



## The "high-intensity society" in the face of sustainability issues

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**In order to appear as a credible adversary and thus dissuade its opponent from taking a stand against it, the army must not only possess a significant number of materials and personnel, but also have the capacity to project them.**

The conventional deterrence equation, however, does not stop there, especially in the context of a high-intensity conflict, characterized by The conventional deterrence equation, however, does not stop there, especially in the context of a high-intensity conflict, characterized in French doctrine by the activation of "all operational functions ... to oppose the adversary's characterized violence." »[17]. [17] This definition, which is relatively imprecise, nevertheless suggests the essential point: high intensity will by definition lead to significant human and material losses, in the face of an adversary who also activates all his operational functions.

Consequently, the credibility of conventional deterrence provided by the army and its projection capabilities would greatly benefit from the integration of these operational, strategic and tactical capabilities into a wider socio-cultural ecosystem. Beyond its capacity to intervene - and to intervene in force - the army must, in this sense, demonstrate its integration within an integrated system. Beyond its capacity to intervene - and to intervene in force - the army must, in this sense, demonstrate its integration within a consequent economic and industrial system, ensuring not only the quality of its equipment, but also its capacity to replace those that could be destroyed in contact with the adversary [18].

Even more decisively, French society must return to the price of blood to be paid, because a conflict of high intensity will lead to significant losses, which an exacerbated sensitivity to death would make even more important. In addition to its capacity to produce equipment, it is therefore important to ensure our ability to recruit, train and

deploy all the fighters needed for victory. Only then can enemy aggression be prevented and deterred, while the opposite prospect - the prospect of facing an under-equipped and understaffed army - is not a deterrent at all. Does this mean that we must stop cherishing those who protect us, or that we must stop valuing the lives of our fighters? No, in that these natural fears largely shape the civilizational environment that we cherish and for which we would then have to fight. Nevertheless, it is necessary to encourage the emergence of a "high-intensity society", not only to mass-produce the materials necessary for victory, but also to accept the loss of many soldiers.

The question of the emergence of a high-intensity society raises important cultural and philosophical questions and presupposes an unavoidable effort of clarification. It would not, in fact, be a question of signing the end of the Western socio-cultural order that values individual existence and material comfort, but rather of ensuring the transition, in the context of a high-intensity conflict, from a society of comfort to a society of combat. Here too, the army can play a key role: its territorial hold, the mass of personnel it maintains and its participation in the daily economic life of the country give it a unique capacity to address the population. This would also be in its own interest, as the possible emergence of a combat society would further strengthen its deterrent capabilities and at the same time remove the prospect of a deadly conflict. Some of these efforts, moreover, have already been made: French society is not as resistant to the death of its soldiers as is commonly believed; it is to senseless death that it is more resistant to the death of its soldiers. It is to senseless death that it is fervently opposed[19], which underlines the need to inscribe the current combat as well as future battles in a clear discourse, legitimizing not only death, but also commitment: Soldiers must thus see theirs valued during their lifetime[20], with praise going only to the dead[21].

## Conclusion

French armies thus remain particularly well suited to alliance engagement, with the coordinated deployment of French and foreign units enabling specific capability shortfalls to be overcome on a case-by-case basis. Moreover, French armed forces have recently demonstrated their martial capabilities in contact with the GANE encountered along the Sahel-Saharan strip (BSS) or in the Levant. However, the various elements highlighted in this article illustrate the necessity of preparing for a high-intensity conflict opposing us, alone, to a determined adversary of equivalent or higher rank. It is therefore imperative to strengthen our ability to understand tomorrow's adversary and to identify the theatres where it will be necessary to confront him by increasing the density of our resources. Information gathering and processing networks, while providing our armies with more heavy means, in particular better armoured cavalry, more efficient artillery and anti-aircraft systems adapted to future combat [22].

22] Similarly, it is crucial to safeguard our ability to "go first" by developing the tools adapted to the neutralisation of A2/AD systems[23]; to ensure the projectability of these resources by strengthening our transport aviation and the various units responsible for military logistics, while increasing the number of French land holdings abroad or, failing that, the regular deployment of French units within the Entre-Deux, a practice particularly appreciated by our allies and observed by our adversaries [24]. Finally, and above all, it seems particularly appropriate to facilitate the emergence in France of a political sensitivity adapted to high-intensity conflicts. The latter could take two directions: the habituation of the population to the many effects of a confrontation of this nature and the development of a financial and industrial culture adapted to the rapid and massive

production of heavy equipment. The French Army would then have means adapted to its strategic role [25] and could represent the cardinal point of future conventional deterrence.

Although French armies still lack the means adapted to the likely high intensity, some programs illustrate the awareness not only of the military hierarchy, but also of industrialists and especially of political leaders. The Scorpion programme is part of this trend and is to be welcomed. Indeed, it should provide the army with substantial heavy means well suited to high-intensity combat, by authorising the renewal of medium and heavy capabilities. Thus, 200 Leclerc tanks will be modernised and upgraded to XLR standard, 300 Jaguar armoured reconnaissance and combat vehicles will replace the AMX10RC and ERC90, 1872 Griffon multi-role armoured vehicles will replace the Vé1872 Griffon multi-role armoured vehicles still in service, while 978 Serval light multi-role armoured vehicles should be introduced into the French Army by 2030. These different armoured vehicles will be better adapted to contemporary strategic challenges and, in this sense, testify to France's ability to rethink the structure of its armies in order to better adapt to future combat.

The emergence of a conventional deterrent adapted to a high-intensity conflict is a global challenge. It presupposes in-depth doctrinal, technological, legal and economic questioning, but also a national effort of recruitment, training and preparation for a new conflict, borrowing from the confrontations of the past. It presupposes profound doctrinal, technological, legal and economic questions, but also a national effort of recruitment, training and preparation for a new conflict, borrowing from yesterday's confrontations the intensity of modern joint and combined arms combat, without denying the logistical challenges specific to the expeditionary wars that France is conducting in Africa, in the BSS and in the Levant. The high-intensity conflict is thus particularly demanding. It is costly, first of all in economic and political capital, but above all, it must not be overlooked, in terms of equipment and blood. Yet, and this is a paradox that the political elite is struggling to overcome, the best way to avoid the outbreak of such a conflict is to maintain an effective conventional deterrent force, and thus to increase our military spending.

In this sense, these appropriations therefore do not represent a dead loss, but rather an investment in the future that may prove to be particularly profitable in the field of international security. This rule is a constant, which the writer Végèce recalled as long as fifteen centuries ago: "The Roman people have long equipped a fleet ... for the usefulness of their greatness, not because a sudden danger made it necessary, but on the contrary, so that one day they would not have to bear that necessity. For no one dares to declare or cause harm to the country or to the people who are known to be ready and willing to resist and to punish. It is now up to France, through its armies, to appear as a power determined to resist and to crack down, for its own security, but also in the eyes of all the third-ranking powers between the Guarantors and the Alternatives.

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