



## The UK-France Defence and Security Relationship: How to Improve Cooperation

A report by Institut Montaigne and the Policy Institute at King's College London,  
co-chaired by Bernard Cazeneuve, former Prime Minister  
and Lord Robertson, former NATO Secretary General.

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Paris and London, 8 November 2018 - The future of defence and security cooperation between France and the UK is questioned by the current context. However, while Brexit is coming closer and in a context of growing terrorist threat, it is precisely at a time when Europe needs a strong relationship between France and Great Britain, the only two true military powers on the continent.

Conscious of this reality, the Franco-British Taskforce, brought together by Institut Montaigne and The Policy Institute at King's College London, is publishing its report today. Led by Bernard Cazeneuve and Lord Robertson, this binational initiative has been ongoing for nearly one year and been nurtured by 20 top-level experts, whether they are former political leaders, diplomats, military, intellectuals or business leaders.

In "[The UK-France Defence and Security Relationship: How to Improve Cooperation](#)", they formulate a series of strategic policy recommendations aimed at the leaders of both countries to make sure that Brexit will not jeopardise our collective security while providing their armies with the military capabilities to win the wars of the future and strengthening their international influence.

*"A fragile or fractured relationship between the United Kingdom and France would jeopardise our security as much as that of other countries in Europe and around the world. Despite how necessary it may be, this cooperation has never been so precarious. The situation is urgent and*

*therefore, we are jointly formulating concrete proposals to give a new impetus to this historic partnership which is one based on shared values and ambitions."*

**Bernard Cazeneuve, former prime Minister  
and Lord Robertson, former NATO Secretary General,  
both Presidents of the Taskforce.**

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**We propose three main guidelines to ensure the future of the Franco-British security and defence cooperation:**

**I. Firstly, everything must be done to ensure that Brexit does not jeopardise European security.**

Security issues must be separated and protected from the rest of the Brexit negotiations. However, it seems possible to find agreements that would make the United Kingdom a privileged partner to maintain police and judicial cooperation and exchanges of data, which are crucial in the fight against terrorism and organised crime. To this end, it seems possible to revise the status of third countries. It will also be necessary, especially for the United Kingdom, to find compromises on the most difficult issues, such as the jurisdiction of the ECJ and the degree of involvement in decision-making processes. The cross-border cooperation, between France and the United Kingdom, established by the Touquet and Sangatte agreements must also be preserved.

**II. It is then necessary to fully implement the Lancaster House Treaties.**

In this respect, **the full operationalisation of the Combined Joint Expeditionary Force**, which could usefully be articulated with the new European Intervention Initiative (EII), is of particular importance. As political impetus has always played a major role in the success of UK-France cooperation – but also in its failures – it seems desirable to **strengthen strategic dialogue** by creating an annual UK-France Defence and Security Council, supplemented by a more regular "2+2" dialogue (foreign ministers and defence ministers) and a "Quint" dialogue between the heads of the main intelligence services.

**III. Finally, we must adapt our partnership to prepare ourselves, together, for the uncertainties the future may bring.**

Collaboration between our intelligence services would benefit from being more formally structured, in particular to make progress in the field of **cybersecurity**, which must become a new pillar of our partnership (with a common doctrine, joint development of key technologies in data encryption, detection and identification of cyber attacks, artificial intelligence). This new pillar should contain confidentiality and exclusivity clauses making it possible to overcome the difficulties posed by the "Five Eyes" alliance, in which the United Kingdom participates and not

France. **A common strategic vision must be developed in R&D**, identifying key technologies and opportunities for collaboration and leading to joint capacity development. In this respect, **the continuation of the "FCAS" project** for the future combat air system, for which our two countries have unique competencies and common operational requirements, appears particularly decisive for the strategic autonomy of the European continent, even if this project will undoubtedly have to be brought closer, in the long term, to the Franco-German combat aircraft project.

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*The Policy Institute at King's College London addresses complex policy challenges with rigorous research, academic expertise, and analysis focused on improving outcomes.*

*Its vision is to enable the translation of research into policy and practice by facilitating engagement between academic, business and policy communities around current and future issues in the UK and globally.*