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Image Building on European Security by France Through Military Officer Education Programme

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore image building activities carried out by France on European security through educational programs for military officers. In this education, military officers were envoys of various friendly countries of France. This military officers education is a forum where France can disseminate its national security vision and mission. France intention is to demonstrate its strong military traditions, as well as its solid doctrine and battle strategy in anticipation of regional and global threats. The programs offered by France in the education program are considered attractive to its partners. This study used participatory observation methods conducted to reconstruct the background, motivations, goals, and objectives of the French Government in providing education for military officers. In this study, the researchers are exploring the Nation Branding Theory by Simon Anholt and Keith Dinnie and its application in diplomacy specifically carried out by France, namely military officers education. The findings of this study show that France has strategically made the military officers education programs of its partner countries an instrument of foreign diplomacy in defense and security sectors, in line with French national interests and France's geopolitical position in the European region and in the world.

Keywords: France, European Security, Educational programme for military officers, Nation Branding Theory, military diplomacy

1. Introduction

In 1993 European leaders offered ideas on a unified regional defense policy and a discourse on European defense independence through the establishment of a European defense force, which is contained in the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). At the same time North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is taking power consolidation measures such as the establishment of Joint Rapid Reaction Forces, increased cooperation in research and arms industries, and increased joint military operations in the Mediterranean, Atlantic and Pacific Seas. In the early 1990s these policies appeared that the security approach used by the United States and European countries was still very thick with the pattern of strengthening military power or hard power which tended to the model of defense diplomacy in the Cold War era

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defined by the term limited defensive wars (Snyder, 1984). However, there is a different push from the European side, namely France which views that the unification of European countries should be a priority to balance the interests of NATO, especially the United States in Europe. This was successfully realized with the signing of the Maastricht Treaty in 1992 which marked the transformation of the European Economic Community into the European Union. Then-French President Francois Mitterrand was instrumental in encouraging European unification through the adoption of a single European currency and a common policy on foreign affairs and security.

France's long-term interest in unifying EU foreign policy and regional security became increasingly clear with its government's initiative to reduce the number of nuclear weapons that led to the 1998 treaty on the prohibition of nuclear weapons tests. The suspension of nuclear weapons tests is in line with the policy of President Jacques Chirac's government in 1996 after international condemnation of France's nuclear weapons test program in Polynesia, South Pacific which was rewarded with a trade boycott of France by many countries. This international pressure was turned into an opportunity by France's initiative to promote the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty with the United States, Russia, China and Britain, while strengthening France's position as one of the leading sectors in European regional security affairs.

France's role in European mutual defense was strengthened with the establishment of the European Defense Agency (EDA) in 2004 against the backdrop of stagnation in the implementation of the EU's joint security policy. This was also triggered by Britain which was reluctant to support a common security policy within the EU and was more inclined to NATO. This was demonstrated by the holding of joint operations involving NATO-supported EU countries in handling inter-ethnic conflicts in a number of former Yugoslav countries (Macedonia and Bosnia) in 2003 and 2004. The role of EU forces in the EUFOR demonstrates a NATO-standard military campaign scheme for crisis management, with Britain and France dominant in peace efforts between the warring parties. However, in subsequent dialogues Britain expressed reluctance to involve more European forces in the handling of crisis in a number of countries around the Balkans and Baltics, and more inclined to the projection of NATO power which is already quite dominant in Europe. Britain's suspicion on the direction of Europe's common security policy sparked a number of debates and differences of views in the establishment of the Common Foreign and Security Policy.
(CFSP) aimed at establishing a European autonomous power in regional defense and security. Although in the debate all parties agreed that the EU should be more active in crisis prevention efforts through other non-aggressive efforts. The difference in Britain’s vision was then considered one of the factors triggering Brexit.

In subsequent developments, CFSPs are increasingly inclined to add joint security defense capabilities that serve as a tool of military diplomacy and soft power by involving as many joint initiatives as possible from regional defense partner countries. The objective is to increase cooperation programs in aspects not directly related to defense and security at the national and regional levels. Meanwhile, the presence of NATO forces in Europe tends to be positioned as an instrument of hard power from the political interests of the United States and its closest allies. The paradigm has basically been proposed by France as a form of preventive diplomacy for Europe. France through President Mitterrand and his successors has always echoed a shift in the role of the military that is more dominant in preventing regional conflicts, maintaining world peace, and directing the birth of reform of military institutions under a more democratic government (Zipper de Fabiani, 2002).

Bilateral and multilateral cooperation with militaries from former Warsaw Pact countries is the first concrete program of the concept using the medium of joint education and training. The next target is European partner countries in North Africa. Therefore, it is not surprising that at the beginning of the 21st century the form of military diplomacy that is increasingly developing in Europe is educational and training cooperation wrapped in trade and humanitarian interests. This paradigm is also supported by the increasingly open foreign policies of various countries in the world to non-alliance partnerships that rarely occurred in the Cold War era. Gradually this French vision was adopted by other Western European countries that opened educational cooperation programs to officers from Eastern European, Middle Eastern, Asian and African countries. This further establishes a new image of European security that is open to military cooperation, especially bilaterally.

Military cooperation in education has been part of French military diplomacy since the 1800s. At that time, in 1884, the École supérieure de guerre (War College, further education for French middle officers) for the first time accepted foreign officers as its student, a Japanese military officer with the rank of infantry lieutenant. Since then, France has continued to open opportunities for military officers from allied and friendly countries to receive officer education at various strata, ranging from the Saint-Cyr Military Academy for young officer
candidates, the headquarters staff officer school (École d'état-major), the joint command and staff school (École de guerre), to the military college (Centre des Hautes Études Militaires) for senior officers with the rank of colonel and the equivalent of brigadier general.

In various world conflicts, officers who had received military education in France, who then held strategic positions in the armed forces in their countries showed a role in opening bilateral cooperation with the country of origin of his almamater, France (Willi, 2014). The construction of the Japanese navy before World War I characterizes the thinking of French strategists. At that time the visit of French military officials in Japan received a warm welcome from Japanese officials and the public. During World War II, a number of Swiss officers who graduated from the Paris military college played an important role in helping the resistance against German forces. A number of military leaders of African countries are graduates of officer schools in France. They gave way to bilateral military cooperation with France and other European countries. Foreign officers, alumni of the Saint-Cyr Military Academy from various developing countries, also became ambassadors or initiators of military cooperation with France and developed doctrines and political views that more characterized the softer European security perspective than the American perspective.

Cooperation in the exercise became a platform for more concrete French defense diplomacy. Within the framework of the policy of military assistance under the flags of NATO and the UN, the French military plays its diplomatic role through the dispatch of personnel on the ground for 'assistance' tasks. If diplomacy through education has long-term goals, diplomacy through military training or assistance is aimed more at technical and operational goals to prepare for a common mission. The form of military cooperation is determined by the foreign policy-making body in the field of defense called DGRIS (Direction générale des relations internationales et de la stratégie) and the ministry of foreign affairs. Both agencies are structural pillars in international cooperation policy, especially in the field of defense.

In its development, joint military education and training cooperation has not only become a strategic instrument of France in preventing conflict, but also as part of structural cooperation to support France's military campaign in a country or part of long-term defense cooperation which includes defense industry cooperation, scientific research, and a number of social agendas that touch on security issues such as human rights protection and handling humanitarian crisis (DCSD, 2020).
Livre Blanc or French Defense White Paper of 2013 describes the long-term vision of defense cooperation as part of efforts to increase the defense capacity of his country and partner countries, as well as in ensuring the continuity of national interests related to defense and security. At first glance, there is nothing special in the policy. What needs to be taken into account, however, is how the educational cooperation (especially aimed at foreign military officers) and the joint training programs offered by France influence the cooperation programs of European countries in the defense, security, industrial, social and international political sectors. The long-term returns of the cooperation program have been felt mainly by Francophonic countries and countries in the Middle East since the 2000s. Currently, the political missions and military operations of European countries in these regions are increasingly facilitated by the traces of military diplomacy initiated by France.

One of the authors of this research, who directly participated in the École de guerre military education cooperation program class of 2017-2018, was the object of implementation of defense diplomacy, along with 71 other foreign student officers from 61 countries, as well as more than 150 foreign student officers from the batch before (class of 2016-2017) and after (class of 2018-2019). This amount is far greater than the comparable programs carried out by other European countries. In addition, author's participation in a number of joint exercises held at French combat training centers during Education, participation in several conferences, and visits to several French education and training centers, became the source of observational data and records used in this study. The implementation of military diplomacy in the education and training cooperation program can be explained from the targeting of cooperation focused on military officers from alliance countries, non-alliance countries and building cooperation with France and neutral countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. These foreign officers became ambassadors of diplomacy and transmitted, to some extent, the French pattern of strategic thinking throughout their careers. Furthermore, the determination of curriculum and teaching patterns as well as a number of provisions applicable in education and training are reflections of the long-term objectives of French foreign and defense policy.

Military cooperation policies in the form of education for foreign officers and joint exercises with friendly militaries place France as a prime driver of international military cooperation in the European Union. France seeks to rebrand Europe as a more independent region in its defense strategy and reduce its dependence on NATO. This interest is supported by several important events, such as the occurrence of Brexit and changes in commitments related to the
defense and security budget of each NATO country in Europe. Other factors, such as economic, political, and industrial cooperation, have also encouraged France to increase its military cooperation. Therefore, an insight is needed to understand how France places military cooperation in education and training as an instrument of military diplomacy, and shapes the image of European regional defense.

2. Literature Review

This research uses the Theory of Military Diplomacy. Andrew Cottey and Anthony Forster in Reshaping Defence Diplomacy: New Roles for Military Cooperation and Assistance (Cottey and Foster, 2004) and Gregory Winger in the Velvet Gauntlet: A Theory of Defense Diplomacy (Winger, 2014) explain the use of military force and capability as soft power in realizing the defense and security agenda of a country or defense alliance through cooperation programs to increase the military capacity of the countries involved and assistance in the form of education, exercises, funding or military equipment. In practice the post-Cold War use of military force in diplomacy to date has been characterized as follows:

- The expansion of the military's role from traditional roles, such as defense security cooperation and combat operations, shifts to the functions of conflict and crisis prevention, peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance, and other defense cooperation between countries involving civil society, governments, and international institutions.
- Role as a diplomatic tool to support the interests of countries or alliances, by establishing interaction with foreign militaries, exchange of military personnel in operational or educational tasks, joint exercises, sending military attaches, military missions in defense industry cooperation and participation in world peace missions.
- Role as a diplomatic tool to support the interests of countries or alliances, by establishing interaction with foreign militaries, exchange of military personnel in operational or educational tasks, joint exercises, sending military attaches, military missions in defense industry cooperation and participation in world peace missions.
- Role in capacity building, in order to strengthen partner countries in alliances or strategic partners through joint training programs, education, assistance support in operations and administration, and equipment assistance.

This research also uses the Nation Branding Theory. Simon Anholt in Place Branding and Public Diplomacy (Anholt, 2005) and Keith Dinnie in Destination Branding and the Role of
Stakeholders: The Case of Oman, Journal of Place Branding and Public Diplomacy (Dinnie, 2008) explain that an individual country or collective group of countries in the region can be viewed like a brand, and the adaptation of marketing principles and public diplomacy in shaping the reputation and competitive value of a nation in the international world. There are 6 main elements that become the framework for assessing the comprehensive image of a country, namely:

- Governance, including perceptions of political leaders, justice, effectiveness of government systems, political stability, defense and security, and levels of corruption.
- Society or citizenship (People), includes demographic characteristics, such as education level and work competence, friendliness of residents, and cultural influences.
- Society or citizenship (People), includes demographic characteristics, such as education level and work competence, friendliness of residents, and cultural influences.
- Tourism, covering specific aspects that give a good impression to tourists in terms of tourism, such as natural beauty, distinctive cultural arts, tourist facilities, hospitality, safety and comfort.
- Investment and immigration, including the ease and attractiveness of foreign investment, as well as the ease of obtaining a decent life for migrants.
- International trade, covering the competitive nature of goods and services in international markets, such as product quality, innovation, reliability, and value.

Anholt offers the idea of Nation Branding in the form of the Nation Brands Index (NBI) obtained from the results of a global public perception survey. This Nation Branding Index is an indicator that can be used to build the reputation and credibility of the country to the country or public that is its target, so as to give the expected impression. NBI is also used as an indicator of the competitiveness of developing countries to be ready to compete in international markets that have been controlled by developed countries.

In this study also used the concept of defense strategic cooperation in alliances as stated by Vito d'Orazio in International Military Cooperation: From Concepts to Constructs (d'Orazio, 2013) and Collin S. Gray in Hard Power and Soft Power: The Utility of Military Force as an Instrument of Policy in the 21st Century (Gray, 2011) explained the foundations of international military cooperation and strengthening the capacity of armed forces through
various cooperation behaviors and institutions or communities of states involved in it as a manifestation of the foreign policy of these countries. This concept connects hard power and soft power approaches that are tailored to the policy context and values to be instilled in the country or intended party. The forms of military cooperation in diplomacy are chosen according to agreed norms in alliances or partnerships between countries to ensure the realization of various interests of a country or regional countries collectively, which is also called behavioral cooperation.

3. Research Methodology

This research uses qualitative methods with phenomenological approaches and document studies in analyzing diplomatic aspects of European security defense issues. Some data analyses also applied case studies to issues that showed military cooperation commitments directly related to diplomatic incidents and interviews with respondents directly involved in military cooperation programs. As one of the actors in military cooperation in the field of education with France, the author also includes a personal perspective as an insight that is expected to connect the theories and approaches used in research with the data presented.

An important question in this study is why the French government organizes military education and joint exercises for the militaries of its partner countries, what is the background, motivation, and goals and objectives of military diplomacy. How will the military diplomacy impact France's foreign relations with its partner countries? And how the role of such military diplomacy can affect common security defense policy in Europe.

Data sourced from personal archives of the author when participating in officer education and military training in France from 2017-2018, from Indonesian officers who participated in educational cooperation programs with France from 2016 to 2020, and from official statements of the French government that are open to the public, especially from the French Embassy in Indonesia, The French Ministry of Defence, and the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, from the officer education institutions, namely from the Ecole Militaire Paris which houses a number of military educational institutions, as well as from Communiqués of European Union institutions, and NATO available online.

Data were collected through observations and documentation from personal archives, official letters and regulations of the French Government, as well as educational archives related to
French and NATO military diplomacy policies, as well as interviews with several actors of military cooperation with France, who were TNI officers.

In this qualitative research, researchers apply case study analysis to several data related to aspects outside military diplomacy, such as foreign policy and international trade. Data on the chronology of EU foreign and security policy developments in the perspective of NATO and the EU CFSP will be compared. Similarly, between the transatlantic alliance's version of regional security image and the French version of Gaullism identity, along with key events such as the European regional security crisis and global issues that are actual and relevant to the development of defense image building.

Theories, concepts and approaches on military diplomacy and image building or nation branding as mentioned above are used to explain the research variables and phenomena associated with the theory that occur in relations between the French Government and its partners in the NATO alliance, the European Union, and its bilateral cooperation partners.

4. Discussion

4.1. France's European Defense Image Building Measures

France's significant role in building Europe's defence image dated back to the 1990s. France was not alone. Together with the UK, the two countries initiated the initial steps of forming an EU force, followed by the deployment of military forces in a number of conflict and crisis arenas, as well as bilateral and multilateral military cooperation. However, NATO's dominance in European defense has led to a number of confusions that have again obscured Europe's strategic plans for defense autonomy. Several U.S. initiatives that leverage its influence in NATO and Europe are triggering a shift in Europe's strategic vision of security. Britain's exit from the European Union also forced France to share with Germany in furthering Europe's vision of strategic autonomy in the face of international security issues. In each of these steps and changes, France has transmitted Gaulism and sovereignty in the field of regional security, both through meetings of state leaders, as well as bilateral lobbying and military cooperation.


The vision of European independence in the field of security was originally a reaction of Western European countries to the development of global issues that mostly involved the role
of NATO. EU member states, which are also close allies of the United States, are tied to a number of political and military missions of the alliance's leaders in various conflict regions around the world. A shared awareness of establishing autonomy in the field of European regional security began to emerge after the Cold War through the Helsinki, Finland conference in 1999.

It was precisely after the handling of the conflicts in Bosnia and Kosovo that Europeans realized how dependent they were to the United States in security matters at the outer boundaries of their own conflict-prone territories, such as the Balkan peninsula, the Mediterranean, and the Baltic region. European Union leaders then agreed on the formation of a rapid reaction force capable of acting independently with a projected force of up to 60,000 personnel ready to be sent in 2 months to carry out missions for at least 1 year. Political and military elements in the command structure of the forces even contradict NATO's battle-proven model of crisis management. However, it was not military technicalities that hindered the joint initiative, but the real political support of all European leaders themselves.

In 1998, Britain and France were in a bilateral meeting in Saint-Malo. Both expressed willingness to be the main promoters of the creation of an EU force. On the sidelines of the agreement, French President Jacques Chirac reminded that there are 2 main obstacles that can thwart the interests of building a European autonomous defense force, namely Britain's reluctance to include additional European defense budgets and European defense independence that will never be effective as long as it is still in the shadow of the United States. The agreement in the Saint-Malo declaration affirms that Britain and France together will strengthen EU solidarity and build an institutional framework backed by credible military forces in order to respond to various forms of regional and international crisis. The two countries also laid the groundwork for the involvement of EU military forces as NATO partners, including the potential for duplication of obligations of EU member states that are also active NATO members.

The contribution of European countries to NATO military missions everywhere almost always overrides the European perspective, or at least all strategic objectives must be in line with NATO interests, reflected in the attitude of the United States as its leader. The tendency to always put the interests of the United States first and dependence on NATO power gave rise to a sentiment of unity as well as a worrying feeling of inferiority within the European
Commission. Measures to cover Europe's main weakness in achieving defence independence have yet to be agreed. The three weaknesses include the lack of modernization of European military equipment and capabilities to carry out modern warfare equivalent to NATO, the NATO-EU military cooperation mechanism in the command structure of security missions that are still ambivalent where NATO remains the main military power in Europe, and the support of defense industry cooperation that is still centralized in the United States so that it can inhibit innovation or competition in technological progress in Europe.

Although in the course of its journey, European defense security policy to date has not been separated from NATO, the steps pursued by countries promoting European defense autonomy show slow but consistent progress. The Council of Europe agreement in Helsinki in 1999 marked the first British-French success in setting a deadline for the formation of an EU force in 2003. The EU’s rapid reaction force, at the level of the armed forces corps, with a strength of 60,000 personnel, could be reached by 2007.

The unity of European countries' vision on regional security issues was tested by the United States' plan to invade Iraq in 2003 on the grounds of possession of weapons of mass destruction. The United States' push to engage its NATO allies under coalition forces is supported only by Britain, Poland and Australia. French President Jacques Chirac, backed by three-quarters of his parliament, thinks Iraq does not represent a significant threat that must be overcome by a large-scale military invasion. France's decision can be considered a political move to maintain President Chirac's popularity, but it has a profound effect on the attitude of other EU countries. As a result, the United States had to fight without its strongest European ally. The stance marks Chirac's failure to reach out to the United States, and reinforces sentiment about the importance of the European Union having standards on how to deal with international and regional security issues.

France's diplomatic efforts to rebuild the trust of its main allies only succeeded in the era of President Nicolas Sarkozy. France's integration into NATO's main command structure in 2008 marked a shift in the EU's image of a more pro-Atlantic pact. Franco-American military cooperation and defense diplomacy efforts within the framework of NATO were getting closer. Significant cooperation programs in that period included joint operations and ISAF framework military assistance assistance in Afghanistan, anti-piracy operations around the Gulf of Aden, joint air operations in Libya and the Mediterranean Sea, counter terrorism actions, and increased frequency and scale of joint exercises and education.
France's changing identity in security politics has reinforces the EU's dependence on NATO as its security agency. That image was reinforced through the deployment of EU forces in the Libyan War, intelligence operations in Tunisia, Egypt and Syria. The European Council's decision to impose sanctions to militarily invade Libya and Syria alongside NATO coalition forces erodes ambivalence in Europe's regional security vision.

4.1.2. The Shift in the Image of European Defense in the Lead-Up to Brexit and Beyond.

The emergence of ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) raises problems of domestic terrorism, border security and illegal immigration for Europe. After the 2013 seizure of territory between Syrian government forces and Islamic State rebels, at least 1.2 million people bet their fate crossing mountains and seas to seek asylum in other countries around the Middle East. The wave of refugees who broke through Europe's borders through sea and mountain routes brought in a number of foreign fighters or terrorist groups who attacked cities in Europe. The terrorist attacks in Paris in 2015, Brussels in 2016, and Manchester in 2017 as well as a series of other terror events have been claimed by the Islamic State group. The proliferation of Islamic extremist ideology and the radicalization that refugees bring poses new challenges to European security. European Union (EU) countries have taken different stances in their handling of refugees, particularly from humanitarian approaches and new labour potential. However, all countries agreed to step up repressive measures against radical groups emerging within the country.

In the United Kingdom, the issue of immigration and terrorism raises sentiments about state sovereignty in the field of security defense. Britain's interest in handling security issues within the EU cannot be adopted by other EU member states without mutual agreement. Britain's commitment to building a collective security defence force alongside the EU community is shifting more towards NATO. Brexit supporters spread fears that Britain's membership in the European Union would hamper its freedoms in intelligence and security cooperation, as well as the military equipment industry with non-European countries. Issues of flexibility in security policy without being tied to the interests of mainland European countries came to the fore amid the 2016 Brexit campaign.

Stronger opinion ahead of the Brexit referendum mainly rests on the implementation of single market policies and regional security issues. Debates about economic and trade policies in the British public caused negative sentiment on Brexit, while security issues actually supported
pro-Brexit parties. The discourse that emerged ahead of the referendum was that Britain would not be isolated in terms of security if it left the European Union. Instead, Britain will be more sovereign by fostering broader security cooperation with NATO and its allies such as Canada, Australia and Saudi Arabia. The June 2016 referendum that won the pro-Brexit party with 51.9% of the vote showed public concern about the importance of European integration in a superstate. Security collaboration and partnerships were not immediately affected, with agreements on the use of nuclear weapons, intelligence exchange, and military cooperation programs not being delayed. However, it is clear in various forums about statements by British and EU officials trying to convince the international public that Brexit does not have a major effect on the security agreement.

In fact, during the Cold War until before Brexit, Britain played a major role as a glue of interests and a bridge of communication between countries in North America with Europe, and between NATO and the European Union. For the United States, strong relations with Britain are a guarantee for the political interests of the United States towards the European Union. Although in some cases, such as Western European countries' rejection of the invasion of Iraq, Britain is considered quite influential in driving EU policy in political and security matters. Now, after Brexit, Britain's position as a partner of the European Union has created friction between the two major pacts, namely NATO and the European Union. Britain rejects attempts to establish the European Union as the West's central geopolitical power and has specifically sought to overshadow France, which is competing for European leadership on security with the United States and NATO.

The Brexit period has also raised tensions between Western leaders, particularly between President Trump and Chancellor Merkel, President Macron, and his European counterparts. President Trump pressed a number of political and trade agendas on Europe, including the obligation to increase defense spending to 2% of total GDP for NATO member states. Britain's position in the middle is obviously more in favor of the United States. This further undermines Britain's role as a mediator, especially in the political and security agenda. Of course, these changes show the negative impact of Brexit in terms of harmony in the security sector. In addition, the real consequences of Brexit on the interests of the U.S. commercial and industrial sectors also underscore the weakening of economic and political ties within the transatlantic alliance, further strengthening the role of France and Germany as European leaders.
In terms of collective security in Europe, NATO is clearly still the main deterrent force. The development of global security threats and global trends in the issue of security defense in Europe and the surrounding region still show the dominant role of NATO and the weakness of EU political policy. As of the end of 2017 only a few NATO-EU security cooperation initiatives have continued, such as intelligence sharing, maritime operations in the Mediterranean, and education and training cooperation. The establishment of PESCO (Permanent Structured Cooperation) further adds to the complex of foreign policy and security cooperation between the EU and NATO, including with the UK. Britain, which was previously still a major partner of the EDA (European Defense Agency), must reset its commitment to military cooperation with the European Union. Britain's position as one of the 5 largest military powers in the world in general will not be disturbed by Brexit.

With a defence and research budget far larger than the EU’s collective security budget, as well as an edge in terms of the military industry, it is only natural that the UK should not immediately open the widest possible military and defence industry cooperation with the EU. Significant military and industrial cooperation with the EU only began after the UK Ministry of Defence announced its 2021 vision for building its army force with a budget of 85 billion pounds for 4 years. That vision included greater military cooperation with France.

The deployment of European Union (EU) forces in various conflict theaters forms the main image of European defense. European Union (EU) troops have been deployed to address crisis in Mali and the Sahel region since 2013, assistance and training missions in Niger, Central Africa, Somalia, Libya and a number of countries in Africa since 2012, security and intelligence missions in Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan, and security and assistance missions in Georgia since 2008, in Ukraine since 2014 and in Armenia since 2022. In addition to sending the military, the EU security mission also includes civilian duties, such as military advisory, aviation, law enforcement through the dispatch of police personnel, border security, and training assistance to the military.

As of February 2023, 4,000 EU military and civilian personnel have been deployed in 9 military operations, 12 civilian missions and 2 maritime operations conducted in Europe, North and Central Africa, as well as the Balkans and the Middle East. The CSDP's mandate in military operations and civilian missions is governed through command structures at the political, strategic, operational, and tactical levels. The command structure essentially follows NATO's standard mission control procedures. Some adjustments were made at the political
and strategic level. The representative branch of EU institutions authorized in the field of foreign policy and security is included in the organizational structure of the mission command. European Union member states through their representatives in the European parliament determine the involvement of their country's forces in CSDP military or civilian missions.

The existence of CSDP as an integral part of CFSP (Common Foreign and Security Policy) has been mandated in the European Union Treaty of 2009. In its organizational structure the CSDP is headed by a High Representative who is also the acting Vice President of the European Commission, and holds the role of chairman of the European External Action Service (EEAS), and director of the European Defence Agency (EDA). In carrying out its functions, CSDP launched PESCO as the controller of military operations, EDF (European Defense Fund) as a form of support for research, defense industry, and military capability development, and EPF (European Peace Facility). The elaboration of the EU security policy along with the preparation of military forces and civil apparatus as mission drivers shows the EU’s readiness to realize its defense autonomy.

The establishment of the CSDP was supported primarily by an agreement between Britain and France. The role of the two countries in uniting the views of Atlantis and Europeanism is quite rare, because these two views often cause dilemmas in the European community. At home, French politicians and defence observers have questioned the emergence of new beliefs about the vision of self-reliance in the Government's defence policy. Although it is realized by all parties that military budget constraints under President Sarkozy forced his country to switch to a common policy within the framework of the European community and NATO.

Military observers' concerns were evident when the United States successfully urged France to jointly sponsor the invasion of Libya, as well as impose economic and political sanctions on the Qaddafi regime. French and U.S. political lobbies have also succeeded in pushing Italy, initially opposed to the invasion of Libya, to turn to its fleet of warships and warplanes. Italy was initially reluctant to get involved on the grounds of a single French leadership in the coalition.

Operation Harmattan (the French version of the military operation in Libya) featured not only the military power of Western Europe, but also the reliability of communication and control
(Command and Control) between European sea, air, ground forces on the African battlefield, as well as the application of intelligence sharing accommodated by the NATO command structure. France used its diplomatic clout as chair of the presidency of the G8 nations to press for a number of UN Security Council resolutions against Libya. The combination of military and diplomatic force, as well as information warfare in filtering news about Libya is strong enough to form an image of legitimacy for European and NATO military intervention.

However, after the victory of coalition forces and the death of Moammar Qaddafi, the country's leadership transition has been unable to mitigate Libya's economic and security collapse. At the end of the war, the West left Libya with more problems. Only France returned with an increase in the amount of oil and gas export quotas from Libya to 33%. France has also been a key partner in infrastructure and trade reconstruction efforts across much of North Africa. On the military side, France can open a military base in Libya that gives it the opportunity to control the arms market in North Africa and confront the growth of terrorist groups in the Sahara and Sahel.

In a geopolitical context, France's intervention in the run-up to and after Brexit has established the country's strong political sphere of influence between EU and North African countries. This advantage is closely related to Britain's reluctance to continue bilateral agreements with France regarding European alliances. Although military cooperation between the two within NATO is still good, the ad hoc leadership of European security must shift to other strategic partners. And France chose Germany which was closer in terms of its culture and defense traditions. Soon after the Franco-German special agreement was established, the two pioneered the establishment of the CSDP's main tools, namely PESCO, the permanent command structure for planning and implementing military missions, the EDF (European Defence Fund) which is a form of civilian government support in CSDP programs, and the EPF (European Peace Facility) which supports the fulfillment of defense equipment and infrastructure for all EU members. Although France's contribution to EU programmes is still below Germany's (in 2021 Germany's contribution to the EU was 33 billion euros, while France's was 26 billion euros), the largest portion of the budget to support the EU’s collective security programme is from France.
4.1.3. European Image Branding in the Field of Security Defence

At the beginning of the 21st century, the Chinese government is implementing a long-term strategy to build the world's perception of progress as a potential partner in trade, industry and tourism. Quite massive and intensive efforts were even made to polish China's image by presenting international media experts. For example, in the 2008 Olympic sweepstakes, the Chinese government hired Weber Shanwick Worldwide, a PR consultancy, to ensure that China was ready to sponsor the world sporting event. American On Line (AOL) Time Warner has also been contracted to produce Chinese-language news programs that air at leisurely hours for TV audiences in the United States. The perception that is built is generally a counter-narrative of the image of the Chinese state as a socialist country that is poor, backward, militant, and unfriendly to foreigners. The long-term goal of changing public perception outside China is to make way for its foreign policy, thus facilitating interaction in various forums and cooperation, by causing psychological repercussions for potential partner countries, including the Chinese diaspora around the world.

China's practice of national branding, which is considered another form of propaganda, remains doubtful by some experts. Jack Yan (2008), stated that nation branding is inseparable from the history and culture of the country, where the state can become a brand and its leader as a brand manager who holds a democratic mandate. The impact of this branding concerns individuals, citizens as well as private industry. However, the government cannot choose whether the country is the subject or object of branding, but rather chooses between letting the country become the object of another country's branding because it has been foolish, or accepting the challenge to project a more real and promising country brand to the world.

For large countries nation branding has generally been cumulatively attached to the performance of its government, private sector, and individual citizens, giving the country a more competitive position. For small or developing countries, which do not have strong economic, diplomatic and military power, or more uniqueness, similar measures advertising campaigns are one of the most appropriate ways to enter the competition of trade, industry, tourism, and world politics. Of course, these efforts are sponsored by the Government.

In relation to the European Union, or Europe in general, the image of its collective security sector can be seen from how strong the troops are and how the political deterrence affect of all military activity of the two opposing camps, Europe and Russia. The figure below shows a
fairly balanced military force posture compared to its potential opponents, Russia and the semi-neutral ex-Soviet states. SIPRI data for 2022 reveals that the gross number of NATO troops in Europe at 2 million personnel, including around 60,000 EU troops, can be considered equivalent to Russia's 1.3 million personnel. The NATO force in question consists of the total armed forces of its 29 member states, plus U.S. and Canadian forces. About 100,000 U.S. personnel are on standby at NATO-SHAPE command centers in Belgium, Germany, and Italy, and about 50% of its active forces are at standby posts in Poland, Turkey, and Romania. NATO maritime security forces are on alert in the Baltic, North Atlantic and Mediterranean waters. Air force and missile defense forces are centered in Germany, Britain, Italy and Poland.

Figure 1. NATO’s Eastern Flank
Source: NATO website (www.nato.int)
Meanwhile, European Union forces, as a manifestation of the CSDP's mandate, namely the 60,000-strong Eurocorps, are concentrated in Strasbourg, France. Although deployed only on a mandate from the European council, the Eurocorps force relies on NATO command of its operations. Only 4 missions out of a total of 8 Eurocorps troop missions were initiated and commanded singularly from the Mission Force Headquarters of the CSDP. Other missions are generally collaborative missions commanded by NATO officers under the NATO command structure, with operating standards and doctrines used by NATO. The main missions of EU troops are in Central Africa and Mali with detailed missions generally being assistance and training. Other fields of operation, such as in the Sahel, are controlled singly or bilaterally by France and Germany. With an operational rapid reaction force of only 5,000 personnel organized in modular battle-groups according to the type of mission, and its involvement with NATO as its most important ally, it is only natural that the Eurocorps force becomes the busiest and most experienced military task.

In the last two decades the position of EU troops has rarely received massive publicity. The European public itself highlights regional security issues and threat perceptions only in major cases. The results of a survey from the Special Euro-barometer of the Leibniz Institute in 2017 indicate that despite terrorist attacks in several European countries, the perception of European citizens still tends to be positive. The main security concerns that interest European public besides terrorism are organized crime, especially drug trafficking, human trafficking, natural disasters, cyber-crime, and border security issues associated with illegal immigration. Most perceived threats do not include the use of military force, or repressive security missions, except terrorism. Emerging issues such as cyber-attacks and the use of fake news or hoax reporting through social media are not too worrying for the European public. However, some events of crisis in the Eastern European region and environmental issues are considered to receive more attention, although they are not always associated with security or defense contexts. Meanwhile, social phenomena arising from the influx of refugees from poor countries that are in conflict, as well as the problem of natural disasters are considered to touch the socio-political domain more than security. This can be concluded as a sentiment of security or trust in the Government in handling national and regional security issues in Europe is quite positive. It is this image that makes policies to realize the idea of Europe's collective security still difficult to realize.
Anholt-Ipsos' Nation Brand Index in a public release on the global perception index of 60 countries' branding shows that European countries occupy the top places in terms of human development indicators. The EU region is still labeled as a Good country based on national cumulative questionnaires from at least 20 respondent countries. In the last publication of the 2022 edition, security issues did not fall into a special category, as did the initial editions published from 2005 to 2010, where the image of European security was still quite popular. Unlike countries in the region around Europe that are still poor or conflict-ridden, European Union countries are considered the most conducive region for economic activity and sociocultural development. The initial conclusion can be drawn that the image of European security has not been strong enough to attract public attention in supporting the discussion of security issues in Europe. Therefore, it seems clear that expansionist and aggressive policies lack political support. The only domain that is still multi-sector is diplomacy. Unfortunately, diplomacy cannot be measured from the perspective of Anholt's Nation Brand.

What is quite unique is seen when comparing the reputation of Europe with the individual image of EU member states. British, French and Italian brands are considered more attractive than those countries as communities. The implementation of a single market policy and the establishment of the Eurozone in the end slowly shifted public perception to see Europe as a whole. Perceptions of the European Union are also biased, with the continent as a whole a region, making issues about the lagging of Eastern Europe and vertical conflicts to civil wars that intersect with European interests further erode efforts to maintain Europe's top branding. It is not surprising, then, that the majority of respondents doubt Europe's competitive advantage in global economic and political competition. Anholt (2007) concluded that the branding of Europe as a community institution with complexity of problems and ambivalence in the political and security sectors undermines its own image as a community of prosperous and calm states.

From the fact of the survey and analysis results, it is relatively difficult to assess the change in the image of Europe in the field of defense security specifically. Of the 6 dimensions of country brand assessment used by Anholt (Nation Brands Hexagon), namely exports, government, culture/heritage, society, tourism, and investment or immigration, only Government indicators can still be directly linked to the image of European security. The identity of 'European' in the context of security also cannot be generalized to all EU member states or European countries in general. However, if you look at the branding of several
European countries that are centers of defense research and industry, as well as major actors in collective security policy, we will obtain similar characteristics. In this case it is France, Germany, England, Poland and Italy. Foreign and security policy is at the root of the mentality of these countries, following from their historical roots since the last three centuries.

Van Ham (2005) argues that the application of European soft power makes the central issues of defense and geopolitics in the Cold War era to the issue of weapons of mass destruction as legitimacy of the invasion of Iraq less touching the European public. However, it also did not make the European public feel comfortable with NATO's presence as its guard against the Russian threat. The crisis in Kosovo, Armenia, and Ukraine heightened European concerns over NATO security guarantees, and formed a political basis that promoted security sovereignty for Europe. Thus, Europe's security image from an outside perspective has not shown significant changes since the early 2000s. For the European public, on the other hand, the crisis in its Eastern neighbors has proven to drag on other security issues, such as displacement, the threat of local terrorism, and the problem of foreign labor.

Institutionally, the EU's short-term communication strategy is aimed at ensuring that EU partners and stakeholders, including all member states, understand the changes and developments that have been achieved and are in progress. In the medium and long term, the EU's communications strategy is aimed at changing stakeholder perceptions and behaviour. The European Commission and the European Parliament implement a communication strategy coherent with 4 EU Treaty Articles, namely Article 11 on the right to information, freedom of expression, and freedom of the media, Article 41 on the right to be heard and access to personal documents, Article 42 on the right to access documents on EU institutions, and Article 44 on the right to petition. The EU Treaty mandates institutions and budgets to carry out communication and provide information in multiple languages understood by EU citizens, and through preferred media channels.

The Europe Direct Information Centre in its development has used various publication channels, including the Europa channel, satellite TV services, the European Parliament Multimedia center, the official EU press service, and a number of social media networks. This communication strategy already accommodates all public communication channels, but in fact it is not enough to increase the prestige of the European Union. Van Ham's (2005)
criticism suggested that branding efforts should not be enough to simply combine the principles of public relations with marketing.

Each European country has been quite established since centuries in establishing its own identity. In fact, European countries are no longer building new brands as competitive multilateralism forces. The EU constitution contained in treaties and treaties only directs normative communication without showing the interest of a more expansive community. Disseminated values tend to be for internal consumption, such as supporting peace, affirmations about democracy, and the rule of law. More weighty missions such as contributing to the achievement of peace, global security, sustainable development, eradicating poverty, protection of human rights, protection of children and women, and other issues that touch more on social and political issues.

Although the image of military power is not a central object in the EU's communications and information strategy, successes in military research and operations in Africa and in the Levant have strengthened Europe's identity of self-reliance in defence and security. The EU’s security strategy underwent a fairly progressive evolution, beginning with changes to the mission planning and control command structure supported by ground forces, a fleet of warplanes, warship flotillas, as well as self-sufficient cyber and satellite sensing capabilities. Eurocorps forces were directed to adopt the concept of a United States combat division, but with modifications of the number of personnel, command systems, and special skills that made it quite effective but more economical.

France and Germany developed the concept by initiating the formation of a modular Franco-German Brigade with less combat equipment and fewer but more equipped personnel. The brigade, which has been initiated since 1993, consists of 2 French mechanized and light infantry battalions with a total of 12 companies, 2 German light infantry battalions with a total of 10 companies, 1 German artillery battalion with a total of 5 cannon and rocket batteries, and 1 joint logistics battalion. With a strength of about 4000 personnel, this fairly compact modular brigade is deployed as an initial strike force within the framework of the Eurocorps joint military operation.

The brigade is deployed in Afghanistan under the International Security Assessment Force (ISAF) and in combat task forces in the Sahel region of North Africa. France itself is also developing the concept of modular brigades in its own army. Named Groupement Tactique
Interarmes (GTIA) it is capable of carrying out stand-alone operations to seize tactical targets. The United States and Russia have also developed the same concept, but it has been abandoned.

The collaboration between the air and navies of the two countries, known as the Joint Tactical Airlift, is impressive for the U.S. Air Force, as it is far more efficient than its and NATO's similar programs. With a total fleet of 57 A-400M, C-130J, KC-130, and C-160 aircraft, the bilateral military cooperation program has proven to be able to bridge the capability gap and capacity of military airlift operations so as to save operational and maintenance costs by up to 30% when compared to normal use without combined operations. The two examples of joint operations do not place NATO or EU identity within the framework of defense-security cooperation. However, the image built from the policy of military power development is automatically attached to the European brand as a community.

The impact of multilateralism in the practice of the communication strategy has brought success in nation branding efforts carried out by only a few member countries. This is understandable, because the European brand is already quite strong in many fields and the very close cooperation between EU member states creates a stigma that the progress of some countries must also be adopted or can be felt by other member states. Meanwhile, the communication channels for building that perspective are no longer binding. As long as a strong message in the information disseminated touches unresolved issues in other countries, it directly affects the image of the pertinent. In this regard, the efforts of France and Germany to build solid bilateral military cooperation, considered very innovative and effective by the United States, are accepted as a communal performance of Europe. Therefore, the French and German branding move has already achieved its goal.

4.1.4. The value of the European Union's Nation Brands Index in Defense

The results of the Nation Brands Index (NBI) survey from Anholt-Ipsos in 2022 put Germany at the top of the ranking, followed by Japan, Canada, Italy, France, the United Kingdom, Switzerland, the United States, Sweden, Australia. Of the 30 countries with the highest NBI scores, 22 of them are European countries. The six indicators of nation branding are broken down into 21 main drivers of branding success. Government branding indicators include assessments of poverty, environment, Competent and Honest which can be related to
transparency, rights and fairness, and peace and security. Peace or security conditions affect 3% of nation branding.

Nation branding theory is generally used by developing countries to produce products or show superiority from a public perspective so that countries become more competitive and ready to enter international markets, or to attract investment to boost their economic growth. The indicators used are in line with the instruments of Public Diplomacy where the values that are strengthened are policies, norms, and cultures that are expected to change the perception of the intended party.

In the context of the European Union, although the majority of member countries have a fairly high NBI (Nation brands index) value, in the multilateral system, members who are still far behind in the economy become a factor changing common identity. Conversely, the branding that a country does on issues or policies that trigger a lot of world public attention can also attract the branding of the country or community attached to that country. The case of insulting Islam through Jyllands-Posten cartoons spread by Danish media brought branding about the culture and openness of the people of Scandinavian countries and Europe. The Danish government's reaction to protect cartoon makers and media has had an impact on public perception of the safety, tourism and culture sectors. The comprehensive impact of the Danish Government's official stance on similar cases built a global reputation for the country and the European community whose label it was attached to Danish society.

In terms of European security defense, the products or advantages displayed by NATO and CSDP both form the image of Europe as a fairly solid region in terms of governance, export products, and investment. Branding in regions that focus on certain issues and competitive advantage is the key to attracting the interest of target consumers or perceptions of destination countries and stakeholders in the sector in question. This nation-branding strategy opens views on the application of diplomacy in a number of fields, including in military diplomacy and investment campaigns from strategic multilateral industries. The success of Franco-German cooperation developed the concept of task forces and efficient joint operations paved the way for investment.

4.2. Impact and Challenges of French Military Cooperation

The era of President Obama's administration in the United States and his Democratic predecessors placed much emphasis on building alliance strength and was marked by a rapid
deterioration of regional and global security contexts. The weakening of U.S. security guarantees with NATO under President Trump has left European countries with no alternative but to join forces to avoid external pressure on their national interests. Trump's emphasis on Europe's regional security concerns has instead fostered European awareness to reduce their dependence on the outside world, and implement credible joint action capacities tailored to their security needs.

European leaders agreed on a number of alternatives to follow Trump's demands, particularly the issue of the obligation to increase the portion of the defense budget to 2% of GDP. The alternative to the withdrawal of 12,000 U.S. troops from NATO bases in Germany in 2020 is to gradually strengthen Eurocorps capacity and build on the CSDP's reputation as a credible European alliance. Another alternative is to build the reputation of the European military through public diplomacy, with the main instrument being military cooperation, both joint military operations and cooperation in education and training. Whatever alternative will be used, and whichever European country will execute it can be a relevant effort to build Europe's reputation and credibility.

Europe's reputation in building sovereignty in the field of security defense is embodied in the European Strategic Autonomy (ESA). ESA is described as the capacity and capability of European politics and military to make decisions independently in matters of foreign, defence and security policy, and to carry them out alone or with self-determined partners, including the use of military force. ESA as a joint project to transform European defence requires political commitment and a rational plan of action. The action began during the Arab Spring and bloody conflicts in a number of African and Middle Eastern countries. European countries are increasing their defense and strategic research budgets to fund military operations in the region and improve their internal security from the actions of radical Islamists. When Britain was still part of the European Union, there were differences of opinion regarding the EU's active role in refugee and border security issues. The portion of the budget to support the strengthening of border security is uneven, as well as the commitment of countries to open access to illegal immigrants from the Middle East and Africa. The debate about a common vision in handling regional issues that threaten Europe then became one of the reasons for Britain's exit from the EU.

During the period 2017-2019 ESA expanded its sense of strategic autonomy and its role in rapidly changing geopolitics. Post-Brexit EU uncertainty, political pressure from the United
States under President Trump, and China's rapid economic expansion led the European Council to agree to prepare an ESA budget to mitigate the economy and improve Europe's industrial dependence on outside supplies. The French have different thoughts about ESA. Although many regard the ESA as a manifestation of deepening European integration, the legacy of General de Gaulle's French spirit sees it as an instrument to balance the influence of the United States as the leader of the Atlantic alliance capable of pushing his country's agenda. For France, ESA is largely a pragmatic proposal with two main goals, namely the development of European countries' autonomous military capabilities to participate in combat operations and crisis handling missions, especially in Africa where France does not want NATO to be involved. This vision was basically largely agreed upon by France in a meeting in Saint Malo in 1998 with Britain. The French conception of ESA must of course be supported by an independent program of technological research and production of military equipment.

France's ambition to realize the EU as an independent defense power got a wide open path in 2017, where through the European Defence Fund President Macron managed to convince many parties about France's readiness to support the EU's autonomy policy and the steps prepared to answer the geopolitical challenges of the time. With Britain's exit from the EU and Donald Trump's 'America First' policy, the vision of strategic autonomy closer to French Gaullist culture has no longer encountered major obstacles. Although an official statement from the Council of High Representatives for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy confirms that the goal of EU Strategic Autonomy is not to substitute NATO, but rather complement it. However, the focus of the agenda raised is not only the issue of force capabilities and defense industry capacity, but also the economy, energy policy, the use of the single Euro currency. This vision competes with similar concepts from the United States, China, and India that have also triggered sentiments of autonomy from EU member states themselves.

Since Brexit took effect, France has become the leader of the European Union in political and security matters. Together with Germany and Italy, France is using the 2040 strategic autonomy scenario to promote shared interests linked to political and security agendas, including agreed shared values that can serve as legitimacy for external action. External action from a political and defence perspective has for years hindered high-level decisions on crucial issues. The EU's soft stance on Russia's annexation of Crimea, Ukraine in 2014 and against Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad over biochemical weapons attacks on its citizens.
To prevent conflicts that result in a soft stance on strategic issues, France is pressuring all EU members through a common vision of EU Strategic Autonomy and joint project packages including the EU Green Deal and investment in European Tech, as well as commitments to limit oil and gas imports. However, it was not until 2021 that the European parliament approved a budget to support the strategy policy until 2027.

In terms of building defense and security capabilities, France is pushing for joint programs in technology, industry, politics and investment. In terms of military cooperation, France's ambitions are demonstrated by leading the Eurocorps and carrying out assistance and training programs to military personnel in a number of countries in North and Central Africa. Due to the military cooperation program set up by PESCO and the EEAS as implementers of the EU's internal and external training programs, France's presence in the Sahel is part of the French Government's policy.

4.3. Relevance and Effectiveness of French Military Cooperation in Officer Education and Joint Training in European Defense Image Building

France's reintegration into NATO's main command structure cemented its position as a European leader in the security sector. All cooperation within NATO involves all Allies and allows France to be part of the planning and targeting of joint operations. However, in practice the United States did not always give France a sufficient share in all policies. After France's rejection of the 2003 invasion of Iraq, the United States and Britain pressured France to always engage in joint combat and intelligence operations. A number of conflicts handled by the United States and NATO such as military campaigns in Syria and Iraq, assistance tasks to Afghanistan did not leave room for French rejection. This included Operation Hamilton, which was a massive assault on Syrian troop concentration centers and key installations around the Syrian capital. The United States, the United Kingdom, and France on April 13 and 14, 2018 flew more than 60 flight sorties and fired more than 90 cruise missiles. The strike initiative is established through a mission planning mechanism at NATO's command center in Brussels along with all combat components in which France participates. Another French attachment to NATO was the appointment of a high-ranking French officer as SACEUR chief of staff to accompany the United States general who became its commander. This has become a tradition that has been running since 2010.

The United States gave full authority to France in handling the Boko Haram terrorist group in the Sahel-Sahara region as a form of trust. In Operation Barkhane launched in early August
2014, France fielded not only combat troops, but also intelligence and logistics specialists, as well as training regiments in cooperation with local forces. Until the cessation of the operation in November 2022, the operations command center in N'Djamena in the Chadian capital had trained more than 5,000 troops from Chad, Mali and Niger. A number of educational programs for local army officers are also organized with support from France and NATO. In addition to Africa, military cooperation is agreed by the United States in parts of Syria, where French special forces form local militia groups to fight Islamic State militants.

Because the nature of the operation is secretive, the image of the training program is often attached to NATO and the United States. This is in contrast to Operation Barkhane which instead the image of a helper was aimed directly at France.

France's military cooperation in education and training remains largely exclusive, aimed at its close allies and Francophone-based countries in Africa. In the early 20th century, France opened officer exchange and education programs for the Japanese army and navy. The number of officers sent by the Japanese continued to increase from 1 person in 1884 to 15 people in early 1914. Other records suggest that the Japanese navy sent 50 officers on a crew training program to the naval training center at Tulon. Japanese naval traditions of the time characterize distinctly French.

Within the framework of bilateral military cooperation, France established an education and training program for officers for its close partner countries. Records in the Ecole Militaire Saint-Cyr show 5 to 10 foreign officers attending army officer education. While the Ecole d'état-major, education for specialist officers with the rank of captain was only opened in 1993 for 2 foreign officers. That number increased to 17 officers in 2016. Education for senior officers, the College Interarmee de Defense (currently Ecole de Guerre) before World War II, was only given to foreign officers by invitation. It was not until the early 1990s that a total of 10 to 15 foreign officers were able to attend the Ecole de Guerre education. Indonesia was noted as one of the countries that first assigned TNI officers to study at the Ecole Militaire, in the city of Paris in 1991.

Currently for officer education programs, France invites annually more than 200 foreign officers from 65 countries. This number is not fixed, but the number of education programs is determined consistently, especially for class transfer education. Countries invited were selected according to the level of defense partnership with France. NATO member states received top priority, followed by Latin American countries, selected African countries, both
Francophonie and Anglophonie, as well as a number of countries in Asia. Some countries that are not recorded as having sent officers include Russia and former Soviet states that are not members of the NATO alliance. Countries in North Africa and the Sahel-Saharan region that do not have equivalent education for senior officers are invited to appoint one of their officers to the Ecole de Guerre.

The number of foreign officers invited to military education cooperation programs by France shows quite significant figures, especially compared to similar programs in the United States, Britain, Germany, Canada and other major countries. In the class of 2016 to 2019, Ecole de Guerre received more than 200 foreign officers from around 70 countries for a 3-year educational cooperation program. This number reaches 30% of the total officers who attend education. This means that out of 10 student officers, there are at least 3 foreign officers and 6-7 French officers. The Ecole d'etat-major in the same period received more than 60 officers for 3 programs. In addition to officer career education programs, there are special weapons and skills specialization training programs for officers and non-commissioned officers.

The large and consistent number of foreign personnel makes this educational cooperation program part of defense diplomacy and potential public diplomacy in shaping France’s defense image. The invited countries are industrial partners and potential strategic cooperation partners for France, both those with economic, political and research cooperation and those who are members of joint missions. These include Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Pakistan, China, South Korea, Singapore, Indonesia, and Japan. These countries are given more seats than any other partner country. For poor and developing countries, the French Government provides scholarship incentives as well as access to preparatory education and further training.

In addition to the number of students from abroad, the French Ministry of the Armed Forces includes a NATO-standard educational curriculum with a number of insights into experience and understanding at political, strategic, tactical levels that are different from the approaches used in British and US officer education. Nonetheless, from the perspective of researchers who follow the program, the curriculum and learning practices applied emphasize traditional French military values and culture that are quite authentic. The attitudes and indoctrination that led to anti-Atlantic sentiment never emerged, except in political forums and diplomatic scenarios.
The large and consistent participation of industrial and defense partner countries in the short term has opened up technical cooperation for invited countries. For countries that have participated in this cooperation program for many years, trust and transparency, even a tradition of partnership that opens more intense diplomatic relations. The opportunity to experience military education with a fair proportion of foreigners, providing a cross-cultural military experience that opens up positive cooperative relationships.

Cumulatively, France has been a leader in military education and training cooperation programs in Europe. The country's national interest in building its own defence image is underscored by its attachment to the military command structure of NATO and the EU CSDP.

5. Conclusion

Ambitions about self-reliance in defense for Europe have stagnated for years, partly due to the lack of interest of European countries in implementing commitments to build a common defense force. Since the establishment of the European Union in the 1990s, the institutional implementation of Article 42 of the EU Treaty has only begun to be realized starting in 2017. In this evolution, France played a role ranging from initiating the formation of Eurocorps with Germany in 1993 to encouraging the formation of PESCO and other institutions under the CSDP. The European defence image is inherent with France, thanks to its role in every military and civilian mission in various crisis areas, both under the NATO flag, alongside other EU forces, as well as in the framework of independent military missions and bilateral cooperation.

France's leadership in European defense branding is carried out through various political efforts and military diplomacy. France's contribution to the establishment of PESCO, strengthening the role of the CSDP and the institutions that support it, shows that France's domestic policies in the field of security can be aligned with Europe's mission of strategic self-reliance. One of them is through officer education and joint exercises conducted with NATO Alliance partner countries, the European Union, and non-alliance countries from Eastern Europe, Asia, and Africa. The diplomatic effort created a mixed impact, but was able to lift the image of Europe as a potential defense security partner alongside Britain and the United States.
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Military diplomacy through joint education and training is able to bring together the diverse interests of the nations involved, build partnerships that strengthen bilateral alliances and cooperation, and build security capabilities of French and European partner countries. The researcher also gained cross-cultural communication experience while working with non-French officers from 75 countries who participated in officer education programs under the Ecole Militaire Paris. The experience can be one of the references for the success of military diplomacy through education, which in the long run can be a catalyst in preventing conflicts and bridging interests between nations through military cooperation.

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