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# Implications for the U.S. of Anglo-French Defence Cooperation

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# Summary

- The cooperation is driven by significant defence spending cuts.
- There are efforts regarding practical military cooperation.
- A promising area involves increased defence industrial cooperation.
- The leadership of the two countries is committed; there are mixed signals in the bureaucracies; the issue is if defence industries have bought in.
- The UK wants Anglo-French projects to which other European countries can sign on; no more multinational efforts like the A-400M.
- The hope is that the U.S. will not try to kill it.
- It is one of the few initiatives so Europe can get decent capabilities out of declining defence budgets.

# To Be Clear

- France has no friends, only interests --  
Charles de Gaulle
- We have no eternal allies, and we have no  
perpetual enemies. Our interests are eternal  
and perpetual . . .  
Lord Palmerston

# Defence Spending

- In 2010, UK defence budget was 43.5 billion Euros.
- French defence budget was 39 billion Euros.
- Combined budgets are now about half of all European defence spending.
- About 75% of all defence R&D spending.
- By 2015, combined budget could be 2/3 of all European defence spending.

# Defence Spending Cuts

- In the UK, the 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review mandated a cut of around 8% in UK defence spending in real terms over four years.
- In France, Defence Minister Morin announced a reduction of 3% out of the defence budget, which cut across a range of capabilities.
- One writer notes that "a senior French military officer believes that the defence cuts in France in future are likely to be 'unprecedented' with 'big decisions' on major programmes necessary"

# Libya 2011

- There was solid UK-French air and maritime cooperation.
- However, Libya exposed the problems which remain in bilateral military cooperation.
- There were difficulties in communications, different concepts of operation, gaps in intelligence sharing and a problem with aligning political ambition and military capabilities.
- Perhaps most important were the problems in sharing classified information.

# Libya – Steps To Be Taken

- As noted in 2012 UK-France Summit Declaration.
- Prioritise joint work in the key areas of: command and control; information systems; intelligence, surveillance, targeting and reconnaissance; and precision munitions.
- Reinforced the desire to set up the Combined Joint Expeditionary Force.
- Will establish a Combined Joint Forces Headquarters by 2016.

# National Sovereignty

- Cooperative efforts are needed so the UK and France can be credible partners to the U.S.
- They are also driven by the need to have the capabilities to pursue independent foreign policies.



# Depth of Relationship

- This must have political support from the highest level and be driven by the leadership.
- However, it is an open question with mixed signals on whether it is taking root in the bureaucracies.
- The big question is if defence industry believes in cooperation.

# Defence Equipment - 1

- 2012 Summit cited the most concrete results in areas of defence equipment.
- The desire for cooperation on UAVs was made clear with specific projects.
- With regard to the Medium Altitude Long Endurance (MALE) drone, the two leaders announced they would place with BAE Systems and Dassault a jointly funded contract to study the technical risks associated with the MALE UAV
- France also confirmed its interest for the UK Watchkeeper system with an evaluation by France to begin this year.

# Defence Equipment - 2

- Will establish in 2013 a joint Future Combat Air System Demonstration Programme.
- Contract let to MBDA in December 2011 for two initial studies on a future cruise and an anti-ship weapon.
- Intention to sign a contract in coming months for development and manufacture of the Future Anti-ship Guided Weapon.

# Industrial Complications

- UK and French systems are fundamentally different.
- Role of government in France is much more than in UK.
- Can those practical hurdles be overcome by government?
- Will UK industry in particular accept the risks and buy in?

# Basis for European Cooperation

- From the UK perspective, there will be Anglo-French agreements.
- Other European countries can then sign on.
- No more multinational efforts like A-400M.
- Other European states are not happy with Anglo-French agreement.

# U.S. Interest

- It is in the U.S. interest to hope that Anglo-French efforts succeed.
- It is one of the few initiatives that could get more military capabilities out of declining European defence spending.
- A “benign watching brief” by the U.S. may be all that is needed.
- But the UK and France certainly hope that the U.S. does not act against it.