



JOINT STATEMENT OF INTENT BETWEEN
MR. LLOYD AUSTIN
SECRETARY OF DEFENSE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
AND
MR. SÉBASTIEN LECORNU
MINISTER OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC

Born out of the American War of Independence, the Alliance between the United States and France – the oldest between two nations on opposite sides of the Atlantic Ocean – was shaped by the challenges both nations faced together across two world wars and over numerous crises and conflicts, spanning from the Cold War to modern global threats.

Our relationship rests upon a foundation of common values and shared interests, namely the defense of democracy; preserving the international rules-based order; and protecting the UN charter-enshrined principles of self-determination and territorial and political independence. The United States and France work together bilaterally, with our Allies and partners, and with the UN Security Council and other multilateral bodies to strengthen these shared interests.

The strategic environment has dramatically evolved since our 2016 Statement of Intent, which anticipated we would face a range of threats from both State and non-State actors. Today, we are faced with the return of strategic competition with State actors aiming to undermine the international rules-based order. At the same time, we are confronted with the persistent threats that transnational extremist organizations and terrorist groups pose to our citizens and forces at home and abroad. We must also tackle global challenges stemming from climate and health crises, which require us to enhance our collective resilience by strengthening our supply chains and critical infrastructure.

To that end, we reaffirm the need to enhance our defense cooperation in order to enable our forces to jointly address the array of threats we face. This renewed Statement of Intent seeks to capture our common vision and provide a basis of understanding for deepening our existing cooperation on security and defense wherever possible. As the leaders of our militaries, we acknowledge the legally non-binding nature of this statement, but stand by its tenets as a framework for our cooperation. In this regard, we aim to enhance cooperation in several key areas:

First, as France's 2022 Strategic National Review states, NATO has proven its strategic relevance in the context of Russia's invasion of Ukraine and Allied support to the Ukrainian Armed Forces defense of their country's sovereignty. We therefore resolve to uphold NATO as the primary and essential guarantor of collective defense in Europe and are committed to fulfilling the NATO Wales Summit Defense Investment Pledge.

Second, we recognize that our Strategic Dialogue on Defense serves as the bedrock of our defense relationship. Thus, regular consultations, attesting to our mutual trust and values, serve as a forum for building a shared understanding of these challenges and facilitate cooperation to address them with our respective strengths and capabilities.

Third, our cooperation on intelligence, which enables our combined operations, continues to develop within the framework of the Lafayette Committee. We pledge to maintain the steady pace of Lafayette Committee engagements with the aim of reaching concrete information sharing goals. We will strive to maintain our regular pace of intelligence sharing, especially in West Africa and the Levant, where we have reached an unprecedented level of operational information sharing. The enduring nature of the Ukraine conflict and the challenges of the Indo-Pacific region require us to improve our information sharing mechanisms. Thus, we remain committed to fostering interoperability, connectivity and optimization of processes. We reaffirm our shared commitment to the Lafayette Committee framework in order to pursue the current dynamic and develop this vital cooperation for the planning and conduct of our military operations.

Fourth, we reaffirm our steadfast commitment to optimize our cooperation in all theaters where our armed forces are engaged in combined operations, especially in Europe, the Middle-East, Africa, the Caribbean, the Indo-Pacific region, and the maritime domain. We must reinforce our interoperability and enhance our common strategic and operational culture through regular personnel exchanges with the aim of optimizing our combined operations. Our interoperability benefits from mutual support and consultation throughout the conception of our capability programs. We intend to improve upon our existing operational and technical interoperability across our military services in order to conduct combined operations, including in high-intensity conflicts. We intend to improve the connectivity between current and future generation capabilities, including air combat systems.

Fifth, we reaffirm our commitment to supporting the people of Ukraine as they continue to fight to defend their liberty and sovereignty. We must continue our consultations on supporting Ukraine throughout and following its conflict with Russia. Similarly, we intend to maintain close coordination regarding the transfer and monitoring of military equipment, training of the Ukrainian Armed Forces. We intend to also continue to support operations and deployments aimed at deterring Russia from attacking NATO territory. Our Strategic Dialogue must therefore enable the coordination of our respective communication strategies aiming to promote our actions and increase the political cost of aggression for Moscow. We reaffirm the Joint Leaders' Statement on Preventing Nuclear War and Avoiding Arms Races that nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought, particularly as Russia's unprovoked and unlawful war of aggression against Ukraine and dangerous nuclear rhetoric undermine global nuclear international peace and security.

Sixth, as the Indo-Pacific region is at the heart of both global economic growth and increased geostrategic importance in the years ahead, we reaffirm our respective commitment to fulfill our roles as key actors in the region due to the number of our citizens, the basing of our permanent forces, and the extent of our territories. We consider it necessary to continue our dialogue on the security of this region, especially in terms of information sharing, promotion of regional cooperation and coordination of our naval and air deployments in order to preserve our sovereign interests, access to resources, and freedom of navigation. We will work with our Indo-Pacific allies and partners to advance a free and open, resilient, secure, and prosperous Indo-Pacific region.

Seventh, we intend to continue ongoing dialogue on political and security challenges in Africa. We commit to ensuring close coordination of our efforts to bolster the security and defense of our Western African partners. Moreover, U.S. and French forces work closely together – by, with, and through our partners – to counter violent extremism and malign influence in West Africa and the Horn of Africa. We also intend to coordinate our efforts to minimize the spread of disinformation and malign influences by our strategic competitors and their proxies.

Eighth, as the terrorist threat remains in the Middle-East and in the Levant, we intend to continue our combined operations and our information sharing on the regional situation. We must also pursue our coordination regarding the support of the Lebanese armed forces in order to contribute to stabilizing Lebanon.

Ninth, as responsible nuclear weapons States, the United States and France reaffirm that nuclear deterrence is a foundational component of the defense strategies of our respective nations, as well as the supreme guarantee of the security of the NATO Alliance. We intend to deepen our bilateral consultations and compare national approaches to deterrence policy and posture. The publication of the 2022 U.S. Nuclear Posture Review affirmed a continuing commitment to a safe, secure, and effective nuclear deterrent and strong and credible extended deterrence, while France's 2022 Strategic National Review confirmed the unique role of nuclear weapons for deterrence. We reaffirm the unique and distinct role of nuclear weapons for deterrence and the importance of enhancing the nuclear deterrence culture of the NATO Alliance.

Tenth, we recognize that today, no major operation can succeed without incorporating cyberspace and space as operational domains, whose applications allow us to assess, decide, and act at any given time and location. We intend to enhance our ability to operate effectively in space and cyberspace to detect, prevent, counter and respond to the full spectrum of threats, using all available tools. Thus, the extension of potential conflict to space and cyberspace requires us to enhance our existing and formalized cooperation structured through converging strategic analysis and mutually recognized advanced capabilities.

Eleventh, based on a common assessment of threats and a shared ambition to confront them, we are constantly enhancing our cooperation in space. Since 2009, we have leveraged our Space Cooperation Forum to advance shared objectives, such as information-sharing, developing mutual education and training opportunities, and building towards combined operations. Our cooperation went a step further

when France joined the Combined Space Operations initiative in 2020 alongside Australia, Canada, Germany, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States. We also align on the necessity to promote norms of responsible behaviors in space within international bodies. We welcome NATO's Center of Excellence for Space in Toulouse, France, and we look forward to collaborating with our allies to make the Center a hub for learning and cooperation. We intend to continue advancing our robust space collaboration bilaterally and with other allies and partners.

Twelfth, in the cyberspace domain, we share common interests, especially regarding the protection of our networks and critical infrastructure which are vital to conduct operations. We aim at deepening this cooperation, which was initiated in 2014, through regular participation in major cyber defense exercises, combined operations, and increased information exchanges between our respective cyber commands and relevant bodies.

Thirteenth, U.S. and French strategies reinforce the importance of securing the seabed domain. As current events demonstrate the relevance of this domain, exchanges between French and American experts enhance our interoperability in seabed surveillance, defense, and action.

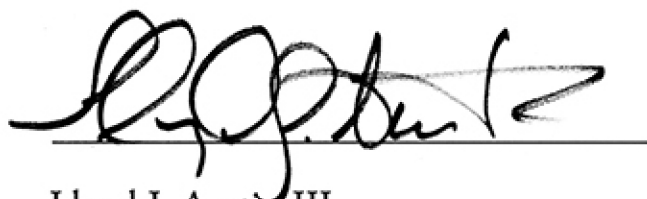
Fourteenth, countering malign influence and enhancing our capabilities of information warfare are key for future strategic successes. In this light, we intend to share a common understanding of the global information space and of active threats in this complex virtual environment. In order to do so, we plan to enhance and coordinate our monitoring abilities complementarily. We intend to share best practices, and synchronize our efforts when appropriate.

Fifteenth, we already cooperate on numerous technical subjects through working groups under the Cooperative Oversight of Programs process, and this process would usefully be extended to new subjects and stakeholders. Within this framework, we can explore new opportunities for cooperation offered by military applications of advanced technologies in order to maintain our technical and operational advantage.

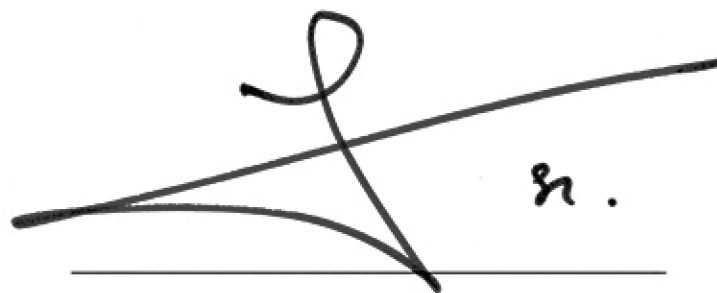
Sixteenth, as a concrete realization of the shared commitment between our Presidents, the Defense Trade Strategic Dialogue (DTSG) was formally launched on June 13, 2022. The Cooperative Oversight of Programs process will work hand-in-hand with the Defense Trade Strategic Dialogue to expeditiously resolve any bilateral matters. We intend to continue our exchanges aimed at securing the defense industrial base, including through promoting mutual access to defense markets, reinforcing cyber security in the private defense sector, and addressing export control issues.

Seventeenth, we recognize that NATO and the European Union play complementary, coherent, and mutually reinforcing roles in support of international peace and security. On the basis of our longstanding cooperation, we commit to enhancing the NATO-European Union strategic partnership. The United States acknowledges the value of a stronger and more capable European defense that contributes to global and transatlantic security and is complementary to, and interoperable with NATO. France is committed to increased defense investment to benefit collective security, as illustrated by its reinforced posture on the Eastern Flank.

Well aware of the challenges for our armed forces and the stakes for our defense relationship, we are proud of the accomplishments made in the service of our common strategic ambitions.



Lloyd J. Austin III
Secretary of Defense
United States of America



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Minister of the Armed Forces
French Republic

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