



## LETTER FROM THE ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF TO CONTACT NO. 40 MILITARY SPECIFICITY

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**Military specificity is a crucial issue for our operational effectiveness. However, such an important concept is not always well understood, perhaps because, thanks to a long period of peace in Europe, the idea of war as the figure of the soldier has faded somewhat in our mental horizon.**

Based on the primary purpose of the army, that is, the defence of the Nation by arms, in a methodical and organized way, it consists of a grammar specific to the military world, sometimes different from the common logic, and which is expressed in different fields. First of all, it is a specific military state, described in the Defence Code, which makes the soldier a separate servant of the State, subject to a distinct legal regime based on exceptional obligations and subjection.

This is merely the translation of an absolute imperative for the Nation: that of maintaining the free disposal of armed force, without notice or time limits. It is then a model of organization and functioning specific to the army. In order to act autonomously in a context of serious crisis, or even total chaos, it cannot behave like a company or even a public service. Managerial rationality must sometimes give way to command and mission worship, and accounting optimisation must give way to the imperatives of resilience.

Finally, it is a morality of singular action. For the use of armed force, which can cause destruction and death, requires real ethical reflection. It is for this reason that philosophical and religious reflection has been developing for centuries around the notion of just war, which is quite simply aimed at enabling soldiers to preserve their honour and humanity in combat.

Military specificity is therefore neither a withdrawal into identity nor a threat to society, quite the contrary. On the contrary, it is a strength for France, and an indispensable

condition for ensuring the long-term basis of its defence capabilities.

General Jean-Pierre Bosser

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