

Europe, France and nuclear deterrence

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Early February 2019, a few days after the United States announced its withdrawal from the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, the chairman of the Munich Security Conference, Wolfgang Ischinger, raised the question of a possible extension of the French nuclear umbrella to the rest of Europe: "It is a question of knowing if and how France could be willing to strategically put its nuclear capacity to work for the whole of the European Union." (1)

These remarks illustrate the return of a nuclear debate in Europe that seemed to be closed for years. While the current security dynamics on the continent lead to increase the place of nuclear deterrence issues in Europe, it is useful to put this nuclear debate into a larger historical perspective, while looking at the current strategic environment and what is at stake for France.

Historical perspective on the nuclear debate in Europe

Nuclear deterrence has played a fundamental role in preserving peace and strategic stability in Europe since the end of the Second World War. For a large number of European countries, it continues to play an essential role, limited to extreme circumstances, for the defence of their vital interests. Europe's relationship to nuclear weapons has to be considered in its multiple aspects: the Atlantic Alliance (NATO is a nuclear alliance - Europe is one of the two theatres where the United States exercises its extended nuclear deterrence), the European integration (the EU obviously has no role in nuclear deterrence, but the growing solidarity between EU Member States has political and strategic implications, in particular for the two European nuclear-weapon states), the bilateral dimension and of course the national dimension, for the nuclear-weapon states concerned.

The idea of a "European nuclear deterrent as such and a "European nuclear force" emerged in the late 1950s in Western Europe, as part of a crisis of confidence in the US security guarantees. The Suez episode in 1956 illustrates the limits of American engagement in support of its allies, while the launch of the Sputnik in 1957 highlights the unprecedented vulnerability of the American territory. Europeans fear that Washington will accept the prospect of a limited nuclear war in Europe and refuse to engage its strategic arsenal based on its territory, so as not to expose the American people to nuclear reprisals from the USSR (2). Projects on a "European atomic pool" (3) emerge to reduce Europe's strategic dependence on Washington and give it a voice in NATO. Trilateral agreements between France, Italy and Germany provide for a close cooperation in the field of conventional armaments and "military applications of atomic energy" (protocol agreement known as "FIG" signed on November 25 1957), and also for the construction of an isotopic separation plant at Pierrelatte (April 8, 1958); General de Gaulle put an end to this cooperation when he returned to power in 1958. Conversely,

* This text is a courtesy translation of an article originally published in French in *Revue Défense Nationale* n° 821 in June 2019. C. Jurgensen is a French career diplomat and currently Director for Strategy and Policy at the French Atomic Energy Commission. The views mentioned in this contribution are personal and cannot be attributed to the CEA or the French Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs. Some are developed in the author's article "What future for nuclear deterrence?", *Hérodote* n° 170, "La France Demain", 3rd quarter 2018, and her contribution for the CSFRS IXth National Conference, in December 2018.

the European Defence Community (EDC) Treaty signed by six states on May 27, 1952, like the initial version of the Euratom treaty, would have resulted in preventing the development of the French military nuclear program (4); this is one of the main reasons for the French Parliament's rejection of the EDC treaty on August 30, 1954 (5).

However, these purely European nuclear temptations remained theoretical. There are several reasons for this failure; for Europeans, in particular the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), the risk of a decoupling between Western Europe and the United States was too high. Thus, the issue of the contribution of nuclear deterrence to the security of Europe has been viewed through the sole prism of the American nuclear umbrella (the US "extended deterrence") and the Atlantic Alliance. From the end of the 1950s, Washington gradually implemented a policy of "nuclear sharing" (6) with its European allies; NATO's Nuclear Planning Group (NPG) was created in 1966 and met for the first time on April 6, 1967. For the Americans, it was meant to respond to European concerns about the US security guarantees and to avoid the proliferation of nuclear arsenals in Europe, particularly in the FRG (7), while controlling decision-making process for the use of the Alliance's weapons.

In 1967, during the negotiations of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the Americans had to guarantee (8) their European Allies, in order to overcome their reluctance, that the future treaty would not jeopardize NATO's nuclear sharing arrangements. Also, Americans had to ensure that the future NPT would not prevent a future European federation from succeeding one of its member states concerning the status of Nuclear Weapon State ("[It] would not bar succession by a new federated European state to the nuclear status of one of its former components" (9)) - a clause taken up by the FRG when it ratified the NPT (10). The NPT eventually limited the number of nuclear states in Europe.

From the second half of the 1970s, the Soviet threat, and in particular the deployment of nuclear intermediate forces (the SS-20), as well as a deepening of the political construction of Europe led to revitalizing ideas and discussions on an autonomous European defence and its possible nuclear dimension (11).

The end of the Cold War, with the demise of the Soviet camp, gradually generated a certain "vacuum" on nuclear defence issues in Europe. NATO reduced its nuclear posture (12) and eventually spent more time wondering *how* to get rid of its nuclear weapons, rather than *why* it was keeping them... From the 2000s, the Alliance's nuclear "centre of gravity" shifted from deterrence to nuclear disarmament. President Obama's Prague speech in favour of a "world free of nuclear weapons" accentuated this dynamic. Meanwhile, the German Foreign Minister, Guido Westerwelle, publicly requested in 2010 the withdrawal of nuclear weapons stationed on the German soil. Compared to Europe, Russia experienced the opposite nuclear trajectory.

However, the start of the 21st century has given way to a new era of tension between major powers and to a revival of the nuclear issue in Europe, especially since the annexation of Crimea in 2014. The NATO Summit in Warsaw in July 2016 marks the return of the nuclear debate in Europe; it reinforces the language on nuclear deterrence, a first since 1991.

The return of a nuclear debate in Europe

Today, nuclear deterrence is in a paradoxical situation. Nuclear issues are back on top of the international agenda while, at the same time, a prohibitionist logic of nuclear weapons is gradually taking root. A debate on the idea of a “European nuclear deterrence”, in response to a hypothetical withdrawal of the US nuclear umbrella, has recently resurfaced in the press (13). As Bruno Tertrais notes, while in the 1990s France was at the forefront of this debate, the intellectual momentum today comes from Germany. Different formulas have been discussed : a reinforced role of the French and British nuclear forces; a French “extended” deterrence, with the deployment of French nuclear weapons in other European countries; a “Europeanization” of the French deterrence, placed under a common European command, with common funding and doctrine; and even the development of a German nuclear deterrent. In the summer of 2017, a report commissioned by the Bundestag concluded that Germany could legally finance French nuclear deterrence.

This renewed nuclear debate in Europe is stimulated by the deteriorating strategic context. The resurgence of the Russian threat (as illustrated by the Ukraine crisis, the Russian policy of “strategic intimidation”, the announcement by President Putin in March 2018 of new strategic capabilities, or the use of chemical weapons on European soil) brings back on the agenda the possibility of a major crisis in Europe under a nuclear umbrella. Doubts about the political solidity of US security guarantees, which have been expressed more openly in Europe since the election of Donald Trump, contribute to restart a nuclear discussion in Europe.

The erosion of the European security architecture accentuates such trend: arms control instruments, both conventional and nuclear, are increasingly undermined and contested. After real success, arms control has entered a phase of regression and deconstruction. These developments have a direct impact on strategic stability in Europe.

The crisis of the 1987 INF Treaty (14) is emblematic of the “end of the post-Cold War era” we are living through (15). Since 2014, the United States has accused Russia of violating the treaty. In a statement of December 4, 2018, the NATO foreign ministers declared that they had “come to the conclusion that Russia has developed and put into service a missile system, the 9M729 (16), which violates the INF Treaty and poses significant risks to Euro-Atlantic security” and asked Russia to respond to these concerns in a substantive and transparent manner.

In the absence of developments from Moscow, the United States announced on February 1, 2019 that it was withdrawing from the INF treaty (effective from August 2, 2019). On the same day, the North Atlantic Council issued a statement supporting the US decision (17). In the aftermath, Russian President Vladimir Putin announced that Russia was also suspending its participation in the INF treaty.

The American decision is motivated by the Russian violation; a treaty only makes sense if all parties comply with it. After first denying the existence of the system concerned, Russia finally recognized its existence, while disputing the alleged range of the missile and therefore the violation of the treaty. Yet, the end of the INF treaty also reflects a change in the strategic balance since 1987, with Russia in the midst of a military resurgence and an assertive China. Beijing was indeed not a party to the INF treaty and

obviously does not intend to be party to it, as three-quarters of its missiles are in the ranges covered by the treaty.

The death of the INF treaty opens an uncertain and unstable period. The implications are still difficult to anticipate. They will depend in particular on the decisions and military measures that will be taken by the main actors (deployments of air-to-ground, sea-to-ground or new ground-to-ground systems, strengthening of missile defence, etc.).

With the end of the INF treaty, the future of the US-Russia strategic relationship is now at stake. The 2010 New START treaty, which remains the foundation of this bilateral strategic framework, expires in 2021 (it can be extended for a period of no more than five years). Therefore, we may soon be faced with the absence of any Russian-American arms control agreement and with the return to the sole logic of big power competition between the US, Russia and now also China.

At the same time, and somehow paradoxically, divisions over nuclear matters have increased within the European Union (EU). The dividing line is between states under a nuclear umbrella, which are rediscovering the virtues of deterrence for their security, and the other member states. The recent treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (or “ban treaty”), ratified by Austria and signed by Ireland, seems to exclude any possibility of overcoming these divisions for a long time. Over time, the accession of EU member states to this treaty could create real uncertainties on the EU political and strategic cohesion. Almost thirty years later, François Mitterrand's question – “How to manage the difference in nuclear status within the European Union?” – remains more relevant than ever.

What is at stake for France?

The reshaping of the strategic landscape in Europe has direct consequences for France, which will become after Brexit the only nuclear weapon state in the EU. Paris could receive more solicitations on this issue.

France's choice in favour of the nuclear strategy in the 1950s rests on a double foundation: the desire to protect its vital interests, and the willingness to ensure its independence and its freedom of action in all circumstances. While the French nuclear doctrine has been adapted to take into account the evolution of the strategic and political context - and particularly the deepening of the European construction -, these foundations have never been questioned. French nuclear deterrence remains a *national* deterrence (18): it is up to the French President alone to appreciate the limit of France's vital interests. French deterrent also remains a *central* deterrent (in contrast to the US concept of “extended deterrence”).

However, from the very beginning, French nuclear strategy has always known a certain tension between the desire for independence and France's European membership. French General Poirier formulated this dialectic as follows: “How to accord the requirements and constraints of the autonomy of decision, which the atom imposes on our strategy, and that of our no less necessary contribution to the security of our neighbours and allies?” France has long considered that its nuclear deterrence has a European role (19), even more since the end of the Cold War and the deepening of European integration. However, this “European role” is not limited to the EU's institutional framework. It includes different dimensions: a geographic dimension (20),

a political dimension with the European integration (closely linked to the deepening of defence Europe), a military dimension (with the issue of the articulation of French nuclear deterrence with NATO), and a bilateral dimension, in particular with the United Kingdom and Germany.

The contribution of French deterrence to the security of Europe is therefore both a factual contribution, resulting from geography, and a political and strategic choice. A historical perspective allows us to measure French developments - and openings - in this area.

A retrospective look

As noted by Georges-Henri Soutou (21), the leaders of the Fourth Republic, who launched France's secret military program at the end of 1954, did not conceive this nuclear strategy separately from the European framework and the Atlantic Alliance. It was a question of "acquiring reassurance in the event of the erosion or disappearance of the [American] nuclear guarantee, but from within NATO. In fact, the French aspired to the same status as the British."

When he came to power in 1958, de Gaulle first proposed to the Americans and the British a "tripartite directorate" on the use of nuclear weapons (Memorandum of September 17, 1958) (22). After the failure of its proposal, France entered a path of "Atlantic disengagement" and strived to reduce its dependence on the United States.

Despite a real continuity in the French atomic adventure between the Fourth and the Fifth Republic, the de Gaulle period marks a major shift, with the assertion of a French "nuclear sovereignty" (23). From 1960, France gradually acquires its nuclear autonomy, with its first nuclear test in February 1960 ("*Gerboise bleue*") and the construction of an independent nuclear force responding to a national strategy (with a strategic triad operational in 1971). Links with NATO come under strain: Paris refuses to put its strategic forces at the service of NATO during the 1962 Nassau agreements and withdraws from the Alliance's integrated command in 1966. France portrays its decision as a desire for independence that serves Europe and not as a departure from the Alliance, hence French Prime Minister Pompidou remarks to the National Assembly on April 13, 1966: "Independence does not suppress solidarity, it strengthens it, I would even say that it creates it. It's about making France find the way back to itself. By doing so, we serve Europe and prepare it to reappear and play its role". As early as 1962, Pompidou stressed that the nuclear force of a continental European country like France, directly exposed to danger, contributed to strengthening the security of Europe (24). The French nuclear singularity is anchored from 1966. In 1968, France refuses to sign the NPT, criticizing an American-Soviet nuclear duopoly.

An easing of tensions begins from the Giscard d'Estaing presidency (25) in the 1970s. Successive French Presidents gradually - and with caution - recognize that France's vital interests are not limited to its national territory alone.

They do this first on a geographical basis (the 1972 French White Paper states that "our vital interests are located on our territory and in its approaches."), then politically, with the deepening of European construction. As French Prime Minister Alain Juppé pointed out in September 1995, "France's vital interests have for several years a more political than geographical horizon".

In 1976, President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing took up the concept of "enlarged sanctuarization" (26), that is to say, in his own words, "the extension of the French strategic nuclear guarantee to all or part of Western Europe". However, he eventually abandoned it, faced with harsh criticism, notably from the Gaullist party, denouncing a questioning of the doctrine of "sanctuarization" of the national territory.

The end of the Cold War represents a real break. It opens a period of uncertainty about the role of nuclear weapons in the defence strategy and revives a debate on the European dimension of French nuclear deterrence, as European integration deepens and widens. For the first time, the European issue is formulated as such in the French strategy. The 1994 French White Paper "dismisses (...) a strategy focused exclusively on the sanctuarization of the national territory" and underlines: "The problem of a European nuclear doctrine is about to become one of the major issues of the construction of a European common defence. (...) With nuclear power, indeed, Europe's defence autonomy is possible. Without it, it is excluded (...). However, there will be no European nuclear doctrine, no European deterrence, as long as there will be no European vital interests, considered as such by Europeans and understood as such by others. Until then, France does not intend to dilute the means of its national defence in such an area under any pretext."

Since the end of the Cold War, the French authorities have put forward various concepts to strengthen the European dimension of French nuclear deterrence:

- The "*concerted deterrence*" (27): Jacques Mellick, French Secretary of State for Defence, defined it in 1992 (28), in the context of the end of the Cold War and European integration (creation of the CFSP). After Alain Juppé in 1995, Jacques Chirac clarified this concept in 1996: "It is not a question of unilaterally expanding our deterrence or imposing a new contract on our partners. It is a question of drawing all the consequences from a community of destiny and an increasing interweaving of our vital interests. Given the differences in sensitivity on nuclear weapons that exist in Europe, we are not proposing a completed concept, but a progressive approach, open to partners who wish to commit to it."
- Returning to a more unilateral perspective (possibly due to the lack of interest from European partners), Jacques Chirac noted in 2006 that "French nuclear deterrence, *by its very existence*, becomes an essential element of the security of the continent". While recalling the French idea of "concerted deterrence", he called first to deepen the discussion between EU member states about their common security interests.
- Proposals for a "dialogue" on the role of nuclear deterrence were floated, with Germany (the 1996 Franco-German concept) and with the European partners (Cherbourg speech by Nicolas Sarkozy in 2008).
- In 2015, in the context of the Ukrainian crisis, François Hollande accentuated the European dimension of France's nuclear deterrence. He underlined that "the definition of our vital interests cannot be limited to the national scale only, because France does not conceive its defence strategy in isolation, even in the nuclear field" and seemed to include, in an interrogative way, the "*survival of Europe*" among the vital interests of

France: “Who could believe that an aggression, which would jeopardize the survival of Europe, would have no consequences?” (29)

After this brief historical overview, a few remarks can be made.

First, two European partners, the United Kingdom and Germany, have received a specific treatment in the French nuclear strategy.

Unsurprisingly, *Germany* occupied a special place in the French nuclear debates (30), because of history (“never again 1940”), geography (the FRG had a double geographic proximity, with France and with the Soviet bloc) and strategic reasons (Germans were concerned about a possible nuclearisation of German soil by French tactical nuclear weapons). The nuclear issue dominated the Franco-German relationship in the 1980s during the Euromissile crisis. François Mitterrand had thus consented in 1986 to a consultation of Bonn on the possible use of French pre-strategic weapons on German soil, but “within the limits imposed by the extreme rapidity of such decisions”, and while stressing that the decision of employment could only be a national one. However, France refused to extend explicitly and automatically its nuclear deterrence to Germany (31).

After the end of the Cold War, in a common Security and Defence Concept, adopted at the Franco-German Council in Nuremberg in December 1996, Paris and Berlin emphasized their “community of destiny and interests” and indicated that they were “ready to start a dialogue on the role of nuclear deterrence in the context of European defence policy”. In this regard, the recent Aachen treaty of January 22, 2019 is not only an extension of the 1963 Elysée treaty, but also of the 1996 Franco-German concept (32).

The rapprochement with the other European nuclear power, the *United Kingdom*, took place at the end of the Cold War, even if discussions had already been initiated in the past (33). As early as 1992, a strategic dialogue was established within the framework of a joint nuclear commission. The Franco-British declaration known as “Chequers”, adopted at the level of Heads of State and Government on 30 October 1995, recognized an interconnection of the vital interests of the two countries, (“we do not see situations arising in which the vital interests of either France or the United Kingdom could be threatened without the vital interests of the other being also threatened”) - it is significant that this language was reaffirmed by the two countries after the British Brexit referendum, at the Franco-British Sandhurst Summit in January 2018 (34). The nuclear cooperation launched in 2010 with the Lancaster House treaties (in particular the Teutates treaty) marks an unprecedented strategic rapprochement between the two countries (within the limits allowed by the overlapping of British and American military programs), with the construction and operation of radiographic and hydrodynamic joint facilities.

Secondly, the option of a French “extended deterrence”, based on the American model, was never adopted. In a way, French so-called *central* deterrence was built in opposition to the US extended deterrence, which France did not consider credible for itself. This limited choice in favour of a central deterrent was and remains the choice of a middle power, with limited budgetary resources. The concepts and means of France’s nuclear deterrence strategy (retaliation, strict sufficiency, nuclear warning, unacceptable damage, etc.) also result from this choice.

Finally, the European organizations themselves have recognized the independent contribution of French nuclear forces to the overall deterrence of the Alliance (the 1974 Ottawa declaration by the Atlantic Council, reaffirmed in NATO's successive strategic concepts) and of Europe (the Hague platform adopted in 1987 by the Western European Union Ministers). Reintegration of France into NATO's integrated military command has not called into question the independence of its nuclear deterrence and its non-participation in the nuclear planning mechanisms of the Alliance. France continues to refuse anything that could interfere with the President's freedom of assessment, decision or action. However, as François Hollande pointed out in 2015, "France wishes to contribute to the definition of the nuclear policy of the Alliance". Paris therefore supports the strengthening of nuclear culture within the Alliance and contributes to the strengthening of NATO's declaratory stance on nuclear deterrence.

Future prospects

If debates that have resurfaced in Europe on the idea of a European nuclear deterrent remain limited to a few personalities and must be put into perspective, their very existence remains no less significant. They reflect an in-depth development in Europe, and the awareness that the interests of the old continent do not automatically overlap with those of the United States. As the German Chancellor said in an unprecedented way, Europe can no longer rely solely on the United States for its own defence.

In this context, discussions have resurfaced about a possible contribution of French nuclear deterrence to the strengthening of European strategic autonomy, in light of President Macron's European ambition (35). A 2018 French National Assembly report on European defence asked following question: "Now that the United Kingdom has decided to leave the EU, should French nuclear deterrence be extended to all EU member states, and if so, under what conditions?". If a "European nuclear deterrent" (whether a "Europeanization" of the French deterrent or a European deterrent *per se*) can be expected to remain excluded for the foreseeable future, recent publications have looked at more concrete and "realistic" options to strengthen French deterrence in this regard (36). In any case, it is up to the French President alone to decide on any potential changes in French nuclear strategy.

However, France is not the only one concerned. What about "demand"? Among European partners, the uncertainties and difficulties of a greater contribution of French nuclear deterrence to the security of Europe would probably be strong (37). In the past, they have shown little interest in the French ideas and proposals (38). Obviously, the role of the United States is a key factor in this equation. In the strategic and political DNA of most European countries, Washington remains the ultimate guarantor of their security and the defence of their territory, particularly in nuclear matters. European partners remain extremely cautious not to weaken the US security guarantees.

Beyond this discussion, strengthening the defence of Europe requires Europeans to make a lasting effort to collectively enhance their defence and deterrence capabilities (39). At the end of the Cold War, European countries massively divested security issues - militarily, financially and intellectually - and contracted their armed forces. A renewed European effort requires a re-appropriation of strategic and particularly nuclear culture - Thucydides reminds us that "the strength of the city is not in its vessels or its ramparts, but in the character of its citizens". Such renewed effort also means strengthening European conventional capabilities. In that regard, the debate about the "burden

sharing”, brutally revived by Donald Trump, is far from being illegitimate. At the same time, Europeans must develop European initiatives that will allow them to be credible partners or to act more independently if and when necessary. Several recent initiatives pursue this objective, such as the European Defence Fund and the permanent structured cooperation within the framework of the EU, or the European Intervention Initiative led by France with nine European partners (40).

On a national basis, France takes its share of these efforts, with the 2019-2025 military programming law, and in particular the renewal of the two components of its deterrence. As President Macron has reaffirmed, nuclear deterrence remains for France the ultimate guarantee of its security and independence. Within the Alliance, French deployments participate in the Enhanced Forward Presence in the Baltic countries.

Finally, the weakening of the security architecture in Europe must push the Europeans to initiate an in-depth discussion on the conditions of strategic stability on the continent. As a matter of priority, they should define their own security interests and relevant arms control measures compatible with those interests (mainly to reduce mutual distrust, reinforce transparency on doctrines and capabilities, and reduce the risks of involuntary or uncontrolled escalation) (41).

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As Bruno Tertrais points out, a serious debate on the role of nuclear weapons in European security has reappeared in Europe for the first time in more than twenty years. Strategic and political developments have fostered such debate: we have entered a new phase of international relations, marked by a return to the logic of power between the main strategic players and a weakening of our security frameworks.

The security challenges are high, for France and Europe. For Europeans, the risk is that a strategic rivalry between the United States, Russia and China might take place at their own expenses. Former German Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel recently voiced such concerns and warned: “Today, the world sees Europe as the last geopolitical vegetarian in a world full of carnivores. Without the UK, we will become vegans. Then a prey.” (42) European countries should not be bystanders or disengaged observers of strategic developments which directly concern them all. In this important year for Europe, a re-appropriation by Europeans of the strategic debate is therefore essential.

Notes

(1) Interview in the *Ouest France* newspaper, February 9, 2019.

(2) Such a prospect meant Washington's abandonment of the doctrine of “massive retaliation”, presented by US Secretary of State Dulles in January 1954 and adopted by NATO in December 1954.

(3) See in particular Georges-Henri Soutou : « Les accords de 1957 et 1958 : vers une communauté stratégique nucléaire entre la France, l'Allemagne et l'Italie ? », *Matériaux pour l'histoire de notre temps*, n° 31, 1993.

(4) See Jacques Bariéty : « La décision de réarmer l'Allemagne, l'échec de la Communauté européenne de défense et les accords de Paris du 23 octobre 1954 vus du côté français », *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire*, tome 71, 1993.

(5) A draft “application protocol” aimed at modifying the EDC treaty was presented by Pierre Mendès-France, who became President of the Council, to the five other European countries at the Brussels conference in August 1954, before the vote in French Parliament. If adopted, it would have allowed the continuation of French military nuclear activities. It was however rejected by the European partners. See J. Bariéty, *supra*.

(6) Eisenhower plan of December 1957 consisting of the installation of an IRBM stock in Europe and the endowment to NATO troops of American tactical nuclear weapons, American ideas on a multilateral nuclear force (MLF) within NATO, finally abandoned, Nassau agreements in December 1962, then creation of the "Nuclear Planning Group".

(7) The agreements of October 23, 1954 signed in Paris, which allow the progressive rearmament of the FRG and its integration into NATO, oblige Bonn not to manufacture any atomic weapon "on its territory" - an important precision for the future. See, in particular, Jacques Vernant, « La logique de Nassau », *Politique étrangère*, 1962, n° 27-6 and Emmanuelle Maître, « Le couple franco-allemand et les questions nucléaires : vers un rapprochement? », FRS note n° 18/2017, November 2017.

(8) These American assurances, formalized in the form of Q&A approved by the Allies on April 6, 1967 ("*Questions on the draft non-proliferation treaty asked by US Allies together with answers given by the United States*"), were transmitted on April 28 1967 by the Americans to the Soviets, who did not question them. They were appended to a letter from Secretary of State, Dean Rusk, to President Johnson, and were sent to the US Senate on July 9, 1968, for review during the NPT hearings, and thus made public. See also William Alberque: "The NPT and the origins of NATO's nuclear sharing arrangements", IFRI Studies, *Proliferation Papers*, February 2017.

(9) The Soviets objected to the potential nuclear status of a future European federation (see Alberque, *supra*). The only way for Europe to acquire a nuclear force would therefore be in the context of a federation involving one of the already existing European nuclear powers.

(10) In a declaration of 2 May 1975 for its ratification of the NPT, the FRG indicated that: "no provision of the Treaty may be interpreted in such a way as to hamper the further development of European unification, especially the creation of a European Union with appropriate competences".

(11) In particular, the idea of combining British and French forces to create the nucleus of a European deterrent would have been considered in the 1970s, particularly in the context of the renewal of the Anglo-American nuclear agreements. See Jean Klein: « L'Europe et les relations transatlantiques à l'heure de la négociation », *Politique étrangère*, 1975, vol. 40, n° 1.

(12) Withdrawal of almost all American non-strategic nuclear weapons from Europe within the framework of the 1991 Presidential Nuclear Initiative, commitment to Russia in 1997 not to deploy nuclear weapons in the territory of the new members of the Alliance. Today, according to open sources, NATO continues to station between 160 and 200 American nuclear weapons in five countries: Germany, Belgium, Italy, Netherlands, and Turkey.

(13) In particular: *Carnegie*, August 2018 (« Tracking the German Nuclear Debate ») ; *Die Welt am Sonntag*, 29 July 2018 (« Brauchen wir die Bombe ? ») ; *New York Times*, 5 July 2017 (« European Nuclear Weapons Program Would Be Legal, German Review Finds ») ; *Foreign Affairs*, 27 March 2017 (« The case for a European Nuke ») ; *Der Spiegel*, 23 February 2017 (« Die deutsche Bombe ») ; *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 6 February 2017 (« Eine Atom-Supermacht Europa würde ich begrüßen ») ; *Tagesspiegel*, 23 January 2017 (« Deutschland braucht Atomwaffen ») ; *FAZ*, 27 November 2016 (« Das ganz und gar Udenkbare ») ; *Spiegel Online*, 6 November 2016 (« Wie Trump Deutschland zur Aufrüstung zwingen könnte ») ; *Bild* (« Bekommt Deutschland eigene Atomwaffen?»).

(14) Concluded between Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev at the twilight of the Cold War, this treaty signed in Washington on December 8, 1987 ended one of the most serious crises of the Cold War, the Euromissile crisis. It provides for the elimination of cruise and ballistic missiles launched from the ground and with a range of between 500 and 5,500 km, which can carry conventional or nuclear explosive charges.

(15) Bruno Tertrais: "The announced death of the INF treaty or the end of the post-Cold War", FRS, February 2019.

(16) This missile is dual, ie with conventional and nuclear capacity.

(17) The press release from the French Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs of February 2, 2019 also underlines: "With its partners and allies, France has come to the conclusion that Russia has developed a missile system, the 9M729, which violates the Treaty on Intermediate Nuclear Forces (FNI). Russia has not responded to requests for explanations or calls for consistent implementation of the treaty made repeatedly in recent months. France regrets arriving at a situation in which the United States had to notify its withdrawal from the INF treaty."

(18) From his press conference on September 3, 1959, General de Gaulle emphasized the national character of the future strike force: "The defence of France must be French (...). A country like France, if it happens to go to war, it must be its war. His effort must be his effort (...). Naturally, French defence would, if necessary, be combined with that of other countries. "

(19) See, in particular, Jean Klein : « La France, l'arme nucléaire et la défense de l'Europe », *Politique étrangère*, n° 3, 1979 ; Bruno Tertrais : *La France et la dissuasion nucléaire. Concept, moyen, avenir* ; La Documentation française, 2017, and « La dissuasion partagée ? » *Revue Défense Nationale*, n° 819, April 2019.

(20) See the speech by Georges Pompidou to the French National Assembly, December 2, 1964: "By the mere fact that France is in Europe, its strength plays fully and automatically for the benefit of Europe, whose defence is physically and geographically inseparable of its own."

(21) "The 1957 and 1958 agreements", cited above.

(22) See, in particular, Frédéric Gloriant, « Londres et la proposition gaullienne de Directoire nucléaire tripartite de septembre 1958 », in Céline Jurgensen and Dominique Mongin (dir.), *Résistance et dissuasion – Des origines du programme nucléaire français à nos jours* ; Odile Jacob, 2018.

(23) See, in particular, Maurice Vaïsse : « Le général de Gaulle et la souveraineté nucléaire », *Résistance et dissuasion*, cited above.

(24) "The French government believes that the nuclear weapon politically controlled by a European country and, I would add, by a country in continental Europe, will play an essential role. Far from weakening the Atlantic Alliance, it strengthens it. Not, of course, so much by its power (...) but by its presence and the fact that it will be controlled by a country exposed to the first danger. Thus, it will really play its deterrent role because it leaves the opponent in no doubt about the consequences of even a limited aggression. [...]" (Georges Pompidou, July 16, 1962).

(25) See in particular, "French nuclear deterrence: genesis and current events", speech delivered by Mr. Pierre Messmer, Chancellor of the Institute, during the conference organized on February 15, 2002 in Oxford on the theme "France, the Great - Brittany and Nassau's defence policies in Nice: continuity and development".

(26) Mentioned by General Méry in "An army for what?", RDN, June 1976.

(27) See in particular the numerous research on this concept, such as: Georges-Henri Soutou, "Dissuasion élargie, dissuasion concertée ou dissuasion pour le roi de Prusse », *Géopolitique*, n° 52 ; Frédéric Bozo, « Une doctrine nucléaire européenne : pour faire quoi et comment ? », *Politique étrangère*, 1992/2 ; Loïck Benoit, « François Mitterrand et la défense nucléaire de l'Europe », *Revue de la Recherche Juridique - Droit Prospectif*, 1998-2.

(28) "It would consist of a nuclear power retaining its independence of nuclear decision, while consulting its partners on the arrangements to be made for the application of nuclear fire."

(29) Speech in Istres, February 19, 2015: "We are participating in the European project, we have built with our partners a community of destiny, the existence of a French nuclear deterrent makes a strong and essential contribution to Europe. France also has de facto and heartfelt solidarity with its European partners. Who could believe that an aggression, which would jeopardize the survival of Europe, would have no consequences? This is why our deterrence goes hand in hand with the constant strengthening of European defence. But our deterrence is our own; it is we who decide, it is we who value our vital interests. "

(30) See, in particular, David Yost, "Franco-German defense cooperation", *Politique étrangère*, n° 4, 1988 ; Emmanuelle Maître, « The Franco-German Tandem: Bridging the Gap on Nuclear Issues », *Prolifération Papers*, n° 61, Ifri, January 2019.

(31) Jacques Chirac stressed in 1986 that it was advisable "not to get lost in sterile debates on the possible extension of our nuclear guarantee" in the FRG.

(32) Article 4 of the Treaty states that "the two States, convinced of the inseparable nature of their security interests, are increasingly converging their security and defence objectives and policies, thereby strengthening security systems collective of which they are part. They lend support and assistance by any means at their disposal, including the armed force, in the event of armed aggression against their territories. "

(33) See Jean Klein, above, and « La France, l'arme nucléaire et la défense de l'Europe », *Politique étrangère*, n° 3, 1979.

(34) For the record, this is not the first time that the two countries have used the concept of vital interests. In an obviously very different context, on February 6, 1939, the English Prime Minister Chamberlain stressed that "Any threat against the vital interests of France will entail the assistance of Great Britain."

(35) See, in particular, his speeches at the Sorbonne and in Athens in 2017.

(36) Bruno Tertrais, « La dissuasion partagée ? », cited above, and « The European dimension of nuclear deterrence », *Finnish Institute of International Affairs*, n° 106, November 2018.

(37) See, notably, ECFR, « Eyes tight shut: European attitudes towards nuclear deterrence », December 2018.

(38) Bruno Tertrais cited above.

(39) Faced with the development by certain states of postures of strategic intimidation, even blackmail, Europeans need to prevent possible temptations to circumvent nuclear deterrence from the bottom with territorial "fait accompli".

(40) In addition to France, these are: Germany, Belgium, Denmark, Spain, Estonia, Finland, the Netherlands, Portugal and the United Kingdom.

(41) See, in particular, Corentin Brustlein: « The Erosion of Strategic Stability and the Future of Arms Control in Europe », *Prolifération Papers*, n° 60, Ifri, November 2018.

(42) Interview with the *Spiegel*, January 2018.