaulle's – and France's – passionate commitment to freedom.

The Defence Secretary underlined that both countries share the same commitment to continental security, as leading members of NATO and key contributors to the Alliance's Readiness Initiative and he called for the UK and France to help NATO adapt for the future – recognising the clear intent and increasing potency of adversaries and the game-changing ways they are using new technologies and operating concepts to gain a competitive edge.

"Like you, we see our adversaries acting globally, challenging the international system – of Churchill and de Gaulle – and the values that underpin them – liberty, justice, and tolerance. And like you we are determined to not just talk about our interests but to act on them", he said.

Secretary Wallace also welcomed the additional £24.1 billion in UK defence spending over the next four years to modernise the Armed Forces – the largest increase since the end of the Cold War – with investment in the new domains of information age warfare, supercharging R&D, and equipping us to

campaign in the new era of constant competition.

He said, "we are determined that the UK is a self-confident, proactive, problem-solving and burden-sharing nation. Ready to take on the challenges and shape and share the opportunities of the 2020s, alongside our allies and friends. So, in future, expect to find a 'Global Britain' more present, more forward deployed, and more active around the world."

Secretary Mr Wallace told how, on the anniversary of the Lancaster House Treaties a few weeks before, the UK and France had announced that the Combined Joint Expeditionary Force has reached full operating capability. Both countries' Armed Forces are now capable of deploying a joint expeditionary force of up to 10,000 or more. A force that can handle multi-domain missions from humanitarian assistance to complex high-intensity combat and the Defence Secretary said he strongly believes that this is just the beginning.

The UK is embarking on a generational modernisation of our Armed Forces and he called for both countries to ensure it is the Combined Joint Expeditionary Force that is at the forefront of cyber, space, intelligence sharing, and multi domain integration.

The Defence Secretary looked to the 2021 UK-France Summit as a time to seek and to seize the opportunities of the future. He reminded the audience how, ten years ago at Lancaster House, the UK and France declared the ambition to deploy a UK-French integrated carrier strike capability. Next year that ambition will be realised when HMS Queen Elizabeth and the Charles de Gaulle sail together for the first time. He said, "proof that, in this more unstable and uncertain world, our nations will continue to keep the flame of freedom burning."

The two ministers also used the Conference to announce the production contract for the Franco-British Maritime Mine Countermeasures Programme (MMCM) at the Conference. A joint programme which is a revolution in mine warfare: it will make the work of operators easier and more efficient and will keep divers away from the threat by using autonomous undersea vehicles. The MMCM will directly support the security of the two countries' deterrent and will therefore help to guarantee the sovereignty of both countries. As Mme Parly said, "the proof, if proof were needed, that joining forces does not necessarily mean threatening our independence."

Not only does this investment represent a leap forward to the ability of France and the UK to detect and neutralise sea mines. It creates jobs, generates prosperity, and will enable those vital sea lanes to remain open – reducing the risk to ships and the lives of sailors.

## The industrial perspective

**Éric Béranger**, Chief Executive Officer, MBDA and **Antoine Bouvier**, Head of Strategy, Mergers & Acquisitions and Public Affairs at Airbus.



On the industrial perspective, **Antoine Bouvier**, Head of Public Affairs at Airbus, talked about Airbus's success to become formidable aeronautics, defence and space leader in Europe over the last fifty years with the highest

levels of technology. But he also spoke of the challenges faced by the aviation sector during the COVID crisis and this must be used as an opportunity for the sector to transform. He talked of Brexit but the need to keep the United Kingdom involved as a major player in building multilateral programmes. On defence he said both the UK and France have set ambitious targets for security and welcomed the UK's recent Integrated Review with an unprecedented increase in funding and France's Ambition 2030 plan.



**Éric Béranger**, CEO of MBDA, talked of how the history of MBDA is closely linked to the Franco-British relationship. The Lancaster House Treaty added a strategic dimension by establishing a political and institutional basis through One-MBDA

and overseen by an intergovernmental agreement. By avoiding expensive duplication and by pooling manufacturing capabilities, sovereign access to an effective and affordable complex weapons industry is thus guaranteed for the United Kingdom and France. M. Béranger explained how this has improved performance and allowed MBDA to become a world class industry leader at the heart of the defence industries of the UK and France. This One-MBDA scheme has led to joint programmes and the requirement to produce common technologies within the framework of a joint research financing initiative called Complex Weapon Innovation and Technology Partnership. He ended by thanking the Franco-British Council for hosting the Defence Conference at this important time of building a new relationship between the UK and France.

## An academic view: the evolution of Franco-British defence



**Dr. Alice Pannier**, Research Fellow, Head of the Geopolitics of Technologies programme, French Institute of International Relations

**Dr. Alice Pannier** talked about her research on Franco-British defence cooperation and her book 'Rivals in Arms'. France and the UK have so many close interests that there is no alternative but to work together. Her research looked at how elements of the Lancaster House Treaties had been implemented including the creation of the Combined Joint Expeditionary Force, the intervention in Libya in 2011 and industrial cooperation through the creation of One-MBDA.

She has identified the four challenges of making cooperation a reality. These are identifying a common interest, coordinating the national bodies involved (whether governmental, industrial, or diplomatic), agreeing on the costs and gains, and articulating bilateral cooperation and relations with third parties. In the UK and France's case there are relationships which may impact on how the UK and France can cooperate. Brexit, the UK-US "Special Relationship" and France's relationship with Germany impact on UK-France cooperation. This is can at times be resolved through hybrid models where bilateral and multilateral relationships are brought together, whether through NATO, E3 or others.

France and the UK have managed their partnership through treaties like Lancaster House and regular bilateral summits to keep all parts of the relationship engaged. This process has become institutionalised in both countries and ensures there is no going back.

# Discussion Groups

The discussion groups provided an opportunity for participants to review in detail four themes that had been identified by the French and the British Ministries of Defence as relevant to the development of current policy and work-strands for further action. Each session was introduced and moderated by members of the Franco-British Young Leaders Programme.

## GROUP DISCUSSION 1

### First Themed Discussion:

# What is our new operational ambition?

#### Introductions by,



**Général François Lecointre, Chef d'État-Major des Armées**



**General Sir Nick Carter, Chief of the Defence Staff**

**Général François Lecointre** opened the First Themed Discussion by calling for the UK and France to continue to work together in the area of defence and security and deepen the ties that unite both countries.

As the UK leaves the European Union he wondered whether he should be worried about its impact on the military relationship between France and the United Kingdom. He concluded that this was not a serious risk. In his view, the Franco-British military relationship remains fundamental and has a strong framework. The projects both countries have carried out together, the links they have woven together, shared ambitions and geographical proximity guarantee the strength of this relationship, whatever the political consequences of Brexit.

**General Sir Nick Carter** stated how proud he is that the Combined Joint Expeditionary Force (CJEF), established by the Lancaster House Treaty, is now at full operating capability despite the challenge of COVID. But this is only the end of the beginning. The next challenge is to develop CJEF into a multi-domain capability that includes space and cyber.

The CJEF is more than a headquarters and a contingent high readiness force. It is importantly a framework for interoperability and a means to develop ever closer military relationships. The Chief of Defence Staff saw this recently in Mali where both countries are fighting together against violent extremism.

The strategic context is dynamic and complex, defined by instability and compounded by COVID. Extremism undermines the cohesion of fragile African countries; it fuels population migration, and it provides a cover for serious organised crime.

He also talked of this as an era of constant competition between great powers and would be great powers being conducted below the threshold of what we would call war. States are utilising new weapons, tactics and techniques made possible by the pervasiveness of information and the ever-increasing pace of technological change. Together these are changing the character of warfare and of politics.

In this new era of constant competition, it is not just across geographies that both countries need to operate together but across all five domains (land, sea, air, cyber and space), and below the threshold of conflict. These are the challenges that the new global environment poses, and these are the challenges that both allies are ready to confront together.

## GROUP DISCUSSION 2

## Second Themed Discussion: Building equipment for the future.

### Introductions by,



**Jeremy Quin**  
MP, Minister  
for Defence  
Procurement

**Jeremy Quin MP** opened the Second Themed Discussion on building equipment for the future by looking at UK-French cooperation on defence equipment and armaments which was a key theme of the Lancaster House Treaties and has become a cornerstone of the revived bilateral relationship ever since. He said it is vital that work continues. The UK and France are the main military players in Europe and together account for about 40 per cent of all European Defence spending and over 60 per cent of the Research and Technology investment so this helps to underpin the European defence and security industry itself.

The Minister welcomed the biggest boost to UK Defence spending in 30 years with an additional £16.5Bn above the manifesto commitment over four years announced by the British Prime Minister with a for military research and development. This investment will build on world-class science and technology capabilities and will preserve the UK Armed Forces' technological advantage, giving them the tools they need to counter the threats faced now and into the future.

**Joël Barre** spoke about the French armament programme with plans for €39.2 billion of spending on defence in 2021 which is a 5% increase on spending in 2020. This is welcome support from the French Government. The bilateral relationship is strong and based on the commitment in 2010 to make MBDA the primary European complex weapon company. This was



**Joël Barre,**  
Chief  
Executive of  
the Direction  
générale de  
l'Armement

ratified by an intergovernmental agreement in 2016 and supports interdependency between both countries in complex weapons.

Bilateral cooperation has allowed for joint working including UK Wildcat helicopters to be equipped from 2021 and French future light helicopters from 2026 under the Sea Venom/ANL anti-ship missile programme.

The bilateral projects agreed at Lancaster House have now become reality and for the past two years both countries have been working together to identify new opportunities of joint working for the next decade. These projects look to strengthen joint working, improve operational efficiency and foster interoperability.

Both speakers confirmed that Lancaster House continues to provide a solid basis for future co-operation between the two nations and, ahead of the UK-France Summit in 2021, both countries agreed to set out a framework to accelerate the partnership over the next decade. In particular, at how to improve integration and interoperability as the world adapts to 21st century threats.

## GROUP DISCUSSION 3

# Third Themed Discussion: A common voice in geostrategic debates.

### Introductions by,



**Mme Alice Guitton,**  
**Director General**  
**International**  
**and Strategic**  
**Relations (DGRIS)**



**Angus Lapsley,**  
**Director General**  
**Strategy and**  
**International.**

For the Third Themed Discussion, **Angus Lapsley** and **Alice Guitton** talked about the need for a common voice in geostrategic debates and reflected on what strategic autonomy means for France and the UK.

In Mme Guitton's view this means Europeans needing to avoid becoming only spectators of what will be the future of strategic stability in Europe and the need for a more relevant strategic perspective. In the future this will include space, cyber space, expeditionary operations, nuclear and industrial co-operation.

Discussing whether the post-Brexit situation will change the UK's outlook on Europe's strategic relevance in the future, Angus Lapsley felt that the UK and France, working with the United States, would develop the idea of selective independence; not always doing same things, but talking and co-ordinating together. Alice Guitton agreed and called for improvements to avoid duplications and reduce the fragmentations of industries. The EU and NATO capability development processes should reinforce each other but not duplicate one another.

Discussing NATO more broadly, they agreed that the core purpose remains defence and deterrence, but that is changing with the Concept for the Deterrence and Defence of the Euro-Atlantic Area and the continued importance of nuclear, but also the sub-threshold competition in cyber and information. As this competition becomes global, NATO must understand the implications with the rise of China, and global issues like terrorism.

They then considered the EU's role. Alice Guitton felt this is a global approach to conflict prevention, crisis management, and post conflict stabilisation; countering

hybrid threats; protecting Europeans from foreign interferences as well as capacity building in the broader neighbourhood, burden sharing, capabilities and industrial co-operation

Angus Lapsley agreed the EU and NATO can play complementary roles. It is important to avoid the EU making co-operation between NATO allies harder and there is a need to be careful with dividing up the world or responsibilities between them. The threats are too fluid and often need both.

Discussing the top policy priorities for the UK and France co-operation in the coming years they agreed that the key objectives are:

- Counter Terrorism (CT) (Africa, Levant...) counter proliferation
- Reducing strategic tensions including at the borders of the European continent
- Delivering shared capability projects and preserving European defence budgets
- Indo-Pacific region - starting with protecting French and British overseas territories
- Strategic stability and arms control
- Cooperation on space and cyber
- Bringing the Combined Joint Expeditionary Force to life

To cope with all of these challenges achieve there is a need for a strong defence relationship between France and the UK.

# The diplomatic perspective

By **Lord Edward Llewellyn**, British Ambassador to the French Republic, and **Mme Catherine Colonna**, French Ambassador to the United Kingdom

The British Ambassador, **Lord Llewellyn**, began his observations on the diplomatic perspective by reflecting on the importance of the defence relationship between the UK and France. He reflected on ten years of work since Lancaster House. As Ambassador he sees the full breadth of the relationship between both countries.

France is the UK's closest European ally on foreign policy, security and defence. A deep relationship forged on the crucible of history.

Lord Llewellyn spoke of his memories when he was Chief of Staff at No 10 Downing Street in the run-up to the signing of Lancaster House ten years ago and how the close ties then, as neighbours, are still as close as ever.

He welcomed the UK's biggest defence investment since the Cold War will bring about new investment in space, cyber and AI - areas where the UK can work closely with France.

The cooperation on security is as important as defence in the fight against terrorism. Sadly both countries have been affected by this and both countries stand together to fight intolerance and extremism.

The UK and France both work closely every day as Permanent Members of the UN Security Council, NATO, the Human Rights Council, OPCW and members of the E3 with Germany and both ambassadors celebrate that close work.

The Ambassador concluded by looking forward to close cooperation at COP-26 on Climate Change, building on the Paris Agreements, and the UK-France Summit in 2021.

**Mme Catherine Colonna**, the French Ambassador, talked about the need to maintain an essential strategic "entente" between the two countries; and this is essential for the security of both countries, of Europe and the Euro-Atlantic area. The Ambassador underlined that this alliance also contribute to the defence of democratic values and principles such as rule of law, multilateralism, the protection of the environment or resilience in the face of pandemics. The challenges faced are immense and far beyond



**Lord Edward Llewellyn**,  
British  
Ambassador  
to the French  
Republic



**Mme Catherine Colonna**,  
French  
Ambassador  
to the United  
Kingdom

what could have been imagined ten years ago at Lancaster House, so the joint political and military cooperation is irreplaceable. As the Ambassador said, "there is simply no alternative".

Facing three levels of challenges: military threats, terrorism and global challenges, both countries can act, because they share the essential (values and willingness to act).

She reminded that because of Brexit, this cooperation is even more essential, and that it requires to continue to confront points of view, with the openness that proximity permits, to make sure to maintain converging views on the difficulties, and approaches that respect our own interests regarding security issues.

As the Ambassador noted, the common political and military weight of both of the countries is irreplaceable: this can be seen on many theatres, but as well in terms of continental European defence, or in NATO. Within international organisations, the Ambassador underlined the strong and determined actions of both countries when the principles of international order are infringed.

She added that "we must take our share of the burden and remain in keeping with our history, our values and our ambitions. All the fundamentals are in place for the development of this strategic relationship for the next ten years and, for my part, I will continue to work on our bilateral collaboration."

## GROUP DISCUSSION 4

# Fourth Themed Discussion: Innovation: tackling tomorrow's challenges.

### Introductions by,



**M. Emmanuel Chiva, Director of the Defense Innovation Agency**



**Clare Cameron, Director, Defence Innovation**

Opening the Themed Discussion, **Clare Cameron** and **Emmanuel Chiva** talked of the need for Defence to exploit science and technology and how this is crucial to the operational advantage, international standing, industrial capability and prosperity of both countries. This is especially true in an increasingly complex and dynamic threat environment.

Emerging and disruptive technologies such as automation and artificial intelligence will have far reaching implications globally. Data will be increasingly important and environmental issues such as climate change and changing demographics raise complicated geopolitical and security challenges.

Clare Cameron spoke of how UK Defence had embarked on an ambitious Defence Innovation Initiative in 2016, aimed at:

- Embedding innovation across the Ministry of Defence and the Armed Forces
- Transforming the way to think, operate, and use technologies
- Developing the ability to harness ideas
- Exploiting ingenuity – quickly and affordably.

Clare Cameron welcomed the UK's four-year defence budget settlement. This has provided defence in the UK with the certainty needed to meet today's threats and prepare for the future by transforming Defence into an agile, technologically advanced organisation able to

understand, develop and exploit technology and new ideas faster.

Emmanuel Chiva talked of the increased importance of defence innovation as we enter an era where it is harder to predict and prepare for the future. He called innovation a matter of survival and found it hard to foresee the state of war in 2080. The new economic giants of transnational companies with huge budgets that transcend states are also changing the way governments can react and challenging the boundaries on space, cyberspace and Artificial Intelligence. He said that missing the next technological breakthrough is what keeps him awake at night. The French Defence Innovation Agency was created in 2018 to harness innovation which can become operational quickly. The director talked about a new initiative looking at identifying potential future threats to then look at ways of combatting them.

He talked about greater scientific research between the UK and France and future collaboration opportunities. "We are here to dare, we are here to imagine", he concluded.

Looking at the cooperation begun under Lancaster House, both countries are exploring how UK and France Defence Innovation could work together in the future and how both countries can strengthen the developing relationship, especially in areas with similar objectives, such as:

- championing the exploration of disruptive technologies,
- accelerating innovation for the Armed Forces customers,
- ensuring clarity of requirement and defining routes to the end user,
- providing a cross-government organisation to find and fund innovation,
- having initiatives in place to proactively attract SMEs and innovators.

**Lord Peter Ricketts**, CChair of the Franco-British Council in the United Kingdom, closed the Conference by thanking all of the speakers and participants, and the generous sponsors Airbus and MBDA who made the meeting possible. Even in unprecedented times, it was important that the Defence Conference went ahead online. Lord Ricketts was pleased that the Franco-British Council was able to bring together virtually government policymakers, senior members of the armed forces, business leaders, academics and other members of the defence family to pool their experience and to think together about the future of Franco-British defence cooperation.

The Defence Conference marks the tenth anniversary of the Lancaster House Agreements

- a ground-breaking set of agreements between our two countries. Lord Ricketts reflected on his own role in 2010 as National Security Advisor when he coordinated the UK side of the Lancaster House Agreements alongside his French colleagues, Jean-David Levitte and Général Benoit Puga. They were ground-breaking treaties in showing the trust and confidence between both countries including the acceptance of mutual dependence in nuclear warhead work.

The Conference has shown how the agreements have become a reality. Lord Ricketts welcomed the discussion between the two chiefs of the defence staff who talked about the real operational success of the Combined Joint Expeditionary Force as a game-changer of interoperability, command and control, and the human dimension of seeing officers from both armed forces at all levels working effectively together.

On the defence industrial side, Lord Ricketts welcomed the announcement by both Defence Ministers of a new contract with Thales for a new joint Maritime MCM programme. He welcomed the continued Franco-British relationship despite Brexit as the common threats and values between both countries remain strong.

He looked forward to the Defence Conference in 2021 and hoped that it could be held in person.



JOINT ARTICLE

# Ten years on from the Lancaster House Treaty

## The future of Franco-British defence

**By the Franco-British Council co-Chairs, Hervé Mariton and Lord Peter Ricketts**

As we mark the tenth anniversary of the Lancaster House Treaties - a major milestone for Franco-British defence cooperation - the world is changing. Europe is striving to move forward, Britain has left the EU and the COVID crisis faces countries and international institutions with unprecedented challenges. . These are not reasons to scale back UK-French defence cooperation to an end, but rather to strengthen the ties that unite us.

We need each other. The French Ambassador to London, Catherine Colonna recently quoted the joint declaration made by Jacques Chirac and John Major in 1995: "we cannot imagine a situation in which the vital interests of one of our countries could be threatened without the interests of the other being threatened in the same way."

Our two countries face the same threats: Islamist terrorism, the Russian challenge to European security, the Chinese bid to dominate the next generation of technology. Our security depends on our capacity to respond to these threats and this capacity is strengthened when our efforts are united. The exchange of information is essential in the fight against terrorism. As maritime nations we play a key part in maintaining freedom of navigation on the high seas.

Whatever difficulties Brexit will cause in our bilateral relationship, geography dictates our need for strong links as recent history demonstrates.

There is no defence without a substantial budget. Together we account for more than half of the European military effort. But decisions on budgets are always difficult and the need to reduce deficits - aggravated by the COVID crisis - will put great pressure on defence spending. It therefore makes sense for our two countries to support each other and encourage each other in a major political effort, while saving and pooling resources wherever we can.



Hervé Mariton

The Lancaster House agreements confirmed our common interests and set out an ambitious programme of practical cooperation. The case for working together is as strong now as it was then.

We are Europe's two nuclear powers and want to remain that way. The research programmes for radiographic cooperation demonstrates a capacity to cooperate in this most sensitive area. There are multiple exchanges between our armed forces. We share the understanding of the need to intervene and have the operational capacity to do so. British forces are at present working alongside the French in Operation Barkhane in the Sahel, and the French are working alongside the British in the NATO operation in Estonia. Lancaster House also created the Combined Joint Expeditionary Force, which gives the operational capacity to mount a demanding military operation together, including air and naval units.

We have made progress with some defence industrial projects. This cooperation predates Lancaster House, but the Treaties gave it new impetus. The missile sector is a good example, with the light anti-ship programme announced in 2010 and a future anti-ship / cruise missile programme. The latter programme was the

subject of an interesting political cooperation between the two defence committees of the National Assembly and the House of Commons. Progress has been achieved on other naval industrial programmes such as the Maritime Mine Countermeasures Programme. But this has not always been the case for information systems and for several aeronautical cooperation projects; an area in which Lancaster House's ambitions of a joint project for a MALE (medium altitude long endurance) drone, and of a Future Combat Air System (FCAS) have not succeeded.

The threats we are confronted with, our awareness of defence issues, our ambitions in the world, the specific place of our two countries and our budgetary constraints are not changed by Brexit. Indeed, with France in the European Union and the United Kingdom outside, the need for understanding and cooperation is more essential than ever.

We need to move closer, so the Lancaster House process remains as relevant as ever. President Macron's proposal for a European Defence Initiative includes the United Kingdom. The Franco-British Defence Council, created in 2018, is a very useful forum to maintain and strengthen cooperation.

The Franco-British Council Defence Conference on 26th November is not simply a commemoration of ten years of the Lancaster House Treaty. With the participation of the two Defence Ministers, Florence Parly and Ben Wallace, it is an important opportunity to contribute to the future.



**Peter Ricketts**

The British Ambassador to Paris, Edward Llewellyn, recalled that in 1843 the then Foreign Secretary, Lord Aberdeen, called for a cordial Franco-British agreement which became the "Entente Cordiale" in 1904. The 2020s still need this understanding, especially in defence cooperation. It is about strategic interests, our place in the world, identity and the deep pride of each of our two countries.



Former French President Nicolas Sarkozy and former British Prime Minister David Cameron at the signing of the Lancaster House treaty in November 2010 with their officials including then British Ambassador Peter Ricketts and current British Ambassador Ed Llewellyn

# Participants in the Franco-British Council Defence Conference 2020

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## About the Franco-British Council

The Franco-British Council was founded in 1972 on the joint initiative of President Georges Pompidou and Prime Minister Edward Heath in the context of a developing Europe and of an increasingly globalised community. Since then it has dedicated itself to the promotion of a better mutual understanding between the UK and France by bringing together leading representatives of the worlds of defence, science, politics, business, education and culture.

Please visit the Franco-British Council website for further information about future defence conferences; the Franco-British Young Leaders Programme and Local Leaders Initiative; along with other news

## Acknowledgements

The Franco-British Council / Conseil franco-britannique would like to thank the speakers and participants of the 2020 Defence Conference; the supporters of the conference for their generosity, including the French and the British Ministries of Defence and the invaluable sponsorship of Airbus and MBDA for this eighth edition; HE Lord Edward Llewellyn, British Ambassador to the French Republic, and HE Mme Catherine Colonna, French Ambassador to the United Kingdom; the members of the Steering Committee; the editors of the report, Olivier Martin and Olivier-Remy Bel; and the Franco-British Council's Senior Defence Advisor Geoff Wright who made our conference possible this year.

## With grateful thanks to our partners

