

French Republicanism: A Comparative Analysis of the French Military Interventions in Libya in 2011 and in Syria in 2013

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Summary

Using Ruth Wodak's Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA) of Critical Discourse Analysis, this thesis examines the ways in which French Republican ideas were synthesised with arguments relating to the Responsibility to Protect Doctrine in 2011 and 2013 to justify military intervention and international cooperation. Firstly, Nicolas Sarkozy had learned his lesson with Tunisia that the Arab Spring was more than just a minor wave of protests. Therefore, when the uprising began in Libya, Sarkozy relied on the Republican ideas of the universality of Liberty, Equality, and Human Rights. This was pitched perfectly to justify a military intervention along the lines of the Responsibility to Protect Doctrine, co-opting the support of the United States and the United Kingdom into the mission, as well as gaining the tacit approval of Russia.

However Hollande, when approaching a similar situation in Syria, relied on a different side of the Republican ethos. In seeking to "punish" Syria rather than protect its citizens, Hollande fell succumbed to the more paternalistic trappings of French Republicanism, indulging in a more naked display of *grandeur*, designating France as a *gendarme* of the world. Ultimately, this was an inappropriate tactic to adopt. Hollande's administration would antagonise Russia and misread the American intentions. This would lead to further embarrassment when events overtook President Hollande, and the United States and Russia organised their own agreement to deal with Syria's chemical weapons.

Declaration/Statements page

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Introduction

Within the past sixty-five years, France has had to undergo significant adaptations. With the fall of Dien Bien Phu in Indochina, marking the beginning of the end of France as a colonial power, France has had to re-assess its position in the global order, as well as how it interacts with other states.

The first adaptation occurred with the return of General Charles de Gaulle and the creation of the Fifth Republic. De Gaulle recognised that France would need to change if it was to retain its influence in the world following decolonisation. De Gaulle introduced the concepts of *grandeur* and *rang* to the French political lexicon; these notions covered a broad range of policies, all designed to re-establish and reinforce French unity and French primacy after the ignominious setbacks suffered by France during and immediately after the Second World War. Based on a deeply romanticised notion of France's history, with dreams of a great French destiny¹, De Gaulle envisaged a France which was strong, independent, and respected. *Rang* can be interpreted as either rank or status, which is important to the understanding of France's actions in the international order. It concerns France's position within the international hierarchy; it is both a necessity and an expectation that France should sit amongst the great powers at the top of this hierarchy.

Chapter 2 of Volume III of de Gaulle's memoirs is titled "Status", and discusses events between 23 October 1944 and 2 March 1945². In particular, this chapter concerns the build up to and the immediate aftermath of the Yalta Conference, as well as the position France held in the world at the time. The most illuminating of these was the conversation de Gaulle had with Harry Hopkins on 27 January 1945. Here, Mr Hopkins explained that relations between the US and France had deteriorated because America's previous high estimation of France's value and standing "was overthrown in an instant" following France's collapse and surrender to Germany in 1940. Furthermore, many of the political and military leaders whom the US had trusted to

¹ Charles de Gaulle, *Memoires de Guerre – L'appel* Paris, 1954, english translation found in Daniel J Mahoney, 'De Gaulle: Statesman, Grandeur and modern democracy (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1996) p. 16

² Volume III *Salvation 1944-1946* (Translated by Richard Howard) in Charles de Gaulle, *The Complete War Memoires of Charles de Gaulle* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1984) p.716

rise to the challenge “did not show themselves”. Ultimately, “Judging that France was no longer what she had been, we could not trust her to play one of the leading roles”³. In summarising his conversation with Mr Hopkins, de Gaulle stated that “the French have the impression that you no longer consider the greatness of France necessary to the world and yourself”⁴. This perception of France’s position in the world led to its non-inclusion in the Yalta Conference, where the “Big Three” of the US, Russia, and the United Kingdom discussed the post-war reorganisation of Europe. Therefore this loss of *rang* (status) within the international hierarchy, and particularly amongst the other larger military powers in the Second World War, resulted in France playing no role in the Yalta Conference. In the concluding paragraph, de Gaulle argues that the result of the Yalta Conference, namely that France would join the “Big Three” in occupying German territory, and that she would sit with them in what would later be known as the Security Council, showed a belated recognition that France was still a significant power. De Gaulle concludes by predicting that the memories of France’s failure in 1940 would soon fade due to the role she played in the victory over Germany.

However, the post-War period saw a host of new challenges to France assuming its position at the top of the global order. The Cold War had resulted in states banding together for safety. The world was effectively divided into two spheres: East and the West, Communism and Capitalism. To counter the perceived threats posed by the major extensions of Soviet and/or Communist power and influence in Europe and Asia between 1944 and 1949, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation was created, an organisation of North American and Western European States, dominated by the United States. Other supranational entities such as the United Nations, and the various precursors of the European Community also emerged, potentially seeing France’s influence in the world diluted.

During the Cold War, France sought to navigate these choppy waters, cooperating with nations and organisations where it served their interests, whilst maintaining a relative isolation. This was particularly typified by France’s withdrawal from the integrated command structure of NATO in 1966, whilst still remaining a member of the wider organisation. Instead, de Gaulle preferred the notion of European

³ Ibid. p. 760

⁴ Ibid. p.763

cooperation (with the assumption of French leadership), with the aim of enabling France to act independently of the US and counter-balance American and Soviet primacy in, and influence over world affairs⁵.

French Foreign and European policy for the next twenty years was dominated by subtle deviations from the path set forth by de Gaulle, with a very gradual rapprochement with the United States. This was somewhat accelerated by the collapse of the Soviet Union. Instability stemming from the disintegration of the Soviet Union catalysed or unleashed the violent dissolution of the former Yugoslavia. This, combined with conflict in Rwanda, gave rise to new conceptualisations of conflict. Failures on these fronts led to the development of new doctrines encouraging and legitimising various forms of pre-emptive (or preventive) actions towards and interventions in humanitarian catastrophes, such as Liberal Internationalism, and its successor, the Responsibility to Protect.

However, eight years ago a new dilemma emerged in North Africa and spread across the Middle East. Alain Juppé admitted that France had tolerated authoritarian regimes in order to prevent “chaos”, using them as bulwarks against extremism and terrorism⁶. On 17 December 2010, a street vendor named Tarek el-Tayeb Mohamed Bouazizi from Tunisia self-immolated following harassment from authorities. One man’s desperate act would ignite protests in Tunisia, Morocco, Libya, and Syria. Tunisia’s leader President Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali fled the country following mass protests⁷. King Mohammed of Morocco responded to the protests by offering a referendum on constitutional amendments⁸. However, protests in Libya and Syria took violent turns, with both regimes responding to the demonstrations with force. In both cases, violence begot violence, eventually leading to civil conflicts.

⁵ A discussion on De Gaulle’s intentions following the withdrawal from the NATO command structure found here: Garret Martin. ‘The 1967 withdrawal from NATO – a cornerstone of de Gaulle’s grand strategy?’ *Journal of Transatlantic Studies*, 9:3 2011, 232-243

⁶ “Arab spring” symposium – Closing speech by Alain Juppé, Ministre d’Etat, Minister of Foreign Affairs, to the Arab World Institute 16 April 2011 <https://uk.ambafrance.org/Arab-spring-symposium-Closing> [accessed 30/09/2017]

⁷ Angelique Chrisafis and Ian Black, ‘Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali forced to flee Tunisia as protesters claim victory’ *The Guardian* 15 January 2011 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/jan/14/tunisian-president-flees-country-protests> [accessed 11/06/2019]

⁸ ‘Morocco’s King Mohammed unveils constitutional reforms’ *BBC* 18 June 2011 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13816974> [accessed 11/06/2019]

The conflict in Libya reached its peak on 17 and 18 March 2011. Colonel Muammar Gaddafi's forces advanced towards, amongst other cities, Benghazi. Benghazi had been one of the first cities to begin its protests⁹, and fear abounded there would be greater civilian casualties¹⁰.

However, the UN decided to intervene by passing a Resolution which allowed the creation of a no-fly zone above the country to prevent Gaddafi from using his air force against civilian populations¹¹. The resolution had been lobbied for by France, who also participated in the establishment and enforcement of the no-fly zone with the US and the United Kingdom until 31 March 2011, at which point NATO assumed control of the mission¹². Despite the NATO intervention, the conflict continued for another six months until 31 October 2011, concluding eleven days after Colonel Gaddafi had been captured and killed by rebels in Sirte¹³.

The Syrian conflict, on the other hand, was significantly more complicated, and at the time of submitting this thesis, is still ongoing. As with the Libyan conflict, the Syrian War began with anti-government protests in Damascus on 15 March 2011¹⁴. Despite opening a "national dialogue"¹⁵, the reforms offered by the Assad regime were insufficient to satisfy the protestors.

Protests continued, and were met by repression and bloody recriminations¹⁶. Seven officers who felt that the regime had gone too far in targeting civilians deserted their posts and created the Free Syrian Army, a group who would seek to bring about the

⁹ Ian Black, 'Libya's Day of Rage met by bullets and loyalists' *The Guardian* 17 February 2011 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/feb/17/libya-day-of-rage-unrest> [accessed 02/03/2019]

¹⁰ This was the reason given for passing Resolution 1973 (2011) Adopted by the Security Council at its 6498th meeting, 17 March 2011

[http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1973\(2011\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1973(2011)) [accessed 30/09/2017]

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² 'NATO takes command in Libya air operations' Press release (2011) 040 NATO 31 March 2011 https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_71867.htm [accessed 11/06/2019]

¹³ 'UN Security Council votes to end Libya operations' *BBC* 27 October 2011 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-15481143> [accessed 24/11/2019]

¹⁴ Elizabeth Flock, 'Syria revolution: A revolt brews against Bashar al-Assad's regime' *The Washington Post* 15 March 2011 https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/blogpost/post/syria-revolution-revolt-against-bashar-al-assads-regime/2011/03/15/ABrwNEX_blog.html?utm_term=.841572165a49 [accessed 11/06/2019]

¹⁵ 'Syria opens 'national dialogue' with opposition' *BBC* 20 July 2011 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-14096981> [accessed 11/06/2019]

¹⁶ Salma Abdelaziz 'Shallow Grave Yields several bodies in Syrian City marked by unrest' *CNN* 16 May 2011 <http://edition.cnn.com/2011/WORLD/meast/05/16/syria.bodies.found/index.html> [accessed 11/06/2019]

downfall of the Assad regime and “protect the people from the armoured killing machine of the system”¹⁷. From this point on, the conflict only escalated. In addition to the Free Syrian Army, other forces antagonistic to the Syrian regime also began to emerge, including the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria, commonly known as the Rojava¹⁸, and various Islamist groups such as the Islamic Front and Al Qaeda. Opposition forces were able to secure significant victories until 17 April 2013, at which point the Assad regime managed to slow the opposition’s offensive enough to begin its own counteroffensive¹⁹.

The conflict entered a new phase on 21 August 2013, following a massive chemical weapons attack in Ghouta. This brought widespread international condemnation, though the Assad regime simply continued with its devastating offensives to clear the rebels from the Damascus suburbs²⁰. Amongst the first to respond to the chemical weapons attack was France. Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius declared that the international community should react with “force”²¹, whilst President François Hollande stated that “France stands ready to punish”²² those responsible.

France lobbied the international community to take decisive action. Despite the initial support for airstrikes by the US and UK administrations, a vote in the British House

¹⁷ Joshua Landis, ‘Free Syrian Army Founded by Seven Officers to Fight Syrian Army’ *Syria Comment* 29 July 2011 <https://www.joshualandis.com/blog/free-syrian-army-established-to-fight-the-syrian-army/> [accessed 11/06/2019]

¹⁸ This group effectively achieved autonomy in 2012 when Assad’s forces retreated from Kurdish areas to deal with other insurgents. For some information on the region and its governance, see <http://www.tangledwilderness.org/a-mountain-river-has-many-bends/> [accessed 11/06/2019]

¹⁹ AFB Beirut, ‘Syria army closes in on Qusayr near Lebanon’ *Al Arabiya* 21 April 2013 <http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2013/04/21/Syria-army-closes-in-on-Quasar-near-Lebanon-.html> [accessed 11/06/2019]

²⁰ Sam Dagher and Farnaz Fassih, ‘Syria Presses Offensive, Shrugs Off Gas Attack Claims’ *The Wall Street Journal* 22 August 2013 <https://www.wsj.com/articles/syria-opposition-calls-on-un-1377179398?tesla=y> [accessed 11/06/2019]

²¹ Donna Abu-Nasr, ‘France calls for force after Syrian gas attacks’ *The Age* 24 August 2013 <https://www.theage.com.au/world/france-calls-for-force-after-syrian-gas-attacks-20130823-2sgzs.html> [accessed 11/06/2019]

²² 21st Ambassadors’ Conference – Speech by M. François Hollande, President of the Republic. Paris, August 27, 2013 (<https://franceintheus.org/spip.php?article4855>) [accessed 11/06/2019]

of Commons resulted in a military intervention being ruled out²³. Shortly thereafter, President Obama also sought Congressional Support to authorise military action²⁴.

In reality, despite establishing a red line in August 2012 relating to the usage of chemical weapons, Obama had cooled to the idea of intervening militarily²⁵. Instead, backroom channels between Israeli and Russian diplomats would provide a solution to de-escalate the situation and prevent military intervention²⁶.

However, despite the blatant coolness of Obama towards a military option, Hollande and France continued to advocate for a military solution up until agreement had been reached between Syria, the US, and Russia. Hollande later claimed that his threats were intended to bring about the diplomatic outcome reached, yet from his and America's conduct, it was clear that they had not been included in the decision making progress. Hollande had to settle with proposing the UN Resolution which would ratify the agreement. On 14 October 2013, the Chemical Weapons Convention came in to force for Syria, making it the one hundred and ninetieth nation to sign it in to their national law.

So what can be learned from these two examples about how France operates in this multipolar world in the twenty-first century? This thesis seeks to answer a specific question: To what extent did France's rhetorical framing justifying military intervention in Libya and Syria affect the build-up and outcomes of French and International action in these two examples?

Using Ruth Wodak's Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA) as its methodology, this thesis explains the ways in which discursive practices by both Presidents Sarkozy and Hollande played a role in establishing the respective outcomes. It shows that the discourse of these two actors, and their respective administrations, synthesised two

²³'Syria Crisis, Cameron loses Commons vote on Syria action' *BBC* 30 August 2013

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-23892783> [accessed 30/09/2017]

²⁴ Peter Baker and Jonathan Weisman, 'Obama seeks congressional approval for Strike in Syria' *The New York Times* 31 August 2013

<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/01/world/middleeast/syria.html?mcubz=0> [accessed 30/09/2017]

²⁵ 'A history of the Syria chemical weapons 'red line' *France 24* 14 April 2018

<https://www.france24.com/en/20180414-syria-chemical-weapons-red-line-obama-macron-assad-russia-usa-france-idlib> [accessed 11/06/2019]

²⁶ Jodi Rudoren, 'Israeli Helped Inspire U.S.-Russia Weapons Deal With Assad, Memoir Says' *The New York Times* 15 June 2015 <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/16/world/middleeast/israeli-helped-inspire-us-russia-weapons-deal-with-assad-memoir-says.html> [accessed 08/06/2019]

elements to make their arguments validating the need for military intervention: French Republicanism and the Responsibility to Protect Doctrine.

When Sarkozy and Hollande made these speeches, in the context of arguing for military intervention, this thesis argues that they are attempting to achieve two goals. Firstly, the speeches are intended to act as an extension of diplomacy. In particular, whilst conferring the ability of states to intervene for the purpose of protecting a population from a state failing to abide its obligations to keep them safe from atrocities, the Responsibility to Protect Doctrine still requires agreement by the United Nations Security Council.

This chapter opened describing how France has had to adjust its interactions with the wider international community in response to varying changes in the world. Part of this adjustment has seen France orient itself towards acting within multi/supra-national entities such as the United Nations/North Atlantic Treaty Organisation/ European Union. This thesis draws a line from de Gaulle's notion of *grandeur*, and his opinion that, as Treacher puts it, France was one of "the only entities with the right to issue orders, and the power to be obeyed"²⁷. France seeks then, wherever it can, to co-opt these larger political bodies to achieve policy goals and increase its *rang*.

However, as high an opinion of France de Gaulle may have had, ultimately France still must convince the international community that a certain course of action is both required, and would be the best solution. This is especially the case with the Doctrine of the Responsibility to Protect, which may only be applied in very specific circumstances. Firstly, that the intervention has the right intention of halting or averting human suffering; secondly the proposed course of action is the last resort, after all reasonable non-military options have been explored; thirdly, the proposed military intervention is proportional to its aims; finally, that there are reasonable prospects that the proposed action will indeed stop or prevent the issue which justifies an intervention²⁸.

²⁷ Adrian Treacher, *French Interventionism: Europe's last global player?* (Ashgate; Hampshire, 2003) p.27

²⁸ 'Report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty' International Development Research Centre Ottawa 10 2001
<http://responsibilitytoprotect.org/ICISS%20Report.pdf> p. XII [accessed 27/09/2017]

Beyond the need to make an argument however, these speeches also serve another, more performative purpose. Again, de Gaulle believed that a country's legitimacy stems from the support and respect its citizens give it²⁹. Therefore, *grandeur* is as much about looking like a leader as it is being one. It is for this reason that when Sarkozy and Hollande made speeches regarding the victims of atrocities in Libya and Syria, they were framed within a specific French Republican concept. It is in reference not to international human rights, but to the founding principles of the Republic. The use of this language serves little to no purpose internationally in convincing other states to intervene. Indeed, if one were to try and convince another state, it would surely utilise cultural references relevant to the target audience. This is because French leaders³⁰ are attempting to perform and consolidate French national identity on the world stage, primarily for the domestic market, i.e. the citizenry.

Therefore, the first claim to originality this thesis makes is to explain the outcomes of these two examples based on the discourse used by the nation's leaders. This thesis takes the basic premises of Davidson³¹ and Gaffney³², but builds a unique, more comprehensive understanding of these events together, explaining the similarities, differences, and continuities stemming from the Libyan intervention into the Syrian proposal.

The way in which this thesis achieves this goal is via its methodology: the Discourse-Historical Approach³³. Using Wodak's approach to Critical Discourse Analysis, this thesis looks to the origins and understood meanings of various Republican ideas. It then examines how those ideas then influence, modify, or reinforce the discourses relating to the Responsibility to Protect Doctrine. The DHA, which has not been used in this way to discuss these circumstances, allows the interpretation of words and phrases by situating them historically and culturally. This methodology is ideal to

²⁹ Philip H Gordon, *A Certain idea of France: French Security and the Gaullist Legacy* (Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1993) p.10

³⁰ I use the term leaders as this thesis looks beyond just the discourse of the President, but also to the Prime Minister, Foreign Minister, and Defence Minister.

³¹ Jason W Davidson, 'France, Britain and the intervention in Libya: an integrated analysis' *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 2013 Vol. 26, 310-329,

³² John Gaffney. 'Political Leadership and the Politics of Performance: France, Syria and the Chemical Weapons Crisis of 2013' *French Politics* (2014) 12, 218-234

³³ Ruth Wodak, 'The discourse-historical approach' in Ruth Wodak and Michael Meyer (ed) *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis* (London; Sage Publications, 2001)

examine French political discourse, and certainly foreign policy discourse, as it so frequently harks back to historical cultural notions.

This thesis finds that whilst the method of policy articulation and persuasion are similar in technique, Presidents Sarkozy and Hollande relied on very different aspects of both French Republicanism and the Responsibility to Protect Doctrine in order to justify the need to intervene. President Sarkozy and his administration utilised concepts relating to humanitarianism, linking the aspirations of the Libyan people to those of France, thereby conjuring notions of *Liberté, Égalité, and Fraternité*. The Hollande administration on the other hand relied more on French supremacy, on its self-appointed role as *gendarme* in the international community. Much less emphasis was placed on the victims of the chemical weapons attack. Instead the arguments were more oriented towards deterring future attacks. The one exception to this being Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius, who was more deft at conjuring sympathy.

This thesis represents one of the few pieces of research which examines both the intervention in Libya, and the proposed intervention in Syria. Prima facie, the basic facts appear quite similar, thereby justifying a comparative analysis. As shown above, both conflicts stemmed from popular protests during the Arab Spring. Both regimes were/are led by authoritarian governments. Both involved attacks by the state against its civilians, which meant that parties arguing for intervention used the Responsibility to Protect Doctrine (R2P) as at least one of their justifications.

However, there are a number of differences which must also be acknowledged. These events happened within two years of each other, but with different French governments, political parties and leaders in office. This difference is not necessarily problematic, as it allows for comparisons across political ideologies (though as is shown in Chapter 2, and with Hollande's own words³⁴, political differences are not so great in relation to foreign policy).

More significant differences to be considered however are the specific geopolitical contexts of each country. Libya had very few positive links in the international

³⁴ Interview between President Francois Hollande and Le Monde *Le Monde* 31 August 2013 https://www.lemonde.fr/international/article/2013/08/30/francois-hollande-au-monde-il-ne-s-agit-pas-de-renverser-le-dictature-syrien_3468865_3210.html [accessed 26/04/2019]

community, and one of its largest economic partners was France. France had been one of the first countries to open up economically and diplomatically to Gaddafi³⁵. Therefore, intervention on an international scale was unlikely to be too disruptive to other great powers.

The same cannot be said about Syria however. For one, Russia leases a naval base in Tartus, Syria, which gives Russian ships access to the Mediterranean. As of 29 April 2019, Russia was finalising extending its lease by 49 years³⁶. Furthermore, the aftermath of the intervention in Libya will also have been in Russia's mind, who was the most resistant party (other than Syria) to military intervention.

Following France, the UK and the US' intervention in Libya, the three leaders wrote an op-ed in the New York Times arguing that Gaddafi should go.³⁷ As will be shown in Part II, the military intervention taken by France, the US and the UK (before being taken over by NATO) was meant to be purely the establishment of a no-fly zone. However, Resolution 1973 was interpreted by these three countries more broadly, to allow bombers to strike armoured vehicles as well. With their printed admission that they sought the removal of Gaddafi from power, Russia would become more suspicious of the usage of this norm, as it felt it had been abused³⁸. These two factors would mean that Hollande would have a significantly harder time convincing Russia to agree once again to a military intervention. This thesis does not argue that there is a specific set of words or phrases that will allow France to intervene. Rather the conclusion which is drawn from this thesis is that there are more effective combinations of arguments, synthesising the Republican and R2P discourses.

This thesis is split into three Parts. Part I addresses the current state of the literature, and this thesis' place within it (Chapter 1), before discussing in greater detail the

³⁵ An analysis of Sarkozy's dealings can be found here: Catherine Graciet, *Sarkozy/Kadhafi Histoire Secrète d'une trahison* (Paris; Editions Du Seuil, 2013)

³⁶ 'Moscow close to finalising deal to lease Syria's Tartus Port for 49 years' *Radio Free Europe/Radio Free* 21 April 2019 <https://www.rferl.org/a/moscow-damascus-near-deal-on-lease-syrian-port-tartus/29894114.html> [accessed 11/06/2019]

³⁷ Barack Obama, David Cameron and Nicolas Sarkozy 'Libya's Pathway to peace' *The New York Times* 14 April 2011 https://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/15/opinion/15iht-edlibya15.html?_r=3& [accessed 11/06/2019]

³⁸ Louise Riis Anderson and Tim Dunne, 'In Defense of Liberal Intervention' *Danish Institute for International Studies* 3 June 2014 <https://www.diis.dk/en/research/in-defense-of-liberal-intervention> [accessed 11/06/2019]

Discourse-Historical Approach (Chapter 2), then finally extrapolating in greater detail upon the histories and flexibility of Republican concepts (Chapter 3).

More specifically, Chapter 1 looks at the literature concerning French foreign policy developments from de Gaulle to Sarkozy, as well as the literature surrounding interpretations of the Responsibility to Protect Doctrine, and a discussion on the literature surrounding the interventions in Libya and Syria. This chapter is organised chronologically, following developments as they happened throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

Chapter 1.1 addresses the impact Charles de Gaulle had when becoming President and founding the Fifth Republic. It discusses the fundamentals of his foreign policy theories, as well the conceptualisation of *rang* and *grandeur*. The impact of Charles de Gaulle on the institutional psyche of France cannot be underestimated, and this thesis demonstrates how these ideas still resonate today.

The next section deals with the ensuing results of Presidents attempting to navigate a rapidly decolonising and multipolar landscape (1.2). Specifically, this part is divided into two. The first section (1.2.1) deals with UN mandated interventions. The first sub-part (1.2.1.1) looks to UN mandated missions such as Yugoslavia, Somalia, and Rwanda, as well as discussing the theory of Liberal Internationalism. Then, this section focuses on UN mandated missions authorised under Chapter VII (1.2.1.2), and in particular the Gulf War. The circumstances surrounding the Gulf War contain similarities to the situation in Libya which are discussed briefly. Finally, the second section (1.2.2) looks at France's move towards supranational groupings such as the Western European Union, the European Union and NATO, as well as how France conducted itself during the war in Afghanistan.

Chapter 1.3 then examines the literature analysing the Responsibility to Protect Doctrine. This chapter describes the development of the Doctrine, before explaining its parameters and limitations, as well as looking to the similarities and differences it has with Liberal Internationalism. Chapter 1.4 then looks to the literature analysing the foreign policy of President Nicolas Sarkozy. It is shown, in particular, how Sarkozy attempted to pivot France towards the US in finally re-joining the command structure of NATO, as well as his relative weakness in regards to foreign policy, with

a constant sense of improvisation and offensive comments. Finally, Chapter 1.5 approaches the literature concerning the interventions in Libya and Syria. This section describes both what the literature has said regarding these two interventions, in addition to highlighting where the gaps in the literature exist in regards to these points, and thus how this thesis seeks to fill it.

This thesis continues by discussing the methodology in Chapter 2, explaining the theoretical origins of the Discourse-Historical Approach within the context of Critical Discourse Analysis. The chapter then progresses to the practical aspects of the research. In particular, it explains the notion of *topoi*, and provides a list of the types used to analyse the texts found in Appendices 1 and 2. It also provides the logic for why those particular texts were chosen, and how this methodology helps the thesis create new and original work within the literature.

Chapter 3 then defines the various aspects of Republicanism found in the speeches of the Sarkozy and Hollande administrations. In particular, it explains the historical origins of Libert ,  galit , and Fraternit , as well as the evolutions those terms have undergone to be reimagined in the modern setting (3.1). After this, there is a brief discussion of the French Constitution, and the powers which it conveys to the President (3.2).

Once this establishing Part is concluded, the thesis moves on to its analysis. Part II will enquire into the situation in Libya. Part II is separated into two Chapters. Chapter 4 contextualises the events prior to the intervention in Libya. The first section discusses the financial and other links France and Sarkozy had with the Gaddafi regime prior to the intervention (4.1), whilst the second section examines the Sarkozy administration's initial reaction to the Arab Spring, showing how the administration lurched from one gaffe to another in misreading how wide ranging the protest movement would become (4.2).

After establishing this background information, Chapter 5 advances into the analysis of the Sarkozy administration's rhetoric. This is done in three parts. Firstly, the humanitarian case for intervention is investigated. In particular, this sees how, amongst other things, the *topoi* of humanitarianism, of threat, of burden, and of solidarity are mobilised to justify the need for humanitarian intervention (5.1).

Secondly, this part considers in particular at the arguments for the specific type of intervention, explaining the logic of why airstrikes were eventually settled upon, and how France advocated for a broader wording within the Resolution to grant it the greatest freedom for manoeuvre (5.2). Finally, this section scrutinises the way in which France engaged with different state and multinational entities in order to gain legitimacy for the airstrikes. This included liaising with the US, the UK, the UN and NATO (5.3).

After discussing Sarkozy and the intervention in Libya, Part III then studies President Hollande and the situation in Syria. Again this Part is divided into two chapters. Chapter 6 concerns the relevant background information which helps us understand Hollande's domestic situation and foreign policy position. The first section addresses Hollande's domestic politics, and how the first year of his Presidency would set the stage for things to come. It finds a President who had defined himself as very much the anti-Sarkozy, but that this had been a more attractive proposition for his electorate as a candidate than as a President. As such, Hollande had lurched from one crisis to another (6.1). The next section (6.2) briefly discusses Hollande's foreign policy. The first part tackles Hollande's intervention in Mali (6.2.1), whilst the second part establishes how the situation in Syria had progressed to where it was (6.2.2).

Chapter 7 then examines the Chemical Weapons crisis and Hollande's attempts to resolve it. This Chapter is divided into four parts. Firstly, it appraises the general tone of Hollande's reaction, focusing specifically on the notion of "punishing" the Assad regime (7.1). Secondly, this chapter probes the Hollande administration's arguments as it relates to the Responsibility to Protect Doctrine. This chapter enquires into the differences in how Hollande approached this matter compared to Sarkozy (7.2). Thirdly, this chapter reviews how Hollande and his executive attempted to convince other nations, and particularly the US, in intervening militarily (7.3). The final part looks at the aftermath of the G20 summit, in which America and Russia struck upon an agreement which would resolve the crisis (7.4). This part consider how Hollande sought to reframe events in a more positive light, arguing that his pressure had resulted in the confluence of events playing out as they did.

After these discussions the thesis concludes, summing up its findings and methodology. It also reiterates how this research adds to the existing body of academic work, before finally addressing the possible results of this thesis in regards to future research endeavours.

Part I

Chapter 1 - Historical Context and Literature Review: French Interventions in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Century and International Norms

The intervention in Libya by NATO has certainly proved to be fertile ground for a wide range of academic work. To a lesser extent, the proposed airstrikes in Syria in 2013 have also produced a number of works. The aims and scope of the research conducted also vary widely, with some choosing to look into why the decision was made, and others attempting to work out the foreign policy implications as to what it means. This Chapter examines this body of work, picking out the strengths of the research which has been carried out, as well as some of its weaknesses. This helps contextualise the position this thesis holds within the body of academic work.

Particularly, this thesis concerns French interventions, the rhetorical framing of said interventions, and the impact that these framings can have on other national and international actors when seeking to build coalitions.

In order to fully situate this thesis within the literature, this chapter analyses five different aspects of the literature specifically relevant to the research aims of this thesis. It examines more broadly the literature concerning France's military interventions in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Whilst this thesis focuses specifically on the French response to crises in Libya 2011 and Syria 2013, it is important to discuss the academic understanding of previous interventions, as well as the development of the logic of foreign policy. This thesis argues that the developments under Sarkozy and Hollande represent, for the most part, a continuation of the principles established under de Gaulle when founding the Fifth Republic (some of which can be traced even further back). However, in a post-Cold War international context, French policy has had to adapt. This is especially the case in places where France has less influence, such as the Middle-East, where it must deal with other powers (such as Russia in the case of Syria).

Therefore, to give context to the present situation, this review also examines the academic treatment of foreign policy logic developments, to establish continuities and differences. Firstly, it establishes literature covering the impact of the election of

General Charles de Gaulle as President of France in establishing the foundations of the Fifth Republic, as well as originating many of the principles of France's twentieth century Foreign Policy (1.1).

The next section then looks at French foreign policy and multilateral military interventions including French forces through the prism of its interactions with other world powers and supranational organisations such as the United Nations and the NATO (1.2). It discusses briefly the conditions which drive nations, and specifically France, to consider military intervention. This section also analyses the contentious relationship France has had with each of these of these organisations as it attempted to assert control upon these organisations with the tools it has at its disposal. This is important to gain an understanding that France operates within a multi-polar world, in which it needs to take into account the intentions of numerous other actors, something which dominated both the interventions in Libya and Syria.

Then, before examining foreign policy developments under Sarkozy, as well as the literature explaining interventions in Libya and Syria, there is first the need to briefly review the academic arguments surrounding the Responsibility to Protect Doctrine (1.3). This doctrine was a key argument in the justifications for the intervention both in Libya and Syria, with elements of it featuring heavily in the speeches and declarations of the Sarkozy and Hollande executives. Specifically, this part discusses the varying interpretations of the norm, regarding when it can be successfully used to justify international intervention, as well as how it came to replace Liberal Internationalism.

We then progress on to an analysis of the foreign policy under Nicolas Sarkozy (1.4), taking a broader view of the changes and continuities he brought with him upon becoming President. This looks particularly at the literature surrounding Sarkozy's attitude and amendments towards NATO, France's operations in Afghanistan, and more generally an analysis of his broader foreign policy aims.

Finally, we examine the literature surrounding these interventions themselves, which help to better understand the situations in Libya and Syria. This part conveys how this thesis' approach differentiates and evolves previous discussions regarding those interventions. In particular, the methodological approach (as explained in Chapter 3),

utilising the Discourse-Historical Approach, allows for a different kind of analysis of the interventions which are both unique and novel (1.5).

1.1 *Grandeur* and *rang*: Gaullism and the birth of modern French Foreign Policy

Adrian Treacher considers General Charles de Gaulle to be the most significant figure of modern France, based on his lasting influence both on the Fifth Republic as a whole, and France's security policy³⁹.

For de Gaulle, two concepts were essential both for France's domestic and security policy; *rang* and *grandeur*. These ideas were based on de Gaulle's own vision of France's history. Of course, as Treacher notes, his historical conclusions "only followed a long and illustrious line of French leaders in believing that France had a special right and duty to play the role of world power just because it was France"⁴⁰.

De Gaulle opens his memoir "Mémoires de Guerre" with the following passage:

The emotional side of me tends to imagine France, like the princess in the stories of the Madonna in the frescoes, as dedicated to an exalted and exceptional destiny. But the positive side of my mind also assures me that France is not really herself unless in the Front Rank; that only vast enterprises are capable of counterbalancing the divisive ferments which are inherent in her people. In short, to my mind, France cannot be France-without greatness⁴¹.

This quote sums up quite a few ideas that he has surrounding the notion of France. Here he contrasts his romanticised notion of France, of something almost holy that needs to be protected, with his more pragmatic view that France must lead the field in order to be fully actualised. This type of thinking is of course not uncommon for any nation. Every country's leader imagines their own country as something special, as a world leader. This idea is not something which should be readily overlooked. It is certainly something which drove de Gaulle to be mistrustful of United States of America and NATO, as he felt that limitations on the sovereignty of France's foreign policy would be against her best interests.

Foreign policy, according to de Gaulle, ought to be "grounded in a concern for the independence, rank and greatness of the nation [and is] linked to and necessarily

³⁹ Adrian Treacher, *French Interventions: Europe's last global player?* (Ashgate; Hampshire, 2003) p.26

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Charles de Gaulle, *Memoires de Guerre – L'appel* Paris, 1954, english translation found in Daniel J Mahoney. *'De Gaulle : Statesman, Grandeur and modern democracy* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1996) p. 16

entails an attitude of honourable self regard”⁴². Therefore, de Gaulle believed the domestic policy had an international element to it. He believed that the “patriotic ardour resulting from an enhanced standing in the world could heal the deep social divisions that so often plagued France”⁴³.

General de Gaulle viewed the international system as inherently competitive and hostile, and that it was a fundamental truth that states would consistently act in their own interest. Therefore, it would be logical for the nation-state to become the ultimate focus of people’s loyalty⁴⁴. Treacher argues that de Gaulle viewed France as being “more equal than all the other [states]”⁴⁵, and was therefore one of “the only entities with the right to issue orders, and the power to be obeyed”⁴⁶.

Grandeur itself had no specific definition as “de Gaulle nowhere bothered to explain with any precision just what a politics of ‘grandeur’ entailed”⁴⁷. Despite this, there is some common ground between academics when they describe *grandeur*. Generally, *grandeur* implies the will to be a “player” and not a “stake”, and to be an “ambitious”, “universal”, and “inventive” actor on the world scene.⁴⁸

One of the most important elements for *grandeur* is that it tends to find strength in the fact that France does not become over reliant on any other power bloc. The basic *raison d’être* of France is to be a great power, at which point it can make its own terms. In the Cold War, it managed to stay relatively independent by creating “the greatest possible distance from the Atlantic Alliance without destroying or abandoning it...”⁴⁹

⁴² Daniel .J. Mahoney, *De Gaulle: Statesmanship, grandeur, and Modern Democracy* (Piscataway;Routledge,2000) p.17

⁴³ Reed Davis, ‘A Once and Future Greatness: Raymond Aron, Charles de Gaulle and the Politics of Grandeur’ *The International History Review*, 33:1, 27-41, p.28

⁴⁴ Adrian Treacher. *French Interventionism: Europe’s last global player?* (Ashgate; Hampshire, 2003) p.27

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Charles De Gaulle, quoted in Farah Nayeri, ‘Chirac takes his cue from de Gaulle’, *Wall Street Journal Europe*, 11 August 1995

⁴⁷ Ibid. p.29

⁴⁸ Daniel .J. Mahoney, ‘*De Gaulle : Statesmanship, grandeur, and Modern Democracy*’ (Piscataway;Routledge,2000) p.17

⁴⁹ R. Aron, *Memoires: Fifty Years of Political Reflection* (New York and London, 1990) p.260

This strain of self-sufficiency explains France's decision to "reject the supranational and federalist models for the then still emerging EEC"⁵⁰, instead proposing the Fouchet Plan which emphasised intergovernmental structures.

Grandeur as an ideology makes the nation-state the most important aspect of international relations, both from France's perspective, and other nations. De Gaulle sought continuity in nations, referring to its people instead of its regime. At the time, de Gaulle would refer to Russia, and not the Soviet Union⁵¹. Indeed, Kramer argues that that "unlike the other nations of post-war western Europe", France continued to conceive of itself almost entirely in traditional nation-state terms"⁵². Furthermore, Hazareesingh describes this thinking as where "all states were primarily motivated by interests, and that grand ideologies such as communism or capitalism simply provided the language in which these conflicting interests were articulated. These interests were relatively constant, and were determined by national identity and character, geography, cultural attributes, and the legacy of past political experiences"⁵³.

Indeed, *grandeur* can cover quite a broad set of ideas and ideals. As well as representing de Gaulle's worldview/understanding of nations and nationalities, it also served a domestic function. Cerny argues that *grandeur* was in part designed to "create a new and deeper sense of national unity that would enable the traditional cleavages in French political life to be overcome by reinforcing the consensus around a strengthened and dynamic state that incarnated the general interest within a stable political system"⁵⁴.

However, de Gaulle's approach did not mark a considerable break from the previous regime under the Fourth Republic, and indeed kept with many of its strategic decisions. Treacher notes that de Gaulle maintained the *force de frappe*, NATO (he never withdrew France from the organisation as a whole), Franco-German

⁵⁰ Adrian Treacher *French Interventionism: Europe's last global player?* (Ashgate; Hampshire, 2003) p.27

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Steven Philip Kramer, *Does France Still Count?: The French Role in the New Europe*, (Center for Strategic and International Studies/Praeger; Washington DC, 1994) p.94

⁵³ Sudhir Hazareesingh, *Political Decisions in Modern France* (Oxford University; Oxford, 1994) p.276

⁵⁴ P G Cerny, *The Politics of Grandeur* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge; 1980) p.18

rapprochement, decolonisation and the development of the EEC”⁵⁵. Instead, Treacher argues de Gaulle changed the tone and style of foreign policy; “the fundamental choices open to France had not changed, de Gaulle just modified the way of dealing with them”⁵⁶.

Grandeur can therefore be seen as a codification of France’s post World War Two aspirations and policies developed under previous regimes into something which, according to Philip Gordon, formed “a crystallisation of the traditional French attitudes towards national security into a coherent, well-articulated and largely implemented doctrine”⁵⁷.

Grandeur can also be seen as a pragmatic approach for France to adapt to changing circumstances. Following the loss of much of its empire by this point, France had to adapt to the new global hierarchy, with her now occupying a middle power status. Treacher notes that de Gaulle “taught the French that they were no longer a great power in material terms, although a sense of moral predominance was instinctively retained”⁵⁸. France moving forward would therefore seek to take leading roles in larger power structures, injecting said “moral predominance” into more powerful entities. It is for this reason that membership, and leadership of the EEC, was considered important to French national interests.

This idea of *grandeur* was, by necessity, all encompassing. James F McMillan notes that de Gaulle was “... developing a renewed sense of national pride, to legitimise the Fifth Republic and to enhance the authority of French State”⁵⁹. France’s international stature would therefore be improved by a growing social, cultural and political unity within France itself.

Treacher argues that de Gaulle’s objective was always fixed on France’s international position, where “internal policies were hence only mechanisms for the pursuit of

⁵⁵ Adrian Treacher, *French Interventionism: Europe’s last global player?* (Ashgate; Hampshire, 2003) p.27

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Philip H Gordon, *A Certain idea of France :French Security and the Gaullist Legacy* (Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1993) p.10

⁵⁸ Adrian Treacher, *French Interventionism: Europe’s last global player?* (Ashgate; Hampshire, 2003) p.28

⁵⁹ James F Mcmillan, *Twentieth Century France, Politics and Society 1989-1991* (Edward Arnold, London; 1992) p.167

foreign policy. Economic, technical, scientific and even social progress was prioritised *behind* international progress”⁶⁰, linking it to what he finds to be de Gaulle’s obsession with rank, or France’s relevant standing in the international pecking order. Treacher also argues that this remains “the pre-eminent and unswerving guiding principle in French security policy strategic planning today”⁶¹. This thesis seeks to understand, in part, the importance of this thought process in the policies and actions of both Presidents Sarkozy and Hollande.

This thesis focuses on events and France’s position forty to fifty years after these ideas were introduced and expounded on. The context of de Gaulle’s comments are in a period of relative strength for France, even when considering decolonisation. However, as later sections of the Chapter show, the ability for France to dominate the international scene would become more complicated, especially within the post- Cold War setting. The research aims of this thesis deal with, in part, France attempting to utilise, and through its use increase its *rang* within the international order. However, this becomes increasingly difficult with multiple countries such as the US, Russia, and China all attempting to utilise the international order to achieve these same aims. As explained in the introduction, this thesis does not assume that Sarkozy and Hollande’s respective crises are the same. Each faced their own challenges, and in particular, other actors such as Russia had greater influence on the situation in Syria than were present in Libya. However, we can still seek to learn about the limits of France’s coalition building abilities within their own contexts.

De Gaulle believed, as many leaders did and still do, that a country’s legitimacy stemmed from the respect and support the citizenry afforded their country, and the kinship they felt for the countrymen⁶². This is exemplified in Parts II and III in the rhetoric of the two Presidents. Sarkozy is shown to categorise those participating in the Libyan uprising as sharing the same values and aspirations as Frenchmen, effectively creating a brotherhood between them. Hollande also explains this, though more in terms of the responsibility of France to act in a certain way. Popular support

⁶⁰ Adrian Treacher, *French Interventionism: Europe’s last global player?* (Ashgate; Hampshire, 2003) p.28

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Philip H Gordon, *A Certain idea of France :French Security and the Gaullist Legacy* (Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1993) p.10

for the Libyans was relatively high, whilst intervention in Syria proved to be less popular⁶³. For this reason, Hollande found himself on the defensive in an interview concerning his support for the intervention⁶⁴.

De Gaulle would argue that France herself was on a historic mission, that its leadership and brilliance would drive humanity forward. This idea of course would be very popular in any country, but especially in one where its “belief system [was] given toward national exceptionalism”⁶⁵. Philip Gordon concurs, noting that the French have historically believed themselves to be exceptional, whereby the world as a whole has held an interest in France’s culture and ideas⁶⁶. This idea has historically, and contemporarily, been the driving force behind France’s international projection of its own culture. (For a recent example, see Emmanuel Macron’s drive to push French as the most commonly spoken language in Africa⁶⁷.) This thesis demonstrates in explicit terms how these notions of French exceptionalism play key roles in the rhetoric of France, and its duty to intervene.

De Gaulle therefore had in mind an idea that whilst France would not be a superpower in the new, bipolar Cold War order, it could and should still be a great world power. De Gaulle himself wrote that “France is not really herself unless she is first rank”⁶⁸. De Gaulle was the one to take on this mission, and became the very embodiment of this idea to future French political figures.

This quest for France to be considered by the international community as a great country would subordinate all other concerns. Klaus Schubert stated that “the

⁶³ An IFOP poll showed that 66% of French people approved of intervention in Libya - John Vonicur, ‘Libyan War not a sure thing to save Sarkozy’ *The New York Times* 11 April 2011 https://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/12/world/europe/12iht-politicus12.html?_r=1 [accessed 10/06/2019], and 33% in favour of military intervention in Syria (Bruce Stokes ‘As French, US leaders push for Syria action, their people are united in opposition’ *Pew Research Centre* 9 September 2013 <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2013/09/09/as-french-u-s-leaders-push-for-syria-action-their-people-are-united-in-opposition/> [accessed 10/06/2019])

⁶⁴ Interview between Mr Francois Hollande and TF1 on the situation in Syria, and on government policy, 15 September 2013 <http://discours.vie-publique.fr/notices/137002098.html> [accessed 08/06/2019]

⁶⁵ Adrian Treacher, *French Interventionism: Europe’s last global player?* (Ashgate; Hampshire, 2003) p.28

⁶⁶ Philip H Gordon, *A Certain idea of France :French Security and the Gaullist Legacy* (Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1993) p.164

⁶⁷ Angelique Chrisafis, ‘Macron launches drive to boost French language around the world’ *The Guardian* 20 March 2018 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/mar/20/macron-launches-drive-to-boost-french-language-around-world> [accessed 06/01/2019]

⁶⁸ Charles de Gaulle, *Mémoires de Guerre* (Plon/Livres de Poches, Paris; 1954) p.5

‘Grandeur’ of the nation is the most important national concern... National independence and maximum world status have been characteristic imperatives of French policy. Any asset or resource which promises to strengthen the nation, which seems suitable for improving the global status and glory of France, becomes a worthwhile policy device⁶⁹.

France has always held this external outlook, and specifically “an inherent preoccupation with international standing and status and paranoia of what any loss of these would bring”⁷⁰. General Michel Cot referred to France’s secular global evangelism⁷¹, and President Mitterrand himself felt that France’s position in the world was better appreciated outside of France than within⁷².

This sentiment of course spread to its aid policy, and what it considered its humanitarian interventions. Grosser had a pragmatic view of France’s provision of aid to developing countries, seeing it as “the logical outcome of a national ambition to play a part wherever the future of the world is being decided”⁷³.

Indeed, the idea that France acts on behalf of those who have been disadvantaged is a powerful one, one which later chapters will show has been mobilised often in the modern context. Marie-Claude Smouts speaks of France, stating that “Her ambitions of grandeur still feed on the dreams of distant horizons. She cannot imagine herself powerful without a presence beyond her borders and an influence overseas”⁷⁴. Grandeur, as Grosser points out, is not a policy instrument, but an end unto itself⁷⁵.

Moïsi includes France with a select few countries such as the United States of America, Russia, and China “which believes, rightly or wrongly, not only that the

⁶⁹ Klaus Schubert, ‘France’ in Regina Cowan Karp (ed) *Security with Nuclear Weapons?: Different Perspectives on National Security* (Oxford University Press, Oxford; 1991) pp.162-163

⁷⁰ Adrian Treacher, *French Interventionism: Europe’s last global player?* (Ashgate; Hampshire, 2003) p.29

⁷¹ Michel Cot Président de Groupe de Réflexion, Fondation pour les Etudes de Défense, in an interview with Adrian Treacher in Adrian Treacher, *French Interventionism: Europe’s last global player?* (Ashgate; Hampshire, 2003) p.29

⁷² Francois Mitterrand, *Reflexions sur la Politique Extérieure* (Fayard, Paris ; 1986), reproduced in M. Francois Mitterrand et la politique extérieure’, *Le Monde*, 31 January 1986

⁷³ Alfred Grosser, ‘General de Gaulle and the foreign policy of the Fifth Republic’ *International Affairs*, vol.41 no.2, Apr 1963 p.201

⁷⁴ Marie-Claude Smouts, ‘The Fifth Republic’, in Paul Godt (ed) *Policy-Making in France*, (Pinter Publishers, London; 1989) p.235

⁷⁵ Alfred Grosser, ‘Le rôle et le rang’ in André Lewin (ed), *La France et l’ONU (1994-1995)*, (Collection Panoramiques, Condé-sur Noireau; 1995) p.64

world matters to them but that they matter to the world. For these nations, international identity is an essential part of national identity; they can and must make a difference on the international scene”⁷⁶. Dominique David argues that due to France’s multiple frontiers, facing in multiple directions, the fact that it marked the endpoint of the historic migratory route across Europe from East to West, and because France acted as the intersection of the Latin, Germanic, and Anglo Saxon cultures, it inevitably led to a settlement of numerous people’s with an inherently internationalist perspective⁷⁷.

De Gaulle felt that pursuing a strong foreign policy was essential to France’s domestic strength, stating that “[u]nless France and its people are devoted to great enterprise abroad, they find themselves... always in “mortal danger”, susceptible to internal collapse or foreign domination”⁷⁸.

This explains why France’s diplomatic network remains one of the densest and extensive diplomatic corps in the world⁷⁹. Furthermore, Treacher argues that this “national self-perception naturally raised the profile of the military as a foreign policy tool”⁸⁰. Hence de Gaulle and his security advisors considered France’s military power to be as important as its economic power as an indicator of France’s autonomy and national sovereignty. This synergy between the French military and France’s domestic policy culture as a whole can be best seen in its military parades during Bastille Day; something most unusual in the West.

Part of France’s keenness to exalt the power of the military can be linked to one of de Gaulle’s tactics, which was designed to aid France in its pursuit of *grandeur* and *rang*; that of its non-dependence. Throughout this thesis’ analysis, one finds a tension in the rhetoric of the Sarkozy and Hollande administrations. France seeks to act as part of a coalition, which would typically be assumed to be a weakness; France requiring the

⁷⁶ Dominique Moïsi, ‘The urge to be different’, *The Financial Times*, 25 July 1995

⁷⁷ Dominique David Chargé de mission auprès du Directeur, IFRI, in interviews with Adrian Treacher, found in Adrian Treacher, *French Interventionism: Europe’s last global player?* (Ashgate; Hampshire, 2003) p.29

⁷⁸ Edward A. Kolodziej, *French International Policy Under De Gaulle and Pompidou* (Cornell University Press, Ithaca; 1974) p.35

⁷⁹ The Lowy Institute ranks France as having the third largest diplomatic corps in 2017, with a total of 266 posts; comprising of 160 Embassies/High Commissions, 89 Consulates/Consulates-General, 15 permanent mission, and 2 Other Representations, found at <https://globaldiplomacyindex.loyyinstitute.org/#> [accessed 9 January 2019]

⁸⁰ Adrian Treacher, found in Adrian Treacher *French Interventionism: Europe’s last global player?* (Ashgate; Hampshire, 2003) p.30

aid of others to establish its goals. However, this is not necessarily as contradictory as appeared, if it is France who is driving others to act on her behalf. This, in many ways, could be seen as the greatest manifestation of France's *rang*, and, as this thesis shows, is an integral part of how France seeks to operate in the post-Cold War world.

The international world order established following the Second World War resulted in France holding a greatly depreciated position; considered a 'great power' in name only, as the Cold War made the international scene ever more bi-polar. France therefore reluctantly accepted an international framework which would, through its alliances and rules of solidarity, inevitably inhibit its independence.

Therefore, the leaders of the Fourth and Fifth Republics devoted much of their time to finding ways for France to re-establish its national prestige, whilst also still abiding by the various agreements and treaties. France's primary goal was of course to protect its national frontiers, both domestically and in its colonies, from foreign aggressors. Firstly, it was against potential German aggression⁸¹, before subsequently turning its focus to the threat of the Soviet Union⁸².

However, a number of factors led to a shift in France's foreign policy planning. During the course of the early Fifth Republic, with its rapprochement with the West German Republic and the seemingly decreasing risk of direct Soviet military intervention in France, war started to become less of a risk. With this increased security of the Hexagon, de Gaulle's Administration could turn its attention from amassing a large conventional land army to defend its homeland in a European arena, and instead look to France's outward goals, that being the re-establishment of its rank on the world stage.

Whilst total independence within any geopolitical context would be impossible, de Gaulle wanted France to have as much autonomy as possible. De Gaulle reasoned that the best way to achieve this would be to work to circumvent the bipolar world order established at the Yalta and Potsdam Conferences. Therefore, a third European bloc needed to be established: one which would not only allow France greater freedom to

⁸¹ Signed firstly with the United Kingdom (Treaty of Dunkirk 1947), and then with the UK and the Benelux countries (Treaty of Brussels 1948)

⁸² North Atlantic Treaty 1949

act independently, but also provide France a greater entity through which it could enact its wider security goals.

Furthermore, France felt that every country needed to be responsible for its own defence⁸³, and that France's past defensive failures stemmed from it being tied into agreements limiting its own strategic freedom. Wendl argued that "[n]either the alliance system before World War I nor the attempt to construct a system of collective security between the wars, saved France from great suffering and a feeling that she had been used as an advance pawn and as a source of manpower in terms of the peripheral strategy of the Anglo-American powers"⁸⁴.

France felt that the fact that America had allowed her to suffer for three years before deciding to step in on her side during the First World War, that the alliances with Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Romania and Yugoslavia all proved ineffective in containing the rise of 1930's era Germany, and the humiliation suffered at the hands of the British fleet at Mers-el-Kébir, were all indicative of the fact that France could not rely on other nations and alliances to keep itself safe.

Post-World War II, France's experiences with the United States did not inspire any further confidence. Both America's perceived failure to support France in its conflict in Indochina in 1954, and its veto against the Franco-British intervention in Suez in 1956 taught France that whilst America may be, in principle, an ally, it could not rely on its support.

These experiences taught France that it needed to become non-dependent on other nations, and sought to utilise the détente between the two superpowers to carve out a position for itself. The threat of nuclear war restrained the US's and USSR's actions, allowing France to act with significant autonomy with minimal costs and risks.

Further to this, France made little distinction between its own interests, and the greater interests for Europe. Indeed, Cole described France's mission as such: "Europe was to be led to independence from American hegemony under France's enlightened military

⁸³ Pierre Lelouche, 'Guidelines for a European defence concept' in Jonathan Alford and Kenneth Hunt (eds) *Europe in the Western Alliance*, (Macmillan/IISS, London; 1988)

⁸⁴ Wolf Mendl, *Deterrence and Persuasion: French Nuclear Armament in the Context of National Policy 1945-69* (Faber and Faber, London; 1970) p.70

and political leadership. Only France, the lone continental European nuclear power, was strong enough to provide an alternative to American leadership”⁸⁵.

In promoting its *grandeur* and *rang*, as well as justifying its leadership and non-dependence in Europe, de Gaulle would accentuate France’s ‘exceptionalism’. Pierre Lellouche argued that because of its history and culture, France would not be able to reject its founding principles of national independence⁸⁶.

Once France’s involvement with the Algerian conflict was concluded, de Gaulle sought to display France’s new autonomous foreign policy to the world. Between 1964 and 1967, France pursued active engagement with Mexico and Latin America, attacked the dollar-dominated international financial system, visited the Soviet Union, condemned the American War in Vietnam, continued to veto the United Kingdom’s application to join the EEC, and withdrew from NATO’s integrated military structure⁸⁷.

These moves, whilst being beneficial to France, also showed to the world that France would not show deference to the US as self-styled ‘leader of the Western world’. Instead, it would resist America’s attempts to gain greater influence in Europe by attempting to create a European security identity.

It is important to note that de Gaulle’s conceptualisation of French non-dependence did not mean that it could not join alliances, or work with other nations to achieve mutually beneficial goals. Instead, it meant that a nation had the freedom to act without undue limits. De Gaulle himself described his position in these terms: “[W]hat is independence? – certainly not isolationism or narrow nationalism. A country can be a member of an alliance, such as the Atlantic Alliance, and remain independent... To be independent means that one is not at the mercy (*à la discretion*) of any foreign power”⁸⁸.

⁸⁵ Alistair Cole, *French Politics and Society* (Prentice Hall, Hemel Hempsted; 1998) p.239

⁸⁶ François Léotard, ‘Défense européenne : le temps de la volonté’, *Le Figaro*, 3 January 1995

⁸⁷ Adrian Treacher *French Interventionism: Europe’s last global player?* (Ashgate; Hampshire, 2003) p.32

⁸⁸ Charles de Gaulle, quoted in Jolyon Howorth, ‘France and European security 1994-94 : re-reading the Gaullist « consensus » in Tony Chafer and Brian Jenkins (eds) *France: From the Cold War to the New World Order* (Macmillan, London; 1996) p.22

Menon argued therefore that de Gaulle's defence policy:

was not ideologically driven. Rather, it was based on a Machiavellian view of the nature of international politics and the duties of the state within an anarchic international system... Hence the philosophical underpinning of the need for national independence was simply the belief that reliance on another for security was inconceivable.⁸⁹

This is also reflected in a quote by Edouard Balladur, stating that a country's "international influence is measured by its ability to carry its partners with it to the international stage. But its power to do this is very weak if it does not have the means and political will to act by itself"⁹⁰. This Chapter shows many examples of France attempting to keep a balance with the US, between maintaining a level of independence whilst also seeking to build consensus. Indeed, the fate of the two interventions this research examines were, in part, linked to the management of Franco-American and Franco-British relations. Ultimately, one of the defining features of the Libyan intervention was the ability of France, the UK and the US to work together. Conversely, the failure to intervene in Syria is shown as a failure of understanding between the Hollande and Obama administrations.

Goldstein argued that the French political elites no longer believed that an alliance-based security policy would provide a reliable source of safety for France, nor that they were in a position to depend on the security patronage of a superpower⁹¹. This further enabled de Gaulle's transition towards this more non-dependent foreign and security policy.

As is explained in the next section, non-dependence would remain an important corner-stone of French strategic thinking. And yet, France would eventually end up re-joining the NATO command structure. The next section of this Chapter examines the development of French foreign policy from de Gaulle until Sarkozy as it pertains to France's security policy as it interacts with other multinational bodies.

⁸⁹ Anand Menon, 'From independence to cooperation: France NATO and European security' *International Affairs*, Vol 71. No.1 1995 p.20

⁹⁰ Edouard Balladur, in a speech given to the Institute of Higher National Defence Studies, Paris, 8 September 1994

⁹¹ Avery Goldstein, 'Discounting the free-rides : alliances and security in the postwar world', *International Organization*, vol.49 no.1 Winter 1995, p.47

1.2 Between Independence and Influence: France and the International Order

It is safe to say that France's relations with NATO had been somewhat contentious under de Gaulle (as was discussed above), especially following France's withdrawal from the NATO command structure in 1966. This next section charts how subsequent French Presidents sought to fulfil the principles set forth by de Gaulle, namely those of attempting to increase France's prestige on the world stage, without interfering with the idea of non-dependence.

The fundamental question from this period onwards for France is whether it could adapt to a new world order which was increasingly multipolar and inter-dependent. If France were to continue to export its power and values abroad, it would have to do so within a new framework. This thesis seeks to answer this question in the recent history, by seeing how Presidents Sarkozy and Hollande strove to exert its power and hold true to its Republican ideals, as well as encourage other members of the international community to either acquiesce or support France. Again however, we contextualise these developments by looking to how previous administrations sought to solve this problem, as well as examining historic interpretations to see whether they still apply to this day.

This part is separated into two sections. Firstly, it shows how France attempted to use the United Nations to try and bolster its own *rang*, as well as the ways it attempted to wield influence, somewhat unsuccessfully, in the former Yugoslavia and Somalia. It also examines Security Council mandated interventions, conducted under Chapter VII of the Charter of the UN in the post-Cold War period, which would lead to a major rethink of French strategic planning (1.2.1).

Secondly, we examine how France attempted to drive its own security through the Western European Union and European Union organisations in the post-Cold War setting. Upon failing to achieve its intentions, we see how France began to slowly move towards NATO once again (1.2.2).

1.2.1 UN Mandated Interventions and Humanitarian Intervention

Before France's humanitarian interventions are analysed, it is first important to understand why France would seek to intervene militarily at all. In its 1994 "Livre blanc sur la défense", the French government addressed the interests which France must defend. Firstly, it referred to "*les intérêts vitaux*", which are related to the very survival of the nation itself. If these interests are significantly jeopardised by any antagonistic force, then France is within its rights to mount "*la défense ultime*"⁹².

These *vital interests* include "the integrity of its national territory, including the mainland and overseas départements, of its air and sea routes, the free exercise of [its] sovereignty and the protection of the population"⁹³.

Secondly, there are the "*intérêts stratégiques*". The relationship between the vital interests and strategic interest had not been defined prior to the publishing of this White Paper. Suffice to say, the White Paper argues that both interests should be protected with the same vigour, and that it is for the government of the day to define what its strategic interests should be⁹⁴.

However, the White Paper does describe what some of the overlying priorities for France should be. Firstly, the maintenance of peace in the European continent, as well as on its southern and eastern borders, paying particular interest to the Mediterranean and the Middle East.

Secondly, it relates to France's economic interests. This includes France's various airways and sea-routes. As the White Paper notes, 82% of France's imports and 56% of its exports utilise shipping lanes, the majority of which use the Mediterranean, the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. Therefore, because of France's reliance on these routes, they would indeed be considered strategic areas. The strategic interests also include petrol and natural gas found in the Middle East and Algeria respectively.

Ultimately, Paul-Marie de la Gorce argues that 'peace' represents a French national interest, that France pursues no territorial expansion or nor does it seek to dominate

⁹² Le Livre Blanc sur la Défense 1994 <http://www.livreblancdefenseetsecurite.gouv.fr/pdf/le-livre-blanc-sur-la-defense-1994.pdf> p.24

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid. p.25

using its military⁹⁵. De la Gorce notes further that whilst worldwide peace is in France's national interest, this does not necessarily mean that it will seek out to maintain the status quo. De la Gorce notes that the purpose of the French intervention in the Balkan conflict was not to maintain the Yugoslavian Republic. Similarly, whilst the intervention in the Gulf War was to maintain the territorial integrity of Kuwait, it did not maintain the status quo in relation to Iraq's military or economic power⁹⁶. Ultimately, France's goal is to resolve conflicts in the most effective way, taking into account the specific circumstances of that conflict⁹⁷.

As was mentioned in the White Paper, geographical proximity indicates one of the criteria to establish whether an area represents a strategic interest for France. Such areas include of course North Africa, and de la Gorce discusses specifically the strategic significance of Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria.

In his analysis of the situation in North Africa, de la Gorce predicted that the greatest risk to stability in Morocco and Tunisia, and therefore the greatest risk to France's interests in the region, could be found in the prospective victory of "Islamism" in Algeria⁹⁸. Specifically, de la Gorce argues that an Islamist victory in North Africa would threaten France's cultural and linguistic influence in North Africa⁹⁹. De la Gorce also notes that migration from North Africa across the Mediterranean would increase, whilst pragmatism would mean that the economic exchanges would have to continue.¹⁰⁰¹⁰¹

The findings of this thesis do not challenge this conceptualisation of what represents the strategic interests for France. In particular, both Sarkozy and (especially) Hollande made the argument that beyond the moral argument to intervene, there was also

⁹⁵ Paul-Marie de la Gorce, *Intervention Extérieure et préservation des intérêts français* in Pierre Pascallon (ed) *Les Interventions Extérieures de l'Armée Française* (Bruylant, Brussels, 1997) p.36

⁹⁶ *Ibid.* pp. 36-37

⁹⁷ *Ibid.* p. 37

⁹⁸ *Ibid.* p.40

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁰¹ It is interesting to note here that de la Gorce argues that France's cultural and linguistic hold on North Africa is in of itself a strategic interest, separate from its effect on any other of France's relations in North Africa. This is a trend which will be seen later on in this chapter.

pragmatic interest in France upholding human rights and achieving peace as swiftly as possible.

In order to understand the interventions proposed and realised in Syria and Libya, it is first useful to examine the frameworks which allow for intervention. This part has been separated into three additional sections. The first section looks at UN mandated humanitarian missions (1.2.1.1). Taking into account all that has been stated above, it is therefore not surprising then that if peace were to be considered of strategic importance to France, it would seek to intervene when it could to encourage it. We then examine the various operations which were authorised under Chapter VII of the Charter of the UN (1.2.1.2). The next section appraises the effect of the War on Terror on both the UN and NATO, and how America's seemingly bullish attitudes placed France's reintegration into NATO at risk. This section helps give insight as well into Franco-American relations in recent times, something of increased importance in a multi-polar world. This thesis finds that one of the defining factors for whether the proposed interventions in Libya and Syria was successful was the support of the US. In Libya, the US/NATO support granted legitimacy to the action, as well as limiting the resources required by France to conduct such an action. In Syria, Obama's reticence led the US to find solutions beyond the use of force, effectively wrong-footing the Hollande administration.

1.2.1.1 Humanitarian Missions Mandated by the UN

Humanitarian intervention has become the focus of much literature of recent years. Specifically, the interventions in the former Yugoslavia, Somalia, and Rwanda signified that a new form of conflict, one based on humanitarian grounds with a largely international slant, was becoming more common.

Firstly however, one must consider what humanitarian interventions are. General Claude le Borgne argues that conflicts for humanitarian reasons are not a new concept. In many ways, the concept of ‘just war’ as espoused by Hugo Grotius justifies a humanitarian intervention¹⁰². Indeed, in *Le Droit de la Guerre et de la Paix*, Grotius argues that the law of nature allows other states to intervene and exercise an oppressed people’s rights of collective self-defence on their behalf¹⁰³.

General le Borgne argues that such interventions for the cause of ‘humanity’, as recognised by the church, had historically been viewed as acceptable. These arguments later became central to Marxist-Leninist policy, and was later broadly adopted by the West¹⁰⁴. In particular, this ideology, as adopted by the West, came to be known as Liberal Internationalism. Dunne and McDonald argue that this term is used far more by practitioners of International Relations than by academics, and is “underdeveloped both as a theory of global order and as a basis of foreign and security strategy”¹⁰⁵. As a theory, it bridges the gap between normative and analytical, which McDonald finds to be both an appealing, and problematic aspect of the theory¹⁰⁶.

However contentious the theoretical and analytical aspect of this idea is¹⁰⁷, the idea found political champions. Most notably perhaps was Tony Blair and the Labour Party of the United Kingdom. Two weeks after taking office, Foreign Minister Robin Cook gave a speech which stated that “the labour government does not accept that political

¹⁰² General (C.R.) Claude le Borgne, *La Strategie de Compassion* in Pierre Pascallon (ed) *Les Interventions Exterieures de l’Armée Française* (Bruylant, Brussels, 1997) p.175

¹⁰³ Hugo Grotius *On the Law of War and Peace* (A>C> Campbell trans, London 1814) (1625) Pt VIII

¹⁰⁴ General (C.R.) Claude le Borgne *La Strategie de Compassion* in Pierre Pascallon (ed) *Les Interventions Exterieures de l’Armée Française* (Bruylant, Brussels, 1997) p.176

¹⁰⁵ Tim Dunne & Matt McDonald, ‘The Politics of liberal internationalism’, *International Politics* 50(1) January 2013 pp.1-17 p.7

¹⁰⁶ Matt McDonald, ‘Foreign policy internationalism and political possibility’, *International Politics* 50(1) January 2013: 97–117.

¹⁰⁷ Full discussion of this point found in Tim Dunne & Matt McDonald, ‘The Politics of liberal internationalism’ *International Politics* 50(1) January 2013 pp.1-17

values can be left when we check in our passports to travel on diplomatic business. Our foreign policy must have an ethical dimension and must support the demands of other peoples for the democratic rights on which we insist for ourselves”¹⁰⁸.

This political idea would bloom into the notion of international community, most notably espoused by Tony Blair in his speech in Chicago in April 1999¹⁰⁹. In this speech, Blair discussed a great breadth of topics, all linked by the common theme of internationalism; explaining how global factors affected economics and politics. Specifically, Blair linked the idea of spreading “the values of liberty, the rule of law, human rights and an open society” as being part of a country’s national interest¹¹⁰.

Blair states that non-interference has been an important norm to the international order, and that it should not be dismissed. However, it also should not be used as a shield with which nations can protect themselves for any action. Acts like genocide and migration flows created by repressive policies cannot be seen as being internal matters¹¹¹.

The next issue to consider then is when should a state intervene militarily? For Blair, there are five questions which must be considered:

First, are we sure of our case? War is an imperfect instrument for righting humanitarian distress, but armed force is sometimes the only means of dealing with dictators. Second, have we exhausted all diplomatic options? We should always give peace every chance, as we have in the case of Kosovo. Third, on the basis of a practical assessment of the situation, are there military operations we can sensibly and prudently undertake? Fourth, are we prepared for the long term? In past we talked too much of exit strategies. But having made a commitment we cannot simply walk away once the fight is over; better to stay with moderate numbers of troops than return for repeat performances with large numbers. And finally, do we have national interests involved?¹¹²

Blair does not find these to be “absolute tests”, but merely questions to consider when looking at a situation¹¹³. As discussed in the later section (1.3), Liberal Internationalism has in many ways been replaced by the Responsibility to Protect

¹⁰⁸ ‘Robin Cook’s speech on the government’s ethical foreign policy’ *The Guardian* 12 May 1997 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/1997/may/12/indonesia.ethicalforeignpolicy> [accessed 10/06/2019]

¹⁰⁹ Speech by Tony Blair ‘The Blair Doctrine’, Chicago 22 April 1999 <https://www.globalpolicy.org/component/content/article/154/26026.html> [accessed 10/06/2019]

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Ibid.

Doctrine. Yet, there are a great many similarities between the two principles, and arguments raised by Tony Blair in his Chicago Speech will emerge in the statements of Sarkozy and Hollande.

This is understandable however, as the French at the time articulated the need for intervention in a similar way. General Bernard de Brassy de Guast argues that situations which would require humanitarian intervention can be defined by ‘chaos’¹¹⁴. The General utilises the Larousse dictionary definition of chaos as being situations of total confusion and general disorder¹¹⁵. General de Brassy de Guast argues that there are particular hotspots where these occur on the planet which are located in Africa and central Asia, spanning from the near east to the Great Wall of China¹¹⁶.

General de Brassy de Guast argues that there are three questions any nation, but specifically France, must ask before undertaking an intervention into “*situations chaotiques*”:

1. Is it necessary to intervene militarily?
2. If the answer is yes, what is the goal?
3. Finally, what kind of intervention is required?¹¹⁷

Of course, General de Bressy de Guast argues that international law, as it currently stands, theoretically prohibits interventions of this type. Article 2 of the Charter of the United Nations argues against the interference of states in the internal affairs of other states¹¹⁸. Therefore, in theory, a state needs to permit an outside force to intervene in an internal conflict. However, as Part 1.3 demonstrates, international law can be malleable to certain arguments, and the increased prevalence of the Responsibility to Protect Doctrine adds some level of ambiguity to the situation.

When considering an intervention, a decision will need to be made as to whether it needs to be direct or indirect. Indirect interventions involve supporting secondary

¹¹⁴ General (C.R.) Claude le Borgne, *La Strategie de Compassion* in Pierre Pascallon (ed) *Les Interventions Exterieures de l’Armée Française* (Bruylant, Brussels, 1997) p.167

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Ibid. pp.167-168

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Article 2, Chapter 1 Charter of the United Nations <http://legal.un.org/repertory/art2.shtml> [accessed 20/11/2018]

parties in conflicts, or enforcing trade embargoes. General le Borgne argues however that an indirect approach is not guaranteed to succeed (not that such a guarantee is granted with direct intervention). However, he does concede that blockades can, in certain circumstances such as Iraq, be useful if there is consensus in the international community¹¹⁹.

General de Brassay de Guast also notes that any military intervention of this type risks appearing as a return to colonialism¹²⁰. Often countries can be criticised as to where it does not intervene, as much as to where it does; the example given being the United States' intervention in Somalia, where the situation in Liberia or Sudan seemed as dire at the time¹²¹.

General de Bressy de Guast next discusses the goals which could justify a humanitarian intervention. Firstly, he argues that the protection of national citizens who are in danger could justify an intervention, such as what occurred with the Battle of Kolwazi in Zaire, or the Boxer Uprising¹²².

Secondly, it can be to support or protect humanitarian organisations, be they state-run, or non-governmental, who are themselves seeking to assist civilians. Of course, there exists a risk that as a situation continually deteriorates, soldiers will start to replace the aid workers. Furthermore, the situation could deteriorate even further as soldiers are not well suited to this humanitarian work¹²³. Finally, and linked to the second goal, according to General de Bressy de Guast, is if an intervention has been called upon by a UN Resolution. This will of course become a recurring theme throughout this analysis as France is often keen to demand multilateral responses to security issues.

Practically, it is General de Bressy de Guast's opinion that one of the most important approaches to obtain a more desirable outcome is to create as precise a mission objective as possible, both with a well-defined time frame, and mission locale (which he himself admits is often easier said than done)¹²⁴. He also argues that politicians give

¹¹⁹ General (C.R.) Claude le Borgne *La Strategie de Compassion* in *Les Interventions Exterieures de l'Armée Française* (Pierre Pascallon (ed) (Bruylant, Brussels, 1997) p.176

¹²⁰ Ibid. p.168

¹²¹ Ibid. p. 169

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Ibid. p.170

¹²⁴ Ibid.

those on the ground a free hand to make strategic decisions; and that the initial engagement often signifies whether the rest of the operation will be a success or a failure¹²⁵.

De Bressy de Guast also argues that a more discrete approach to military intervention is preferable. In particular, the approach by the Americans in Somalia (UNISOM II) represented a significant failure; where operations taking place under the watchful eyes of the media resulted in the deaths of 22 American soldiers, and the ignominious withdrawal of all UN troops following their failed UN peacekeeping mission¹²⁶. Indeed, de Bressy de Guast notes that in today's world, the media are often the first to arrive on the scene of a major disturbance, and as such, they need to be taken into account when planning any military intervention¹²⁷.

A successful military intervention on the other hand requires preferably a “discrete intervention on the ground with highly equipped and armed mobile units who already understand the region, and its language”¹²⁸. They should then remove themselves from the situation as soon as possible, so as to not become too entangled in the political causes of the ‘chaos’. This approach of ‘*Go in slow, get out fast*’ was used effectively, according to General de Bressy de Guast, by the French forces in Rwanda.

Historically, France has given significant resources to the UN's peacekeeping efforts. As of 31 August 1995 the total number of “blue helmets” deployed by all nations was 68,894. Of this number, France had contributed 7,386 troops, only coming behind the United Kingdom with 10,257¹²⁹.

These peacekeeping efforts are also known as ‘Operations for the Maintenance of Peace’. Flory describes these as “military or paramilitary operations which are organised out of necessity, from a failure to implement the mechanisms in Article

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Ibid. p. 171

¹²⁷ Ibid. pp.171-172

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ David Ruzié, *Les Modalités Juridiques de la Participation Française au Maintien de la Paix* in Pierre Pascallon (ed) *Les Interventions Exterieures de l'Armée Française* (Bruylant, Brussels, 1997) p.193 note (1)

43”¹³⁰, which is to say, acting in the absence of special agreements which seek to make armed forces available to the UN in advance.

As this would suggest, Ruzié notes that there are two different types of multi-national intervention. One type represents missions undertaken by states which have been authorised by the UN, but which are not specifically controlled by the UN; the other type representing the missions which fit more easily into the framework established by the UN¹³¹.

One of the principle objectives of the UN is to act to promote/maintain global peace and develop international security. The Security Council is given this responsibility by Article 24 of the United Nations Charter¹³². However, as Article 24 suggests, the task of promoting and maintaining peace does not rest solely with the Security Council. Indeed, the General Assembly may submit its own recommendations to restore international peace and security under the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Resolution 377A¹³³ (also known as a ‘Uniting for Peace’ resolution) where a lack of unanimity amongst the Security Council’s five permanent members has led to a failure to act.

Indeed, the first usage of the Uniting for Peace Resolution was against the United Kingdom and France. Their voting against Resolution 119, relating to the Suez Crisis prompted the General Assembly to use its power to adopt Resolution 1001, which established the United Nations Emergency Force I (UNEF I), to secure and supervise the cessation of hostilities, as well as calling for a cease-fire between the parties, and calling for all nations to stop introducing military goods into the area¹³⁴.

¹³⁰ M Flory “L’Organisation des Nations-Unies et les opérations de maintien de la paix *AFDI 1965* p.446 and in note p.456

¹³¹ David Ruzié, *Les Modalités Juridiques de la Participation Française au Maintien de la Paix* in Pierre Pascallon (ed) *Les Interventions Exterieures de l’Armée Française* (Bruylant, Brussels, 1997) p.193

¹³² Article 24 Chapter V Charter of the United Nations <http://legal.un.org/repertory/art24.shtml> [accessed 21/11/2018]

¹³³ Resolution A/RES/377(V) United Nations General Assembly 3 November 1950 [http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/377\(V\)](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/377(V)) [accessed 21/11/2018]

¹³⁴ Resolution A/RES/1001 (ES-I) United Nations General Assembly 7 November 1956 <https://unispal.un.org/DPA/DPR/unispal.nsf/0/14BCD994EE8F6558852560DF0067939D> [accessed 21/11/2018]

However, despite this example with the Suez Canal incident, France has been involved in a significant number of humanitarian interventions, either approved by, or led by, the UN. A brief history of these conflicts can help provide context for France's intervention in Libya, and its proposed intervention in Syria, allowing us to view the trends for how France has undertaken such interventions.

The first example to consider is the Korean War. The UN intervention began with the Resolution dated 7 July 1950. This initial Resolution requested that the member states of the UN render assistance to the Korean Republic, under the command of the United States¹³⁵. However, Resolution 83, as passed by the UN Security Council, ensured that the operation was conducted under a unified command structure under the flag of the UN¹³⁶. Amongst the twenty states involved in the action, France contributed a brigade of approximately 3,000 troops under the command of General Monclar.

De Gaulle had been dismissive of the use of the United Nations as an international organisation¹³⁷. He believed it to be another American instrument, designed to aid in the US's march towards American hegemony¹³⁸. This seemed to be supported not only practically, with it taking a leading role in the conflict in Korea, but also structurally, with the US transferring the remit over "Maintenance of peace issues" from the UNSC to the General Assembly, thereby negating the power of France's Security Council veto (an important signifier of France's *rang*)¹³⁹.

Tensions were further exasperated when the UN, emboldened by the transition of power to the General Assembly, started interfering in what France considered to be its internal affairs with decolonisation. Specifically, the supranationalist agenda of UN Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld led to much anger, with it becoming

¹³⁵ David Ruzié, *Les Modalités Juridiques de la Participation Française au Maintien de la Paix* in Pierre Pascallon (ed) *Les Interventions Exterieures de l'Armée Française* (Bruylant, Brussels, 1997) p.195

¹³⁶ Resolution S/RES/83 United Nations Security Council 7 July 1950
[http://undocs.org/S/RES/83\(1950\)](http://undocs.org/S/RES/83(1950)) [accessed 22/11/2018]

¹³⁷ Philippe Moreau Defarges, 'La France et L'ONU: le ralliement', *Relations Internationales et Stratégiques*, no.9, Spring 1993, p.112

¹³⁸ Adrian Treacher, *French Interventionism: Europe's last global player?* (Ashgate; Hampshire, 2003) p.63

¹³⁹ Shaun Gregory, *French Defence Policy into the Twenty-First Century*, (Macmillan, Basingstoke; 2000) p.170

particularly manifest during the UN's intervention in Congo in 1960, whereby France refused to provide any financial contribution to the mission.

Relations deteriorated further during de Gaulle's presidency after the UN's opposition to French military action in Bizerte, Tunisia¹⁴⁰. De Gaulle was also suspicious of the UN as he believed that it had supranational aims¹⁴¹.

However, de Gaulle learnt to adjust his thinking on the UN as he began to learn how to use the organisation to boost France's standing in the international community. He firstly worked to champion the principle of non-intervention of the UN in a state's internal affairs, giving legitimacy to his belief that France alone should be responsible for the decolonisation of its remaining imperial territories¹⁴².

Once most of France's colonies had gained independence, France needed to find another means of exerting its power and influence. The process of decolonisation by no means severed the links between the Hexagon and its former overseas territories (as mentioned above). Through its postcolonial links, France was able to rely on a not insignificant bloc of votes in the UN General Assembly, and other multinational organisations¹⁴³.

Confident in its position, both as a permanent member of the Security Council, and with the support of multiple nations in the General Assembly, successive French Presidents would encourage greater participation within the EU. Presidents Pompidou, Giscard, and Mitterrand all saw the UN as a mechanism to increase France's *rang* in the world. Mitterrand himself regarded that "France today is country the best received and the most popular because people know that France seems to be the country the best understood and most liked by all Third World countries [sic]"¹⁴⁴.

¹⁴⁰ Brian Urquhart, 'Un regard extérieur sur 50 ans de présence française' in André Lewin (ed) *La France et L'ONU (1945-1995)*, (Collection Panoramiques, Condé-sur-Noireau ; 1995) p.119

¹⁴¹ Alfred Grosser, 'Le Role et le rang', in *La France et L'ONU (1945-1995)* (Collection Panoramiques, Condé-sur-Noireau ; 1995) p.66

¹⁴² Adrian Treacher, *French Interventionism: Europe's last global player?* (Ashgate; Hampshire, 2003) p.64

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Francois Mitterrand, in an interview on French national television with Anne Sinclair, Dominique Bromberger, Michael Colombès, Paul-Marie de la Gorce, André Mazières and Michel Tatu, 18 December 1984

Mitterrand in particular increasingly sought French participation in UN missions as a means of increasing France's international capital. In 1982, France had submitted troops to the UN's mission in Lebanon (UNIFIL). Despite the mission requiring close co-operation with the US, Mitterrand felt that in these circumstances, France's international credibility and regional influence would be better served by participation¹⁴⁵.

However, this became the first of many interventions France would become involved with in the 1990s. France viewed its position in a rejuvenated UN Security Council as a source of national pride, and thereby pursued an increasingly activist approach. France would use it as a means to make pronouncements in the major crises of the time¹⁴⁶.

It viewed the UNSC and its participation in UN missions as being part of France's natural mission. Minister Léotard stated that:

Within its means, France will participate in peacekeeping operations. It knows that its history, culture and language bestow upon it a singular responsibility; namely that of one of the few nations in the world with a global vocation. It is this will and certainty which testify to the durability of its rank as a great nation.¹⁴⁷

An increased involvement in UN missions by France, as well as its general trend towards multilateral missions, was also useful in tempering the US's hegemonic position¹⁴⁸. Indeed, France started to view itself as one of the principle humanitarian powers in the world. Alain Juppé affirmed, upon assuming office in May 1995, that through these humanitarian missions, France could increase its rank in the world. He stated that "through imagination, determination, and a desire to hold its rank in the world, France can affirm itself as it wishes to be – a great world power"¹⁴⁹.

¹⁴⁵ Adrian Treacher, *French Interventionism: Europe's last global player?* (Ashgate; Hampshire, 2003) p.64

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ François Léotard, in Preface to *De Sarajevo à Kigali: Deux Années D'Interventions Extérieures de l'Armée Française Fin92-Fin 94*, Ministère de la Défense, Paris 1995. p.3

¹⁴⁸ Adrian Treacher, *French Interventionism: Europe's last global player?* (Ashgate; Hampshire, 2003) p.65

¹⁴⁹ Alain Juppé, quoted in 'A prime minister for France', *The Economist*, 20 May 1995, p.43

This thesis' findings indicates that this idea remains true to this day. Both in the rhetoric of Sarkozy and Hollande's administration, it is shown that France continues to stake its claim as an important power, whose role in the world is, at least in part, defined by its ability and willingness to intervene abroad to protect human rights.

Throughout the early nineties, France was keen to be supportive of the UN and its missions. In September 1992, the then Foreign Minister Dumas announced that France was ready to make available a force of 1,000 men for peacekeeping missions¹⁵⁰. Prime Minister Rocard promised that France, under the auspices of the UN, intended to always make itself available where international law needed to be upheld, or where lives were in danger¹⁵¹.

Treacher argues that appearing to be committed and generous with its resources afforded France a number of advantages. Firstly, it allowed France to present itself as an important global figure, thereby affirming its place in the international community (or its *rang*) as one of the major powers which took its role in upholding the international order seriously; and secondly, it meant that French representatives could be present and participate in any peace negotiations which would take place, allowing France to protect and promote its own interests. Furthermore, any French casualties incurred during these missions would not only show France's commitment on the international stage, but also afford it increased leverage "via an emotional hold on its international partners"¹⁵².

Treacher goes further, suggesting that once France had realised that taking an active role in the UN's peace support missions could be used to promote its own role in the international community, it made it a central tenet of its foreign policy¹⁵³.

This perception of its position in the UN leading to it being considered a major power resulted in it taking a largely disproportionate share of the UN's peacekeeping burden, both financially and militarily. The early nineties saw France devote ever greater

¹⁵⁰ Phillipe Moreau-Desfarges, 'La France et L'ONU: le ralliement' *Relations Internationales et Stratégiques*, no.9 Spring 119 p.121

¹⁵¹ Michel Rocard, quoted in Maurice Torrelli, 'Les missions humanitaires de l'armée française' *Defense Nationale*, vol.49, March 1993, p.65

¹⁵² Adrian Treacher, *French Interventionism: Europe's last global player?* (Ashgate; Hampshire, 2003) p.64

¹⁵³ Ibid.

resources to peacekeeping. In 1991, France was the fifteenth largest contributor to UN military operations. However, in 1992 France was contributing 10,000 of the 60,000 strong UN contingent on operations around the globe. Of the thirteen operations under the auspices of the UN in 1993, France was involved in eight of them¹⁵⁴.

¹⁵⁴ *The Military Balance 1994-1995*, (IISS/Oxford University Press; 1994) p.45

1.2.1.2 Multinational Interventions based on Chapter VII of the Charter of the UN

The use of multinational forces, as set out in Chapter VII of the Charter of the UN¹⁵⁵ has rarely been used by the Security Council. It effectively allows the Security Council to decide its approach in terms of how it will push for international security¹⁵⁶. This section details France's experiences of working as part of a multinational operation during the Gulf War. This section shows the initial difficulties France had in adjusting to the new post-Cold War order and multinational interventions. In many ways, the relationship between France and the US during the Gulf War can be seen as a mirror image to their relationship during the Syrian crisis. Furthermore, interesting parallels can also be drawn in comparing the relationships between France and Iraq at the time, and France and Libya. However, these parallels must not be overstated.

Following Iraq's annexation of Kuwait, the Security Council authorised military sanctions with Resolution 678, granting a grace period between its signing and 15 January 1991 for Iraq to abide by the previous resolutions demanding its withdrawal. Otherwise, the Security Council would use "all necessary means to uphold and implement resolution 660 (1990) and all subsequent relevant resolutions and to restore international peace and security in the area"¹⁵⁷.

After Iraq's failure to comply with the Security Council's demands, Operation Desert Storm was launched, under the operational control of the United States. Around thirty countries made up the multinational force, which included 20,000 French troops, whose own part on the operation was known as Operation Daguet¹⁵⁸.

At the time, France had no significant legal or historical ties to Kuwait. Mitterrand had always pursued a high profile foreign policy, and so when the opportunity presented itself, his first action was to dispatch the *Clemenceau*, an aircraft carrier, to the Gulf.

¹⁵⁵ Articles 39-51, Chapter VII Charter of the United Nations <http://www.un.org/en/sections/un-charter/chapter-vii/> [accessed 22/11/2018]

¹⁵⁶ SFDI *Le Chapitre VII de la Charte des Nations-Unies*, Colloque de Rennes (1994), éd Pedone, 1995 p.324

¹⁵⁷ Resolution S/RES/678 United Nations Security Council 29 November 1990 <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/575/28/IMG/NR057528.pdf?OpenElement> [accessed 22/11/2018]

¹⁵⁸ Guillaume Lasconjarias, Desert Storm and Operation Daguet, twenty years on in Les Chemins de memoire no211/ December to January 2011 <http://www.cheminsdememoire.gouv.fr/en/desert-storm-and-operation-daguet-twenty-years> [accessed 22/11/2018].

This was justified on the basis that France had a responsibility to uphold international law as a member of the Security Council¹⁵⁹.

However, the Iraqi raid on the French Embassy in Kuwait City, as well as the abduction of a French diplomat, granted France a reason to significantly increase its contribution to the region. Furthermore, the fact that the United States had been building up its military presence in the region for a while, and that the United Kingdom (who had historically been France's Middle East 'rival') had announced that it would be deploying an armoured brigade, meant that France could not be seen as being the "weak link in what was becoming a major international undertaking"¹⁶⁰.

Whilst France was building its military resources in the area, it also pursued more diplomatic solutions too¹⁶¹. As well as the obvious benefits to avoiding an armed conflict, establishing a diplomatic solution would also prevent what was going to be an American-dominated intervention. This would have the double benefit of building France's own *rang* in finding a peaceful solution, and also proving its own independence from America in a very Gaullist way.

However, France had a number of considerations to contemplate. Treacher notes that the Elysée has always considered its relations with the Arab World as a key part of its international *spécificité*, and France has a population of approximately three million *magrébins*. Also, France had lost its effective influence in Lebanon and Syria at that point, and needed to maintain the limited relationships it did have in the region¹⁶².

Amongst these relationships, based on French trade (including arms trade), was theirs with Iraq. Arms trade had begun as political relations improved in 1975. Between 1977 and 1987, France contracted to sell a total of one hundred and thirty-three Mirage F-1 fighters. The first transfer took place in 1978, whereby France provided eighteen Mirage F-1 fighters, and thirty helicopters. In 1987, *Le Monde* estimated the value of

¹⁵⁹ 'La France souhaite que le problème soit réglé au sein de la communauté arab' *Le Monde*, 11 August 1990

¹⁶⁰ Adrian Treacher, *French Interventionism: Europe's last global player?* (Ashgate; Hampshire, 2003) p.67

¹⁶¹ As seen in statement by President Mitterrand of 9 August 1990, Service de Presse de la Présidence de la République, Paris.

¹⁶² Adrian Treacher, *French Interventionism: Europe's last global player?* (Ashgate; Hampshire, 2003) p.67

French arms sales between 1981 and 1985 as being US\$5.1 billion, representing 40% of its total arms exports¹⁶³.

It was Mitterrand himself who decided to take the lead in the Gulf crisis. As has been explained previously, much of French foreign policy is articulated directly through the presidency and the executive. Mitterrand left his stamp by utilising a very personal style of diplomacy, calling on personal envoys like Michel Vauzelle (who at the time did not hold a position within the government) to conduct a lot of the negotiation¹⁶⁴, rather than members of the Foreign Ministry. Mitterrand also preferred to use those like Admiral Jacques Lanxade and Maurice Schmitt to correspond with the military establishment, thereby circumventing a critical Jean-Pierre Chevènement (who, at the time, was Defence Minister and founder member of the Franco-Iraqi Friendship Society, and later resigned in protest against the conflict).

The specific circumstances of the conflict meant that Mitterrand did not require parliamentary support; conscripts were not included, so Parliament did not need to authorise action, and as it was described as a policing on behalf of, and with the support of the UN, no declaration of war would be required.

Mitterrand made many of his proclamations on the crisis on television, rather than before the Assembly, as he sought to be personally managing it. Barbara Balaj notes that at this point Mitterrand had been able to add crisis management as part of the executive's remit¹⁶⁵.

Mitterrand's approach to the continuing crisis was not only criticised by Chevènement; he also faced challenges on both the left and right sides of the political spectrum. Leader of the *Front National*, Jean-Marie Le Pen felt that because none of France's vital interests were at stake, France should not play the role of *gendarme*. Furthermore, because France was "not an ally of the country that was attacked; in fact,

¹⁶³ 'Arms from France' found at <http://countrystudies.uk/iraq/99.htm> [accessed 25/01/2019]

¹⁶⁴ Andrew Rosenthal, Confrontation of the Gulf; US offers to fly Baker to Geneva to talk to Iraqi *The New York Times* 4 January 1991 <https://www.nytimes.com/1991/01/04/world/confrontation-in-the-gulf-us-offers-to-fly-baker-to-geneva-to-talk-to-iraqi.html> [accessed 25/01/2019]

¹⁶⁵ Barbara S Balaj, 'France and the Gulf War', *Mediterranean Quarterly*, Vol.4 no.3 Summer 1993 p.108

most of our interests are linked to the country that was attacking”¹⁶⁶, France should not involve itself.

On the opposite side of the political spectrum, the Parti Communiste Français argued that in deciding to intervene in the Gulf, France was only serving to protect the investments of American oil companies¹⁶⁷. Charles de Gaulle’s son, Philippe, led a faction of the Rassemblement pour la République to describe the whole crisis as an irresponsible American adventure¹⁶⁸. There was also fairly uniform resistance from the Greens and ecological lobby¹⁶⁹. There were also rumours of a general unhappiness at a French foreign policy which was content to send soldiers to support an authoritarian Kuwaiti regime, but not to support the Lebanese Christian Maronite army led by General Aoun as it was being driven from Lebanon by the Syrian regime¹⁷⁰. Despite this criticism however, general support for Mitterrand’s policy remained at around 66%¹⁷¹.

Whilst other Western European states submitted aircraft and ships to support the embargo and mine-clearing operations, only the United Kingdom and France contributed ground troops to the Gulf. Both these countries sought to distance themselves from any joint European Community response to the crisis. France in particular was keen to maintain control of the response within the UN Security Council, rather than encourage the involvement of the European Community. This of course had the effect of marginalising Germany. Indeed, the perception of the crisis in Paris was that of the rebirth of the idea of “Le directoire à trois”, a gaullian idea which suggested that the nuclear powers of France, the UK and the US work closely together to help sustain global security and co-ordinate nuclear strategy¹⁷²¹⁷³.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid. p.100

¹⁶⁷ R.E. Utley, *The French Defense Debate: Consensus and Continuity in the Mitterrand Era*, (Macmillan, Basingstoke; 2000) p.181

¹⁶⁸ Adrian Treacher, *French Interventionism: Europe’s last global player?* (Ashgate; Hampshire, 2003) p.68

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ ‘Still in step, mostly’, *The Economist*, 27 October 1990, p.29

¹⁷¹ Adrian Treacher, *French Interventionism: Europe’s last global player?* (Ashgate; Hampshire, 2003) p.68

¹⁷² A copy of the memorandum sent by de Gaulle can be found here: “*Memorandum from General de Gaulle to the President of the United States of America and to the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom*” 17 September 1958 <https://mjp.univ-perp.fr/defense/1958otan.htm> [accessed 19/12/2019]

¹⁷³ Alfred Grosser, ‘Le role et le rang’ in *La France et L’ONU (1945-1995)* (Collection Panoramiques, Condé-sur-Noireau ; 1995) p.66

Both the United Kingdom and France felt that their position within the UNSC granted them a special responsibility to act in crises such as these¹⁷⁴. Of course, the reverse could also be true, whereby the UK and France's failure to act in this circumstance could also be construed as weakness¹⁷⁵. This placed France in a position where if military force were to be taken, they had to be involved. Indeed, Mitterrand often spoke of France's duty in this situation, stating that it "must be worthy of its responsibility as a major power"¹⁷⁶.

Operation Desert Storm represented France's largest military deployment overseas since the Algerian conflict. Furthermore, 24 January 1991 marked the first time Mitterrand commanded french planes to bomb Iraq. There was a feeling that not doing so would have discredited them on the world stage. Howarth described the situation as being one "which spoke to the very heart of France's world influence, in which the chaotic claims of history and geography, of rights and aspirations, of force and persuasion, of pragmatism and ideology were central"¹⁷⁷. Lellouche concurred, finding that "to remain on the margins would be to make us [France] watchers of and not actors in history"¹⁷⁸.

Treacher notes that France's drive for *rang* led it to involve itself in all aspects of the conflict, even after growing domestic economic issues had led France to shrink its defence budget¹⁷⁹. Indeed, French strategic policy makers began to change their approach, feeling that France could maintain its *rang* on the global stage by taking leading roles in, and holding influence over, major international organisations like the EU or UN.

Treacher also argues that France felt that it had to be seen to be acting following a perception that it had been inactive during the reunification of Germany and the revolutions in Eastern Europe, and that Mitterrand felt that a situation, such as what

¹⁷⁴ Adrian Treacher, *French Interventionism: Europe's last global player?* (Ashgate; Hampshire, 2003) p.68

¹⁷⁵ Jean-François Deniau, 'Le rang de la France', *Le Monde* 7 September 1994

¹⁷⁶ François Mitterrand quoted in 'Mitterrand vows to pursue peace plan until last dawn' *International Herald Dawn*, 19 January 1991

¹⁷⁷ Jolyon Howarth, 'The President's special role in foreign and defence policy', in Jack Hayward (ed.), *De Gaulle to Mitterrand: Presidential Power in France*, (Hurst and Co., London; 1993) p.184

¹⁷⁸ Pierre Lellouche, 'Mitterrand ou l'art du zigzag', *Le Figaro*, 9 February 1994

¹⁷⁹ Adrian Treacher, *French Interventionism: Europe's last global player?* (Ashgate; Hampshire, 2003) p.69

was developing in Kuwait, afforded France an opportunity to be a global actor, at a time where it was becoming increasingly challenging to do so¹⁸⁰.

However, once the armed conflict began, France placed its forces under direct American control for the first time since the Second World War. Furthermore, France approved US tanker planes (used to refuel the B52 bombers) to fly over its territories, as well as use its airbases. Mitterrand justified this by stating that it was acceptable as France and America's interests aligned, and that they were part of the same coalition¹⁸¹.

Mitterrand, in deciding to side with the Western powers, risked alienating various Arab states, including those in North Africa. However, in this instance he felt that "France's standing among the Western powers mattered a great deal more than sentimental links with the Third Worlds, even though France's Arab links were one of the principal tenets of French exceptionalism"¹⁸².

Yet, as has been suggested above, French collaboration with the United States and the United Kingdom did not mean passively surrendering to circumstances. France was seen to keenly seek out a diplomatic solution to the crisis, using what Mitterrand called the "logic of peace"¹⁸³. In doing this, France was aiming to establish a wider solution to the crisis, creating a stable security structure spanning from Morocco to Oman. Indeed, France sought to differentiate its position from those in the alliance by attempting to delay military action to give greater time for the trade embargoes to have an impact. Beyond this, France also declared that it would not use chemical weapons, and that it would promote the UN to drive any subsequent peace settlement¹⁸⁴. Mitterrand clarified that in its participation in the coalition, France "would fulfil its engagements loyally", but after any ceasefire "we will once again be ourselves"¹⁸⁵.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ François Mitterrand, during a televised interview, quoted in 'L'épreuve cruelle de vérité aura lieu. Il faut que les Français y préparent leur esprit' *Le Monde*, 9 February 1991

¹⁸² Adrian Treacher *French Interventionism: Europe's last global player?* (Ashgate; Hampshire, 2003) p.69-70

¹⁸³ François Mitterrand in a speech in Oslo, 28 August 1990, quoted in 'Les positions de la France depuis le début de la crise', *Liberation*, 10 January 1991

¹⁸⁴ Adrian Treacher, *French Interventionism: Europe's last global player?* (Ashgate; Hampshire, 2003) p.70

¹⁸⁵ François Mitterrand, quoted in Patrick Marnham, 'Not quite as American as pomme tarte', *The Independant*, 26 February 1991

Mitterrand acknowledged that the US had been a principal actor during the conflict, but stated that France had been able to influence its actions. Playing up France's importance in the conflict, Mitterrand stated that it had performed its role and held its rank¹⁸⁶. Philip Gordon argues that "French participation in the (Gulf) war and cooperation with the United States can be explained as much by a French desire to avoid "marginalisation" as by any resignation to a minor or subordinate alliance role"¹⁸⁷. Marginalisation would seem to have been a factor in France's strategic thinking, but not just marginalisation from the Western powers. It has also been suggested that Mitterrand did not deploy more advanced aircraft to the theatre so that it had an excuse not to engage in raids deep into Iraqi territory, thereby absolving it of the responsibility for damage to Iraqi infrastructure and maintaining its standing with other Arab countries¹⁸⁸.

However, its attempts to appease both Arab and Western allies did not prove to be as effective as they had planned. France's proposal relating to an international peace conference for the Middle East in exchange for Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait was met with strong and immediate opposition from both Washington and London, who saw it as rewarding Iraqi aggression¹⁸⁹.

At the conclusion of the conflict, France and other European countries' efforts were perceived to have been side-lined by the United States. In the aftermath of the fighting, Lellouche queried what role the French could expect to play in the post-conflict negotiations. France's ground troops represented only three percent of the total ground forces deployed. Lellouche therefore found that France had attempted to *buy* its way to the negotiating table with only twelve thousand troops; something which damaged Mitterrand's claim that France was the world's third military power¹⁹⁰.

Indeed, the consequences of the conflict in Iraq and Kuwait were far more significant than had been originally anticipated. Laird argued that the lesson learned from the conflict meant that it had pushed "the French over the barrier to discussing the

¹⁸⁶ François Mitterrand, quoted in Colombani, 'Le rang de la France', *Le Monde*, 5 March 1991

¹⁸⁷ Philip H Gordon, *A certain idea of France: French Security Policy and the Gaullist Strategy*, (Princeton University Press, Princeton; 1993) p.179

¹⁸⁸ E.g. Samy Cohen, 'Le Président chef des armées', *Pouvoirs*, no. 58, 1991 p.34

¹⁸⁹ Alan Riding, 'War in the Gulf: France; French Policy Upsets Friend and For, at Home and Abroad', *The New York Times*, 24 January 1991

¹⁹⁰ Pierre Lellouche, 'Mitterrand ou l'art du zigzag', *Le Figaro*, 9 February 1991

necessity for change”¹⁹¹. Heisbourg credits the Gulf War as having as great an impact on French security and foreign policy as the Algerian War of Independence in the 1950s and 1960s¹⁹².

Much of the French political elite were still holding France’s nuclear deterrence as being the central focus of its defensive strategy. However, conflicts in the post-Cold War climate would require a different approach. Indeed, France’s efforts in the Gulf were restricted by a lack of military intelligence; an inability to project force sufficiently; outdated combat aircraft (especially with the Jaguar and Crusader aircraft, while the new Mirage 2000Ns had not been adequately prepared for conventional operations)¹⁹³.

Mitterrand also limited the French forces’ capabilities by not deploying conscripts to the combat zone. Whilst, as has been mentioned above, this carried the advantage of not having to gain authorisation from parliament, it pragmatically meant that its combat force needed to be drawn from forty-seven different regiments (including non-frontline personnel like doctors). Indeed, despite the French Army consisting of 280,000 personnel and having one of the largest defence budgets in the West, France could only contribute a maximum of 12,000 troops for Desert Storm. Treacher argues that only France’s naval showing could really be said to demonstrate its global *rang*¹⁹⁴.

France had not been adequately prepared for an overseas conflict against a well-equipped opponent, and especially as part of a coalition of professional forces. The French seemed genuinely surprised at how effective the American and British forces were able to integrate effectively during operations. Treacher argues that this softened the attitudes in some influential circles towards NATO¹⁹⁵. Marshall also observed that the Gulf War had led to “the jaw-dropping revelation that being outside NATO’s military structure limited France’s influence. That, plus the waning of the Soviet threat has helped bring it [France] back towards NATO”¹⁹⁶. This decision was also helped

¹⁹¹ Robbin Laird ‘The renovation of French defence policy’ in Stuart Croft and Phil Williams (eds), *European security without the Soviet Union* (Frank Cass; 1992) p.102

¹⁹² François Heisbourg, ‘La France et la crise du Golfe’ in Nicole Gnesotto and John Rober (eds), *L’Europe Occidentale et la Golfe*, (WEU Institute for Security Studies, Paris ; 1991) p.17

¹⁹³ Adrian Treacher, *French Interventionism: Europe’s last global player?* (Ashgate; Hampshire, 2003) p.70

¹⁹⁴ Ibid. p.70-71

¹⁹⁵ Ibid. p.71

¹⁹⁶ Andrew Marshall, ‘Old Rivals unite in a military embrace’, *The Independent*, 5 June 1995

by the fact that whilst France had not been as well prepared as it perhaps should have been, it still proved to be popular domestically for President Mitterrand, with him receiving an approval rate for his handling of the crisis of seventy-three percent¹⁹⁷.

This conflict brought a number of things into focus for the French leadership. It reaffirmed de Gaulle's notion that security policy needed to have global considerations to adequately protect France's interests. It also woke political elites up to new threats in a post-Cold War global system, including the increased proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, and the increased availability and acquisition of ballistic missile technology. Furthermore, France's reliance on its nuclear deterrent was of no use whatsoever in this conflict. Blunden argued that "[i]mplicit in the emphasis on threats from the South was the need to move closer to the 'North'"¹⁹⁸.

The aforementioned cases show that even when France's security was not directly at risk, it still felt the need to greatly involve itself in the affairs of other nations in order to protect its *rang*. It also provides an example whereby France seeks to intervene in the affairs of a country with which it shares business dealings. Chapter 4 will deal with the prior business engagements France had with Libya. However, Sarkozy chose to make a different choice with his engagement, seeking to create the circumstances in which Gaddafi would be removed from office by his enemies. This example also shows circumstances where a proposed intervention is complicated by differing objectives. As seen in Part III, the Gulf War represents, at least in terms of intention, a mirror image of the circumstances in Syria. In the Syrian example, however, it was France that pushed aggressively for a military option, and it was the US who pursued further diplomatic solutions due to other political pressures.

The dysfunction between France and the other nations' military also led to a serious change of thinking in Paris in its relations with NATO. The next part discusses in greater detail France's further integration within other international security apparatus.

¹⁹⁷ Alan Riding, 'War in the Gulf: France; French Policy Upsets Friend and For, at Home and Abroad' *The New York Times*, 24 January 1991

¹⁹⁸ Margaret Blunden, 'France after the Cold War: inching closer to the Alliance', *Defense Analysis* Vol.9, no.3, 1993 p.262

1.2.2 Towards a European Security Policy: WEU, EU, and NATO

The immediate post-Cold War environment was dominated by the United States exerting itself on the international community, for example: ex-Yugoslavia, Iraq, and Somalia. France's response to this was to try and counter these with shows of its own strength, as well as trying to draw Europe into closer coalitions with France to offset America's power.

France attempted to argue that since NATO had succeeded in its primary goal of deterring Soviet interference in the West, America would seek to withdraw from Europe. NATO was sixty-one percent funded by the US at the time, and was therefore a source of suspicion for French policy elites (France only provided nine percent of funding at the time)¹⁹⁹.

However, these attempts throughout the 1980s to draw the Western European powers away from just being the European pillar of NATO, and towards an alliance founded on European political union, were unsuccessful. Instead, a strategic shift began to take hold. Valance stated that there needed to be an "admission that we have transposed the ancestral dreams of French grandeur to the European level, and abandoned hope of a French dominated unified and powerful Europe"²⁰⁰. Vernet too noted that with the exception of some staunch Gaullists and the communists, there was consensus across the board that France should review its NATO status. The only thing holding them back was that no one wanted to be the first to come out against thirty years of security policy orthodoxy²⁰¹.

Ultimately, it would be Mitterrand who would step forth and broach this subject during a summit meeting with President Bush Senior at Key Largo in April 1990. At the same time, French officials were holding talks with their American, British, and German counterparts to explore the possibility of NATO reform and France's 'return'.

¹⁹⁹ Jean-Dominique Merchet, 'La Defense dépense tous azimuts' *Libération*, 5 June 1996

²⁰⁰ Georges Valance, *France-Allemagne: Le Retour de Bismark* (Flammarion, Paris ; 1990) p.285

²⁰¹ Daniel Vernet, 'The Dilemma of French foreign policy', *International Affairs*, vol. 68 no.4 Winter 1992-3 p.661

However, the report produced from these discussions was subsequently rejected by the Elysée²⁰².

Part of the reason Mitterrand felt the need to pursue new avenues was to contain the potential power of a newly reunified and resurgent Germany. However, the Key Largo initiative was swiftly rejected, in part due to a fear of the loss of French autonomy within an organisation dominated by America and Germany²⁰³. This then led to actions which seemed to indicate that France was returning towards a more 'France-First' approach to security.

France began actively seeking to sabotage NATO's efforts to broaden its areas of competence. Firstly, France challenged NATO's attempt to extend its remit to include security initiatives in Central and Eastern Europe beyond the limits contained in Article V of the Washington Treaty. It opposed close cooperation between NATO and what was then known as the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Mitterrand spelled out his position clearly during the London NATO summit in July 1990, and vehemently opposed an official role for NATO during the Gulf War, as well as refusing specific out-of-area missions for its Rapid Reaction Corps.

France also stated that NATO reform should have no effect on the EU's Intergovernmental Conference, where the EU was beginning to establish the European Security and Defence Identity. Therefore France argued that there should be no political element to NATO's function, and that it should instead focus purely on the defence of Europe. France also objected to the North Atlantic Cooperation Council for similar reasons, arguing that it would create "a second pan-European security organisation that still left the continent without a fully functioning mutual defence organisation"²⁰⁴. France instead felt more comfortable at this point with a looser, more ad-hoc coalition-based approach to security as opposed to a fully collective approach, which would carry with it obligations for France to act.

²⁰² Adrian Treacher, *French Interventionism: Europe's last global player?* (Ashgate; Hampshire, 2003) p.83

²⁰³ Margaret Blunden, 'France after the Cold War: inching closer to the Alliance', *Defence Analysis*, vol9 no.3 1993 pp.261-262

²⁰⁴ Adrian Treacher, *French Interventionism: Europe's last global player?* (Ashgate; Hampshire, 2003) p.84

France also decided at this time to withdraw the majority of its forces from Germany, refused to participate in the establishment of multinational and cross-stationing arrangements, as well as rejected a joint allied consultation on nuclear strategy.

Mitterrand first announced that all fifty thousand French troops based in Germany would be withdrawn by 1994 (with the exception of those who were part of a dedicated Franco-German Brigade). This therefore meant that the French military needed to find a new role for these troops, one which would preferably not make them subordinate to NATO. Fortunately for France, the answer would arrive with the creation of the Eurocorps.

The establishment of the Eurocorps was at least in part designed to rival NATO, though Defence Minister Joxe was keen to communicate that it was not intended to be considered a European army²⁰⁵. Despite this claim however, it quickly grew into a fighting force of forty-five thousand troops.

France was keen for the Eurocorps to represent a European alternative to NATO. Beyond serving the purpose of taking responsibility for the security of Europe away from NATO, this was also tied the German military into a security apparatus which was itself beholden to the European Union²⁰⁶.

However, France would not be able to keep the Eurocorps completely independent. Once lengthy negotiations over the terms of the functioning of the Eurocorps had been concluded, the agreement signed in January 1993 included terms which would make the force available to NATO in the event that one of the member states had been attacked²⁰⁷. This meant that they could therefore be deployed under Article V of the NATO Treaty as either a main defence force, or as a rapid response force. By this point, the force had already been used by the Western European Union and the UN for peacekeeping and humanitarian missions.

²⁰⁵ Pierre Joxe, in a speech to the Western European Union's Parliamentary Assembly, quoted in *Europe*, no.5744, 5 June 1992

²⁰⁶ Daniel Vernet, 'The Dilemma of French Foreign Policy' *International Affairs*, vol 68 no.4 Winter 1992-3 p.658

²⁰⁷ As was declared in NATO Final Communiqué of the Ministerial Meeting of the North Atlantic Council M-NAC—2(92)206 Brussels 17 December 1992 <https://www.nato.int/docu/comm/49-95/c921211a.htm> [accessed 02/02/2019]

However, the Eurocorps could only be commanded by these supranational institutions if there had been a preliminary agreement by the various governments who contributed troops to the force and there had been established a mission plan which was then followed. The French in particular felt these terms were important as they were outside of NATO's command structure²⁰⁸. However, despite these terms, it was difficult to see how France was not moving ever closer towards returning to NATO's integrated command. France vehemently denied this, but as has been shown above, France had already been content to surrender some military control of its armed forces to the US in the Iraq War. Furthermore, the aforementioned Franco-German Brigade (which had joined the Eurocorps) was deployed in 1997 as part of NATO's Stabilisation Force in Bosnia.

France was soon to realise that its dream of the European centric defence strategy led by European nations would not be viable in the way they had imagined. The Germans seemed to be reluctant in replacing NATO with any EU body. Lellouche argues that there was a miscalculation by the Elysée that they seemingly positioned NATO in opposition to the WEU and 'Europe', thereby giving the impression in Bonn, London and Washington that it was attempting to destabilise NATO and drive the Americans away²⁰⁹. Furthermore, France failed to acknowledge how its actions would look to smaller European nations, who were more suspicious of a European security strategy dominated by UK-France-Germany than one which was dependent on the US²¹⁰.

Furthermore, there were budget concerns to be considered. No European country was willing to incur the significant additional costs which would be accumulated in creating a new security structure, especially as on the whole, the defence budgets of EU members were declining²¹¹. Generally, France had underestimated the hunger for European nations to take a greater share of the Security burden to supplant American military presence; indeed Baurmel acknowledged that "we desire the emergence of a

²⁰⁸ Adrian Treacher, *French Interventionism: Europe's last global player?* (Ashgate; Hampshire, 2003) p.84

²⁰⁹ Pierre Lellouche, 'La France et l'OTAN' *Relations Internationales et Stratégiques* no. 7, Autumn 1992, p.97

²¹⁰ Jean-Jacques Patry, 'L'OTAN dans l'oeil du cyclone', *Défense*, no67, March 1995 p.12

²¹¹ Combined defence budgets of the EU15 at the end of 1996 was approximately half of the defence budget of the US: Dominique Lagarde, 'OTAN: la bataille d'Europe' *L'Express*, 5 December 1996 p.85

European security and defence pole, but were virtually the only ones who really want it”²¹².

Indeed, as has been mentioned above, France in the 1990s had suffered for not being present at the NATO decision-making table. France’s consistent declarations against reintegration in NATO had reduced her influence in security policy. It also meant that the Allies could not reliably discern France’s intentions, and therefore became more drawn to a relative clarity being produced by America.

As France was also becoming increasingly involved in peacekeeping missions, it would also require further coordination with its allies. French officials became ever more aware of the need to reintegrate as, despite its efforts otherwise, it was clear that only NATO had the capability to organise an international response to an attack on the integrity of one of its members. However, Mitterrand could never completely reintegrate France into the military structures of NATO during his presidency, despite his softening approach towards the organisation²¹³. This approach was carefully thought out so as to be supportive enough of NATO so that the organisation and its allies would not feel that France was attempting to destabilise it, whilst not so supportive as to preclude the possibility of another entity replacing it, be it the WEU or something else²¹⁴. Treacher argues that part of the reason for this could have been that Mitterrand did not want to “leave a legacy as having betrayed a supposedly basic, if illusory, tenet of Gaullist security policy – autonomy from American hegemony”²¹⁵.

Therefore, Mitterrand was only willing to take marginal steps at reintegration with NATO, as he felt that the arrangement as it stood was suitable enough (as evidenced, according to him, by the experiences in the Gulf War)²¹⁶.

Opinion on full reintegration at this point was rather split. Mitterrand’s policy towards NATO ran contrary to the advice of the Defence Ministry, who, with the support of

²¹² Jacques Baumel, ‘La France et l’OTAN’ *Relations International et Stratégiques* no. 7, Autumn 1992, p.107

²¹³ He admitted as much on numerous occasions, for example: during his televised broadcast regarding nuclear dissuasion Elysée Palace, Paris 5 May 1994

²¹⁴ Shaun Gregory, *French Defence Policy into the Twenty-First Century* (Macmillan, Basingstoke; 2000) p.41

²¹⁵ Adrian Treacher, *French Interventionism: Europe’s last global player?* (Ashgate; Hampshire, 2003) p.84

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*

the armed forces, believed that greater reintegration with NATO would be beneficial (based on the army's own experiences in the Gulf and Bosnia)²¹⁷. However, as has been suggested above, others argued that NATO was a product of its time, and that after having won the Cold War and resisted Soviet aggression in Europe, it would disband. American withdrawal from the continent would swiftly follow, and Europe would need to stand on its own two feet to develop its own security policy with its own security apparatus²¹⁸.

It arrived as quite a shock to some French observers when NATO reinvigorated and reinvented itself in the post-Cold War security climate. As early as May 1991, NATO established the Rapid Response Force, made up of British, Dutch, and German Troops after having given itself an 'out-of-area' role.

With NATO giving itself additional roles and capabilities, it seemed unlikely to the French at this time that a successor or parallel European security would emerge. Lansford argued that the effective ways in which NATO had adapted to the changing environment, and the ineffective nature of both the WEU and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, meant that the likelihood of a new, effective security organisation emerging at this point in time was slim. Instead, the newly incoming President Jacques Chirac would have to operate France's security policy within the global security framework as it stood.²¹⁹ This would mean that as international military interventions grew, French security planners would have to take account of the possible interactions with NATO. Freedman argued therefore that this would mean that "Gaullist notions of a dignified independence would have to be qualified by the logic of alliance"²²⁰.

Therefore, France would slowly draw itself into the day-to-day functions and policy-making apparatus of NATO. France would be increasingly supportive of NATO declarations which affirmed the European defence and security identity within the organisation (London 1990, Rome 1991, Brussels 1994, Berlin 1996). The French

²¹⁷ Ibid.

²¹⁸ Alan Riding, 'Paris moves to end isolation in NATO', *International Herald Tribune*, 30 September 1992

²¹⁹ Tom Lansford, 'The Question of France: French Security Choices at century's end', *European Security*, vol.5, no.1, Spring 1996, p.47

²²⁰ Lawrence Freedman, *The Evolution of Nuclear Strategy* (Macmillan, Basingstoke; 1989) p.323

even acknowledged that in order to offset the potential rise of German power, it would need to draw itself closer to the US and the UK²²¹.

In March 1991, France announced that it would be participating in NATO's Strategy Review Group, though the French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas was quick to argue that this did not mean there had been a change in France's dealings with NATO²²². Mitterrand had earlier announced that France would be allowed to participate in NATO's Air Command and Control System, though once again French officials were keen to confirm that "this does not modify our general doctrine of staying out of the integrated command"²²³. In 1993 and 1994 France established three permanent missions at standing NATO commands. Furthermore, French troops had been put under the control of NATO. These changes had meant that it was essential that the French Defence Minister sit on and be heard in the NATO meetings which could decide the fate of French military units.

In September 1992, the then Defence Minister Pierre Joxe hinted that France might take a more active role in NATO's politico-military activities, possibly even a return to the Defence Planning and Military Committees²²⁴. Also in 1992, the Elysée also acknowledged that NATO was indeed capable of undertaking actions of collective security on behalf of either the UN or the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe. As has been mentioned above, the Eurocorps units had been authorised for usage in the event of a member of NATO having been attacked, (France had only previously accepted the principle of 'operative control')²²⁵. Then, following the NATO Defence Ministers meeting in Seville in October 1994, the Balladur government produced a *Livre Blanc* which would state that the Chief of Staff could

²²¹ Martin Woollacott, 'The great Atlantic drift away', *The Guardian*, 10 February 1995

²²² Quoted by Claire Tréan in 'La Relation de la France à l'OTAN n'est pas modifiée, affirme M. Roland Dumas', *Le Monde*, 23 March 1991

²²³ Edward Cody, 'France moves to join new NATO defense unit', *The Washington Post* 9 February 1989 https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1989/02/09/france-moves-to-join-new-nato-defense-unit/a20022d0-f515-4ade-8775-8c9b9beab68e/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.04c8eeee97e0 [accessed 02/02/2019]

²²⁴ Alan Riding, 'France moves to Take Bigger Part in Defining New Role or NATO' *The New York Times*, 30 September 1992 <https://www.nytimes.com/1992/09/30/world/france-moves-to-take-bigger-part-in-defining-new-role-for-nato.html> [accessed 02/02/2019]

²²⁵ Maurice Vaisse and Clémence Sebag, 'France and NATO: A History' *Politique Étrangère* 2009/5 Pages 139-150 (e-version) <https://www.cairn.info/revue-politique-etrangere-2009-5-page-139.htm#> [accessed 02/02/2019]

participate in NATO's Military Committee whenever French troops are to be deployed or whenever France's interests are a factor²²⁶.

Based on the situation as it stood, including the aforementioned lack of appetite that Europe supplant NATO with its own security organisation, France needed to be pragmatic in this situation. As Quatremer explained the situation: "the "European defence identity" will be built within NATO or will not be built at all"²²⁷. The leadership in Paris began to acknowledge NATO as being essential for the development of the European Security and Defence Identity into something more defined. In order to achieve a more robust ESDI, France would need to engage in a more wide-ranging and less antagonistic European Security dialogue. Indeed, "French negotiators had to help forge Europe's new security shapes via NATO reform before France's favourable strategic position of the Cold War was finally eroded"²²⁸. Vernet explains that "France, which had for a time entertained the notion of a European defence identity that was allied to and complimented the United States, but which was independent, has just made a double acknowledgement: the Europeans have neither the financial means nor the political will to be independent. With our principal partners integrated in NATO, it is in NATO that the "European defence identity" has to be asserted"²²⁹. Indeed the Chirac/Juppé administration felt that in order for France to be effective on the European stage, it needed to act *within* the organisation, and not outside of it. During the Cold War, France's status as an independent ally of NATO had been useful, but changes in the post-Cold War climate meant that it had to adapt. Chirac realised that France would need to sacrifice some measure of what they perceived as national sovereignty so as to be more effective on the global stage. This so-called loss of sovereignty would not however, as de Montbrial noted, be at the cost of its European objectives: "Europe will exist only if it is self-defined, and if it acquires the means to be autonomous. Hence, Paris earnestly desires its preservation of a strong

²²⁶ Pierre Baylau, 'La France revient' *Le Point*, 24 September 1994 p.20

²²⁷ Jean Quatremer, Editorial in *Libération*, 17 January 1996

²²⁸ Adrian Treacher, *French Interventionism: Europe's last global player?* (Ashgate; Hampshire, 2003) p.90

²²⁹ Daniel Vernet, 'L'OTAN fait une place à l'Europe en sein' *Le Monde*, 4 June 1996

Atlantic alliance, but one whose European pillar is on equal footing with the American pillar”²³⁰.

The next step in France’s slow reintegration with NATO came in December 1995, where Foreign Minister Hervé de Charette declared that France was fully returning to all non-integrated military bodies of NATO (with the exception of the Nuclear Planning Group), as well as committing to improve its working relations with Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe. Chirac did posit however that Europe should take some form of leadership role within the organisation so as to produce a more equal partnership. Prime Minister Balladur was open with his frustrations, asking in 1994: “must the Europeans constantly wait for an American decision in order to know what they can do in the area of security? ... The Europeans must be able to take decisions and act on their own”²³¹. The Chief of Defence Staff Admiral Jacques Lanxade reiterated this point regarding European parity within the organisation: “[t]he matter at issue today is not to set up a military organisation responsible for Europe’s defence instead of NATO, but to establish the structures required to allow us Europeans to act in an autonomous way if need be”²³².

Europeans would be given some greater autonomy however through the Combined Joint Task Forces (CJTF). This was a European force which would be able to use NATO’s communication, intelligence and logistics capabilities within the organisation’s command structure. As has been stated again and again above, America dominates NATO, so what was really on offer here was the ability for Europe to construct its own response to international crises where America would prefer not. However, it was argued that due to America’s dominance within the organisation, France felt that it would instead effectively result in American vetoes, and not the development of a distinctly European security identity.²³³

²³⁰ Thierry de Montbrial, ‘French “exception” yes, and it isn’t likely to fade soon’ *International Herald Tribune*, 14 September 1995

²³¹ Edouard Balladur, in a speech to the Western European Union’s Parliamentary Assembly, quoted in *Atlantic News*, no.2675, 2 December 1994

²³² Jacques Lanxade, ‘French defence policy after the white paper’, *RUSI Journal* vol.139, no.2 April 1994, p.18

²³³ Adrian Treacher, *French Interventionism: Europe’s last global player?* (Ashgate; Hampshire, 2003) p.92-93

Resistance to this idea was much stronger within the Mitterrand camp than it was with Balladur, but yet, both parties began to come round to the idea that NATO should be able to undertake military operations outside of its own area²³⁴. As both parties began to warm to the idea, France began to intimate that it would join the command structure of NATO. This was partially so that it could push the Combined Joint Task Forces (CJTF) idea, thinking that it had the potential to give the Europeans increased freedom and autonomy when dealing with out-of-areas situations. The French used the CJTF concept to justify its growing closer to their allies, without having to transgress the gaullian notion of not completely reintegrating into the NATO command structure.

France promised its cooperation in NATO's core functions, its signature for the organisation's New Strategic Concept, and its reluctant agreement to the creation of the NACC, in exchange for America's acknowledgment of an increasing European defence identity. Paris reasoned that NATO integration would eventually dissipate, thereby justifying its short term movement towards the organisation. The French preferred initiatives such as the CJTF precisely because it emphasised cooperation over more formal integration²³⁵. It was this argument which Chirac used to justify his actions before his domestic audience. Furthermore, he was able to argue that any '*retour*' to NATO would not be problematic as the organisation itself had significantly changed, and it was moving towards the "French vision of the global security environment"²³⁶.

The July 1996 NATO summit where the CJTF was formally ratified also marked the further movement closer towards NATO's military structures by France. The French were keen to argue that a real European security would emerge from NATO, where Europe would be able to undertake operations independent of North America. However, Treacher notes that there was no real guarantee of this happening. Many of the French negotiating team were hoping that the developments within NATO would result in their desired outcome. Indeed, many political elites did not see why they had to surrender so much sovereignty to NATO when they felt they had already secured

²³⁴ 'The defence of Europe: it can't be done alone', *The Economist*, 25 February 1995, p.21

²³⁵ A view supported by Jean-Yves Haine, Maitre de Conférences, Centre d'Études des Conflits, Paris Institut d'Études Politiques, in an interview with Adrian Treacher in Adrian Treacher, *French Interventionism: Europe's last global player?* (Ashgate; Hampshire, 2003) p.92

²³⁶ Adrian Treacher, *French Interventionism: Europe's last global player?* (Ashgate; Hampshire, 2003) p.92

recognition of a separate European Security identity from NATO²³⁷. The former Defence Minister Paul Quilès felt that there was some way to go in terms of exploring the possibilities for the ESDI within the EU/WEU framework²³⁸.

Indeed, Chirac's critics felt that France would have had a greater influence on the outside of NATO than within it. Quilès went further, arguing that instead of representing the *Europeanisation* of NATO, it effectively made the United States a member of the European Union²³⁹. Pierre Debezies felt that France had lost an essential part of its *spécificité*²⁴⁰, and Hubert Védrine argued that but for France's nuclear deterrent at this point, France would have been completely trivialised²⁴¹.

Treacher noted that at the time, there seemed to be little consensus between Paris and Washington as to what this most recent agreement meant. France portrayed NATO as moving more towards a "looser collective security organisation with the capacity for variable geometry", and not what the Americans imagined, which was a "traditional[ly] integrated military format"²⁴².

Furthermore, France was content to push for political, rather than military controls over NATO's missions, advocating for a greater say in its operations by national governments and the NATO Advisory Council. However, doubts began to emerge as to whether America would be willing to allow NATO assets to be used in European operations where it would not control the headquarters (authorisation for said operations would require unanimous support in the NAC, effectively giving each member state a veto over the operations)²⁴³. This would also mean that America would have complete control over European CJTFs, in both determining the mission and allocating its resources.

²³⁷ Ibid.

²³⁸ Paul Quilès, cited in *Les Echos* (editorial), 17 January 1996

²³⁹ Paul Quilès, 'Défense européenne et l'OTAN: la dérive', *Le Monde*, 11 June 1996

²⁴⁰ As cited by Adrian Treacher in Adrian Treacher, *French Interventionism: Europe's last global player?* (Ashgate; Hampshire, 2003) p.93

²⁴¹ Hubert Védrine, former external affairs advisor to Francois Mitterrand, in interview with Adrian Treacher, Paris, July 1996, as cited in Adrian Treacher *French Interventionism: Europe's last global player?* (Ashgate; Hampshire, 2003) p.93

²⁴² Adrian Treacher, *French Interventionism: Europe's last global player?* (Ashgate; Hampshire, 2003) p.93

²⁴³ For example, 'A New NATO', *The Economist*, 9 December 1995

There was also some dispute between the US and Europe regarding the allocation of NATO commands. This debate also gave insight into France's approach to its own, and European Security, when Foreign Minister de Charette stated:

[w]hen leaders of influential European countries like Germany or France travel around the world, they carry Europe on the soles of their shoes, so to speak. I do not mean by that that every time France speaks, it expresses the point of view of Europe. France has its own foreign policy, which it alone defines, but like the other European countries, it bears part of Europe's collective responsibility.²⁴⁴

As has been mentioned above, the *rapprochement* with NATO was seen as being controversial. However, closer examination showed that this was not the case. The *Defence Livre Blanc* 1994 made the same demands as was claimed in 1966; i.e. the right for France to deploy its troops as it saw fit, the existence of an independent nuclear policy, the maintenance of national control over its territorial integrity, and the freedom to define what security means to France, and act accordingly at a time of crisis²⁴⁵.

Furthermore, Chirac's approach to NATO seemed logical when understood in the context of French security policy from the 1980s onwards under both Socialist and centre-right administrations. Moïsi justified Chirac's approach, in stating that:

In pursuing a normalisation of relations between France and NATO, Jacques Chirac is only prolonging, in a more spectacular fashion, a stance and policy already practised by his predecessors. It certainly does not represent a revolutionary rupture or violation of a taboo, but rather a gradual, legitimate and realistic revolution.²⁴⁶

The conflict in Yugoslavia changed France's perception of both its own ability to project power, and of Europe's security architecture, vis-à-vis NATO's. France realised, as Beylau suggests, that "NATO [wa]s in full evolution, and France cannot allow itself to remain too far to the margins of a military tool which is indispensable for the crises in which the French are involved"²⁴⁷.

Treacher argues that at this point, *rang* and *grandeur* were the dominant driving forces for France's security policy, and not independence. Indeed, he argues that independence, or non-dependence as it was described, was only ever used as

²⁴⁴ Hervé De Charette, 'A new dialogue between equals', *Time*, 27 January 1997

²⁴⁵ *Livre Blanc sur la Défense 1994*, (Union Générale d'Éditions, Paris; 1994) p.67

²⁴⁶ Dominique Moïsi, 'De Mitterrand à Chirac', *Politique Étrangère*, vol.60, no.4, Winter 1995, p.885

²⁴⁷ Pierre Beylau 'OTAN: la France revient', *Le Point*, 24 September 1994, p.30

justification for certain circumstances. He argues that it was rational for France to downplay its non-dependence in the context of the era²⁴⁸. Pfaff asserts that this was simply an “old policy in a new guise... France has come back to NATO because NATO has been reactivated as agent of Western policy in Bosnia. Since 1990 the alliance had lacked a post-Cold War mission. Now it provides the only game in town”²⁴⁹. This of course did not rule out future shifts in policy regarding NATO, but at this particular point in time, it made sense in this particular set of circumstances.

The findings of this thesis indicate that this balance between collaborating as part of a coalition and acting independently continues to play an important part in the security considerations of French foreign policy, but that, at least in the two examples this research analyses, attempting to drive its security policy via coalition seems to be the most dominant force. This is particularly the case in relation to Syria, where France was offered many opportunities to develop and implement its own approach to the crisis, but was ultimately reluctant to act on its own and ended up following the US lead in resolving the situation. Of course, circumstances outside France’s control also had an impact on how the crisis was resolved. Hollande’s inability to act unilaterally, coupled with his eventual capitulation to the US/Russian plan and his dutiful proposing of the Resolution in the Security Council (in an attempt to save face), all point to a foreign policy dominated by an attempt to maintain some element of French prestige and by desperate endeavours to maintain France’s *rang* amongst the nations in the Security Council.

France’s attitude towards Germany in the early post-Cold War period was one dominated by suspicion, unsure of what role it would take in its newly reunified state. However, France need not have been so suspicious of its neighbour. Indeed, Germany was keen to appease its Western neighbour, as well as seeking to maintain the support of the United States. This balance was best typified with the adoption of the common Franco-German strategic concept in Nuremburg in December 1996. Here, France accepted that in the short term, the European defensive identity would be housed within NATO, so long as measures were implemented to put greater emphasis on

²⁴⁸ Adrian Treacher *French Interventionism: Europe’s last global player?* (Ashgate; Hampshire, 2003) p.94

²⁴⁹ William Pfaff, ‘The ill-grasped logic behind France’s “return” to NATO’, *International Herald Tribune*, 31 January 1996

NATO's European element. For this, Germany agreed that the Western European Union, working with the European Council, would become the judicial base for the future ESDI, as well as supporting France in its attempt to europeanise the Alliance.

France also began to soften its approach towards the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, with some French policy makers seeing it as a preferential option for pan-European security. Treacher attributes this to an attempt to tie Russia into the European security community (a traditional goal for French European policy)²⁵⁰. This proposal suggested that the organisation should have a greater role in European security, but also, in a break from previous proposals, allowed continued American and Canadian influence. This could be interpreted as an attempt by France to limit an American-led expansion of NATO's European remit, both concerning its activities and physical reach. President Chirac himself spoke of how the OSCE's capacity to act as a pan-European security organisation had grown, as well as its acquisition of an international judicial character²⁵¹. Furthermore, the pre-existing opposition to the OSCE's Conflict Preservation Centre gaining more than its technical role, was withdrawn, so it did not become a future European Security Council.

However, the election of a new, Socialist-dominated coalition to the Assembly in June 1997 was to add doubts to France's ever-closer relations with NATO. The new Prime Minister, Lionel Jospin, was wary of any potential subordination of the nation's nuclear forces under the Alliance. Furthermore, it was clear that there was still some distance between France and the other NATO nations, as exemplified in the Madrid, July 1997 NATO summit. France had been lobbying for Romanian and Slovenian membership, which was staunchly vetoed by America. This showed the dearth of France and Europe's influence in the organisation. Simultaneously, France and America were also at odds regarding the allocation of a senior European military officer to the head of NATO's Southern Command in Naples. France's recent election, and the period of *cohabitation* had made these matters significantly more difficult.

²⁵⁰ Adrian Treacher *French Interventionism: Europe's last global player?* (Ashgate; Hampshire, 2003) p.94

²⁵¹ Jacques Chirac, quoted in Alain Frachon 'La France peine à s'imposer sa conception de la sécurité en Europe', *Le Monde*, 4 December 1996

France, and specifically Chirac and his advisors, had greatly overestimated France's welcome, and the types of concessions it believed it could obtain. Menon argued that it was not only France's lack of potential leverage which inhibited its ability to deal with the organisation. He also argued that because France had spent decades on the outside of NATO's Military Committee, it had lost track of the negotiating culture. France's tactics of relying on French exceptionalism and drawing sharp distinctions between itself and others within the Alliance with 'grand gesture politics' would carry very little favour once operating within the organisation²⁵².

However, for France there was no real alternative other than to become closer to the Alliance. France had committed itself to maintaining its military role in the former Yugoslavia, which would necessitate remaining within NATO's operations. The Socialist Defence Minister Alain Richard agreed with the Chirac administration that France would have to reintegrate with the NATO command structures eventually²⁵³. However, Paris was describing the *insertion* of French forces into the Alliance, rather than *integration*, and that France's membership would be *solitaire*, but *solidaire*²⁵⁴.

However, it is difficult to see whether there was any real distinction in effect other than rhetorical. Vernet wondered aloud how France could simultaneously be *inside* and *outside* of the organisation at the same time²⁵⁵. Whilst France may have not seen the development toward an ESDI within the Alliance that it would have liked, Treacher notes that "economic and geopolitical imperatives dictated that NATO was the best and only viable multilateral option for the furtherance of *rang* and *grandeur*, not only within Europe but also in the wider world"²⁵⁶. This certainly would have been the thinking of those with a more pessimistic disposition who were following the EU's attempted implementation of a European Security Policy, as suggested under the Maastricht Treaty.

²⁵² Anand Menon, *France, NATO and the Limits of Independence 1981-97* (Macmillan, Basingstoke; 2000) p.85

²⁵³ Richard Alain, in a radio interview, quoted in Patrice-Henry Desaubliaux, 'Letest de la défense', *Le Figaro*, 10 July 1997

²⁵⁴ Jacques Isnard, 'Solitaire mais Solidaire', *Le Monde*, 4 December 1997

²⁵⁵ Daniel Vernet, 'La France toujours à la recherche d'un arrangement avec l'OTAN', *Le Monde*, 2 December 1997

²⁵⁶ Adrian Treacher, *French Interventionism: Europe's last global player?* (Ashgate; Hampshire, 2003) p.96

However, there was universal agreement, both on the right and the left, to maintain a dialogue with NATO regarding its reintegration. Nor did they reverse their policies on having the Defence Minister and the armed forces' Chief of Staff attend the NATO military committees. Whilst this did not specifically rule out a future change of policy, France seemed to be throwing its support behind NATO, especially during the 1998-99 Kosovo crisis. Unlike with the Gulf War or Bosnia, France did not portray its exceptionalism, or make a big show of pursuing its own agenda. Instead, it quickly fell into line with NATO's mission objectives, even in the absence of a specific UN mandate.

Shortly before the conclusion of the Kosovan conflict, France also had another event which would draw a shift in its security policy. During the Cologne meeting in June 1999, the European Council approved a document which would formally pledge the EU to a common policy on security and defence, giving it the capacity for autonomous action when a crisis may occur, backed by a credible military force. To facilitate this, fifteen foreign ministers announced their intent to absorb the WEU into the EU, thereby committing to assume peacekeeping and conflict resolution responsibilities. Then, six months later, the Helsinki European Council went on to launch a Franco-British driven process which was planned to have 50,000-60,000 personnel by 2003. This force was designed to operate under the principles of the UN Charter, and be capable of deployment within sixty days, and remaining in a single location for at least one year. Furthermore, the member states formally committed themselves to provide assets, both material and budgetary. This Rapid Reaction Force was not to be a standing army, but would have its own planning staff.

This of course meant that the relations between the EU and NATO would be important. This was especially the case for France. Following the Council meeting at Helsinki, French negotiators were reluctant to allow NATO a major say in the development of the CSDP. However, in April 2000 the Jospin government proposed that there be meetings between officials of the EU and NATO to discuss the development of a crisis management capability. With this move, it appeared that the EU was moving from a purely rhetorical idea of a 'common defence policy' as indicated in the Maastricht Treaty, to something a little more concrete. It appeared that France's European partners were also starting to back this idea as well. Gnesotto pointed out "[t]hat all

countries of the Union – whether large or small, from the north or south, NATO members or not belonging to a military alliance, having an interventionist tradition or not – now subscribe to the political and operational aims set out at Cologne or Helsinki, is certainly a major political revolution”²⁵⁷.

However, whilst France may have attempted to claim this new European movement towards a common security policy, forces outside its control had driven the other European nations to the same conclusion. French *rapprochement* had had an impact of course, but changes in approach in Germany and the UK were also significant. The experiences with the Gulf War and Bosnia had led Germany to a substantial change in its constitution which would allow the deployment of troops abroad. Furthermore, Treacher notes that France’s *rapprochement* with NATO served to ease tensions with Germany, where German policy-makers were now reassured that France’s ambitions for the ESDI was not to be a direct challenge to NATO itself. They provided the assurances required for Germany to move forward with a European Defence Cooperation because the Germans felt that it would support the Alliance’s mission²⁵⁸.

Britain also had come to similar conclusions. Following the Bosnian War and shifting American priorities, Prime Minister Tony Blair announced a reorientation of Britain’s European Defence Policy in October 1998. Then, two months later the Franco-British St Malo summit declaration was made, stating that “the Union must have the capacity for autonomous action, backed up by credible military forces, the means to decide to use them and a readiness to do so, in order to respond to international crises”²⁵⁹. In May of the following year, the British Foreign Minister Robin Cook went further, arguing that the EU should be able to mount its own peacekeeping and humanitarian missions without relying on the United States²⁶⁰.

The fruits of this summit declaration were to be found in Operation Artemis, a UN-backed peacekeeping mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (12 June 2003). This was the first test of the European Security and Defence Policy. On paper, this

²⁵⁷ Nicole Gnesotto, ‘CFSP and defence: how does it work?’, *Western European Union Institute for Security Studies Newsletter*, no. 30 July 2000

²⁵⁸ Adrian Treacher, *French Interventionism: Europe’s last global player?* (Ashgate; Hampshire, 2003) p.98-99

²⁵⁹ Franco-British Joint Declaration on European Defence, St Malo, 3-4 December 1998

²⁶⁰ George Parker, ‘Europe: Minister to urge less reliance on US forces’, *The Financial Times*, 13 May 1999

was an EU mission, featuring a number of personnel from different member states. In reality, this was a French dominated mission (90% of the ground troops were French with only one special operations contingent from the UK), and had already been in preparation as a French mission before it was co-opted by the EU²⁶¹. This operation represented not just a small step in the EU entering into peacekeeping missions as a wider force (if only nominally), but also as an example of France driving military intervention through a supranational body to achieve national goals.

The Kosovo conflict, and Europe's minimal contribution to the air and ground operations, acted as the spark for EU leaders to opt into the Helsinki agreement, and establish a European autonomous force. Graham argued that there was a general feeling within Europe that it must "move rapidly to acquire the means to act independently of the US since the EU has increasingly different priorities from that of Washington and may become willing to intervene where the Americans are reluctant"²⁶². This new settlement produced results quickly, with Eurocorps being deployed to Kosovo in Spring 2000 as the military part of the allied peace and reconstruction operation. This was the first instance of non-NATO forces taking over a NATO mission.

However, whilst this marked a significant step in the relations between Europe and America in developing a security policy in Europe, where EU forces could begin to take control of its own destiny in the continent, another event was to change the view of world security once again. The next section therefore looks at France's security position following the attacks of September 11th 2001, and the ensuing War on Terror.

The attacks of September 11th 2001 in the United States led to a significant refocusing of Western strategic planning, and therefore starting the War on Terror. In this section, we compare two of the major conflicts in the 2000's relating to the War on Terror: Afghanistan and Iraq. These two conflicts, and particularly the change in approach from Chirac to Sarkozy, are important to establish the state of France's strategic policy, and specifically its relations with its Western Allies at the start of 2011. They

²⁶¹ Kees Homan 'Operation Artemis in the Democratic Republic of Congo' in European Commission: Faster and more united? The debate about Europe's crisis response capacity, May 2007, pages 151-155 https://www.clingendael.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/20070531_cscp_chapter_homan.pdf [accessed 10/06/2019]

²⁶² Robert Graham, 'Defence: pledge on European capability', *The Financial Times*, 31 May 1999

are also an important indicator of the level of influence France was able to wield, or not wield, at this time. France played subordinate roles in the Western interventions in Afghanistan, due to its lack of historical and influential links to the region which could allow it to enact large-scale operations. As shown, the aim at this time was not necessarily to play a great role during this conflict. Yet it would also indicate the difficulties it would face in conducting operations in Syria, and why it limited its potential actions to airstrikes and support to various rebel groups.

Shortly after the September 11th attacks, blame was placed on Al Qaida and the US began to seek its leader, Osama bin Laden. He had been tracked to Afghanistan, and the US demanded that the Taliban hand over the Al Qaida leader. The Taliban refused, requesting proof of bin Laden's guilt. Dismissing this as a delaying tactic, the United States launched on 7 October 2001 Operation Enduring Freedom with the United Kingdom to dislodge the Taliban from the region and attempt to capture or kill members of Al Qaida.

Operation Enduring Freedom was the first of two separate missions taking place in Afghanistan (OEF-A). This operation (or the Afghan element of this mission) was led by the US and UK, though other nations did join. It is interesting to note that before France offered to send ground troops in support on 16 November 2001²⁶³, Turkey, Australia, Canada, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands had already offered its support/troops²⁶⁴.

Chirac justified French military intervention with two reasons: firstly to “neutralise” Al Qaida and their Taliban support; and secondly to establish a safe zone to deliver humanitarian aid²⁶⁵.

Notably, this initial military intervention was carried out without specific UN approval. Throughout much of the build up to the invasion, President George W Bush

²⁶³ French Troops head for Afghanistan *CNN* 16 November 2001
<http://edition.cnn.com/2001/WORLD/europe/11/16/ret.france.force/> [accessed 18/02/2019]

²⁶⁴ Operation Enduring Freedom Fast Facts *CNN*, 5 October 2018
<https://edition.cnn.com/2013/10/28/world/operation-enduring-freedom-fast-facts/index.html> [accessed 18/2/2019]

²⁶⁵ Speech by Jacques Chirac, President of the Republic, On the French military intervention in Afghanistan and the announcement of the departure of French soldiers to Afghanistan to participate in an international action for the help and assistance of the local population. 16 November 2001
<http://discours.vie-publique.fr/notices/017000259.html> [accessed 18/02/2019]

and the American administration portrayed the conflict as one of self-defence. Indeed, the Joint Resolution authorising the use of military force specifically references this²⁶⁶. Instead, for legal justification, the US drew upon Article V of the Washington Treaty. It had been initially invoked on 12 September 2001, but that it would not be fully implemented until confirmation had been obtained that the attack was the result of a foreign actor. Upon America's investigation establishing that Al Qaida were to blame, NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson declared that NATO was regarding Article V as being activated²⁶⁷.

It is important to note that when France decided to send ground troops, the Taliban was already on the back foot after a series of American and Northern Alliance offensives had driven the Taliban from major cities. France had already been involved in the conflict in a more limited role, with Opération Héraclès being launched on 21 October 2001. Here, France used twenty Mirage IVPs and twenty C-135FRs from its air base in Al Dhafra to provide air surveillance over the country.

In November 2001 however, the conflict entered a second phase with regards to international involvement. On 14 November 2001, the UN passed Security Resolution 1378, effectively retroactively justifying the US' intervention in Afghanistan by ascribing blame on the Taliban for providing support to Al Qaida²⁶⁸. It is no accident therefore that France only intervened *after* the UN had provided its tacit approval of the intervention. Indeed, in his speech announcing the deployment of French troops to the region, Chirac spoke of the importance of as many actors as possible being involved, saying that "this fight will be led in the national setting, in the European Union setting, and in that of the United Nations"²⁶⁹.

²⁶⁶ Joint Resolution to authorize the use of United States Armed Forces against those responsible for the recent attacks launched against the United States. Sept. 18, 2001 [S.J. Res. 23]>
<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/PLAW-107publ40/html/PLAW-107publ40.htm> [accessed 18/02/2019]

²⁶⁷ NATO 'Invocation of Article V confirmed' *NATO Update*
<https://www.nato.int/docu/update/2001/1001/e1002a.htm> [accessed 10/02/2019]

²⁶⁸ Resolution S/RES/1378 United Nations Security Council 14 November 2001
<http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/1378> [accessed 18/02/2019]

²⁶⁹ Speech by Jacques Chirac, President of the Republic, On the French military intervention in Afghanistan and the announcement of the departure of French soldiers to Afghanistan to participate in an international action for the help and assistance of the local population. 16 November 2001
<http://discours.vie-publique.fr/notices/017000259.html> [accessed 18/02/2019]

In this speech, Chirac was also keen to add that both France and the UK had lobbied the UN to find a political solution to the crisis, and that it had produced a resolution to form an interim Afghan government to represent the needs of the Afghan people²⁷⁰.

Firstly, on 5 December 2001, the Agreement on Provisional Arrangements in Afghanistan Pending the Re-Establishment of Permanent Government Institutions (Bonne Agreement) was signed²⁷¹. This provided a route map for how the country was to proceed following the withdrawal and eventual defeat of the Taliban. To support the consolidation of power with a new Interim Authority, the Agreement envisaged the establishment of an International Security Force; with this in mind, Resolution 1373 created the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF)²⁷². This was a NATO led force, whose initial task was to secure Kabul and its surrounding areas from the Taliban, Al Qaida, and any other factions, thereby providing a stable base for the Karzai government to establish itself in the country.

On 2 January 2002, the first soldiers operating within the International Force arrived in Kabul, including 500 French troops whose job was to secure the city, and help train the Afghan forces to stabilise the country²⁷³. Much of France's role in the conflict in 2002 and 2003 involved playing a support role, relying heavily on its Air Force and Navy. On 18 February 2002, France reported suspicious activities near Gardez using its Helios satellites. The resulting reconnaissance by American Special Forces and French spy planes led to the launching of Operation Anaconda.

Despite the limited nature of France's interventions (when compared to America and the United Kingdom), George W. Bush was still mindful to thank the French for their role in the conflict. Indeed, in his remarks in March 2002, Bush noted that: "There are

²⁷⁰ Ibid.

²⁷¹ UN, The Agreement on Provisional Arrangements in Afghanistan Pending the Re-Establishment of Permanent Government Institutions 5 December 2001 [https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/ihl-nat/a24d1cf3344e99934125673e00508142/4ef7a08878a00fe5c12571140032e471/\\$FILE/BONN%20AGREEMENT.pdf](https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/ihl-nat/a24d1cf3344e99934125673e00508142/4ef7a08878a00fe5c12571140032e471/$FILE/BONN%20AGREEMENT.pdf) [accessed 19/02/2019]

²⁷² Resolution S/RES/1386 United Nations Security Council 20 December 2001 <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N01/708/55/PDF/N0170855.pdf?OpenElement> [accessed 19/02/2019]

²⁷³ ECPAD Agence d'Images de la Défense 'Afghanistan 2002.' <http://www.ecpad.fr/afghanistan-2002/> [accessed 19/02/2002]

many examples of commitment: our good ally France, has deployed nearly one-fourth of its navy to support Operation Enduring Freedom”²⁷⁴.

However, the relations were to change significantly following a schism between Presidents Bush and Chirac regarding the Iraq War. This example shows that even in the early mid-twenty-first century, France, under Chirac, was keen to maintain the UN Security Council as the sole legitimate means of authorising the use of force. We also begin to see, as the situation plays out, France recognise the ultimate supremacy of the US, whilst also trying to maintain a level of independence. This, it is argued, once again has, at its heart, France’s sense of *rang*. This being especially important due to France’s historic attempted pivot towards the Middle East, and its large domestic Muslim population.

Plans for an American invasion of Iraq had started to be drawn up as early as September of 2001²⁷⁵, and the nation was wrapped up into the US’ War on Terror when Bush announced that Iraq under Saddam Hussain constituted part of the ‘Axis of Evil’ in his 2002 State of the Union Address²⁷⁶. Bush then made the case for an intervention against Iraq in front of the United Nations, arguing that Saddam Hussain “continues to develop weapons of mass destruction. The first time we may be completely certain he has a – nuclear weapons is when, God forbids, he uses one. We owe it to all our citizens to do everything in our power to prevent that day from coming”²⁷⁷. However, the evidence finding that Iraq had continued its Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) programme was somewhat lacking, with Major General Glen Shaffer revealing that “Our knowledge of the Iraqi nuclear weapons program is based largely - perhaps 90% - on analysis of imprecise intelligence... Our assessments

²⁷⁴ President George W Bush ‘President Thanks World Coalition for Anti-Terrorism Efforts 11 March 2002 <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/03/20020311-1.html> [accessed 19/02/2019]

²⁷⁵ Joel Roberts, ‘Plans for Iraq attack began on 9/11’, *CBS*, 5 September 2002 <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/plans-for-iraq-attack-began-on-9-11/> [accessed 19/02/2019]

²⁷⁶ President George W Bush ‘State of the Union Address’ 29 January 2002 <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/01/20020129-11.html> [accessed 19/02/2019]

²⁷⁷ President George W Bush, ‘President’s Remarks at the United Nations General Assembly’ 12 September 2002 <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/09/20020912-1.html> [accessed 19/02/2019]

rely heavily on analytic assumptions and judgment rather than hard evidence. The evidentiary base is particularly sparse for Iraqi nuclear programs"²⁷⁸.

This dearth of evidence led both France and Germany to reject America's proposal for the invasion of Iraq. A compromise was reached with Resolution 1441, which, amongst other things, authorised Weapons Inspectors to enter Iraq to discern whether the country had continued/restarted its WMD programmes²⁷⁹. There would be serious consequences were the Iraqi government to inhibit the inspectors in their job; however both French and Russian diplomats were clear to explain that these consequences would not be the overthrow of the Iraqi government²⁸⁰, a concession both British and American Ambassadors agreed²⁸¹.

Saddam Hussain accepted the Resolution on 13 November 2002, and allowed an inspection team to enter the country, under the direction of United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission Chairman Hans Blix and the International Atomic and Energy Agency Director General Mohamed El Baradei.

Following four months of inspections, the IAEA "found no evidence or plausible indication of the revival of a nuclear weapons programme in Iraq". Certain items were found which had the potential to be used in nuclear enrichment centrifuges, but that they were content that the items were being used for other purposes²⁸². By March

²⁷⁸ See IBT Staff Reporter 'Little Evidence for Iraq WMDs ahead of 2003 war: US declassified report' *International Business Times* 2 August 2011 <https://www.ibtimes.com/little-evidence-iraq-wmds-ahead-2003-war-us-declassified-report-264519> [accessed 19/02/2019] and Memo from Gen Meyers to Donald Rumsfeld 9 September 2002 <https://web.archive.org/web/20160424014613/https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/2697361-Myers-J2-Memo.html> [accessed 19/02/2019]

²⁷⁹ Resolution S/RES/1441 United Nations Security Council 8 November 2002 [https://undocs.org/S/RES/1441\(2002\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/1441(2002)) [accessed 19/02/2019]

²⁸⁰ 'France threatens rival UN Iraqi Draft', *BBC*, 26 October 2002 http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/2364203.stm [accessed 19/02/2019]

²⁸¹ Embassy of the United States in Manila, Transcript from 'Speech to US Security Council November 8 2002', 12 November 2002, <https://web.archive.org/web/20060103230014/http://manila.usembassy.gov/wwwhira3.html> [accessed 19/02/2019]

²⁸² Mohamed El Baradei, 'The status of Nuclear Inspections in Iraq: an update', *IAEA* 7 March 2003 <https://www.iaea.org/newscenter/statements/status-nuclear-inspections-iraq-update> [accessed 19/02/2019]

2003, Blix advised that UNMOVIC investigation had also made progress, and that they had not found any evidence of WMDs at that point²⁸³.

Despite these findings, or lack thereof, America pushed ahead with its invasion plans. In October 2002, the US congress passed a resolution allowing the US to “use any means necessary against Iraq”²⁸⁴. Secretary of State Colin Powell then took the US’ case to the UN on 5 February 2003. Following his presentation of evidence, the United States, the United Kingdom, Poland, Italy, Denmark, Spain, Japan, and Australia all proposed a resolution to authorise force against Iraq. However, Canada, France, Germany and Russia were all opposed, instead urging a diplomatic solution. It seemed likely that the US and its allies would face a vote defeat and veto, and therefore decided to withdraw the resolution²⁸⁵.

Instead, America and its allies by-passed the United Nations altogether, looking to their domestic settings to justify the proposed military intervention in Iraq. On 17 March 2003, George W. Bush addressed the nation, demanding that Saddam Hussain, and his two sons Uday and Qusay, step down from office and leave Iraq, giving them a 48-hour deadline to do so²⁸⁶. The following day, the United Kingdom Parliament held a vote on whether to go to war with Iraq; and despite some significant governmental resignations, Parliament voted in favour of war 412 to 149²⁸⁷. Upon gaining authorisation, the invasion began on 20 March 2003.

Of course, throughout this time, France and the Chirac administration had been largely critical of the US’s militaristic approach to the Iraqi situation. Dominique de Villepin in January of 2003 argued that at that point in time, military intervention “would be the worst solution”, clarifying that France “will not join in [a] military intervention

²⁸³ Hans Blix, ‘Transcription of Blix’s UN presentation’, *CNN* 7 March 2003

<http://edition.cnn.com/2003/US/03/07/sprj.irq.un.transcript.blix/index.html> [accessed 19/02/2019]

²⁸⁴ Joint Resolution for Authorization for use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002 Public Law 107-243 107th Congress, 16 October 2002 H.J. Res. 114

<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/PLAW-107publ243/html/PLAW-107publ243.htm> [accessed 19/02/2019]

²⁸⁵ Associated Press, ‘US, Britain and Spain abandon resolution’ *Global Policy Forum* 17 March 2003

<https://www.globalpolicy.org/component/content/article/167/35373.html> [accessed 19/02/2019]

²⁸⁶ Remarks by President George W. Bush in an address to the nation ‘President says Saddam must leave Iraq within 48 hours’ 17 March 2003 <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/03/20030317-7.html> [accessed 20/02/2019]

²⁸⁷ "Division No. 117 (Iraq)". *Hansard*. Parliament of the United Kingdom. 401 (365) 18 March 2003. <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200203/cmhansrd/vo030318/debtext/30318-47.htm> [accessed 20/02/2019]

that did not have international support”²⁸⁸. This sentiment was echoed by Chirac himself, who in threatening to use France’s veto, stated that “My position is that under these circumstances, France will vote ‘no’ because tonight we do not think that a war would help achieve the objective we have decided upon, that being the disarmament of Iraq”²⁸⁹.

France’s non-support of the US’ military intervention was treated as a great betrayal in the United States, and marked a significant low-point in US-French relations in the post-Cold War period. As had been shown above, France’s relations with America had steadily been improving over the 1980s and 1990s. However, there are a number of factors which need to be taken into account to understand why France acted in the way it did. In explaining France’s justifications for this policy at the time also helps to provide greater understanding for Sarkozy’s actions in Syria, both in terms of the similarities between the situations, and the critical differences.

The first bit of background information concerns France’s historic ties to Iraq. These ties are based on the twin pillars of oil and trade. Iraq was one of the principal countries within both the Arab Mashreq²⁹⁰ and the Gulf, and France had built strong ties with it throughout the twentieth century. The roots of the French oil industry can be traced to its acquisition of a 22.5% stake in the oil concessions in Mesopotamia following the conclusion of the First World War. These concessions were jointly owned with Anglo-Dutch Shell and some American companies, which together were known as the Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC). The French stake of this group became known as the Compagnie française des pétroles (CFP), a precursor to *Total*²⁹¹. This company, whilst cooperating with the major British and US companies in Iraq, was able to become a major oil producer by the 1960s, competing with other British and French companies throughout the Middle East and Africa.

²⁸⁸ Press Conference of Foreign affairs Minister Dominique de Villepin (excerpts) *Embassy of France in the United States* 20 January 2003

<https://web.archive.org/web/20060927144309/http://www.ambafrance-us.org/news/statmnts/2003/vilepin012003.asp> [accessed 20/02/2019]

²⁸⁹ Jacques Chirac speech broadcasted by TF1 and France 2, 10 March 2003

²⁹⁰ The group of countries located between the Mediterranean and Iran, including inter alia Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Syria

²⁹¹ Additional details can be found in P.Péan and J-P Séréni, *Les Émirats de la république* (Seuil, Paris; 1982) and Emmanuel Catta, *Voyage de Metz: de la CFP au group TOTAL* (Total éditions presse, Paris; 1990)

Prior to the founding of the Fifth Republic, France's popularity in the Arab World was harmed by both its war in Algeria, and its relationship with Israel. However, the election of President de Gaulle and the creation of the Fifth Republic, as well as the end of the Algerian War, led to a reorientation of France's foreign policy and its treatment of the Arab World. David Styan notes that France's improved relations with Iraq, facilitated by CFP/Total's existing position in the region, became "integrated into De Gaulle's broader vision of France as a champion of independent African, Arab and Asian nations"²⁹².

De Gaulle softened France's approaches in a number of different ways to open relations with the Arab World, scaling back arms sales to Israel in the mid-sixties, as well as criticising Israel in 1967 and participating in the subsequent arms embargo. France held a state visit for the then Iraqi President in 1968, where further oil and arms sales concessions were discussed. Despite the Ba'athist coup in July 1968, France's relations with the country grew from strength to strength. France was able to benefit from playing on the anti-American/British sentiments of the younger Arab leaders to secure favourable terms from leaders in the region. Specifically, 1972 saw Iraq and France become inexorably closer. Despite the nationalisation of the oil industry, France secured favourable prices for Total for oil from the region. Saddam Hussain himself visited Paris twice in June 1972. France became a favourable economic partner to Iraq, and placed Baghdad at the centre of its new regional policy. After meeting with Saddam Hussain, President Georges Pompidou's Foreign Minister Maurice Schumann stated: "within the policy framework of France's friendship with the Arab world in general, there is now a specific Franco-Arab policy"²⁹³.

In the subsequent years, trade with the Arab world became extremely important. During his presidency, Giscard d'Estaing was closely involved in all areas of foreign policy with the exception of one region: the Middle East. Here, his young Prime

²⁹² David Styan 'Jacques Chirac's 'non': France, Iraq and United Nations, 1991-2003' *Modern and Contemporary France* Vol 12. 2004 – Issue 3 pages 371-385 (e-version)
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/citedby/10.1080/0963948042000263167?scroll=top&needAccess=true> [accessed 20/02/2019]

²⁹³ *Le Figaro* 16 February 1972, cited in David Styan 'Jacques Chirac's 'non': France, Iraq and United Nations, 1991-2003' *Modern and Contemporary France* Vol 12. 2004 – Issue 3 pages 371-385 (e-version)
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/citedby/10.1080/0963948042000263167?scroll=top&needAccess=true> [accessed 20/02/2019]

Minister Jacques Chirac was given freedom to implement France's foreign policy²⁹⁴. An agreement was signed between France and Iraq in 1975 regarding economic cooperation between the two countries. To facilitate this, Chirac visited Baghdad in November 1974 and January 1976, hosting Saddam Hussein back in France in September 1975. In addition to the oil deals secured for French companies, there were also contracts signed for military and nuclear services. As has been mentioned above, the first order for France's Mirage F-1 fighter planes was made in 1976. In September 1975, Hussain was invited to the Cadarache nuclear facility in Provence, with an agreement being signed in November for France to supply Iraq with a nuclear generator²⁹⁵.

In opposition, the Parti Socialiste had been critical of the arms sales to the Arab world under d'Estaing²⁹⁶. However, when Mitterrand assumed power in 1981, he was keen to reassure the Arab world that he was not hostile to future business by bringing in two ministers with both the experience of, and pedigree in, the Arab world, with Claude Cheysson as Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Michel Jobert as Minister of External Commerce.

The Iraq-Iran War seemed to be an excellent opportunity for French arms dealers. Iraqi military expenditure between 1980 and 1985 reached \$15 billion²⁹⁷, with France's state-owned arms industry benefitting more than most other nations. However, its support for Iraq obviously created tension with Iran. Furthermore, as the conflict ground on, Iraq's economy began to suffer, meaning that arms sales were becoming increasingly difficult to manage. When the conflict finally reached its conclusion, many Western countries were keen to profit from the post-conflict reconstruction. However, trade was limited by the extent to which Iraq had indebted itself to continue the war, as well as COFACE's reluctance to grant credit guarantees.²⁹⁸

²⁹⁴ David Styan 'Jacques Chirac's 'non': France, Iraq and United Nations, 1991-2003' *Modern and Contemporary France* Vol 12. 2004 – Issue 3 pages 371-385 (e-version)
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/citedby/10.1080/0963948042000263167?scroll=top&needAccess=true> [accessed 20/02/2019]

²⁹⁵ Ibid.

²⁹⁶ For example: C. Angeli and S. Mesnier, '*Notre Allié Saddam*' (O.Orban, Paris; 1992) pp.89-90

²⁹⁷ M Brozka and T Ohlson, '*Arms Transfers to the Third Worlds, 1971-85*' (Sipri, Oxford University Press; 1987)

²⁹⁸ David Styan, 'Jacques Chirac's 'non': France, Iraq and United Nations, 1991-2003', *Modern and Contemporary France* Vol 12. 2004 – Issue 3 pages 371-385 (e-version)

As has already been discussed above, France reluctantly entered the Gulf War following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. The trade relations discussed above should go some way to explain France's reticence to engage militarily in the region until every other possible avenue had been explored. However, the conflict did not mark a sharp cessation of relations between the two nations. Slowly and quietly, French and Iraqi diplomats and businessmen sought to re-establish the pre-war links which had been mutually profitable²⁹⁹. Whilst these back-room deals were being argued, Chirac took a public role in arguing for sanctions to be lifted, or at the very least rolled back. Indeed, in his speech in Cairo in April 1996, he argued that: "if Iraq has conformed to all resolutions, then the sanctions must be lifted. The international community cannot remain indifferent to the worsening of the humanitarian situation in this country"³⁰⁰.

Their efforts were mostly successful, with the introduction of the 'Oil-for-food' UN programme proving particularly profitable for French oil companies³⁰¹. In June 1996, Iraq's Petroleum Minister Amer Rachid praised the "positive and important" role France had played in securing Resolution 986, and suggested that France would be favoured in deals conducted under the 'Oil-for-food' programme³⁰².

However, divisions did emerge in the nineties which would act as a preview to the split in 2003. Firstly, the oil companies in the strongest position at the time, and the ones who had signed pre-contract agreements for post-sanctions oil development in Iraq, were Elf and Total, along with China's CNPC (China National Petroleum Company) and the Russian group Lukoil.

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/citedby/10.1080/0963948042000263167?scroll=top&needAccess=true> [accessed 20/02/2019]

²⁹⁹ For more details on the specifics, see David Styan 'Jacques Chirac's 'non': France, Iraq and United Nations, 1991-2003' *Modern and Contemporary France* Vol 12. 2004 – Issue 3 pages 371-385 (e-version)

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/citedby/10.1080/0963948042000263167?scroll=top&needAccess=true> [accessed 20/02/2019]

³⁰⁰ Speech by Jacques Chirac President of the French Republic 'On the cultural, economic, and technological cooperation with Egypt, on French Arab policy, on the consolidation of peace and economic development of the near-east' <https://www.vie-publique.fr/cdp/texte/967005600.html> [accessed 20/02/2019]

³⁰¹ As introduced by United Nations Security Council S/RES/986 Resolution 986 14 April 1995 [https://undocs.org/S/RES/986\(1995\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/986(1995)) [accessed 20/02/2019]

³⁰² *Les Echoes*, 12 June 1996, cited in David Styan 'Jacques Chirac's 'non': France, Iraq and United Nations, 1991-2003' *Modern and Contemporary France* Vol 12. 2004 – Issue 3 pages 371-385 (e-version)

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/citedby/10.1080/0963948042000263167?scroll=top&needAccess=true> [accessed 20/02/2019]

Another issue which emerged was the fact that Iraq was becoming increasingly dismissive of the regulations placed on the country by the UN. One such example involved Saddam Hussain's refusal to allow the UN's inspections of the 'presidential palace' sites in February 1998. Though the issue was eventually resolved with an agreement between the Iraqi government and Kofi Annan, the agreement itself had at least in part come around because of French diplomacy, something for which Chirac was to consider a major victory, as well as proof that France's policy to cultivate a relationship with Saddam Hussain yielded tangible results on the international stage. This seemed to bolster France's international standing at the time, allowing it to show that it was an important part of the UN Security Council (though of course there was some acknowledgement that the threat of further American interference had also been useful)³⁰³.

However, this was only to be a temporary solution. In November of 1998, the US deployed additional troops to the region, and UNSCOM reported a lack of cooperation once more on 16 December 1998, leading US and British forces to bomb Baghdad in 'Operation Desert Fox'. In response to these actions, France completely halted its participation in surveillance and disarmament operations in Iraq.

Divisions between the US/UK and France over Iraq crystallised in 17 December 1999; France abstained in the Security Council vote over Resolution 1284, which sought to streamline oil for food deliveries in exchange for a tougher surveillance regime. The two other nations to abstain in the vote were Russia and China, foreshadowing the Security Council's divisions in 2003.

Further bombings by American and British aircraft on sites outside of the no-fly zone in February 2001 continued to drive a wedge between Washington and Paris, as well as drawing condemnation from the wider French public in France. Generally, France became increasingly hostile to the sanctions imposed against Iraq, with Foreign Minister Hubert Védrine describing them as "more and more cruel and intolerable, and less and less effective"³⁰⁴. Styan notes that, as had been the case in the 1980s, there was a broad consensus on France's policy towards Iraq across the political

³⁰³ As shown in: 'M. Chirac plaide pour la fin des sanctions ...', *Le Monde* (27 February 1998). 'Irak: la France s'oppose à une frappe automatique', *Libération* (27 February 1998).

³⁰⁴ Hubert Védrine, 'Suspension de l'embargo, mais pas les contrôles', *Libération*, 1 March 2001

spectrum, and was therefore not held hostage to cohabitation³⁰⁵. This is corroborated by Tarik Aziz, stating that “in the case of Iraq, there is a unanimity between the right and the left... there is no difference between the Elysée and Matignon”³⁰⁶.

Chirac used his September 2002 trip to the United Nations, and an interview he had made with the New York Times on 9 September 2002, to explain France’s policy, and its theoretical underpinnings, towards Iraq.

Firstly, Chirac explained that France would be resistant to any unilateral action. Instead, any military action would need to be enacted multilaterally via a UN resolution, thereby granting the intervention legitimacy and ensuring it was compliant with international norms. Secondly, France was supportive of moves to ensure that arms inspections were faster and more detailed. This became enshrined in Resolution 1441, giving weapons inspectors a wider mandate. Thirdly, France wanted to ensure that non-compliance, or perceived non-compliance, would not automatically result in a military solution by the UN Security Council, instead trying to introduce a two stage process³⁰⁷. Finally, France wanted to ensure that the endgame for the resolutions was the disarmament of Iraq, and not the overthrow of the Ba’athist government.

In his interview with the New York Times, Chirac stated that he would be promoting a new Security Council Resolution to deploy arms inspectors to Iraq within a few weeks. Chirac and de Villepin were keen to portray themselves as being tough on Iraq, whilst still making the argument that “if the inspectors cannot return, there will have to be a second Security Council resolution to declare if there is a basis for intervention or not”³⁰⁸.

There seemed to be an agreement with this proposal too in Washington, when Bush declared the US support for further efforts in the UN to find a diplomatic solution.

³⁰⁵ David Styan, ‘Jacques Chirac’s ‘non’: France, Iraq and United Nations, 1991-2003’ *Modern and Contemporary France* Vol 12. 2004 – Issue 3 pages 371-385 (e-version)
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/citedby/10.1080/0963948042000263167?scroll=top&needAccess=true> [accessed 20/02/2019]

³⁰⁶ Interview with Tarik Aziz, in *Libération* 16 May 1998

³⁰⁷ Dominique de Villepin, ‘Irak: ne brûler les étapes’, *Le Monde*, 1 October 2002 ; ‘Sur Irak, soyons unis et responsables’, *Le Figaro*, 28 October 2002

³⁰⁸ Jacques Chirac, ‘Multiplie les mises en garde aux États-Unis’, *Le Monde*, 10 September 2002

Indeed, there was some relief in Paris when Iraq agreed, in principle, for the return of arms inspectors on 16 September 2002.

A key element of France's position at this point was not to categorically rule out its participation in a military intervention (thereby distinguishing itself from Germany's rejection of any military solution including German troops). To make this point clear, Chirac took the unusual step of holding a National Assembly debate on its foreign policy on 8 October 2002. This was once again used as an opportunity for France to show its unity between political parties regarding its approach. Whilst there were calls by some left-wing deputies to rule out military intervention altogether, Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin was keen to clarify that all options were on the table, including military options if necessary³⁰⁹.

Upon the successful unanimous adoption of Resolution 1441 on 8 November 2002, France believed that its strategy had been successful, achieving all that it had wanted: confirming the pre-eminent role of the UN, as well as adopting a multilateral approach to compel Iraq to cooperate and reject a unilateral military intervention by the US. At this moment in time, it appears that France had been able to work together to secure a peaceful resolution, with de Villepin stating that the Resolution showed "that the Americans have chosen to work with the UN, that they've chosen the route of responsibility and collective security"³¹⁰.

In addition to this, de Villepin reassured the US (and Iraq) that it would "assume its responsibilities"³¹¹ during the implementation of the Resolution, a phrase which would feature prominently in both the discourse of de Villepin and Chirac between September and February, implying that France would be forced to act if Iraq were to ignore its own responsibilities under the Resolution.

In addition to these public declarations and the Resolution itself, France was keen to call upon its Arab allies to try and apply pressure to Saddam Hussain. France believed

³⁰⁹ L'Irak: le gouvernement ne veut pas s'interdire l'option militaire' and Le France et l'Irak [editorial], *Le Monde*, 10 October 2002

³¹⁰ *Journal du dimanche*, 10 November 2003

³¹¹ Ibid.

that the combined pressure of the UN, the implied threat of military intervention, and the support of its Arab allies would result in Iraqi compliance, as it had in 1998.

France used its *Francophonie Summit* in Beirut in October 2002, as well as stopovers in Damascus, Cairo and Amman to touch base with its various Arab allies, as well as warn against the threat of a new regional conflict³¹². Defence Minister Michelle Alliot-Marie was sent to Saudi Arabia to gain assurances of their pressure on Iraq. French and Arab diplomats attempted to co-ordinate efforts throughout November and December 2002, with Chirac personally visiting President Bashar al Assad of Syria on 18 December 2002. All of this was in an attempt to coordinate a unified French/Arab stance to pressure Saddam Hussain to avert conflict³¹³.

However, as was mentioned above at the beginning of this section, this united UN approach was not to be maintained. As early as January 2003, France became wary of America's increasingly militaristic rhetoric, stating that "today nothing justifies envisaging military action", and threatened the use of the veto to prevent the US using a 'military short-cut'³¹⁴. In order to try and delay matters further, de Villepin made proposals on 5 February 2003 to increase the number of arms inspectors and inspections, devoting French Mirage-IV spy planes to the search. French diplomats also lobbied the three African non-permanent members of the Security Council to ensure any vote would be defeated. A similar approach was also taken by Russian diplomats.

Then, in order to avoid an inevitable defeat in the UN, the US and the UK abandoned their efforts to push a Resolution authorising military force on 18 March 2003. Jean-Marc de la Sablière, French Ambassador at the UN confirmed that during "the last days members of the Council repeatedly stated that, and it is a majority in the Council, that it would not be legitimate to authorize the use of force now while the inspections

³¹² *Le Monde*, 18 October 2002

³¹³ 'Manoeuvres franco-arabes anti-guerre' *Le Canard enchainé* 24 December 2002

³¹⁴ 'L'Irak: la France menace d'utiliser son veto contre une guerre américaine', *Le Monde*, 22 January 2003

set up by the resolution are producing results”³¹⁵. Following their withdrawal, France felt that it was being scapegoated for the US and UK’s diplomatic failures³¹⁶.

France’s stance against military actions were the consequence of a number of factors. Firstly, there seems to be the obvious factor that France (as well as Germany, and a considerable portion of the British public) were unconvinced of the evidence of the existence of an Iraqi WMD programme. In an interview with *The New York Times*, President Chirac advised that he had yet to see any evidence of there being a concerted effort to build a WMD programme. In this interview, he also reiterated that he was “totally against unilateralism in the modern world. I believe that the modern world must be coherent and consequently, if a military action is to be undertaken, it must be the responsibility of the international community, via a decision by the Security Council”³¹⁷.

Beyond that, there is of course the aforementioned political and business ties with Baghdad. However, it is important not to overstate these elements. France had intervened during the Gulf War previously (though reluctantly), and it seems likely that had a WMD programme been discovered, and Iraq not acquiesced to the UN’s demands to dismantle it, that France would have approved military intervention.

David Styan also points to another aspect of Gaullist foreign policy which also played a factor: France’s reorientation towards Arab nations. This is specifically true of Chirac, who under previous governments, had formed close relationships with various Arab leaders. Hubert Védrine explained that “he [Chirac] had kept a closeness with the third world based on personal connections. He is one of the few active leaders to know the five or six people most important people in about a hundred countries”³¹⁸. Olivier Guitta also notes that France’s foreign policy under the Fifth Republic, and

³¹⁵ Report from UN News Service ‘UK, US, Spain withdraw draft resolution, may take ‘own steps’ to disarm Iraq’ 17 March 2003 <https://reliefweb.int/report/iraq/uk-us-and-spain-withdraw-draft-resolution-may-take-own-steps-disarm-iraq> [accessed 21/02/2019]

³¹⁶ ‘France and Russia angered by end of diplomacy’, *The Guardian*, 18 March 2003

³¹⁷ Interview with President of the French Republic Jacques Chirac, *The New York Times*, 8 September 2002, <https://www.nytimes.com/2002/09/08/international/europe/interview-with-jacques-chirac.html> [accessed 21/02/2019]

³¹⁸ Hubert Védrine, quoted in *Libération*, 11 March 2003

especially under Chirac, had placed great importance on its relations with the Arab world³¹⁹.

Historically and culturally, Guitta links this to a number of factors. Obviously, France's links to its former empire are particularly important, both in terms of the historic cultural links provided, but also through the connections remaining with its policy of *françafrique*³²⁰. The post-World War Two reconstruction and waves of decolonisation also led to significant population flows from its former colonies to France. As of 2016, estimates by the Pew Forum stated that Muslims accounted for 8.8 per cent of the population³²¹, which constitutes a significant portion of the electorate. The same demographic research cited above also estimates that this population will increase significantly in Europe, so it will therefore continue to be a factor for the foreseeable future.

As was explained above, the Gaullist tradition saw a move away from support of Israel and reoriented towards the Arab world. However Guitta believes that this undertook a significant increase under Chirac. Guitta argues that whilst the two aforementioned points are to be considered as reasons for Chirac's Arab policy, the main driving force was to build France's prestige, to the expense of the United States³²².

This prestige seemed to be called into play, both during the Franco-African summit in February 2003, and during Chirac and de Villepin's trip to Algiers on 2-4 March. Chirac also explained his concerns during an interview with *Time* recorded on 16 February 2003. Here he warned of the wider effects of an intervention in Iraq on the wider Middle East, that it would help build animosities, leading to greater terrorist threats like that posed by bin Laden. He also feared the effects of a war on the dialogue between the West and the Middle East, and between Muslims and Christians. He acknowledged that Iraq possessing WMDs would be dangerous, but that it was

³¹⁹ Olivier Guitta, 'The Chirac Doctrine', *Middle East Quarterly* Fall 2005 pp.43-53 (e-version) <https://www.meforum.org/772/the-chirac-doctrine> [accessed 22/02/2019]

³²⁰ The system of postcolonial political, economic and social ties between France and its former colonies. For more information, see work of Francois-Xavier Verschave

³²¹ Pew Research Centre, 'Europe's Growing Muslim Population', 29 November 2017 <http://www.pewforum.org/2017/11/29/europes-growing-muslim-population/> [accessed 22/02/2019]

³²² Olivier Guitta, 'The Chirac Doctrine', *Middle East Quarterly* Fall 2005 pp.43-53 (e-version) <https://www.meforum.org/772/the-chirac-doctrine> [accessed 22/02/2019]

important to give the inspectors time to complete their search, as well as providing resources to aid them in their search³²³.

This approach proved popular with those on the right and the left of the political spectrum who had been arguing for further interaction with the Arab World. It also seemed popular at home, with an Ipsos poll in March showing that 69 per cent approved of France using its veto to prevent UN intervention³²⁴.

Despite the clarity with which Chirac had set out France's position towards an armed intervention in Iraq, France's approach was still considered a bitter betrayal in the US. John Gaffney³²⁵ provides an explanation as to France's conduct in the build up to the Iraq War, and why it had such a stark effect on the US administration as well as the culture as a whole. Gaffney seeks to understand how the diplomatic falling-out occurred between France and the US, using the analysis provided by Kagan³²⁶ as a starting point.

Firstly, Kagan conceptualised America as one Hobbesian entity in these circumstances, and Europe as a separate, Kantian entity. However, Kagan does acknowledge some differences between some of the European states which gives them a particular character. For example, France's strategic culture is influenced generally by Gaullism. Kagan argues that, paradoxically, French foreign policy was able to develop a distinct style based on France's independence, precisely because of the protection that the US afforded Europe and the Western World. Kagan argues that such a foreign and security policy would not have been possible without American protection. However, Gaffney has argued that, even with regard to those principles forwarded by Kagan with which he would agree, he would place the emphasis differently. Namely, that there were greater French domestic factors at play in the development of France's strategic culture, but also that a significant factor shaping

³²³ Interview with Time Magazine, 24 February 2003

³²⁴ As mentioned in David Styan 'Jacques Chirac's 'non': France, Iraq and United Nations, 1991-2003' *Modern and Contemporary France* Vol 12. 2004 – Issue 3 pages 371-385 (e-version) <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/citedby/10.1080/0963948042000263167?scroll=top&needAccess=true> [accessed 20/02/2019]

³²⁵ John Gaffney, 'Highly Emotional States: French-US Relations and the Iraq War' *European Security* Volume 13 2004 pp.247-272 [online version] <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09662830490499966?src=recsys> [accessed 21/02/2019]

³²⁶ Robert Kagan, *Paradise and Power* (London, Atlantic; 2003)

French attitudes towards the US was the understanding that most of America's influence in Europe had been primarily to serve its own economic and strategic interests³²⁷.

Gaffney goes further, arguing that Kagan does not place enough significance on France and other European countries' differing 'thresholds for tolerance', i.e. that historical circumstances in Europe have created a set of attitudes and discourses which mean that the use of force is either intellectually or emotionally seen as more unnecessary or dangerous, or as more shocking or shameful. He refers here to the slogan of "Shame" being utilised in anti-War protests in 2003. Indeed, Gaffney argues that at a moral level, interventions such as Iraq would be considered as akin to bullying³²⁸.

Gaffney describes the fundamental issue with Kagan's analysis as being that it does not allow us to see the "contours"³²⁹ of Europe, and the various nations acting within it. France has very specific cultural and strategic logics which drive its actions which distinguish it from the actions of other nations. As has been mentioned above, Germany took a firmly anti-war line in regards to the international community's comportment with Iraq, whereas France allowed for a more nuanced approach to enable it to play as large a role as possible, if circumstances were to change. This thesis also shows that France acts based on its own strategic rubric. This may correspond with the strategic designs of other European allies, or it may not.

The second major issue relating to Kagan's work is that he argues that the UN, and the use of the UN by its members, is used as a substitute for the power its members lack³³⁰. Gaffney argues that here, Kagan undermines the realist approach by arguing that the countries were able to exercise power without power, which is to say that countries would use the "*perceptions* of power and influence, and the protocols that accompany them, that really constitute the fabric of political exchange in international

³²⁷ John Gaffney, 'Highly Emotional States: French-US Relations and the Iraq War', *European Security* Volume 13 2004 pp.247-272 [online version]
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09662830490499966?src=recsys> [accessed 21/02/2019]

³²⁸ Ibid

³²⁹ Ibid.

³³⁰ Robert Kagan, *Paradise and Power* (London, Atlantic; 2003) p.40

relations”³³¹. However, this hard distinction between having power and not having power seems rather simplistic, totally dismissing the concepts of hard and soft power. To argue that European nations have no power outside of the UN, and especially in the case of France, dismisses the relations that France has in the Arab world and sub-Saharan Africa. Instead, the UN, and membership of the Security Council, should be seen as a power multiplier for its members. This also provides for a means to indirectly affect or limit the activities of other nations. France considers this usage of the Security Council as an extension of its own power, and not merely the perception of its power. Whilst France was unable to prevent the conflict in Iraq, it was able to prevent the UN’s approval of the conflict.

Alan Henrikson³³² also has criticisms of Kagan’s Hobbesian/Kantian distinctions. Instead, Henrikson argues that both Europe and the US constitute a political, economic, and cultural system, which exists as more than just a question of competing brute forces. He argues that Kagan’s interpretation of the power dynamics is too simplistic; instead Henrikson argues that European attitudes are as influenced by its *self-perceptions* of power as it is by power itself. Under Henrikson’s conceptualisation, there are three types of power: firstly, power as physical coercion; secondly, that of “articulated threat and promise” (i.e. the carrot and stick); and thirdly, “emanated power”, which is essentially constituted by the symbols of a nation’s power. Henrikson cites the example of the World Trade Center in New York as a powerful symbol of American capitalism. These symbols can either repel or attract others. In the case of the World Trade Centre, this was repulsive from the viewpoint of Al Qaida³³³.

Gaffney uses this conceptualisation of “emanated power” to argue that the rupture between the US and France had stemmed from a miscalculation of America’s tolerance for France to act in such a way. For Gaffney, “much of France’s post World War II behaviour has been based on the idea that it, France, was the one Western

³³¹ John Gaffney, ‘Highly Emotional States: French-US Relations and the Iraq War’, *European Security* Volume 13 2004 pp.247-272 [online version] <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09662830490499966?src=recsys> [accessed 21/02/2019]

³³² Alan K. Henrikson, ‘Why the United States and Europe see the world differently: an Atlanticist’s Rejoinder to the Kagan Thesis’, *EUSA Review*, Vol. 16, No. 3, Summer 2003 https://www.eustudies.org/assets/files/eusa_review/Summer2003Review.pdf [accessed 19/12/2019]

³³³ Ibid.

country “allowed” to behave in this way, diplomatically above its station”³³⁴. In addition, France had misperceived America’s own self-perceptions at this point (namely, that it had suffered a profound assault on 9/11); and to interfere with the US response to this trauma (the development of the doctrine of ‘pre-emption’), was a great insult which would inevitably lead to friction³³⁵.

Gaffney seeks to distinguish these two positions by arguing that the reason France and the US’ rupture was so severe was that the miscalculations and misperceptions were “in large part, culturally conditioned”³³⁶. Effectively, he argues that circumstances beyond strategic aims and objectives dictate how policy is created and enacted. Whilst being keen not to overstate the argument, Gaffney highlights that the cultural baggage feeding into the decisions made by both the US and France led to the schism.

Whilst the totality of Gaffney’s arguments regarding the falling out with America need not be discussed for the purposes of this thesis, he does provide some clarifications regarding the reasons behind France’s policy decisions in this period. He describes how France’s post-World War Two character is comprised of a “dual righteousness/defensiveness”, to which was added “a third element: an arrogant, although not militarily aggressive *mission civilisatrice*”³³⁷. Whilst there may be some dispute as to whether France’s policies are militarily aggressive (this thesis shows that, in their current form, they are), what Gaffney is describing is a form a French exceptionalism which developed in the second half of the twentieth century, moving from “pretensions to equality with the US (through its presumed leadership of Europe) to a recognition of the US’ mighty superiority”³³⁸, throughout which France maintained its sense of responsibility/mission.

Once again, in his analysis Gaffney argues that France became obsessed with increasing its *rang* and its *grandeur* through a use of its foreign and security policy. However, for Gaffney, France’s self-image is illusory, that it is not as great in

³³⁴ John Gaffney, ‘Highly Emotional States: French-US Relations and the Iraq War’, *European Security* Volume 13 2004 pp.247-272 [online version] <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09662830490499966?src=recsys> [accessed 19/12/2019]

³³⁵ Ibid

³³⁶ Ibid.

³³⁷ Ibid.

³³⁸ Ibid.

international player as it imagines. Furthermore, he argues that France was aware of this fact, and, as Treacher and Philip Cerny has argued, used grand gestures to mask its national decline³³⁹. This awareness is therefore also a source of great anxiety for France. Gaffney points to its military parades during Bastille Day as such an example of France attempting to bolster its own ego³⁴⁰.

Gaffney therefore argues that France's conduct in the build up to the UN vote regarding military intervention in Iraq was, as all foreign policy has been, a very personal act. The argument stands that as foreign policy under the Fifth Republic is so tied up with the President, it is almost inevitable that it would assume this personal approach. Here, the line is blurred however between the President (the person), and the Presidency (the office). Certainly it can and is argued that historic and cultural policies established by de Gaulle are certainly inherent in the policies enacted by subsequent Presidents.

It is important to note however that throughout this period, France continued its presence in Afghanistan as part of the ISAF forces. It also continued to work with and participate in NATO. In August 2003, NATO took control of ISAF, effectively placing French troops under its command. However, France by that point had minimised the amount of troops in that theatre, with 750 troops in 2005, and 1500 by the end of 2006, which was much smaller than most European contingents, and much smaller than what France could have produced if it had so wanted³⁴¹. France also restricted the use of its forces so they could only be deployed in Kabul, and not the surrounding areas³⁴².

Auerswald and Saiderman argued that France was keen to manage the use of its troops, attempting to prevent them from participating in operations which could lead to bad PR, such as counter-narcotics or crowd control exercises. There was also a strict oversight of troops, reporting any "action that could possibly appear in the press"³⁴³

³³⁹ Adrian Treacher, *French Interventionism: Europe's last global player?* (Ashgate; Hampshire, 2003) p.27 and Philip Cerny, *The Politics of Grandeur* (Cambridge University Press, 1980)

³⁴⁰ John Gaffney, 'Highly Emotional States: French-US Relations and the Iraq War' *European Security* Volume 13 2004 pp.247-272 [online version] <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09662830490499966?src=recsys> [accessed 21/02/2019]

³⁴¹ David P. Auerswald and Stephen M. Saiderman, *NATO in Afghanistan: Fighting Together, Fighting Alone* (Princeton, Princeton University Press; 2004) (Online Version) p.105

³⁴² Interview with Senior French Officer, Tampa, Florida, quoted in *Ibid.*

³⁴³ *Ibid.*

up the chain of command, through the French Joint Staff to the Chief of Defence, then on to the President. The one caveat to this however was the deployment of French Special Forces in and around Spin Boldak. This too was hedged with limitations though, as they were not allowed to undertake long-term counterterrorism missions which would involve trailing insurgents for extended periods, or accompany Afghan advisors during missions³⁴⁴. The Special Forces troops were also told that they could not disclose that they were currently on mission, as public knowledge could infer a long term commitment or increase the political costs at home³⁴⁵.

However, Chirac had not totally rejected France's role in the conflict, but was rather pursuing other avenues to suggest a French role. Instead, in February 2004 Chirac suggested that the Eurocorps be used to bolster forces in Afghanistan³⁴⁶. The force would be authorised for deployment twice in Afghanistan, once in 2004-2005, and again in 2012³⁴⁷. It is important to reiterate at this point though that Eurocorps, as it was originally conceived, comprised of troops from France, Germany, Spain, Luxembourg and Belgium, so French troops would only constitute a fraction of the troops³⁴⁸.

Certainly the above information would suggest that France was keen to be seen undertaking international peacekeeping missions, but as compared with figures in the nineties above shows, are far more reluctant to supply significant portions of resources. This lends credence to the idea that much of France's peacekeeping missions under Chirac were performative. However, following his various health problems, Chirac announced in 2007 that he would not stand for a third term as French President. Following national elections, Nicolas Sarkozy acceded to the presidency, and with him came some new developments in how France would conduct itself on the world stage.

³⁴⁴ Interview with Senior French Officer, Tampa, Florida, quoted in Ibid.

³⁴⁵ David P. Auerswald and Stephen M. Saiderman, *NATO in Afghanistan: Fighting Together, Fighting Alone* (Princeton, Princeton University Press; 2004) (Online Version) p.106

³⁴⁶ Richard Carter, 'Call for Eurocorps to take over in Afghanistan', *EU Observer*, 6 February 2004 <https://euobserver.com/news/14348> [accessed 22/02/2019]

³⁴⁷ Eurocorps website: <https://www.eurocorps.org/operations/nato/> [accessed 22/02/2019]

³⁴⁸ Eurocorps now includes troops from Poland, Italy, Greece, Romania, and Turkey, as of 6 April 2018 <https://www.eurocorps.org/about-us/contributing-nations/> [accessed 22/02/2019]

1.3 The Responsibility to Protect Doctrine

Many of the justifications provided in launching airstrikes and implementing a no-fly-zone over Libya, as well as intervening in Syria, revolve around the notion of there being a Responsibility to Protect (R2P). Therefore, it is important to gain a better understanding of the literature surrounding the Responsibility to Protect Doctrine, and how it pertains to France and the current situation.

Following the atrocities of Rwanda and the Balkans in the 1990s, it was clear that the international community needed to find a new way to act to help prevent genocide from occurring again. In September 1999, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan set a challenge for the international community to find a way of cooperating to prevent such occurrences again³⁴⁹.

A report named “The Responsibility to Protect” was published in 2001 by the International Commission on Intervention and State Security. This publication argued that the primary responsibility for the protection of people primarily rested with the State. However, a ‘residual responsibility’ lay with the broader international community, which “activated when a particular state is clearly either unwilling or unable to fulfil its responsibility to protect or is itself the actual perpetrator of crimes or atrocities”³⁵⁰.

After some modification, it was eventually adopted in 2005. Paragraphs 138, 139, and 140 of the 2005 World Summit document A/RES/60/1 adopted the measure as follows:

138. Each individual State has the responsibility to protect its populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. This responsibility entails the prevention of such crimes, including their incitement, through appropriate and necessary means. We accept that responsibility and will act in accordance with it. The international community should, as appropriate, encourage and help States to exercise this responsibility and support the United Nations in establishing an early warning capability.

³⁴⁹ Secretary General Presents his Annual Report to General Assembly SG/SM7136 20 September 1999 <http://www.un.org/press/en/1999/19990920.sgsm7136.html> [accessed 27/09/2017]

³⁵⁰ ‘Report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty’ 2001 International Development Research Centre Ottawa 10.) <http://responsibilitytoprotect.org/ICISS%20Report.pdf> [accessed 27/09/2017] p.17

139. The international community, through the United Nations, also has the responsibility to use appropriate diplomatic, humanitarian and other peaceful means, in accordance with Chapters VI and VIII of the Charter, to help protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. In this context, we are prepared to take collective action, in a timely and decisive manner, through the Security Council, in accordance with the Charter, including Chapter VII, on a case-by-case basis and in cooperation with relevant regional organizations as appropriate, should peaceful means be inadequate and national authorities manifestly fail to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. We stress the need for the General Assembly to continue consideration of the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity and its implications, bearing in mind the principles of the Charter and international law. We also intend to commit ourselves, as necessary and appropriate, to helping States build capacity to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity and to assisting those which are under stress before crises and conflicts break out.

140. We fully support the mission of the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide.³⁵¹

Put simply, the Responsibility to Protect relies on three pillars:

- Pillar One: The protection responsibilities of the State
- Pillar Two: International assistance and capacity-building
- Pillar Three: Timely and decisive response³⁵²

Pillar One represents the responsibility on the state itself to neither perpetrate nor allow atrocities to occur on its own territory. This is considered the primary responsibility. Pillar Two declares that other states and intergovernmental organisations have a responsibility to assist states in discharging this primary responsibility, if they are willing to be helped. Finally, Pillar Three states that if the primary responsibility is failing to be discharged, and a state is failing to protect its own people, then other

³⁵¹ Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 16 September 2005 A/RES/60/1 Distribution General 24 October 2005 <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N05/487/60/pdf/N0548760.pdf?OpenElement> [accessed 27/09/2017]

³⁵² Implementing the Responsibility to Protect Report of the Secretary General A/63/677 12 January 2009 https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/63/677 [accessed 27/09/2017 – download word document]

states are to provide that protection by every means permitted by the United Nations Charter³⁵³.

At the time, the Responsibility to Protect proved to be quite controversial as there were serious misgivings about the nature of the responsibility, and whether it would affect the principle of sovereignty. How would the third pillar be interpreted? Would a state lose some of its rights to other states if it was felt that it was failing to discharge the first pillar?

Under the letter of the law, the answer appears to be no. As Simon Chesterman notes, “the significance of RtoP was never, in a strict sense, legal. Rather, it was political—and, importantly, rhetorical”³⁵⁴. Indeed, Article 2(4) of the UN Charter remains the same, prohibiting the use, or threat, of force against other member states except for times of self-defence and action authorised by the Security Council³⁵⁵.

Indeed, there was a fear when the Responsibility to Protect was introduced that states would use it as a justification to push their own objectives. In 2005, there were two examples whereby a Responsibility to Protect claim was rejected. Firstly, in May 2005, the French Foreign Minister Bernard Juchner asked for the Responsibility to Protect to be used in relation to Myanmar. Three months later, Russia also attempted to justify its invasion of Georgia using the same reasoning. Both claims failed as France and Russia were unable to gain any support in the Security Council, even from their own allies. As Badescu (now Stefan) and Weiss note, it ironically served to become an example of the difficulty of abusing the system³⁵⁶. It also had the additional effect of persuading member states, who had been cautious of this newly developing norm, of its defence against abuse.

However, because the Responsibility to Protect does not confer any additional legal obligations, it does not mean that it serves no purpose. Anne Orford has argued, that

³⁵³ Ibid.

³⁵⁴ Simon Chesterman, "Leading from Behind": The Responsibility to Protect, the Obama Doctrine, and Humanitarian Intervention After Libya" New York University Public Law and Legal Theory Working Papers. 2011 Paper 282. <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/13553130.pdf> p.5 [accessed 27/09/2017]

³⁵⁵ UN Charter Article 2(4) <http://www.un.org/en/sections/un-charter/chapter-i/index.html> [accessed 27/09/2017]

³⁵⁶ Cristina G. Badescu and Thomas G. Weiss, “Misrepresenting R2P and Advancing Norms: An Alternative Spiral,” *International Studies Perspectives* 11, no. 4 (2010), pp. 354-374

despite the lack of legal rights/obligations, one can still interpret the Responsibility to Protect as conferring public power and allocating jurisdiction³⁵⁷. It is an attempt to gain some buy in from the UN member States to take responsibility for the welfare of its own citizens, as well as being conscious of the welfare of others in states around them, and taking responsibility for them too if the situation arises.

Chesterman notes that the way that the Responsibility to Protect is written is reminiscent of Article 99 of the UN Charter, which allows the UN Secretary-General to bring before the Security Council “any matter which in his opinion may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security”³⁵⁸. Indeed, much of the push for Responsibility to Protect comes from the Office of the Secretary-General³⁵⁹. Ultimately, it would appear that the true purpose is the encouragement of Member States to act to assist other populations, or at the very least, to make it more difficult to do nothing in the face of atrocities.

Responsibility to Protect has been used successfully on very few occasions, and yet it was successfully implemented in the case of Libya. Chesterman believes it was due to the “unusual clarity of the situation in Libya”³⁶⁰. Indeed, with Colonel Gaddafi explicitly declaring his plans for anyone who stood against him, the decision was made clear for many world leaders. “Within a twenty four hour period the United States pivoted from scepticism about intervention in Libya to forceful advocacy”³⁶¹.

Where a Responsibility to Protect exists, the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty set forth some guidance as to when military intervention may be appropriate. There are four things to consider:

- A. Right intention: The primary purpose of the intervention, whatever other motives intervening states may have, must be to halt or avert human suffering. Right intention is

³⁵⁷ Anne Orford, *International Authority and the Responsibility to Protect* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 22-27

³⁵⁸ UN Charter, art. 99 Chapter XV <http://www.un.org/en/sections/un-charter/chapter-xv/index.html> [accessed 27/09/2017]

³⁵⁹ Gareth Evans, *The Responsibility to Protect: Ending Mass Atrocity Crimes Once and for All* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 2008), pp. 46-51

³⁶⁰ Simon Chesterman, "Leading from Behind": The Responsibility to Protect, the Obama Doctrine, and Humanitarian Intervention After Libya" *New York University Public Law and Legal Theory Working Papers*. 2011 Paper 282. <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/13553130.pdf> p.8 [accessed 27/09/2017]

³⁶¹ Ibid.

better assured with multilateral operations, clearly supported by regional opinion and the victims concerned.

B. Last resort: Military intervention can only be justified when every non-military option for the prevention or peaceful resolution of the crisis has been explored, with reasonable grounds for believing lesser measures would not have succeeded.

C. Proportional means: The scale, duration and intensity of the planned military intervention should be the minimum necessary to secure the defined human protection objective.

D. Reasonable prospects: There must be a reasonable chance of success in halting or averting the suffering which has justified the intervention, with the consequences of action not likely to be worse than the consequences of inaction.³⁶²

When President Obama justified his decision for the United States intervention, he was keen to explain the specific nature of the circumstances in Libya:

America cannot use our military wherever repression occurs. And given the costs and risks of intervention, we must always measure our interests against the need for action. But that cannot be an argument for never acting on behalf of what's right. In this particular country—Libya—at this particular moment, we were faced with the prospect of violence on a horrific scale. We had a unique ability to stop that violence: an international mandate for action, a broad coalition prepared to join us, the support of Arab countries, and a plea for help from the Libyan people themselves. We also had the ability to stop Qaddafi's forces in their tracks without putting American troops on the ground.³⁶³

Within this quote one finds a number of things to analyse. As mentioned above, Obama is quick to mention how exceptional this case was (with the continual mention of the word 'particular'). Obama is also keen to describe the multi-lateral nature of the intervention, with support from Arab countries. And obviously, in a post-Afghanistan/Iraq US, Obama also feels the need to mention that the intervention was done without having to deploy ground troops, thereby minimising the apparent risk to American lives. He is also clear to display that they were fighting with the right

³⁶² 'Report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty' *International Development Research Centre Ottawa* 10 2001

<http://responsibilitytoprotect.org/ICISS%20Report.pdf> [accessed 27/09/2017] p. XII

³⁶³ Barack Obama, "Remarks by the President in Address to the Nation on Libya" (National Defense University, Washington, DC, 28 March 2011), available at <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2011/03/28/remarks-president-address-nation-libya> [accessed 01/10/2017]

intention, and that there was a reasonable prospect of success. When discussing the discourse generated by the Sarkozy government in Part II, these justifications are examined in much greater detail.

However, a brief appraisal of the Responsibility to Protect reveals a number of similarities with the aforementioned Liberal Internationalism. Specifically, when comparing the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty criteria for R2P intervention³⁶⁴ with Tony Blair's own criteria for Liberal Intervention³⁶⁵, these similarities are laid bare. To a certain extent, the intervention having the right intention, that it is a last resort, that it involves proportional means, and that it has a reasonable chance at success, are all present in both definitions. The main difference being that Tony Blair is explicit that national interests must be involved. However, as has been mentioned above by General de la Gorce, establishing peace and stability is often within a nation's best interests³⁶⁶.

These similarities exist despite the fact that R2P was designed, in part, to address the criticisms of humanitarian intervention, such as the risk of generating a backlash from former colonised states who were wary of the supposedly altruistic motives of a military force³⁶⁷, that it relied too heavily on political will which could change³⁶⁸; or that it oversimplified, either accidentally or by design, situations where the options presented were inaction or military action³⁶⁹.

Philip Cunliffe however understands the development of R2P in a slightly different way to these criticisms, which draws a crucial difference between R2P and Liberal Intervention. Instead, the distinction lies in the fact R2P reinforces the importance of the State, instead of transcending it³⁷⁰.

³⁶⁴ Report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty' *International Development Research Centre* Ottawa 10 2001
<http://responsibilitytoprotect.org/ICISS%20Report.pdf> p. XII [accessed 27/09/2017]

³⁶⁵ Speech by Tony Blair 'The Blair Doctrine', Chicago 22 April 1999
<https://www.globalpolicy.org/component/content/article/154/26026.html> [accessed 10/06/2019]

³⁶⁶ Paul-Marie de la Gorce, *Intervention Extérieure et préservation des intérêts français* in Pierre Pascallon (ed) *Les Interventions Extérieures de l'Armée Française* (Bruylant, Brussels, 1997) p.36

³⁶⁷ R Thakur 'The responsibility to protect at 15'. *International Affairs* 92(2) 2016: 415–434

³⁶⁸ T G Weiss 'The sunset of humanitarian intervention? The RtoP in a unipolar era.' *Security Dialogue* 35(2) 2004: 135–153.

³⁶⁹ A J Bellamy, *RtoP: The Global Effort to End Mass Atrocities* (Cambridge: Polity, 2009)

³⁷⁰ D Warner, 'The RtoP and irresponsible, cynical engagement.' *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 32(1) 2003: 109–121.

R2P, according to Cunliffe, is a process of “norming the exception”³⁷¹. By this he means that R2P, as conceptualised by Kofi Annan, “seeks to close the gap between the norm and the exception” in relation to a state’s right to its sovereignty, and the obligations put upon said state to protect its citizens from humanitarian emergencies³⁷². More broadly, it does not create exceptions in certain cases, but rather in certain types of cases, e.g. “he is not concretely discussing the need for intervention in Rwanda or Bosnia-Herzegovina, but for intervention in circumstances of ‘a Rwanda’ or ‘a Srebrenica’”³⁷³. Cunliffe uses the work of Huysmans to explain that the R2P doctrine is a decisionistic rather than normative exceptionalism, in that “While normativist visions of international political order seek to limit the assertion of arbitrary exercise of power as much as possible ... decisionist visions make the arbitrary exercise of power [i.e. the transgression of norms] a permanent and immanent condition of normative order”³⁷⁴.

Whilst R2P has been established as constituting a norm, or rather a decisionist exception to the norm, it does not mean that the outcome is necessarily guaranteed. Indeed, the doctrine still requires a Security Council vote in order to succeed. The norm was found to be appropriate in the case of Libya in 2011, and a protective no-fly zone was allowed to be established to protect civilians, without a Russian veto. However, a joint op-ed by Presidents Obama and Sarkozy, and British Prime Minister David Cameron, would later blur the intention behind the authorising resolution, with the world leaders arguing that Gaddafi must step down³⁷⁵.

³⁷¹ Philip Cunliffe, ‘The doctrine of the ‘responsibility to protect’ as a practice of political exceptionalism’, *European Journal of International Relations* Vol 23, No. 2, June 2017 pp.466-486 (e-version)
<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1354066116654956#articleCitationDownloadContainer>
[accessed 10/06/2019]

³⁷² Ibid.

³⁷³ Ibid.

³⁷⁴ Jef Huysmans, ‘International politics of exception: competing visions of international political order between law and politics’, *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political*, 31(2) pp. 135–165. pp.147-148

³⁷⁵ Barack Obama, David Cameron and Nicolas Sarkozy ‘Libya’s Pathway to peace’ *The New York Times* 14 April 2011 https://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/15/opinion/15iht-edlibya15.html?_r=3&
[accessed 11/06/2019]

This meant that the R2P doctrine would be treated by some academics, and President Putin, as being an imperialistic doctrine³⁷⁶. This argument would therefore be used by Putin as an excuse to resist the notion that the R2P norm had been triggered in the situation in Syria, and cautioned the US that there should be no armed intervention because of this³⁷⁷.

An important element which this thesis seeks to contribute to the literature at large is to show how two French Presidents, Sarkozy and Hollande, sought to synthesise French Republican and R2P ideas together to form a cohesive argument for intervention. Based on what has been explained above, France has adapted to the advent of the multi-polar, international community. For it to be able to intervene militarily, it needs to obtain support from its allies, and needs to convince other members of the Security Council that it is acting in good faith. This is the clear limitation of the R2P doctrine which state actors must seek to address. This thesis shows in detail the ways in which both Sarkozy and Hollande sought to obtain support and built trust (or not, as was the case with Hollande).

After discussing the Responsibility to Protect Doctrine, the next section discusses the foreign policy developments under President Sarkozy. It examines, amongst other things, the extent to which he represented a change or continuation of the foreign policy principles set forth by previous presidents, as well as examining more generally how Sarkozy acted within the international community at large.

³⁷⁶ Louise Riis Anderson and Tim Dunne, 'In Defense of Liberal Intervention', *Danish Institute for International Studies* 3 June 2014 <https://www.diis.dk/en/research/in-defense-of-liberal-intervention> [accessed 11/06/2019]

³⁷⁷ Vladimir V Putin, 'A Plea for Caution from Russia', *The New York Times*, 11 September 2013 <https://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/12/opinion/putin-plea-for-caution-from-russia-on-syria.html?hp> [accessed 11/06/2019]

1.4 Foreign Policy Under Nicolas Sarkozy

Sarkozy's early presidency marked some seemingly significant changes in France's approach to its allies. Most noticeably, after decades of seemingly being drawn towards the organisation, Sarkozy would finally be the one to formerly reintegrate France into the NATO command structure. In the 2008 White Paper setting out France's foreign policy, France declared its intentions regarding NATO. In this document, it describes that the "renewal of NATO and strengthening of the European Union are two aspects of a single approach. Each of these two organisations, with its own characteristics, aims, and dynamics is essential to the security and action of France on the international stage."³⁷⁸ The White Paper also acknowledged that "relations between the European Union and NATO have suffered from a number of misapprehensions and genuine misunderstandings. It is important to dispel these"³⁷⁹.

Therefore, it was here in this document that the arguments for reintegration were laid out. Whilst maintaining that de Gaulle's decision to withdraw from NATO was necessary to "restore their completely national character to [France's] armies", as well as resisting the subordination of French forces to any foreign power, or having any foreign military presence on French territory³⁸⁰, a number of changes in both NATO's post-Cold War mission and France's involvement within it had meant that there was "call for a rethink of their practical implications 40 years on"³⁸¹.

However, any rapprochement would need to meet a number of criteria. Firstly, France would need to have complete freedom to assess situations and decisions, in so far as France would need to have the final say in the usage of its assets in any NATO intervention. However, the Paper is keen to reassure the reader that as the Alliance was a "group of sovereign nations in which political decisions are taken by

³⁷⁸ The French White Paper on Defence and National Security (foreword by Nicolas Sarkozy) <http://www.mocr.army.cz/images/Bilakniha/ZSD/French%20White%20Paper%20on%20Defence%20and%20National%20Security%202008.pdf> p.93

³⁷⁹ Ibid. p94

³⁸⁰ Charles De Gaulle Press Conference, 28 October 1966

³⁸¹ The French White Paper on Defence and National Security (foreword by Nicolas Sarkozy) <http://www.mocr.army.cz/images/Bilakniha/ZSD/French%20White%20Paper%20on%20Defence%20and%20National%20Security%202008.pdf> p.102

consensus”, and “France will therefore retain its full independence of judgement and decision in all circumstances”³⁸².

Secondly, France needed to retain its nuclear independence, and that its assets and deterrence strategy would remain outside of the NATO framework. Finally, France would need to be able to have the final say in when and how its forces are utilised, and specifically that no force would be “placed permanently under NATO command in peacetime”³⁸³.

Sarkozy was confident that joining NATO would not jeopardise any of these freedoms, so France formally re-joined the central military command structure of NATO in 2009. This was of course met with some controversy from both within his own party, and from the opposition. Martine Aubry, leader of the Socialist Party, argued that “nothing today justifies returning to NATO’s military command... There’s no hurry, no fundamental need, except this Atlanticism that’s becoming an ideology”³⁸⁴. Atlanticism here is to be understood as pro-American sentiment.

However, France under Sarkozy did seem keen to play a much greater role in military interventions. This can be seen in Sarkozy’s change in approach to French troops in Afghanistan. Auerswald and Saideman note that key differences emerged in the freedom afforded to France’s troops in conducting operations. Indeed, the key differences they found between the conduct of Chirac and Sarkozy was that: “Where Chirac was motivated to limit most French behavior in Afghanistan, Sarkozy seems to have been motivated to achieve particular *outcomes* on the ground and with regard to the NATO alliance”³⁸⁵.

Interviews conducted by Auerswald and Saideman suggest that practically, this meant not only a significant increase in the number of troops situated in the country³⁸⁶, but

³⁸² Ibid. p.104

³⁸³ Ibid. p.104

³⁸⁴ Steven Erlanger, ‘France Will Take Full NATO membership Again, With Greater Military Role’, *The New York Times* 11 March 2009
<https://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/12/world/europe/12france.html> [accessed 24/02/2019]

³⁸⁵ David P. Auerswald and Stephen M. Saiderman, *NATO in Afghanistan: Fighting Together, Fighting Alone* (Princeton, Princeton University Press; 2004) (Online Version) p.107

³⁸⁶ ‘France’s military presence in Afghanistan’ *France 24* 2 December 2009
<https://www.france24.com/en/20091202-france%E2%80%99-military-presence-afghanistan> [accessed 24/02/2019]

also redeploying its troops to RC-East and Eastern Afghanistan³⁸⁷. France also assisted in Southern Afghanistan when requested, deploying observer, mentor, liaison teams (OMLTs) outside of Kabul. These OMLTs were twice the size of normal OMLTs, as requested by the French themselves, because of the distance between the OMLTs and the rest of its forces, thereby making logistical support significantly more difficult³⁸⁸. Sarkozy was keen in these circumstances to be seen as being helpful to the ISAF mission, removing the constraints which had previously been placed on the Afghan forces by Chirac.

As has been mentioned above, foreign policy within the French system takes an incredibly personal element. Sarkozy, as shown throughout this thesis, was keen to accentuate this element. This attitude can clearly be found in his foreword to the 2008 White Paper: “As Commander in Chief of the French armed forces, I have the duty to protect the vital and strategic interests of our nation. It is my responsibility to choose the strategy and assets France needs...”³⁸⁹

However, whilst Sarkozy was keen to place his stamp on French foreign policy, did his presidency actually mark a significant change in policy? As has been seen above, a common trait shared by many pieces of literature concerning France’s modus operandi in regards to military intervention in the modern day setting is that it attempts to co-opt other organisations or nations into potential military intervention. For many commentators, this has been particularly brought into focus under the presidency of Nicolas Sarkozy.

For Cumming, “the Sarkozy Government endeavoured to move from unilateral towards UN, EU or African-backed military interventions”³⁹⁰. Indeed, this is a

³⁸⁷ Interview with Senior French officers, Tampa, Florida and Paris, France, February and June 2009 in David P. Auerswald and Stephen M. Saiderman, *NATO in Afghanistan: Fighting Together, Fighting Alone* (Princeton, Princeton University Press; 2004) (Online Version) p.107

³⁸⁸ Interview with French Officer, Paris, France June 2009, in David P. Auerswald and Stephen M. Saiderman, *NATO in Afghanistan: Fighting Together, Fighting Alone* (Princeton, Princeton University Press; 2004) (Online Version) p.107

³⁸⁹ The French White Paper on Defence and National Security (foreword by Nicolas Sarkozy) <http://www.mocr.army.cz/images/Bilakniha/ZSD/French%20White%20Paper%20on%20Defence%20and%20National%20Security%202008.pdf> p.9

³⁹⁰ Gordon Cumming, ‘Nicolas Sarkozy’s Africa Policy: Change, Continuity or Confusion’, *French Politics*; Basingstoke 11.1 (Apr 2013) 24-47, p.30

sentiment which has been echoed throughout the literature (J Bucher et al.³⁹¹, Rowdybush and Chamorel³⁹²). Rowdybush and Chamorel note that Sarkozy, early during his Presidency, made pledges to do a number of things to help bring this about: Sarkozy said that there would be a “return of France in Europe”; a full and complete return to NATO’s command structures; a reconciliation with the United States, marked in particular by sending additional troops to Afghanistan; an initiative for a Union for the Mediterranean; and a renewed relationship with Africa as well as the Middle East”³⁹³.

This was of course the opposite of what de Gaulle had done when he withdrew from NATO’s military structures in 1966. As was mentioned above, NATO and the domination of the United States within it was viewed as a threat to France’s own power. However, circumstances had changed in the interim. France had always viewed its ability to deploy its expeditionary forces abroad to defend its national interests, and especially in Africa, as being intrinsic to its sense of *grandeur*. Furthermore, due to its historical ties and continual interactions with Africa, France “recognises that its activism there is the most influential [sic] it can exercise on the international stage”³⁹⁴. Rowdybush and Chamorel note that by taking an active role in conflict resolution internationally, France aims to demonstrate to the world its ability to use hard power, as well as strengthen its political ties with key allies like the United States of America³⁹⁵.

However, with Sarkozy’s decision to move away from unilateral action, France was instead seeking to relieve itself of the significant cost of its interventions, whilst still enabling it to participate in such interventions. As France viewed itself as a great

³⁹¹ Jessica Bucher, Lena Engel, Stephanie Harfensteller & Hylke Dijkstra, ‘Domestic politics, news media and humanitarian intervention: why France and Germany diverged over Libya’, *European Security*, 22:4, 2013, 524-539, p. 527

³⁹² B. Rowdybush and P. Chamorel, Aspirations and reality: French foreign policy and the 2012 elections. *The Washington Quarterly*, 35/1 2011, 163-177.

³⁹³ *Ibid.* pp 164-165

³⁹⁴ Jessica Bucher, Lena Engel, Stephanie Harfensteller & Hylke Dijkstra, ‘Domestic politics, news media and humanitarian intervention: why France and Germany diverged over Libya’, *European Security*, 22:4, 2013, 524-539, p. 527

³⁹⁵ B. Rowdybush and P. Chamorel, ‘Aspirations and reality: French foreign policy and the 2012 elections’. *The Washington Quarterly*, 35/1 2011, 163-177.

power, it felt that it had an obligation in international affairs³⁹⁶. According to Article 24(1) of the UN Charter, the Security Council enjoys “primary responsibility for the maintenance of the international peace and security”, and as a permanent member of the Security Council, France “uses these obligations whenever it suits its interests”³⁹⁷.

As has been shown consistently above, Security Council Resolutions and other forms of political legitimisation are important to France when it is intervening abroad in a nation with which it does not already have a defence treaty. This forms a major part of this thesis’ argument, and is borne out in the comparative case study between the situation with Libya, and that of Syria.

However, what were the longstanding implications of Sarkozy’s change in approach, and did it actually constitute a veritable change in policy? Or, was Sarkozy’s supposed reform programme actually more an example of style over substance?

For Cumming, it is certainly the case that some of Sarkozy’s reforms were more limited than had been previously suggested, whilst others were redundant. An example of a redundant reform was that of the need to break from, or renegotiate defence agreements. In an interview Cumming conducted, many agreements were already “defunct, inapplicable or ignored”³⁹⁸. France’s refusal to intervene militarily to support Laurent Gbagbo (the President of Côte d’Ivoire) in the early 2000s showed that the agreements were not binding. Furthermore, the idea of renegotiating the bilateral agreements at a time when France was advocating an EU-Africa strategy was doubtful³⁹⁹.

Sarkozy also had a complicated relationship with the promotion of democracy in Africa. In later chapters we specifically treat the complicated dealings surrounding Libya and Tunisia. This thesis shows how Sarkozy’s support for democracy was often conditional⁴⁰⁰. However, beyond these there are many other examples of Sarkozy’s

³⁹⁶ Jessica Bucher, Lena Engel, Stephanie Harfensteller & Hylke Dijkstra, ‘Domestic politics, news media and humanitarian intervention: why France and Germany diverged over Libya’, *European Security*, 22:4, 2013, 524-539, p. 527

³⁹⁷ Ibid. p528

³⁹⁸ Gordon Cumming, ‘Nicolas Sarkozy’s Africa Policy: Change, Continuity or Confusion’ *French Politics*; Basingstoke 11.1 (Apr 2013) 24-47, p.30

³⁹⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁰ Chapter 5 will show how Sarkozy was slow to react to the ‘Arab Spring’, and was seen to be supporting the Tunisian regime against the protestors.

inconsistency. In 2008, Sarkozy gave a speech in Benin declaring that he would engage in dialogue with African leaders as “equal, responsible partners”, and that he would respect efforts to “build democracy”, “respect individual freedoms” and “refuse coup d’états”⁴⁰¹.

During his infamous speech in Dakar in 2007, Sarkozy had seemingly planned to foster a sense of partnership and celebrate an African renaissance, but he ended up actually saying that “The tragedy of Africa is that the African has not fully entered into history ... They have never really launched themselves into the future”⁴⁰², before going further and declaring that “the African peasant only knew the eternal renewal of time, marked by the endless repetition of the same gestures and the same words... In this realm of fancy ... there is neither room for human endeavour nor the idea of progress”⁴⁰³.

In this instance, Sarkozy may have been attempting to be offering a form of apology for previous crimes committed by the French Empire, retarding national development in certain areas. However, this ignores the decades of progress made, and maintains a rather condescendingly patriarchal view of Africa. Indeed, Alpha Oumar Konare, (Chairman of the African Union Commission) condemned the content of Sarkozy’s speech as the “declarations of a bygone era”⁴⁰⁴.

Confusion and contradiction formed part of Sarkozy’s foreign policy. Some level of improvisation is inevitable, but Sarkozy often announced policies which he had no intention of following, or would vacillate between contradictory policies. For example, in 2008, Sarkozy proudly forwarded the notion that he would be engaging with the French Parliament in regards to its African Policy. However, he had created an unrealistic notion about the type of coordination which would be happening. This notion was quickly dispelled, with Bayart noting that the Sarkozy government “took

⁴⁰¹ Nicolas Sarkozy, Cotonou speech. Benin, 19 May 2006. <http://discours.vie-publique.fr/notices/063001811.html>

⁴⁰² Nicolas Sarkozy, Speech to the Universite’ Cheikh-Anta-Diop. Dakar, 25 July 2007

⁴⁰³ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁴ Cited in Diadie Ba, ‘Africans still seething over Sarkozy Speech’, *UK Reuters*, 5 September 2007 <https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-africa-sarkozy/africans-still-seething-over-sarkozy-speech-idUKL0513034620070905> [accessed 27/09/2017]

France to war in the Sahel without... so much as informing her Parliamentary representatives”⁴⁰⁵.

The chaos and confusion within diplomatic circles became so pronounced that a group of irate diplomats known as the ‘Marly Group’ wrote to *Le Monde* to complain. They described the foreign policy produced by Sarkozy as ‘impulsive’, as being too ‘mediatised’, as well as being ‘amateurish’⁴⁰⁶. They also stated that Sarkozy’s frenetic style concerned African leaders, who interpreted it as a lack of respect⁴⁰⁷.

As was mentioned above, there was the particular humiliation of Sarkozy’s speech in Dakar. However, Sarkozy was also rather impulsive. An example of this was the decision to recognise the National Transitional Council as the legitimate government of Libya. Seemingly, much of Sarkozy’s interactions with the Libyan rebels were organised through the philosopher Bernard Henri-Lévi. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, it would seem, had not been consulted on the decision, and it is possible that it may have been at least in part motivated by Gaddafi’s withdrawal from promises of contracts worth ten billion euros⁴⁰⁸.

Sarkozy, and his personal advisor, Henri Guaino, were both accused of being anti-intellectual. Guaino wore this on his sleeve as a badge of honour. In response to the massive backlash against the Dakar speech, Guaino, the person who authored the speech, responded by saying that “if intellectuals are protesting, it’s clear proof that we are right”⁴⁰⁹.

This attitude was clearly on display when Sarkozy neglected to consult with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs over the recognition of the National Transitional Council. This was also the case when Sarkozy closed down the Haut Conseil de la Coopération Internationale (HCCI), whose job it was to analyse and try to ensure clarity of France’s

⁴⁰⁵ J F Bayart, ‘Quelle politique africain pour la France?’ *Politique Africain* 121(1) 2011 : 147-160, p.147

⁴⁰⁶ ‘La voix de la France a disparu dans le monde’, *Le Monde*, 22 February 2011
http://www.lemonde.fr/idees/article/2011/02/22/on-ne-s-improvise-pas-diplomate_1483517_3232.html [accessed 30/09/2017]

⁴⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁸ V. Darracq, *France and the Rise of Emerging Countries in Africa* (London: Chatham House, 2011)

⁴⁰⁹ ‘Henri Guaino L’homme africain’ *Le Monde* 27-28 July 2008
http://www.lemonde.fr/idees/article/2008/07/26/henri-guaino-toute-l-afrique-n-a-pas-rejete-le-discours-de-dakar_1077506_3232.html [accessed 01/10/2017]

aid policy. The scrapping of the HCCI could therefore be seen as further action to remove oversight of government departments, which already had only very limited oversight by government and other Non-Governmental Organisations⁴¹⁰.

Another reason that Cumming feels that Sarkozy's policy was mired by incoherence was due to his inability to establish a vision for Africa⁴¹¹. As a result of this, Cumming interprets most of Sarkozy's foreign policy as moving from one crisis to another, searching for "alternative logics and sources of legitimacy"⁴¹².

In the context of this thesis, Cumming's appraisal of the Sarkozy presidency certainly rings true. When comparing Sarkozy's reaction to the Arab Spring, he flip-flopped between attempting to support the existing regime in Tunisia, to only a couple of months later launching airstrikes and supporting a rebel faction against the leader of Libya. And as Cumming mentioned above, in absence of any vision or doctrine for foreign policy, it makes it difficult for people outside of the Elysée bubble to get any coherent understanding, (though if the Marly Group are to be believed, this was also an issue within the Foreign Ministry).

Bayart also argues that France invited some trouble onto itself in the Sahel, by agreeing with the United States of America that direct intervention was required to prevent areas from becoming al Qaeda strongholds. As such, Bayart claims that by targeting a relatively little known group called *Al Qaida au Maghreb Islamique* (AQMI), France gave them a credibility that they would not have otherwise had⁴¹³.

When factoring all of the information above, the question becomes to what extent was Sarkozy truly an agent of change? For Cumming, the answer is yes, he was a genuine agent of change, but with some significant caveats⁴¹⁴. As was mentioned above, Sarkozy seemed to be moving towards a reorientation of policy in terms of fully

⁴¹⁰ Gordon Cumming, 'A piecemeal Approach with no vision Foreign Policy towards Africa under Nicolas Sarkozy' 104-130 in G. Raymond (ed) *The Sarkozy Presidency Breaking the Mould?* Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2013 P. 121

⁴¹¹ Gordon Cumming, 'Nicolas Sarkozy's Africa Policy: Change, Continuity or Confusion *French Politics*' Basingstoke 11.1 (Apr 2013) 24-47, p.42

⁴¹² Ibid.

⁴¹³ J F Bayart, Le piège de la lutte anti-terroriste, 28 July 2010, <https://blogs.mediapart.fr/jean-Francois-bayart/blog/280710/le-piege-de-la-lutte-anti-terroriste-en-afrique-de-louest> [Accessed 27 September 2017]

⁴¹⁴ Gordon Cumming, 'Nicolas Sarkozy's Africa Policy: Change, Continuity or Confusion *French Politics*' Basingstoke 11.1 (Apr 2013) 24-47

reintegrating France into the NATO command apparatus. But as was also seen, the extent of his reforms was far more limited than they originally seemed.

In terms of relations with America, the findings of this thesis do suggest that there was significant improvement in Franco-American relations sufficient to enable successful missions over Libya. Furthermore, this relationship would factor in heavily during the Syrian crisis, though Hollande is shown to have been unable to mobilise or rely on this friendship in the way that Sarkozy had.

This thesis also shows the more improvisational and less focused aspects of Sarkozy. In particular, this thesis presents how quickly he adapted France's position in relation to the regimes in North Africa when circumstances seemed to change. Continuity however can also be found in the Republican narratives and tropes relied on to justify the need for intervention. What Sarkozy was able to do effectively, however, was combine these concepts with arguments relating to the Responsibility to Protect Doctrine, to formulate a single, cohesive argument.

1.5 Interventions in Libya and Syria

In order to situate this current thesis within the literature, there first needs to be an examination regarding what has been written about France's interventions in Libya and Syria. This will therefore be conducted in two parts. The first part addresses the literature concerning Libya (1.5.1), whilst the second takes a close look at that which has been written about Hollande's failed attempt to intervene in Syria (1.5.2).

1.5.1 France's 2011 Intervention in Libya

There are a number of questions surrounding the intervention in Libya. Why did France intervene? Does France's reaction constitute a change in foreign policy? This thesis takes as its objective the analysis of the difference between interventions in Libya and Syria, and what this can teach us about France's foreign policy in regards to when it will intervene militarily. Therefore, it is important to understand the circumstances in Libya, something which this section seeks to interrogate.

Jason Davidson proposed a method of understanding the Libyan intervention⁴¹⁵. In his article, Davidson argues that existing theories of international relations, constructivist, defensive realist, or liberal, were insufficient on their own to explain France's and Great Britain's intervention. According to Davidson, a constructivist interpretation of the intervention places the emphasis on the 'responsibility to protect' norm, as well as the UN Security Council resolution⁴¹⁶. A defensive realism approach would emphasise the refugee flows and risk of terrorism for the intervention⁴¹⁷. Finally, liberalism would focus on Sarkozy's need to minimise electoral risk associated with a humanitarian intervention⁴¹⁸.

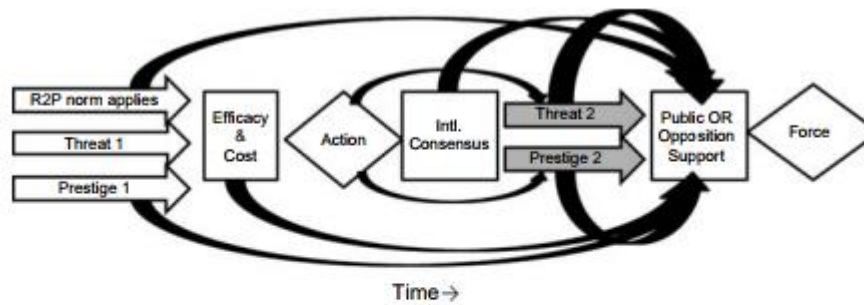
However, Davidson argues that this situation is too complicated to apply a single theory, and that as such, one needs to use an integrated model.

⁴¹⁵ Jason W Davidson, 'France, Britain and the intervention in Libya: an integrated analysis' *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 2013 Vol. 26, 310-329

⁴¹⁶ Ibid. p311

⁴¹⁷ Ibid.

⁴¹⁸ Ibid.



White Arrow: Initial factors that push the govt. toward intervention
 Grey Arrow: Contributing factors that make a govt. leaning toward intervention more likely to do so
 Black Arrow: Factors—if favour force—that increase the likelihood of other factors favouring force
 Box: Pre-requisite factors that could block movement toward force
 Diamond: Decision points (1st is decision to make statement/plan/lobby others to act; 2nd is decision to use force)
 Note: at any time the process can end if a satisfactory solution (that addresses the initial causal factors) is attained

Figure 1. Jason Davidson’s integrated model of Intervention decisions⁴¹⁹.

Davidson’s integrated model (as above) initially breaks down events along the lines of when they happened, and what types of events they were. On the far left is what he considers to be the three causal links. The first causal link being the Responsibility to Protect Norm existing. A constructivist reading of the scenario would suggest that if an international norm exists, it will play a significant role in a decision as to whether military intervention is appropriate⁴²⁰. As discussed above, the Responsibility to Protect norm is designed to apply when a state has abdicated its role in protecting its citizens from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, mass rape, and other crimes against humanity. Furthermore, the international community has a responsibility to take ‘timely and decisive’ action on behalf of the affected population⁴²¹.

The second causal link regards a threat, perceived or otherwise, to a nation. This refers to the defensive realist literature, which would predict a nation intervening in a situation if it felt that the nation or any of its interests were under direct or indirect threat. This includes the citizenry, its territorial integrity, its “economy or any natural resource of major economic or security significance”⁴²². In this case, Davidson argues that this was the threat of migrant flow across the Mediterranean Sea, thereby forming

⁴¹⁹ Ibid.

⁴²⁰ Martha Finnemore, *National Interests in international society* (Ithaca: New York, (Cornell University Press, 1996) pp.85-88

⁴²¹ Alex J Bellamy and Paul D Williams, ‘The new politics of protection?’, *International Affairs*, 87,4, 825-850 pp.827-829

⁴²² Jason W Davidson, ‘France, Britain and the intervention in Libya: an integrated analysis’ *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 2013 Vol. 26, 310-329, p.312

a threat to France's territorial sanctity⁴²³. Furthermore, the greater the migrant flow, the greater the threat presented.

Davidson then brings in a third initial factor, that of Prestige⁴²⁴. Prestige is defined by Robert Gilpin as the social recognition of a state's power.⁴²⁵ Prestige in this context has multiple theoretical interpretations. A realist would argue that a state wants other states to see it as strong so that it can survive, or achieve other objectives⁴²⁶. Indeed, this is the approach that Howarth takes, whereby he argues that France gains prestige by taking the lead in the Mediterranean when the European Union and NATO had been reluctant⁴²⁷.

A constructivist reading concerns social expectations. An example of a constructivist interpretation is Larson and Shevchenko's analysis of Chinese and Russian responses to American Primacy. According to Social Identity theory, both Russia and China modified their behaviours in response to the way in which the countries were perceived⁴²⁸.

Once again, placing prestige as a potential causal factor means that we would expect to see states more likely to intervene if their prestige is at play, and certainly if a nation has historical ties with a nation in question⁴²⁹. That would certainly be the case with Libya, and specifically with Sarkozy as he was one of the first world leaders to welcome Gaddafi back into the fold after a period of being persona non-grata due to the Lockerbie bombing⁴³⁰.

⁴²³ Ibid.

⁴²⁴ Ibid.

⁴²⁵ Robert Gilpin, *War and change in world politics was* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981) pp. 30-33

⁴²⁶ Jason W Davidson, 'France, Britain and the intervention in Libya: an integrated analysis' *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 2013 Vol. 26, 310-329, p.312

⁴²⁷ Jolyon Howarth La France, la Libye, La PSDC et L'OTAN: Bilan de la politique étrangère de Nicolas Sarkozy (2007-2012) *Annuaire français de relations internationales*, 12 271-284 found at http://www.afri-ct.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/17_Rubriques_Howarth-2.pdf [accessed 29/09/2017]

⁴²⁸ Deborah Welch Larson and Alexei Shechenko, 'Status Seekers Chinese and Russian Responses to US Primacy' *International Security*, 34:4, 63-95

⁴²⁹ Jason W Davidson, 'France, Britain and the intervention in Libya: an integrated analysis' *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 2013 Vol. 26, 310-329, p.312

⁴³⁰ John Ward Anderson, 'Gaddafi Visit causes stir in France', *The Washington Post*, 11 December 2011 <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/12/10/AR2007121001689.html> [accessed 28/09/2017]

The next step in the model is attempting to establish whether the course of action, military intervention in this case, will be effective, and what the costs would be. Again, as was mentioned above, military intervention can only result from a Responsibility to Protect case if there is a genuine feeling that the intervention itself would be successful. Therefore, France would have to consider whether they could achieve their goals through military action, before they should.

Once a course of action is decided, then it must be implemented. The next step therefore is seeing if international consensus is with the nation pushing for action. Within the UN, military action is only possible in cases of self-defence, or in cases where there is a Security Council Resolution authorising force.

In order to see if consensus is there, the first step could be to condemn an actor. Taking the first step, Davidson argues, makes intervention more likely to occur. Firstly, because in condemning a state, one burns bridges with them for the foreseeable future, and makes the threatened state an even greater threat to one's own safety. Secondly, by acting first, a state is also putting even more prestige at risk. If after making a threat it then backs down, it can make a leader look weak (see analysis on Hollande and Syria literature below)⁴³¹.

The final step for Davidson before using force is to judge whether there is public support. Liberal International Relations theory advises us that the executive democratic states will often act in a way to maximise the party's fortunes⁴³². Military intervention is rarely a vote winner, so then the case becomes working out what will gain the party in power the best net gain. Davidson sets out the gambit as such:

If the public supports intervention and the opposition does not, there will be no angry voters for the government to lose. If the opposition supports intervention and the public does not, the government knows that angry voters cannot take out their policy frustration by voting for the opposition⁴³³.

⁴³¹ Jason W Davidson, 'France, Britain and the intervention in Libya: an integrated analysis' *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 2013 Vol. 26, 310-329, p.312-313

⁴³² Andrew Moravcsik, 'Taking preferences seriously', *International Organization*, 51:4, 513-553

⁴³³ Jason W Davidson, 'France, Britain and the intervention in Libya: an integrated analysis' *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 2013 Vol. 26, 310-329, p.314

With his Model in place, Davidson then seeks to explain the decision to intervene in Libya. He notes from the beginning that due to the proximity to the event, and the lack of interviews in his case, his article does have limitation, and as such, is better aimed at theory development and explanation.

As was mentioned in the outset, Davidson finds that one reason alone is insufficient, and sets out to demonstrate this. A major justification given in favour of the need to intervene was the siege of Benghazi, and the threat of significant casualties. However, Davidson finds that this is not a sufficient reason for the intervention, as both the British and the French had been advocating for a no-fly-zone long before Gaddafi's threat⁴³⁴.

Davidson opines that the second issue, that of a threat to France's borders, must have played some part in his decision, as there was indeed some concern of large numbers of migrants crossing the sea⁴³⁵. However, if this were such a significant issue for Sarkozy, he could have decided to side with the Gaddafi regime to defeat the opposition, or invested more significantly in border controls⁴³⁶.

Finally, Prestige is offered as the final causal factor. France had been slow to react to the Arab Spring, being caught out offering support to the Tunisian leader when protests broke out⁴³⁷. Davidson argues that due to this, as well as an expectation for France to take leadership in the situation due to France's history in Africa, this made intervention more likely⁴³⁸.

France had made the calculations regarding the cost of intervention, and had decided that an air-only intervention via the no-fly-zone would be a relatively low cost solution that they felt could work. Alain Juppé felt that Gaddafi's air superiority and his

⁴³⁴ Ibid. p.315

⁴³⁵ Nicolas Sarkozy, 'Point de presse' 25 February 2011

⁴³⁶ Jason W Davidson, 'France, Britain and the intervention in Libya: an integrated analysis' *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 2013 Vol. 26, 310-329, p.316-317

⁴³⁷ Brian Love, 'France okayed Tear gas as Tunisia revolt peaked', *Reuters*, 1 February 2011 <http://www.reuters.com/article/uk-tunisia-france-teargas/france-okayed-tear-gas-as-tunisia-revolt-peaked-idUKTRE71077O20110201> [accessed 28/09/2017]

⁴³⁸ Jason W Davidson, 'France, Britain and the intervention in Libya: an integrated analysis', *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 2013 Vol. 26, 310-329, p.317

willingness to use it against military and civilian targets was the only reason Libya had been able to regain the upper hand⁴³⁹.

France would also have had to have expected to be at the front of the coalition, as the United States had already indicated that it did not want to take a long term leading role⁴⁴⁰.

With all of this in mind, the French decided that they would indeed take the steps towards military intervention. Once they had made the decision to intervene, France pursued it. France announced early that it would be working on sanctions with the EU against Gaddafi⁴⁴¹, and two days later had demanded that he leave office.⁴⁴² They burned all their bridges with the Gaddafi regime by recognising the National Transitional Council.

Davidson's approach to the issue of how the Libyan intervention came about is certainly an interesting one, and based on a surface-level reading of events, it seems accurate. It would certainly seem the case that in the mind of Sarkozy, there would have been multiple causal factors to consider. However, it is unclear how much value this theory actually brings. Davidson notes that the article exists mostly to generate more theories, and his approach certainly appears novel. However it is unclear how the model plays out in other circumstances. Prima facie, it would appear to work in the Syria situation, as when it came to the International Consensus stage, this is where Hollande's request for airstrikes failed. However, Davidson notes in his article that there were suggestions that the airstrikes may have still gone ahead even without a United Nations Security Council Resolution⁴⁴³.

What this thesis brings, which Davidson's account does not, is two-fold. Firstly, this thesis has the benefit of time to look back and gain greater perspective. Secondly, this

⁴³⁹ Alain Juppé, 'Réunion des ministres des affaires étrangères du G8' 1 March 2011

⁴⁴⁰ Barack Obama 'Remarks by the President in address to the nation on Libya' 28 March 2011 <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2011/03/28/remarks-president-address-nation-libya> [accessed 01/10/2017]

⁴⁴¹ Nicolas Sarkozy, 'Répression en Libye', 23 February 2011

⁴⁴² Nicolas Sarkozy, 'Point de presse', 25 February 2011

⁴⁴³ See Steven Erlanger, 'By his own reckoning, one man made Libya a French cause', *New York Times*, 2 April 2011 <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/02/world/africa/02levy.html?mcubz=0> and Nathalie Nougayrède, 'BHL, porte étendard libyen', *Le Monde*, 8 November 2011 http://www.lemonde.fr/libye/article/2011/11/08/bhl-porte-etendard-libyen_1600481_1496980.html

thesis also takes a more historically minded approach, and specifically in using the Discourse-Historical Approach. Davidson's approach does not take into account historical policy factors, nor does it contextualise the decision to intervene militarily.

This is a limitation which is also picked up on by Ostermann⁴⁴⁴. Ostermann does not seek to necessarily dispute that there were multiple reasons for the intervention, but he also feels that there must be something else at work. Or else, why would a “discourse so fundamentally invoking democratic norms closely tied to the French foreign policy identity have been engaged for rhetorical reasons only if French interests were supposedly so clear”⁴⁴⁵?

What Ostermann argues instead is that the military intervention in Libya was intentionally articulated in a way so as to create a strong identification between the plight of the Libyan people and France's historical narratives of democratic universalism. As such, “these discursive performances made intervention the culturally only appropriate choice”⁴⁴⁶.

From his analysis, Ostermann manages to pull a number of narratives from the texts he has examined. The key point that is made in favour of the intervention is that, in his sample, the word ‘protection’ is mentioned in “more than 200 separate paragraphs in 59 of the 91 documents”⁴⁴⁷. Furthermore, he notes that the other most common discursive element is that the Arab Spring is consistently framed as a progress for democracy and human rights⁴⁴⁸.

Of course, these messages are also provided in contradistinction to how Gaddafi and the Libyan government is portrayed. Words such as ‘*barbarie*’, ‘*genocide*’ and ‘*terreur*’ are used to evoke not just negative emotions, but also to create a sense of urgency to the plight of the Libyans suffering under Gaddafi and his forces.

⁴⁴⁴ Falk Ostermann, ‘The discursive construction of intervention: selves, democratic legacies, and Responsibility to Protect in French discourse on Libya’, *European Security* 25:1, 72-91

⁴⁴⁵ Ibid. p.74

⁴⁴⁶ Ibid. p.75

⁴⁴⁷ Ibid. p.78

⁴⁴⁸ Ibid.

Ostermann also argues that by portraying Gaddafi and his regime in such a light, “objectifying him as a war criminal, insane or villain”⁴⁴⁹, it means that for anyone to oppose Sarkozy’s plans, they would also have to work somewhat to negate the narrative surrounding Gaddafi himself.

Furthermore:

throughout the case, democratic universalism and its value-commitments to human rights or freedom (*liberté*) play multiple political and fantasmatic roles:

(1) in interpreting the Arab Spring as an advent of a new democratic age. These statements employ predications like a historic moment of change, a revolution, a wakeup call, or the metaphor “wind of liberty” (Sauvadet, NC, Assemblée nationale 2011- 03-22, Juppé, FgAff, Assemblée nationale 2011-03-30), which establishes a comparison between the upheaval and a strong force of nature you cannot withstand;

(2) in affirming democracy as a common denominator of the intervening subjects and the Libyan people (or other peoples); and

(3) in framing the intervention as a means to strengthen democratic developments and help others to achieve their natural democratic and human rights⁴⁵⁰

Throughout much of the discourse Ostermann analyses, the French executive try to blur the lines between the Libyans who are seeking democracy, and the French⁴⁵¹. Sarkozy also seems keen to draw a distinction between Libyans and the Libyan government, which further helps simplify the conflict down from a political conflict to a simple democrats versus dictator⁴⁵².

Finally, Ostermann notes that Sarkozy also wraps narratives surrounding self-determination into the arguments. He is keen to mention that everything that France and its allies do is based on the wishes of the Libyan population; they are asking for French help. But also, that the help will be limited to removing Gaddafi, and then leaving the Libyan people to build their new democracy⁴⁵³.

⁴⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁵¹ Ibid. p.p. 79-80

⁴⁵² Ibid p.81

⁴⁵³ Ibid.

What is interesting to note is that this research is somewhat supported by another as well, that by Bucher et al.⁴⁵⁴. In this research, Bucher et al. compared the media coverage and arguments in regards to the intervention in France and Germany. They found that the media in France tended to mirror the political classes as they became more pro-intervention. Bucher et al. refrain from drawing any conclusions as to the causality, whether the media influenced the political classes, or whether the political classes influenced the media⁴⁵⁵. However what they did find was that the debates occurring in Germany and France were very similar, and it was the domestic context which mattered⁴⁵⁶.

Ultimately, Ostermann argues that his research affirms Davidson's arguments that the Responsibility to Protect Doctrine was important⁴⁵⁷. However, his analysis goes much deeper into the explanation of how it portrayed itself in the discursive practices of the French executive. It also downplays the prestige argument, and Howarth's argument that the intervention was to re-establish regional leadership⁴⁵⁸.

However, it would appear that the research still downplays the historical element of France's foreign policy. It does not really take into account the circumstances leading up to the Libyan intervention. When taken in context, and certainly in contradistinction with France's experience of the Arab Spring in Tunisia, this change in approach seems to be severe. This thesis plans to plug this hole by providing an analysis which takes into account the proceeding events to ensure that the events in Libya and Syria are properly contextualised. Indeed, as was noted in the Bucher et al. study, it was the domestic politics which enabled the French to intervene⁴⁵⁹. This is why this thesis discusses in Chapter 3 the history of French Republican ideals, to better contextualise

⁴⁵⁴ Jessica Bucher, Lena Engel, Stephanie Harfensteller & Hylke Dijkstra, 'Domestic politics, news media and humanitarian intervention: why France and Germany diverged over Libya', *European Security*, 22:4, 2013, 524-539

⁴⁵⁵ Ibid. p. 535

⁴⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁷ Jason W Davidson, 'France, Britain and the intervention in Libya: an integrated analysis' *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 2013 Vol. 26, 310-329,

⁴⁵⁸ Jolyon Howarth, 'La France, la Libye, La PSDC et L'OTAN: Bilan de la politique étrangère de Nicolas Sarkozy (2007-2012)', *Annuaire français de relations internationales*, 12 271-284 found at http://www.afri-ct.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/17_Rubriques_Howarth-2.pdf [accessed 29/09/2017]

⁴⁵⁹ Jessica Bucher, Lena Engel, Stephanie Harfensteller & Hylke Dijkstra, 'Domestic politics, news media and humanitarian intervention: why France and Germany diverged over Libya', *European Security*, 22:4, 2013, 524-539 p.535

the declarations made by the political elites in the build up to potential military intervention, as well as understanding how these ideas can be worn to seek to justify policies (as this thesis does).

Whilst we have examined the potential reasons and justifications for the interventions, the next thing to discover is whether Sarkozy was indeed an agent of change, and to what extent the actions in the lead up to, and during the Libyan conflict, were part of a coherent policy.

For Cumming, as already mentioned above, the answer is yes, but with some pretty large caveats⁴⁶⁰. Sarkozy seemed to be moving towards a slight reorientation of policy in terms of fully reintegrating France into the NATO command apparatus. But as was also seen, the extent of his reforms was far more limited than they originally seemed.

However, one development which is noteworthy was France's integration back into NATO. Whilst in many ways this had been on the cards for over a decade, it was Sarkozy who had been the one to finalise proceedings. This would seemingly begin a new chapter in Franco-American relations. This would be especially key in the implementation of the no-fly zone over Libya. As is shown in Parts II and III, US support can play a vital role in dictating whether or not military intervention takes place.

Now that the literature concerning Sarkozy and his intervention in Libya has been discussed, it is time to move on to the literature concerning François Hollande and Syria, as well as the literature which has begun to emerge comparing the two. It is important to note however, that unlike with Sarkozy's adventures in Libya, there is very little literature surrounding Hollande's misadventure with Syria.

⁴⁶⁰ Gordon Cumming, 'Nicolas Sarkozy's Africa Policy: Change, Continuity or Confusion', *French Politics*; Basingstoke 11.1 (Apr 2013) 24-47

1.5.2 Syrian Intervention and Hollande

As was mentioned above, the main justification by a number of different nations in regards to why there should be an intervention in Libya revolves around the Responsibility to Protect. This argument has also been made in regard to the situation in Syria, and yet there was no intervention. Why?

One such piece of work which tries to answer this question comes from John Gaffney⁴⁶¹. In his article Gaffney takes the growing literature born of the United Kingdom regarding political performance and celebrity politics, and applies it to François Hollande's attempt to gain support for military airstrikes in Syria.

Gaffney shows three elements in relation to President Hollande's 'performance' of the presidency. Firstly, he argues that Hollande's policy decision was driven by domestic issues regarding his public image. Secondly, Gaffney argues that the presidency itself is a 'persona' which must be seen to perform effectively. And finally, Gaffney describes how Hollande's performance was made rhetorically to create the "highly personalised presidential persona"⁴⁶² which was expected.

Gaffney notes that since becoming President, Hollande's popularity had steadily begun to drop. He linked this to the fact that Hollande was seen as "indecisive, undynamic, incompetent and unpresidential"⁴⁶³. The only time that it appeared to relent was when Hollande had announced in January 2013 that France would be intervening in Mali.

As has been discussed above, the President is the director for France for all Foreign Policy actions. If a military conflict were to be started, then the right is solely reserved within the presidency. Indeed, France is unique among her allies in this regard. Gaffney describes how this lends itself toward a "character of individual self-assertion"⁴⁶⁴. However, in the case of Hollande, he had little to no experience with foreign policy, and little to no experience with the United States. This, for Gaffney, is what led him to make the mistake of pushing to attack Syria. Had he had more

⁴⁶¹ John Gaffney, 'Political Leadership and the Politics of Performance: France, Syria and the Chemical Weapons Crisis of 2013', *French Politics* (2014) 12, 218–234.

⁴⁶² Ibid. p. 218

⁴⁶³ Ibid. p.219

⁴⁶⁴ Ibid. p.220

experience, then this “would have allowed Hollande to see that the American administration did not actually want to attack Syria – a point the Russians realised to their own great advantage”⁴⁶⁵.

The study of ‘celebrity politicians’ is essentially a form of discourse analysis, analysing various performative behaviours to gain a better understanding of the subject themselves. According to Corner⁴⁶⁶ “‘political personhood’ is projected in three ways: iconically (for example, photo opportunities); vocally (for example, an increasing self-referentiality in public address); and kinetically (for example, presidential announcements)”⁴⁶⁷. Together, the iconic, vocal and kinetic enhance the ‘personal’ within political culture and institutions. Each of the types of projections carry with them both positives and negatives.

For Gaffney, the executive centric nature of the Fifth Republic confers a tremendous amount of power, and responsibility onto the shoulders of the sitting president. In Hollande’s case, he had won the presidency on the idea that he was *not* a media president, like President Sarkozy had been before him. However, as Gaffney notes, the role had evolved to such a state that one needed to be somewhat media savvy⁴⁶⁸. Gaffney argues that “– the Syrian crisis is constructed in French political rhetoric by the French presidency, with Hollande projected as the protagonist of a heroic narrative”⁴⁶⁹. As such, this puts tremendous pressure on the President, as the President is constitutionally pushed in to making large displays of boldness. Of course, if the President gets it right, then the rewards are huge. However, if the President gets it wrong, then there will be nowhere to hide. The irony of this situation, at least for Gaffney, was that it was Hollande who pushed for airstrikes to make himself seem presidential, but yet when it failed, it resulted in the opposite effect.

In his research project, Gaffney analyses two ‘performances’ of François Hollande; one of the Ambassador’s Conference, and then an interview he did with TF1. The Ambassador’s Conference speech was where Hollande had announced to the world

⁴⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁶ J. Corner, ‘Mediated persona and political culture: Dimensions of structure and process’, *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 2000 3(3): 386–402.

⁴⁶⁷ John Gaffney, ‘Political Leadership and the Politics of Performance: France, Syria and the Chemical Weapons Crisis of 2013’, *French Politics* (2014) 12, 218–234. P. 221

⁴⁶⁸ Ibid. p. 223

⁴⁶⁹ Ibid.

that he would punish the Syrian regime for the chemical weapons attack at Ghouta. However, between this point and the television interview, a whole series of events had taken place to completely undermine Hollande's position. After this announcement, talk began of another no-fly-zone being established. This time, however, it was put to a vote in the British Parliament. Here, the motion proposed by the Government to intervene was defeated by the Opposition. After this, the United States slowly backed away from talk of airstrikes. Ultimately, Russia was able to capitalise on the situation and broker a deal whereby Syria would hand over all of its chemical weapons.

During his interview, after all of these events had taken place, Hollande attempted to play it off as though the confluence of events had gone exactly to plan. He suggested that France's threat had pushed Russia into pressuring Syria into submitting its chemical weapons. However, this submission was unconvincing.

Gaffney's work provides an interesting lens through which one can analyse a leader. However, there are a few points to raise. Whilst the President is indeed constitutionally important, especially in regards to foreign policy and the decision to take military action, there are others who must also take some responsibility, and are equally liable. Laurent Fabius, the Minister of Foreign Affairs was also highly active during the weeks after the chemical attack, as too was the Prime Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault. Whilst the President does tend to generate the push for foreign policy, there are others who also have important roles in this. This thesis takes this broader approach to analyse the level of continuity and difference between the different political actors. However, there is a middle ground to be had, as during the investigation, this thesis finds that the behaviours and language used is universal across Hollande, Fabius and Ayrault, though their styles are different.

So in that regard, it is indeed possible that Hollande's performance or influence on the others in his cabinet was at least partially to blame for what happened. It is certainly the submission of this thesis that Hollande's decision to go down the path of paternalistic *gendarme* was not correct. It is important to note at this time that this thesis is not saying that if Hollande had played the circumstances differently, there would have been a different outcome, just that the conceptualisation that Hollande worked with was insufficient.

Similar to the above work, there has also been little work done in the area of comparing the conflicts in Libya and Syria, and specifically surrounding France's involvement. The first work of note comes from Charles Simpson⁴⁷⁰. Simpson produced a compilation comparing different International Organisations', United Nations Security Council Permanent Five's, and then notable non-permanent United Nations Security Council members' positions on Libya and Syria. Whilst not including a tremendous amount of information, it is still a useful starting point and resource for anyone who wants to know a particular state's/international body's position on Syria and Libya. The analysis that was done shows that in the case of Libya, the Western nations (US, UK, France) were quick to support action against the Libyan regime, whilst the non-Western nations (Russia and China) abstained. Then in regards to Syria, the Western nations were far more hesitant, save for France, and the non-Western nations vetoed any Resolution brought forth.

Another piece of comparative work was done by Stelios Stavridis⁴⁷¹. Stavridis compared the attitudes and arguments had within the French Parliament concerning the conflicts in Libya and Syria. Stavridis noticed a gap in the literature concerning the diplomacy conducted by the French Parliament, and thus decided to fill it. This was due to, at least in part, the Constitutional Reform conducted on 23 July 2008, which modified Article 35 of the French Constitution, stating that government must notify Parliament within three days of launching a military intervention, as well as provide an explanation as to its course of action (though as was mentioned above, a vote is not required at this point). Furthermore, if an intervention lasts beyond four months, then there must be a vote by the Parliament to continue to approve the use of armed forces (as aforementioned, if Parliament is not in session, it will wait until they return).

Stavridis also brings up that despite the French Parliament having a limited role in the creation of foreign policy, there is still some power contained within the parliament,

⁴⁷⁰ Charles Simpson, 'Assessing the Arab Spring in Libya and Syria: A compilation of Varying Statements from Key Actors Connections', *The Quarterly Journal*, Gamisch-Partenkirchen 11.1 (Winter 2001): 55-67

⁴⁷¹ Stelios Stavridis, 'The French Parliament and the Conflicts in Libya and Syria', *Mediterranean Quarterly* 2016 Volume 27, Number 4: 21-41

or outside, as some Members of Parliament may also be members of other sub-state bodies⁴⁷².

In the case of Libya, a vote was held on 12 July 2011 in order to continue the airstrikes against Gaddafi. 482 Members of Parliament and 314 Senators voted in favour of continuing military action, whilst 27 MPs and 24 Senators opposed it.⁴⁷³ For the most part, the meeting was just an affirmation of the agreement in the UN-backed mission. There was repeated mention of the Responsibility to Protect. The day of the debate was the sixteenth anniversary of the Srebrenica massacre⁴⁷⁴. Bernard Caeneuve (member of the Socialiste, républicain et citoyen, SRC group) used the debate to bring up that the Syrian situation was worsening, and that the new Article 35 allowed them to debate it. He also made a point to criticise the government's slow reaction to the Arab Spring⁴⁷⁵.

The debate surrounding the Syrian intervention was of a slightly different character. Instead of discussing the Responsibility to Protect, it focused on whether to promote an existing treaty banning the use of chemical weapons. The debate therefore broke down along two lines; with one party believing that Syria should indeed face sanction via airstrikes, and another faction arguing that that would not solve the issue as it would have little effect on the ground⁴⁷⁶.

However, it is important to note that there was no real decision to make by this point. The vote had already occurred in the British Parliament whereby the United Kingdom had rejected the call for airstrikes, and the US/Russian agreement had already started to be implemented to dispose of the Assad regime's chemical weapon stockpile⁴⁷⁷.

In his conclusion, Stavridis argues that the national parliaments "complement and strengthen state diplomacy by becoming its "legitimizing" brand at the national

⁴⁷² Ibid. p.27

⁴⁷³ "Libye: Le parlement français prolonge l'intervention," *MA-RTS*, 12 July 2011, www.rts.ch/info/monde/3265426-libye-le-parlement-francais-prolonge-l-intervention.html [accessed 29/09/2017]

⁴⁷⁴ Stelios Stavridis, 'The French Parliament and the Conflicts in Libya and Syria', *Mediterranean Quarterly* 2016 Volume 27, Number 4: 21-41 p.30

⁴⁷⁵ Ibid. p.31

⁴⁷⁶ Ibid. P.35

⁴⁷⁷ Ibid.

level”⁴⁷⁸. However, it is difficult to see how this is the case. To a certain extent, the vote affirming the continuing airstrikes in Libya needed to be held. And yet, the vote was more or less a foregone conclusion as the outcome was never in doubt. Furthermore, there was nothing to vote on or for with the Syrian debate, and therefore there was no action to legitimise.

Due to the lack of comparative analysis concerning the intervention in Libya and Syria, this thesis fills this space by using the Discourse Historical Approach (this will be explained in more detail in the next chapter) to conduct a comparative analysis of the Libyan and Syrian interventions. This thesis considerably adds to the literature surrounding the articulation of French foreign policy, as well as more generally the literature regarding the argumentation and implementation of the doctrine of the Responsibility to Protect. This thesis takes as its aim the understanding of the relationship between the use of Republican ideas and justifications, synthesised with the argument for the Responsibility to Protect Doctrine. In answering the question: To what extent did France’s rhetorical framing justifying military intervention in Libya and Syria affect the build-up and outcomes of French and International action, this thesis argues that the two discourses of Republicanism and R2P can, when utilised appropriately, be successfully united into a single, cohesive argument.

This thesis does acknowledge the slight differences between the examples in Libya with that of Syria. However, through the Discourse Historical Approach one can see that the arguments put forward by Sarkozy have a more consistent logic which allows for the two strands of arguments to complement each other. However, the opposite is true of Hollande, whose one-dimensional application of *grandeur*-style archetypes regarding the punishment of the Syrian regime undermined the argument of the Responsibility to Protect to such an extent that Hollande was excluded from the conversations which led to the (albeit short term) resolution of the crisis.

Before continuing on with the analysis, the next chapter explains in greater detail the origins, strengths, and limitations of the Discourse Historical Approach, as well as how the documents have been chosen, and how they will be examined.

⁴⁷⁸ Ibid. p.40

Chapter 2 - Methodology

Having set out to understand to what extent there is continuity between the rhetoric in policies of President Sarkozy and President Hollande in regards to their willingness to intervene in foreign conflict, and why the scenarios played out differently, it is important to undergo an explanation as to how this thesis approaches this.

This chapter examines and explains the methodology utilised in three sections. Firstly, this thesis looks critically at the Discourse-Historical Approach, explaining its historical links with broader Critical Discourse Analysis and appraising its conceptual underpinnings (2.1). This chapter then looks specifically at *topoi*, and how they can assist in the understanding of how certain positions are argued. This part will also look at the specific *topoi* used for the purposes of this research (2.2). Finally, this chapter describes the specific texts relating to the interventions in Libya and Syria that forms the basis of this thesis' analysis (2.3).

2.1 The Discourse-Historical Approach and its origins in Critical Discourse Analysis.

As mentioned in the introduction, this thesis relies on upon a methodological framework based upon the notion of Critical Discourse Analysis. Firstly however, it is important to note that Critical Discourse Analysis (henceforth CDA) does not exist as a single entity, though the methodology's basic aims and *raison d'être* are unified. CDA is multi-disciplinary, and as such draws on a host of different ideas, including “Louis Althusser's theories of ideology, Mikhail Bakhtin's genre theory, and the philosophical traditions of Antonio Gramsci and the Frankfurt School”⁴⁷⁹. This form of analysis can be seen as *critical* in two ways.

Firstly, it draws from the writings of Jürgen Habermas and the Frankfurt School. For Habermas, critical science has to be self-critical, in the sense that it must “reflect the interests upon which it is based – and it must take account of the historical contexts of interactions”⁴⁸⁰ (As will be seen further on, Fairclough's conceptualisation of CDA draws heavily upon this reflexivity).

Secondly, CDA also draws on the traditions of critical linguistics, which emerged as counterpoints to contemporary pragmatics such as speech act theory and the quantitative-correlative sociolinguistics of William Labov⁴⁸¹. The arguments of Kress and Hodge that “discourse cannot exist without social meanings, and that there must be a strong relation between linguistic and social structure, was subsequently accepted by researchers from different traditions...”⁴⁸² However, before advancing to display how this thesis uses these concepts to achieve its aim, it is first important to unpack some of the methodological foundations and assumptions founded within CDA.

Titscher, Meyer, Wodak and Vetter argue that the main theoretical exponents, with the exception of Michel Foucault, are neo-Marxist⁴⁸³. Indeed Norman Fairclough argues that CDA can be seen as the “application of the sort of critical analysis which has developed within ‘Western’ Marxism... [which] highlights cultural aspects of

⁴⁷⁹ Stefan Titscher, Michael Meyer, Ruth Wodak and Eva Vetter, *Methods of Text and Discourse Analysis* (Translated by Bryan Jenner) (London: Sage Publications, 2000.) p.144

⁴⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁸¹ Ibid. p.144-145

⁴⁸² Ibid. p.145

⁴⁸³ Ibid.

social life, seeing domination and exploitation as established and maintained culturally and ideologically”⁴⁸⁴. Specifically, CDA draws on notions of ‘hegemony’, developed by the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci. For Gramsci, hegemony is used to talk about power and the struggle for power, and depends specifically upon gaining the consent of a group. “The hegemony of the dominant social class or class-alliance depends upon winning the consent (or at least acquiescence) of the majority to existing social arrangements.”⁴⁸⁵ Furthermore, Gramsci argues that this struggle permeates through all aspects of social life, be that political, economic or social.

However, CDA draws upon more Marxist ideas. One of the fundamental underpinnings of CDA relates to how it treats language and the construction of meaning. The French Marxist philosopher Louis Althusser argued that ideologies were not characterised by the notion of ‘ideas’, but rather as “material social practices in social institutions”⁴⁸⁶. Pecheux took this concept and applied it to ‘discourse’, which he argued was “language from an ideological perspective, language in the ideological construction of subjects”⁴⁸⁷.

The final element which Fairclough argues provided the theoretical origins of CDA concerns the work of Mikhail Bakhtin, who argued that “linguistic signs (words and longer expressions) are the material of ideology, and that all language use is ideological”⁴⁸⁸. Furthermore, Bakhtin argues that texts have dialogical properties, or are intertextual. Indeed, “as Kristeva (1986) puts it: the idea [is] that any text is explicitly or implicitly ‘in dialogue with’ other texts (existing or anticipated) which constitute its ‘intertexts’”⁴⁸⁹. It is this intertextuality which is important to understand how narratives are constructed.

However, these elements only cover the fundamental elements of CDA. As mentioned above, there are a wide variety of styles of CDA. Whilst each have their own merits, the thesis uses the form known as Discourse-Historical Approach, created by Ruth

⁴⁸⁴ Norman Fairclough, ‘The Discourse of New Labour: Critical Discourse Analysis’ in Margaret Wetherell, Stephanie Taylor, Simeon J. Yates (eds) *Discourse as Data A guide for analysis* (London: Sage Publications, 2001), p.232

⁴⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁷ Ibid. p.233

⁴⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁹ Ibid.

Wodak and Martin Reisigl. As Titscher, Meyer, Wodak and Vetter note, “CDA sees itself as politically involved research with an emancipatory requirement: it seeks to have an effect on social practice and social relationships” and “the research emphases which have arisen in pursuit of these goals include language usage in organizations, and the investigation of prejudice in general, and racism, anti-semitism and sexism in particular”⁴⁹⁰. For Wodak, the Discourse-Historical Approach manages to adhere to this socio-political orientation. She argues that it follows a:

“complex concept of social critique which embraces at least three interconnected aspects, two of which are primarily related to the dimension of cognition and one to the dimension of action:

1. ‘Text or discourse immanent critique’ aims at discovering inconsistencies, (self) contradictions, paradoxes and dilemmas in the text-internal or discourse-internal structures.
2. In contrast to the ‘immanent critique’, the ‘socio-diagnostic critique’ is concerned with the demystifying exposure of the – manifest or latent – possibly persuasive or ‘manipulative’ character of discursive practices. With socio-diagnostic critique, the analyst exceeds the purely textual or discourse internal sphere. She or he makes use of her or his background and contextual knowledge and embeds the communicative or interactional structures of a discursive event in a wider frame of social and political relations, processes and circumstances. At this point, we are obliged to apply social theories to interpret the discursive events...
3. Prognostic critique contributes to the transformation and improvement of communication (for example, within public institutions by elaborating proposals and guidelines for reducing language barriers in hospitals, schools, courtrooms, public offices, and media reporting institutions (see Wodak, 1996a) as well as guidelines for avoiding sexist language use (Kargl et al., 1997)).⁴⁹¹

Ultimately, Wodak argues that CDA does not concern itself with whether a certain act or utterance is ‘right’ or ‘wrong’, but rather make choices which are inherently transparent, and that it should “also justify theoretically why certain interpretations of

⁴⁹⁰ Stefan Titscher, Michael Meyer, Ruth Wodak and Eva Vetter, *Methods of Text and Discourse Analysis* (Translated by Bryan Jenner) (London: Sage Publications, 2000) p.147

⁴⁹¹ Ruth Wodak ‘The discourse-historical approach’ in Ruth Wodak and Michael Meyer (ed) *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis* (London; Sage Publications, 2001), p.65

discursive events seem more valid than others”⁴⁹². The means by which this can be made possible is through the process of triangulation. The Discourse-Historical Approach is designed to work with different approaches and methodologies. It contextualises the discourse studied within its historic, political and social backgrounds. It allows the integration of “a large quantity of available knowledge about the historical sources and background of the social and political fields in which discursive ‘events’ are embedded. Further, it analyses the historical dimension of discursive actions by exploring the ways in which particular genres of discourse are subject to diachronic change”⁴⁹³.

However, an issue remains as to what exactly is meant by ‘discourse’, and how it is distinguished from ‘narratives’ or ‘text’. Discourse is closely linked to what is often described as the post-structuralist school of thought, and specifically the literature produced by Michel Foucault⁴⁹⁴ and Jean François Lyotard⁴⁹⁵. However, whilst Foucault’s work discusses discourse in great length, a precise definition of discourse is left rather ambiguous. Boswell tackles this problem head on, suggesting that “discourses lack the narrativity in the common-sense understanding of the term, in that there is no clearly articulated overarching plot”⁴⁹⁶. Instead, Boswell argues that discourses are the “constellations of ideas that, though never recounted in full, order people’s perspectives”⁴⁹⁷. These create what in Foucauldian language are called ‘*regimes of truth*’, described as “the historically specific mechanisms which produce discourses which function as true in particular times and places”⁴⁹⁸. Boswell argues that discourses are “fluid, rather than fixed, with individuals able to exercise some agency in the sense that they sustain, challenge and modify discourse through their

⁴⁹² Ibid.

⁴⁹³ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁴ Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*. (New York: Pantheon Books 1978)

⁴⁹⁵ Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*. (Manchester: Manchester University Press 1984)

⁴⁹⁶ John Boswell, ‘Why and How Narrative Matters in Deliberative Systems.’ *Political Studies*. 61.3 (2013): 620-636, p.622

⁴⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁸ Clare O’Farrell. ‘Key concepts’ michel-foucault.com (1997) at <<http://www.michel-foucault.com/concepts/>>

interactions"⁴⁹⁹. Wodak finds the best way to describe this as referring to a 'macro-topic'⁵⁰⁰.

Boswell distinguishes this from 'anecdotes', which are "stories in the more everyday sense of the term... they play a critical role in helping people make sense of their world and their place in it"⁵⁰¹.

Thirdly, one has 'narratives', which Boswell describes as a "chronological account that helps actors make sense of and argue about a political issue"⁵⁰². Boswell concludes that:

narrative cannot be entirely distinguished from discourse and anecdote... indeed they are richly interrelated. On the one hand, narratives are constrained by, and must draw on, the discourses that structure our thinking about the world and our place in it... On the other hand, narratives are also built up, modified or undermined by the anecdotes that individuals share with each other over time...⁵⁰³

In addition to these elements, one can also find 'texts' which are generally conceived as "materially durable products of linguistic actions"⁵⁰⁴. Genre is described as "the conventionalized, more or less schematically fixed use of language associated with a particular activity, as "a socially ratified way of using language in connection with a particular type of social activity" (Fairclough, 1995: 14)"⁵⁰⁵. Finally, there are fields of action, which constitute "segments of the respective societal reality, which contribute to constituting and shaping the 'frame' of discourse"⁵⁰⁶. (The example used by Wodak describes Law making procedure as field of action, and things such as laws and bills as genre.)

⁴⁹⁹John Boswell 'Why and How Narrative Matters in Deliberative Systems.' *Political Studies*. 61.3 (2013): 620-636, pp.622-623

⁵⁰⁰Ruth Wodak, 'The discourse-historical approach' in Ruth Wodak and Michael Meyer (ed) *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis* (London; Sage Publications, 2001), p.66

⁵⁰¹Ibid. p.623

⁵⁰²John Boswell, 'Why and How Narrative Matters in Deliberative Systems.' *Political Studies*. 61.3 (2013): 620-636, p.622

⁵⁰³Ibid.

⁵⁰⁴Ruth Wodak, 'The discourse-historical approach' in Ruth Wodak and Michael Meyer (ed) *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis* (London; Sage Publications, 2001), p.66

⁵⁰⁵Ibid.

⁵⁰⁶Ibid.

The triangulatory contextual approach advocated by Wodak consists of four layers:

1. The immediate, language or text internal co-text;
2. The intertextual and interdiscursive relationship between utterances, texts, genres and discourses;
3. The extralinguistic social/sociological variables and institutional frames of a specific 'context of situation' (middle range theories);
4. The broader socio-political and historical contexts, which the discursive practices are embedded in and related to ('grand' theories).⁵⁰⁷

The research for which Wodak initially developed this methodology concerned the emergence of an anti-Semitic stereotyped image during the 1986 Austrian presidential campaign of Kurt Waldheim. She started by formulating five questions which would help in the analysis of different linguistic and rhetorical means and/or forms of racism. Similarly, this thesis adopts this approach when examining the arguments used to justify French use of airstrikes in Libya and Syria. This triangulatory approach is effective in gaining a fuller understanding of where a text is 'located' within society. This means understanding what is the objective of the text, what it is attempting to influence, and from what other texts/themes the specific text being examined is drawing.

Before providing the questions which this thesis examines, the most contentious elements of the Discourse-Historical Analysis (DHA) will be addressed.

One of the major criticisms of DHA relates to its usage of the term '*topoi*' or '*loci*'. These can be described as parts of argumentation which belong to the obligatory, either explicit or inferable premises. They are the content-related warrants or 'conclusion rules' which connect the argument or arguments with the conclusion"⁵⁰⁸. Put simply, the *topos* refer to the themes of specific arguments which lead to the conclusion or response being articulated, e.g. the *topos* of culture: the nature of a certain culture is X, therefore specific solutions are required.

⁵⁰⁷ Ibid. p.67

⁵⁰⁸ Ruth Wodak 'The discourse-historical approach' in Ruth Wodak and Michael Meyer (ed) *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis* (London; Sage Publications, 2001), p74

However, the notion of *topoi*, which finds its origins in the writings of Aristotle, has been argued to be misapplied in its usage in DHA. Whilst not defining it themselves, Zagar⁵⁰⁹, Ietcu-Fairclough⁵¹⁰, Fairclough and Fairclough⁵¹¹ have argued that Wodak's usage goes beyond its original meaning/context.

However, Salomi Boukala argues that a classical interpretation can be utilised to effectively synthesise the notion of *topoi* and DHA⁵¹². However, first there will need to be an examination of the different understandings of the term 'Argumentation'.

According to Toulmin, argumentation is an attempt by any speaker to justify a statement⁵¹³. In the development of his own model, Toulmin argues that the validity of the argument needs to be considered. Toulmin reconstitutes Aristotle's elements of argument (minor premise, major premise and conclusion), referring instead to data and warrant, which are used to establish a *claim* (conclusion). Toulmin also provides a more comprehensive model which also mentions backings, qualifiers, and rebuttals (conditions of exception). However, Kienpointer points out that this comprehensive model is more representative of complex argumentation linked more closely to Cicero's *rationation* (*επιχείρημα*) argumentation scheme⁵¹⁴.

Modern scholars argue that argumentation carries with it an everyday life dimension, that both oral and written argumentation form significant parts of our daily routine⁵¹⁵. Van Eemeren et al. define argumentation as the following:

⁵⁰⁹ I Zagar, 'The use of *topoi* in critical discourse analysis'. In: 2nd International Conference on Political Linguistics, University of Lodz, Lodz, 17-19 September 2009, Šolsko polje, pp. 47-73

⁵¹⁰ Ietcu and Fairclough, 'Argumentation and CDA' Presented at the Language, Ideology, Politics Workshop, Lancaster University, Lancaster, 27 January 2010

⁵¹¹ N Fairclough and I Fairclough, 'Practical reasoning in political discourse: The UK government's response to the economic crisis in the 2008 Pre-Budget Report' *Discourse & Society* 22(3) 2011: 243-268

⁵¹² S Boukala, 'Rethinking *topos* in the discourse historical approach: Endoxon seeking and argumentation in Greek media discourses on Islamist terrorism', *Discourse Studies* 2016, Vol 18(3) 249-268

⁵¹³ Stephen Toulmin, *The Uses of Argument* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press 1958)

⁵¹⁴ M Kienpointer, Modern revivals of Aristotle's and Cicero's *topoi*: Toulmin, Parelman, Ansbombe/Ducrot. in: A Bertocchi, M Maraldi and A Orlandini (eds) *Papers on Grammar VII: Argumentation and Latin*. Bologna: CLUEB, 2001 pp. 17-34. pp. 23-25

⁵¹⁵ See for example: M Keinpointner *Altagslogik. Struktur und Funktion von Argumentationsmustern*. Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: fromann-holzboog, 1992, F Van Eemeren Strategic manoeuvring between rhetorical effectiveness and dialectical reasonableness. *Studies in Logic, Grammar and Rhetoric* 16(29) 2009: 69-91, F Van Eemeren, R Grootendorst and F Henkemans (eds) *Fundamentals of Argumentation Theory: A handbook of Historical Backgrounds and Contemporary Developments*. London: Routledge, 2009

A verbal and social activity of reason aimed at increasing (or decreasing) the acceptability of a controversial standpoint for the listener or reader, by putting forward a constellation of propositions intended to justify (or refute) the standpoint before a rational judge.⁵¹⁶

However, the Discourse-Historical Approach is not the only methodology to share an interest in various argumentation strategies. According to van Eemeren and Houtlosser, the pragma-dialectic theory of argumentation “enables the analyst of argumentative discourse to make a normative reconstruction of the discourse that results in an analytic overview of all elements that are pertinent to a critical evaluation”⁵¹⁷. Effectively, pragma-dialectics is described as a means of systemically dealing with exchanges in verbal communication and interactions⁵¹⁸. Classical Aristotelian argumentation theory is used for inspiration to introduce the author’s own concept of strategic manoeuvring, and specifically its three aspects: topical potential, audience orientation and presentational devices⁵¹⁹.

Amossy defines argumentation as “the use of verbal means to ensure a partial and fragile consensus on what can be considered reasonable by a group of people, or by what a society would define as a reasonable person... the analysis of arguments deals with the ways in which agreement is achieved in discourse in a communicative framework”⁵²⁰.

As Boukala notes, argumentation exists in social interactions and communication, including in the media or political discourse, “insofar as it aims to persuade the audience of the validity of a statement... For this reason, the DHA cannot ignore argumentation strategies, which are manifested via the use of *topoi*”⁵²¹.

⁵¹⁶ F Van Eemeren, R Grootendorst and F Henkemans (eds) *Fundamentals of Argumentation Theory: A handbook of Historical Backgrounds and Contemporary Developments*. (London: Routledge, 2009) p.5

⁵¹⁷ F Van Ermeren and P Houtlosser ‘Strategic maneuvering: A synthetic recapitulation’ *Argumentation* 20 2006: 381-392. P.381

⁵¹⁸ *Ibid.* p. 383

⁵¹⁹ F Van Eemeren, *Strategic Maneuvering in Argumentation Discourse: Extending the Pragma-Dialectical Theory of Argumentation*. (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2010)

⁵²⁰ R Amossy, ‘The new rhetoric’s inheritance: Argumentation and discourse analysis’ *Argumentation* 23 (2009): 313-324 p. 317

⁵²¹ S Boukala, ‘Rethinking *topos* in the discourse historical approach: Endoxon seeking and argumentation in Greek media discourses on Islamist terrorism’ *Discourse Studies* 2016, Vol 18(3) 249-268 p.251

But what specifically is the purpose of the *topoi*? For Kienpointer, they act as “search formulas which tell you how and where to look for arguments. At the same time, *topoi* are warrants which guarantee the transition from argument to conclusion”⁵²². He clarifies this point further by stating that:

The Aristotelian *topos* has two functions, a selective function and a probative function. Hence *topoi* are devices for finding relevant arguments within the set of possible arguments and on the other hand probative formulas which grant the plausibility of the step from the argument to the conclusion.⁵²³

Walton agrees with this assessment that *topos* “is a device to find arguments that can be used to prioritize their strategic strength”⁵²⁴. Rubinelli also reiterates, saying “*topos* refers to a dynamic and pragmatic concept; indeed *topoi* are, in terms of their genus, strategies of argumentation for gaining the upper hand and producing successful speeches”⁵²⁵.

However, there can be some variation in the interpretation of what *topos* is, and what it refers to. Grimaldi notes that the ordinary use of the term *topos* refers to the thoughts of Plato and Isocrates, and is often conjoined with *place* (*χώρος*)⁵²⁶. However, as Boukala mentions, the approaches mentioned above can lead to complications as they will often combine the Aristotelian concept of *topoi* with Cicero’s concept of *loci*⁵²⁷.

Therefore, let us examine the Aristotelian formula for *topos*. The main concepts found within Aristotle’s dialectics are *endoxon(a)* and syllogisms. Aristotle describes a

⁵²² M Kienpointner, ‘Rhetoric’, in J Ostman and Verschueren (eds) *Pragmatics in Practice* Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2011, pp 264-277 p.265

⁵²³ M Kienpointer, ‘Modern revivals of Aristotle’s and Cicero’s topics: Toulmin, Parelman, Anscombe/Ducrot’ in A Bertocchi, M Maraldi and A Orlandini (eds) *Papers on Grammar VII: Argumentation and Latin*. Bologna: CLUEB, 2001 pp. 17–34, pp.17-18

⁵²⁴ D Walton, *Argumentation Schemes for Presumptive Reasoning* (Mahwah, NJ:Lawrence Erlbaum. 1996) p.5

⁵²⁵ S Rubinelli, *Ars Topical The Classic Technique of Constructing Arguments from Aristotle to Cicero*. (Berlin: Springer, 2009) p.13

⁵²⁶ W Grimaldi, ‘The Aristotelian topics’ in K Erickson (ed.) *Aristotle: The Classical Heritage of Rhetoric* (Metuchen, NJ: The Scarecrow Press, 1974), pp.176-193. p.179

⁵²⁷ S Boukala, ‘Rethinking *topos* in the discourse historical approach: Endoxon seeking and argumentation in Greek media discourses on Islamist terrorism’ *Discourse Studies* 2016, Vol 18(3) 249-268, p.252

syllogism as “an argument in which, when certain things are laid down, something other than these necessarily comes about through them”⁵²⁸.

However, as Reisigl and Wodak note, it can be difficult to distinguish between reasonable and fallacious argumentation⁵²⁹. As Boukala notes, fallacies can be an important element in argumentation schemes, especially when attempting to justify discrimination⁵³⁰. However, this section will focus on *endoxon*. When describing *topoi*, Reisigl and Wodak state that it “can be described as parts of argumentation that belong to obligator, either explicit or inferable, premises”⁵³¹. *Endoxa* are the subjects of *topoi*'s examination.

The term *endoxa* is not specifically defined by Aristotle in his work. In *Ethics*, he states that they are views which are held by many learned men and those who hold eminent positions, “and it is not probable that either of these should be entirely mistaken, but rather that they should be right in at least one respect or even in most respects”⁵³². In *Topics*, they are described as opinions “which are accepted by everyone or by the majority or by the philosophers (the wise)”⁵³³.

Whilst this term can be defined broadly, Aristotle advises that expertise is important when discerning *endoxa*, “for people are likely to assent to the views held by those who have made a study of these things, e.g. on a question of medicine they will agree with the doctor, and on a question of geometry with the geometrician; and likewise also in other cases”⁵³⁴. Similarly, Aristotle limits those who can contribute towards the *endoxa*:

⁵²⁸ Aristotle, *Topics*, Translated by W A Pickford-Cambridge (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1928) 100a25

⁵²⁹ For example: M Reisigl and R Wodak *Discourse and Discrimination: Rhetorics of Racism and Antisemitism* (London: Routledge, 2001), M Reisigl and R Wodak The discourse historical approach in R Wodak and M Meyer (eds) *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*, 2nd edn. (London: Sage, 2009) pp. 87-61, M Reisigl and R Wodak The discourse historical approach in R Wodak and M Meyer (eds) *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*, 3rd edn (London;Sage, 2016) pp.23-61

⁵³⁰ S Boukala, ‘Rethinking topos in the discourse historical approach: Endoxon seeking and argumentation in Greek media discourses on Islamist terrorism’, *Discourse Studies* 2016, Vol 18(3) 249-268 p.251

⁵³¹ M Reisigl and R Wodak, *Discourse and Discrimination: Rhetorics of Racism and Antisemitism* (London: Routledge, 2001) p.74

⁵³² Aristotle *Ethics* Translated by W D Ross (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1928) 1098b25

⁵³³ Aristotle *Topics*, Translated by W A Pickford (Cambridge Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1928) 100b20

⁵³⁴ *Ibid.* 104a 30

To examine then all the views held about happiness is superfluous, for children, sick people, and the insane all have views, but no sane person would dispute over them ; for such persons need not argument but years in which they may change, or else medical or political correction—for medicine, no less than stripes, is a correction. Similarly we have not to consider the views of the multitude (for they talk without consideration about almost everything and most about happiness); for it is absurd to apply argument to those who need not argument but suffering.⁵³⁵

Factoring in everything suggested up until this point, it would seem that *endoxa* can sometimes refer to the opinions of those in power, and at other times be the opinions of experts in a given field. However, there are a number of caveats in relation to what forms *endoxa*. Braet argues that *endoxa* “are principles which, while they are accepted by a more or less expert, or quite large groups of people, are not necessarily true or universally valid”⁵³⁶. Kienpointner notes that *endoxa* are not to be considered as axioms or absolute truths⁵³⁷. Finally, Van Eemeren argues that *endoxa* are commonly held beliefs which are normally conceived as being acceptable to the audience⁵³⁸.

Aristotle says on the matter: “reasoning is ‘contentious’ if it starts from opinions that seem to be generally accepted, but are not really such, or again if it merely seems to reason from opinions that are or seem to be generally accepted. For every opinion that seems to be generally accepted actually is generally accepted”⁵³⁹. This therefore privileges the opinions of a wider general public over those of one or two individuals, even if they do form “the most notable and illustrious of them”⁵⁴⁰, thereby taking a more democratic approach to how *endoxa* are created. As Boukala notes, the *endoxa* therefore need to be challenged via “*dialectic syllogism* and especially through the use of *topoi*... [this] *dialectic syllogism* (*διαλεκτικός συλλογισμός*)... is related to human

⁵³⁵ Aristotle, *Ethics* Translated by W D Ross (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1928) 1214b-1215a

⁵³⁶ C Braet, ‘The common topic in Aristotle’s rhetoric: Precursor of the argumentation scheme’ *Argumentation* 19:65-83 p. 75

⁵³⁷ M Kienpointner, ‘On the art of finding arguments: What ancient and modern matters of invention have to tell us about the ‘Ars Inveniendi’ *Argumentation* 11 1997: 225-236

⁵³⁸ F Van Eemeren, *Strategic Maneuvering in Argumentation Discourse: Extending the pragma-Dialectical Theory of Argumentation*. (Amsterdam; John Benjamins, 2009) p.111

⁵³⁹ Aristotle *Topics*, Translated by W A Pickford (Cambridge Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1928) 100b20-30

⁵⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

thought, and its expression on the level of a ‘dialectical horizon’, which consists of a number of dialectic elements that Aristotle calls ‘predicables’⁵⁴¹.

Before continuing, an important point needs to be made when discussing any text which has been translated. Simpler notes that translating the term *endoxa* itself can be problematic⁵⁴². For example, in Theodore Buckley’s 1851 translation of *On Rhetoric*, he uses the word “probabilities” for *endoxa*. For Simpler, he would argue that whilst *endoxa* are “probabilities”, there is not enough emphasis placed on the fact that these probabilities are opinions⁵⁴³.

Furthermore, many translations do not adequately distinguish the difference when Aristotle uses the term *endoxa*, from the term *doxa*. *Doxa*, when used in the works of Gorgias and Plato mean the persuasive force in rhetorical argument, which carries with it a much broader interpretation than *endoxa*, which refers to the opinions of experts/persons in positions of authority⁵⁴⁴. An example of this is to be found in George Kennedy’s 2007 translation of *On Rhetoric*. In Book 1, Chapter 7, Aristotle claims “[t]hings related to the truth [are greater] than things related to opinions”. Here, Aristotle is using the broader term *doxa* rather than the more limited set of opinions inferred by *endoxa*. However, at the beginning of *On Rhetoric*, “Aristotle claims that the true and just are stronger than their opposites, but since even the most exact knowledge would not make persuasion easy, “it is necessary for proofs (*pisteis*) and speeches as a whole to be formed on the basis of common [beliefs]” (*Rhetoric* 1355a)”⁵⁴⁵.

This passage clearly references *endoxa*, however, unlike his treatment of the word *endoxa*, Kennedy’s translation of 1356b does not clarify that those opinions being mentioned are *doxa*. As such, this risks displaying contradictions within Aristotle’s writings where none exist.

⁵⁴¹ S Boukala, ‘Rethinking topos in the discourse historical approach: Endoxon seeking and argumentation in Greek media discourses on Islamist terrorism’, *Discourse Studies* 2016, Vol 18(3) 249-268 p.253

⁵⁴² Kyle Simpler, ‘Opinions in Context: Reconsidering *Endoxa* in Aristotle’s *On Rhetoric*’ (Texas, University of Texas, December 2008) Masters Dissertation
<http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.620.8002&rep=rep1&type=pdf> p.23

⁵⁴³ Ibid.

⁵⁴⁴ Ibid. pp. 28-29

⁵⁴⁵ Ibid. p.24

However, as was mentioned at *Rhetoric* 1355a, truth can be an important part of argumentation, but is not required. Amossy illustrates this fact when she says the “all that is considered true, or at least probable, by a majority of people endowed with reason, or by a specific group, can be called *doxic*”⁵⁴⁶. Utterances with this *doxic* characteristic are still opinions, which do not necessarily mean they are factually accurate, however they can carry with it an equivalent persuasiveness to that of truth in any analytical reasoning. Furthermore, Amossy is also reiterating that *endoxic* elements are normally confined to specific groups of classes of individuals.

The issue of translation is also what leads to the use of the term “predictables”. Rubinelli describes them as “terms introduced at the logical level of propositions. They have to do with the relationship between subjects and predicates as codified by human cognition”⁵⁴⁷. Boukala uses Rubinelli’s translation of *διαλεκτικό κατηγορούμενο* for lack of a better one, as does this thesis.

When examining any line of argumentation Aristotle examines the relationship between four *predictables*. They are definition (*ορισμός*), genus (*γένος*), property (*ίδιον*) and accident (*συμβεβηκόν*)⁵⁴⁸. Aristotle describes the definition (*ορισμός*) as a “phrase signifying a thing’s essence”⁵⁴⁹. W A Pickford-Cambridge further emphasises this by saying:

Establishing a thing’s essence under Aristotle’s schema is mostly concerned with questions of sameness or difference... For if we are able to argue that two things are the same or are different, we shall be well supplied by the same turn of argument with lines of attack upon their definitions as well: for when we have shown that they are not the same we shall have demolished the definition. Observe, please, that the converse of this last statement does not hold: for to show that they are the same is not enough to establish a definition. To show, however, that they are not the same is enough of itself to overthrow it⁵⁵⁰.

⁵⁴⁶ Ruth Amossy, ‘Introduction to the Study of Doxa’ *Poetics Today* 23:3 2002, 369-394 p.369

⁵⁴⁷ S Rubinelli, *Ars Topica: The Classical Technique of Construction Arguments from Aristotle to Cicero* (Berlin:Springer, 2009) p. 9

⁵⁴⁸ Aristotle *Topics*, Translated by W A Pickford-Cambridge (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1928) 101b

⁵⁴⁹ Ibid. 102a

⁵⁵⁰ Ibid.

Property (*ίδιον*) “is a predicate which does not indicate the essence of a thing, but yet belongs to that thing alone, and is predicated convertibly of it”⁵⁵¹

This is elaborated on further by Aristotle, whereby he describes how “it is a property of man to be capable of learning grammar: for if A be a man, then he is capable of learning grammar, and if he be capable of learning grammar, he is a man”⁵⁵². However, he uses the example of sleep as being something which would not be classed as a property as it is not something which would belong solely to man.

Genus (*γένος*) is “what is predicated in the category of essence of a number of things exhibiting differences in kind”⁵⁵³.

Finally, accident (*συμβεβηκόν*) is:

- (1) Something which, though it is none of the foregoing—i.e. neither a definition nor a property nor a genus—yet belongs to the thing: (2) something which may possibly either belong or not belong to any one and the self-same thing, as (e.g.) the ‘sitting posture’ may belong or not belong to some self-same thing.⁵⁵⁴

Aristotle favours the second of these two descriptions as “if he adopts the first, any one is bound, if he is to understand it, to know already what ‘definition’ and ‘genus’ and ‘property’ are, whereas the second is sufficient of itself to tell us the essential meaning of the term in question”⁵⁵⁵.

Boukala notes that the “four *predictables* shape the dialectical syllogism and different categories of *topoi*, which are necessary to dialectics”⁵⁵⁶. Each *predictable* carries with it a corresponding *topoi*. Kienpointner addresses this, stating that he:

established a complex typology of *topoi* with four major classes and hundreds of particular *topoi* (about 400) that can be criticised because they rest on the problematic

⁵⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵⁵² Ibid.

⁵⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁵⁴ Ibid. p.102b

⁵⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁵⁶ S Boukala Rethinking topos in the discourse historical approach: Endoxon seeking and argumentation in Greek media discourses on Islamist terrorism *Discourse Studies* 2016, Vol 18(3) 249-268 p.253

distinction between essential and accidental properties of persons and objects and are not carried through consistently.⁵⁵⁷

The concept of *topos* in Aristotelian dialectic carries with it many meanings, and has developed in relation to his classifications. The *topoi* are arguments used to establish the ‘truth’, and are related to both *endoxa* and *predictables*. They act as the means to verify *endoxa* using the various *predictables*.

One final logical element to consider is the *enthymeme*. Aristotle, it would seem defines *enthymemes* in contradistinction with *examples*, where he states that:

With regard to the persuasion achieved by proof or apparent proof, just as in dialectic there is induction on the one hand and deduction or apparent deduction on the other, so it is in rhetoric. The example is an induction, the enthymeme is a deduction, and the apparent enthymeme is an apparent deduction; for I call a rhetorical deduction an enthymeme, and a rhetorical induction an example.⁵⁵⁸

Aristotle clarifies that compared to an example, an *enthymeme* carries with it “few propositions, fewer than those which make up a primary deduction”⁵⁵⁹. This is because the *enthymeme* will rely on “familiar facts”⁵⁶⁰, which means that the hearer of any utterance will deduct the context of the statement themselves. Aristotle uses the example of an individual who wins a crown as a prize for a competition, whereby it would be sufficient to say that they had been victorious in the Olympic games, as it is common knowledge that a crown is the prize⁵⁶¹.

Kienpointner puts it another way, stating that an “enthymeme is a rhetorical argument that starts from merely plausible assumptions which are accepted by almost everybody in the audience, which need not be completely explicit and which sometimes are not

⁵⁵⁷ M Kienpointner Modern revivals of Aristotle’s and Cicero’s topics: Toulmin, Parelman, Anscimbre/Ducrot, in: A Benocchi, M Maraldi and A Orlandini (eds) *Papers on Grammar VII: Argumentation and Latin*, Bologna: CLUREB, 2001 pp. 17-34 p.18

⁵⁵⁸ Aristotle Rhetoric trans W Rhys Roberts in *The complete Works of Aristotle Volume 2* ed Jonathan Barnes Princeton; Princeton University Press, 1995 1356b As noted in translation, Kassel regards that this passage was added as a later addition to the text by Aristotle himself.

⁵⁵⁹ Ibid. 1357a

⁵⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁵⁶¹ Ibid.

logically valid”⁵⁶². Therefore, *enthymemes* rely on deduction from *endoxa* (publically accepted opinion).

An additional concept to consider when dealing with *enthymemes* is *species* (εἶδη)⁵⁶³. This is differentiated from *topoi* as they refer to special occasions and arguments, e.g. the concept of good and the definition of what of good⁵⁶⁴, whereas the *topoi* guides the speaker as to how to organise an argument.

Rubinelli describes *topoi* as “argument schemes, they are all devices for arriving at a certain conclusion about a case. While they are not all of universal applicability, they can be applied to every rhetorical case. In other words, they are universal in the field of rhetoric”⁵⁶⁵.

Aristotle provides both lists of *topoi*, and explanations for them. Boukala explains that a *topos* “is indeed not only an argumentation scheme, but also a syllogism that leads the orator to a ‘conclusion’ that can always be rejected or defended”⁵⁶⁶. Kienpointner puts it another way, describing *topos* as both search formulae to discover relevant arguments within a set of possible arguments, namely the *endoxa*, but also as a probative formula to examine the reasonableness of the arguments in relation to the conclusion⁵⁶⁷.

Topos is therefore conceptualised by Aristotle as both a rhetorical and a dialectical scheme. Toulmin argues that “warrants can be observed, [they] correspond to the practical standards or canons of argument”⁵⁶⁸. Wengler⁵⁶⁹ takes Toulmin’s concept of

⁵⁶² M Kienpointner Rhetoric, in J Ostman and Verschueren (eds) *Pragmatics in Practise* Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2011, pp 264-277 p.265

⁵⁶³ Aristotle Rhetoric trans W Rhys Roberts in *The complete Works of Aristotle Volume 2* ed Jonathan Barnes Princeton; Princeton University Press, 1995 1358a

⁵⁶⁴ Ibid. 1362a-b

⁵⁶⁵ S Rubinelli, *Ars Topica: The Classical Technique of Construction Arguments from Aristotle to Cicero* (Berlin:Springer, 2009) p.84

⁵⁶⁶ S Boukala, ‘Rethinking *topos* in the discourse historical approach: Endoxon seeking and argumentation in Greek media discourses on Islamist terrorism’ *Discourse Studies* 2016, Vol 18(3) 249-268 p.255

⁵⁶⁷ M Kienpointner, ‘Modern revivals of Aristotle’s and Cicero’s topics: Toulmin, Parelman, Anscombe/Ducrot’ in A Bertocchi, M Maraldi and A Orlandini (eds) *Papers on Grammar VII: Argumentation and Latin*. Bologna: CLUEB, 2001 pp. 17–34 p.18

⁵⁶⁸ S Toulmin, *The Uses of Argument* (Cambridge: Cambridge Press (2003 [1958]) p.91

⁵⁶⁹ M Wengler, ‘If there weren’t so many Turks here, it would be easier for us to find a job’ and ‘Germany has become in fact an immigration country’: Patterns of argumentation and the heterogeneity of social knowledge. *Journal of Language and Politics* (in press)

warrant forward, arguing that an *enthymeme* “is a prototypical part of argumentation within the scheme of argument – warrant and conclusion. Hence, general *topoi* are patterns of conclusion from cause to result”⁵⁷⁰.

Many academics have sought to classify the various *topoi*. Amossy breaks them down into two categories: “those that rely on logicodiscursive patterns believed to be universal and those that build on social and cultural beliefs pertaining to a given ideology. The first correspond to Aristotle’s rhetorical *topoi* (*koinoi*); the second, rooted in specific *topoi*”⁵⁷¹. However, Amossy later admits that “in most cases it is difficult, if not impossible to draw a clear-cut difference between the two”⁵⁷².

Wengler takes a different approach, differentiating context-specific *topoi*, which are only applicable within context-specific areas, from general *topoi*. These are patterns of conclusion which do not rely on its specific context.⁵⁷³

Rubinelli argues that *Rhetoric* B23 contains four distinctive types of argument schemes, which all vary in their level of applicability:

1. *Topoi* which have universal applicability and also appear in *Topics*;
2. *Topoi* which can still be universally applied, but are not found in *Topics*;
3. Less abstract versions of the *topos of the more and the less*;
4. *Topoi* which focus mainly on emotional aspects of human relationships or on considerations valid in rhetorical contexts only.⁵⁷⁴

Boukala uses the typology of Rubinelli to present some the most common Aristotelian *topoi*, based on the distinction between ‘*topoi of probative/real enthymemes*’, and ‘*topoi of fallacious enthymemes*’. Found in the table below (Figure 2), you will find a table of the *topoi* which Boukala considers to be the most connected to the Discourse-

⁵⁷⁰ S Boukala, ‘Rethinking *topos* in the discourse historical approach: Endoxon seeking and argumentation in Greek media discourses on Islamist terrorism’, *Discourse Studies* 2016, Vol 18(3) 249-268 p.255

⁵⁷¹ R Amossy, ‘How to do things with *doxa*: Toward an analysis of argumentation in discourse’ *Poetics Today* 23(3): 465-487 p.475

⁵⁷² *Ibid.* p.476

⁵⁷³ M Wengler ‘If there weren’t so many Turks here, it would be easier for us to find a job’ and ‘Germany has become in fact an immigration country’: Patterns of argumentation and the heterogeneity of social knowledge. *Journal of Language and Politics* (in press)

⁵⁷⁴ S Rubinelli, *Ars Topica: The Classical technique of Constructing Arguments from Aristotle to Cicero.* (Berlin: Springer, 2009) pp. 73-75

Historical Approach. Here Boukala uses the terms Aristotle uses, rather than Rubinelli's:

Topos	Principle and example
<p>Topos of opposites</p> <p>B23 1397a</p> <p>(Topos of real enthymeme that also appears in <i>Topics</i>)</p>	<p><i>If the contrary of a predicate belongs to the contrary of a subject, then this predicate belongs to the subject.</i></p>
<p>Topos of the consequential</p> <p>B23 1399a</p> <p>(Topos of real enthymeme that has universal applicability, although is not found in <i>Topics</i>)</p>	<p><i>If an act has both good and bad consequences, then on the good/bad consequences this act can be exhorted/blamed.</i></p>
<p>Topos of definition</p> <p>B23 1398a</p> <p>(Topos of real enthymeme that also appears in <i>Topics</i>)</p>	<p><i>It is by definition and the knowledge of what the thing is in itself that conclusions are drawn upon the subject in question</i></p>

<p>Topos of better option</p> <p>B23 1400b</p> <p>(Topos of real enthymeme that focuses mainly on interpersonal and emotional aspects of human relationships or on consideration valid in rhetorical contexts only)</p>	<p><i>It consists in examining whether there was or is another better option than that which is advised.</i></p>
<p>Topos of the logic of the further and the less</p> <p>B23 1397b</p> <p>(Topos of real enthymeme)</p>	<p><i>If a predicate does not belong to a subject to which it is more likely to belong, then it does not belong to the one to which it is less likely to belong</i></p> <p><i>‘If not even the gods know everything, then human beings can hardly do so’</i></p>
<p>Topos of induction</p> <p>B23 1398b</p> <p>(Topos of real enthymeme that has universal applicability, although it not found in <i>Topics</i>)</p>	<p><i>A syllogism that starts with something specific and concludes with something general.</i></p> <p><i>If some human beings do not trust their horses to people who do not protect the horses of other human beings, then they cannot trust their salvation to people who do not succeed in saving other human beings.</i></p>

<p>Topos that accepts as a cause something that is not a cause</p> <p>B23 1401b</p> <p>(Topos of fallacious enthymeme that focuses mainly on interpersonal and emotional aspects of human relationships or on consideration valid in rhetorical contexts only)</p>	<p><i>'Dimadis considers the Demosthenes' politics was harmful because after his governance the war began.'</i></p>
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Figure 2. Selected topoi of Aristotle's Rhetoric⁵⁷⁵

Another adaptation of Aristotelian Rhetoric can be found in the work of Perelman and Olbrecht-Tyteca, developing what is called 'New Rhetoric'⁵⁷⁶. In their theory of argumentation, they distinguish between the *loci of quantity* and the *loci of quality*. The *loci of quantity* justifies why a particular action is to be preferred because most people would benefit from it; the *loci of quality* explains why an action should be done because it is the best course⁵⁷⁷.

The next section of this thesis explains how *topos* is utilised more specifically within the Discourse-Historical Approach.

⁵⁷⁵ S Boukala, 'Rethinking topos in the discourse historical approach: Endoxon seeking and argumentation in Greek media discourses on Islamist terrorism' *Discourse Studies* 2016, Vol 18(3) 249-268 p.256

⁵⁷⁶ C Perelman and L Olbrecht-Tyteca *The New Rhetoric A treatise on Argumentation*. (London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969)

⁵⁷⁷ *Ibid.* pp.85-93

2.2 The Discourse-Historical Approach and the application of topos

As mentioned above, many of the academics who have written about and study Toulmin's argumentation theory argue that a *warrant* is an essential part of determining the validity of argumentation. As Boukala states, it "explicitly indicates that the step from *data* to *claim* is justified and why this is so"⁵⁷⁸. Following Wengler⁵⁷⁹ and Kienpointner's⁵⁸⁰ work mentioned above, Reisigl and Wodak define *topoi* as:

... parts of argumentation which belong to the required premises. They are the formal or content-related warrants or 'conclusion rules' which connect the argument with the conclusion, the claim. As such, they justify the transition from the argument to the conclusion. Topoi are not always expressed explicitly, but can always be made explicit as conditional or causal paraphrases such as 'if x, then y or y, because x'.⁵⁸¹

The Discourse-Historical Analysis defines *topos* as a *warrant* which connects an argument with a conclusion⁵⁸². Furthermore, the DHA draws no distinction between *topoi* and Cicero's *loci*. Rubinelli argues that Cicero applies *topos* by means of a rule of Roman law, something which Aristotle refers to in *Rhetoric* A2 1358a as a principle. This is not an *endoxon* since it forms part of an already established body of Roman law, therefore the argument is not rhetorical, but stems from the law⁵⁸³.

Rubinelli compares Cicero's *locus* to Aristotle's *topos*. She shows that Cicero approaches *topoi* as *warrants* with the *locus*: "if someone has not been freed by either having his name entered into the census roll or by being touched with the rod or by a

⁵⁷⁸ S Boukala, 'Rethinking topos in the discourse historical approach: Endoxon seeking and argumentation in Greek media discourses on Islamist terrorism', *Discourse Studies* 2016, Vol 18(3) 249-268 p.257

⁵⁷⁹ S Wengeler, *Topos und Diskurs* (Tubingen: Niemeyer, 2003)

⁵⁸⁰ M Kienpointner, 'On the art of finding arguments: What ancient and modern masters of invention have to tell is about the 'Ars Inveniendi'' *Argumentation* 11 1997: 225-236, M Kienpointner *Rhetoric*, in J Ostman and Verschueren (eds) *Papers on Grammar VII: Argumentation and Latin* Bologna:CLUEB, 2001, pp 17-34

⁵⁸¹ M Reisigl and R Wodak, 'The discourse historical approach' in R Wodak and M Meer (eds) *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*, 2nd edn (London: SAGE, 2009), pp.87-121 p.110

⁵⁸² S Boukala, 'Rethinking topos in the discourse historical approach: Endoxon seeking and argumentation in Greek media discourses on Islamist terrorism' *Discourse Studies* 2016, Vol 18(3) 249-268 p.257

⁵⁸³ S Rubinelli, *Ars Topica: The Classical Technique of Constructing Arguments from Aristotle to Cicero*. (Berlin:Springer, 2009) p.72

provision in a will, then he is not real”, thus illustrating Cicero’s emphasis on Roman law⁵⁸⁴.

Rubinelli contrasts this with the *topos* “if not even the gods know everything, human beings can hardly do so”, which is applied via the *endoxon* that the gods themselves do not know everything, thereby challenging tradition⁵⁸⁵.

However, Boukala argues that significant differentiation can be drawn between the argumentation schemes of Aristotle and Cicero, stemming not only from their different philosophical schools, but also their different historical and political contexts.

Aristotle developed his dialectical syllogism and argumentation theory against the backdrop of Athenian democracy. (Boukala explains here that they are referring to democracy as a regime, drawing from Castoriadis’ work⁵⁸⁶ describing Athenian democracy as somewhere philosophy had been developed to challenge pre-existing traditions and established ‘truths’). This is why therefore, Aristotle emphasised *endoxon* and the importance of the majority’s opinions, claiming that *endoxa* should be challenged where possible. Cicero’s *loci* however was developed in, and emphasises the importance of, Roman law, within the context of its autocratic form of governance.⁵⁸⁷

Following Wengler’s approach to *topos*, Reisigl and Wodak produce a list of *topoi* which were used to analyse the arguments relating to discrimination⁵⁸⁸. In Figure 3 below, one finds some of the most commonly used DHA *topoi*.

⁵⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁸⁶ C Castoriadis, ‘What democracy?’ in C Castoriadis (ed.) *Figures of the Thinkable* (Stanford,CA: Stanford University Press, 190-), pp. 195-246

⁵⁸⁷ S Boukala, ‘Rethinking topos in the discourse historical approach: Endoxon seeking and argumentation in Greek media discourses on Islamist terrorism’, *Discourse Studies* 2016, Vol 18(3) 249-268 p.258

⁵⁸⁸ M Reisigl and R Wodak, *Discourse and Discrimination: Rhetorics of racism and Antisemitism* (London: Routledge, 2001)

Topos	Warrant
Topos of threat or topos of danger	If there are specific dangers or threats, one should do something about them.
Topos of responsibility	If a state or a group of persons is responsible for the emergence of a specific problem, it or they should act in order to find a solution to that problem.
Topos of humanitarianism	If a political action or decision does or does not conform to human rights or humanitarian convictions and values, then one should or should not perform or take it.
Topos of numbers	If numbers prove a specific topos, a specific action should (not) be performed or carried out.
Topos of burden or weighing down	If a person, institution or country is burdened by a specific problem, one should act in order to diminish that burden.
Topos of history	Because history teaches that specific actions have specific consequences, one should perform or omit a specific action in a specific situation comparable with the historical example referred to.

Figure 3: Selected DHA topoi

Boukala notes that DHA's *topoi* are often more specific than Aristotelian *topoi*, most of which tending to relate to the Aristotelian *topos of the consequential*⁵⁸⁹. However, this can be seen as a good thing. *Topoi* can be used to analyse and illustrate how arguments are formed. Rubinelli notes that "what is more appropriate in a specific context is still a matter of [a] scholar's creativity and understanding of the interlocutor.

⁵⁸⁹ S Boukala, 'Rethinking topos in the discourse historical approach: Endoxon seeking and argumentation in Greek media discourses on Islamist terrorism', *Discourse Studies* 2016, Vol 18(3) 249-268 p.258

Clearly the selection of the scheme is influenced by the questioner's general knowledge of the subject"⁵⁹⁰.

This of course means that there can be differentiation when different academics apply *topoi* in their research. Instead, a series of bespoke *topoi* emerge from the author's arguments concerning their topic of study to help understand and explain systems of argumentation. This thesis agrees with Boukala's arguments that Aristotelian *topoi* "provide a holistic classification of *topoi* that can be used by interlocutors to persuade the audience, but might be named differently, in relation to their arguments"⁵⁹¹.

Indeed, because of this, *topoi* are useful in systematically analysing various discourses, providing opportunities to examine stereotypes and assumed knowledges. Therefore, this thesis utilises the Aristotelian *topos* in DHA's argumentation strategies to show the argumentation schemes used by Presidents Sarkozy and Hollande to justify their positions to utilise French military force to assist opposition forces in Libya and Syria during the Arab Spring.

The *topoi* used in this thesis draws not only from the works of Reisigl and Wodak, but also from the literature regarding French Republican history. As was mentioned above, the most effective utilisation of *topoi* is by tailoring them to the specific context.

The *topoi* established for the purposes of this research have been drawn from previous analysis of the French political system, mentioned above in the literature review. They cover a wide timeframe, spanning from the early days of the Republic in the eighteenth century, up until the modern day, and specifically surrounding the events of the Arab Spring. They include ideas which are standard to most Western democracies, as well as those which apply, or have particular meaning within a narrower French Republican context. These *topoi* are utilised to draw from the *endoxon*, or the generally accepted opinions which help to reinforce various argumentation schemes.

⁵⁹⁰ S Rubinelli, *Ars Topica: The Classical Technique of Constructing Arguments from Aristotle to Cicero*. (Berlin:Springer, 2009) p.23

⁵⁹¹ S Boukala, 'Rethinking *topos* in the discourse historical approach: Endoxon seeking and argumentation in Greek media discourses on Islamist terrorism', *Discourse Studies* 2016, Vol 18(3) 249-268 p.259

They are as follows:

Topos	Warrant
Topos of threat or topos of danger	If there are specific dangers or threats, one should do something about them.
Topos of humanitarianism	If a political action or decision does or does not confirm with human rights or humanitarian convictions and values, then one should not perform of taking it.
Topos of burden or weighing down	If a person, institution or country is burdened by a specific problem, one should act in order to diminish that burden.
Topos of history	Because history teaches that specific actions have specific consequences, one should perform or omit a specific action in a specific situation comparable with the historical example referred to.
Topos of cooperation	An action may only be taken with the consent of the primary party, and of the international community.
Topos of Solidarity or Topos of <i>Fraternité</i>	One should act to aid or support activities which meet one's own moral code, and act to guarantee others against injustice.
Topos of Universality	A response by France will also be shared by the rest of the international community.
Topos of Responsibility to Protect	If the criteria for the Doctrine of the Responsibility to Protect is met, then it should be acted upon.
Topos of <i>Liberté</i>	Respect should be given to the aspirations of those who seek to change or be free of a repressive state.
Topos of <i>Grandeur</i>	Because of France's unique experiences, either historical, or practical, its arguments should be given greater consideration.

Figure 4: *Topoi* developed for the purposes of this thesis.

Specifically, we shall see in this thesis how both Presidents Sarkozy and Hollande utilised different types of *topoi* to varying effect.

2.3 Texts subject to the Discourse Analysis

The final matter to discuss therefore is what texts have been looked at and subjected to these questions. This thesis analyses a total of twenty-one texts (more will be referenced of course, but the main focus will be on the twenty-one specifically mentioned). They are:

Speeches concerning the intervention in Libya, made by President Sarkozy and Alain Juppé, Francois Fillon and Gérard Longue

1. Situation in Libya – Communiqué issued by the Presidency of the Republic. Paris, 21 February 2011
2. Statement issued by President Sarkozy at the Council of Ministers meeting. Paris, 23 February 2011
3. Security Council - Libya - Statement by Mr. Gérard Araud, Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations 26 February 2011
4. Interview given by Alain Juppé, Ministre d'Etat, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, to "TF1" (excerpts) 1 March 2011
5. Statements by Alain Juppé, Ministre d'Etat, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, at his joint press conference with William Hague, First Secretary of State, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland 3 March 2011
6. Libya – Reply given by Alain Juppé, Ministre d'Etat, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, to a question in the National Assembly 6 March 2011
7. Press Conference with Mr Nicolas Sarkozy, President of Republic, particularly about the European Union's position in relation to the political and humanitarian situation in Libya, Brussels, 11 March 2011
8. Hearing of Alain Juppé, Ministre d'Etat, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, before the National Assembly Foreign Affairs Committee (excerpts) Paris, 15 March 2011

9. Security Council - Libya - Statement by Mr Alain Juppé, Ministre d'Etat, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs (UN Translation) 17 March 2011
10. Paris Summit for the Support of the Libyan People – Statement by Nicolas Sarkozy, President of the Republic
11. Intervention by the armed forces to implement UNSCR 1973 – Government statement in the National Assembly – Speeches by François Fillon, Prime Minister; Alain Juppé, Ministre d'Etat, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs; and Gérard Longuet, Minister for Defence and Veterans (excerpts) Paris, 22 March 2011

Speeches and Interviews with François Hollande and Jean-Marc Ayrault and Laurent Fabius

1. 21st Ambassadors' Conference – Speech by M. François Hollande, President of the Republic, Paris, 27 August 2013:
2. Joint Declaration of Mr François Hollande, President of the French Republic, and Ahmad Al-Assi Al Jarba, President of the Syrian National Coalition, on the Situation in Syria. Paris 29 August 2013
3. Interview between President François Hollande and *Le Monde* *Le Monde* 31 August 2013
4. Déclaration by Prime Minister, M. Jean-Marc Ayrault 3 September 2013
5. Syria/Syrian chemical programme – National executive summary of declassified intelligence¹ Paris, 3 September 2013 (Eng translation by French Defence Ministry)
6. Syria/government declaration and debate at the National Assembly and Senate - Speech by M. Laurent Fabius, Minister of Foreign Affairs, in the Senate

7. Government statement and debate in the National Assembly and Senate – Speeches by M. Jean-Marc Ayrault, Prime Minister, and M. Jean-Yves Le Drian, Minister of Defence (excerpts)
8. Introductory remarks by M. Laurent Fabius, Minister of Foreign Affairs, during his press conference Paris, 10 September 2013
9. Interview between Mr François Hollande and TF1 on the situation in Syria, and on government policy, 15 September 2013 (Extracts)
10. Speech by M. Laurent Fabius, Minister of Foreign Affairs (excerpts) New York, 27 September 2013

Upon looking at this collection of twenty-one texts, one will notice a couple of things. Firstly, one of the most used resources in obtaining the official transcripts and translations of speeches was from the “FranceintheUS.org” website.

Secondly, one will notice that the texts, eleven concerning the intervention in Libya, and ten regarding the proposed intervention in Syria, are chronological. For both case studies, texts were chosen from a month around the event, the signing of the UN Resolution in the case of Libya, and the failure of the proposed intervention in the case of Syria. The rationale was to see how the discourse would change throughout the process of attempting to achieve international support for a military intervention. One of the aims of this thesis is to understand whether the arguments would begin to evolve over time.

As such, when the texts were being chosen, there were a number of different criteria they had to meet. The texts could not be too short, otherwise there would be insufficient raw data to analyse. It also became clear that it would be useful to compare the discourses of various members of the executive so as to see if the same points are made, or whether differences would begin to emerge. There was also an attempt to try and make them as equidistant as possible, again to try and help analyse the development of arguments over a fixed period of time.

This methodology represents one of the original contributions to the literature surrounding the articulation of foreign policy, and in particular when seeking to apply

the doctrine of the Responsibility to Protect. This methodology enables the understanding of the cultural significance of words and actions, as well as better interpret their true meaning when seeking to justify a certain action. This methodology allows us to contextualise certain events and actions so that they may be better understood. As was mentioned in the introduction, this thesis recognises the different contexts which Presidents Sarkozy and Hollande found themselves. Yet, by taking into account their respective contexts, in combination with the language used to make their arguments, it becomes easier to compare the approaches between the two leaders, seeing where there were points of similarity, and points of difference.

Now that there has been an explanation as to how the data has been collected and how this thesis will analyse it, the next chapter examines in greater detail the various different ideas which constitute French Republicanism, including their origins, their development, and how they manifest in the modern day.

Chapter 3 - Defining Republican Ideals

This section investigates the specific nature of French Republicanism. It examines the uniqueness of the French formulation of Republicanism, looking specifically at its origins as a Revolutionary Universalist ideology, as well as some of the distinctive component concepts, such as *Liberté*. It shows not only how the idea has grown over the past two centuries, but how it is interpreted now within the context of the modern Republic, within a modern, multicultural society. This chapter discusses the most important constitutional concepts, including those famous three values contained within the constitution: *Liberté* (Freedom), *Égalité* (Equality), and *Fraternité* (Brotherhood) (3.1). This Chapter then briefly discusses the French Constitution's effect on Foreign Policy and Military Intervention (3.2).

This Chapter does not however discuss the notion of *grandeur*, which is also of paramount importance to this thesis as it is specifically linked to France's experiences in its Foreign Policy, because a full examination of the origins and meanings of the term has already been conducted in Chapter 1.1. Therefore, to avoid redundancy, this Chapter will focus on *Liberté*, *Égalité* and *Fraternité*.

3.1 Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité

These three words exist as almost a form of mantra for the French national consciousness, ingrained deeply within the psyche of France's understanding of its own civic nature. It is essential therefore that this thesis gets to grips with the historical and modern day understandings of each of these elements.

Firstly, let us consider the meaning of '*Liberty*'. It is important to know firstly that all the terms mentioned above and below have considerable fluidity with regard to their definition. In 1819, Benjamin Constant spoke of a distinction between two separate forms of liberty; one 'ancient', and one 'modern'⁵⁹². The modern form of liberty is associated with freedom to go about one's life and business as one chooses, and to practise religion or express beliefs free from outside constraint. The 'ancient' liberty concerns itself more with what is considered to be full participation in the public life, "combined not only with a disregard for the virtues of private life, but also with the complete subjugation of the individual to the authority of the community"⁵⁹³. In explaining these different forms of liberty, Constant was seeking to explain how French Republicanism so swiftly degenerated into tyranny, soon after the French Revolution. He noted that within French Republicanism there was a tension between these two conceptualisations of liberty, and that the great challenge, and the most preferable outcome would be to bring these two conceptualisations together.

Of course, this tension between two conceptualisations of liberty (on deciding whether the individual or the community should be the primary focus) is not a uniquely French issue. Nor, as this thesis shows, is the question of individual/community liberty particularly limited to an individual moment in time. However, these debates surrounding the referent object of liberty will inform other ideals of French Republicanism, as well as specifically monolithic ideals of what a Frenchman/woman is meant to be, and what French ideals are.

Indeed, the development of French Republicanism can be seen as an oscillation between these two conceptualisations. Jean-Fabian Spitz notes that initially, "with

⁵⁹² Jeremy Jennings 'Liberty' in Edward Berenson, Vincent Duclert and Christophe Prochasson (eds) *The French Republic: history, values, debates* (Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London, 2011)

p.95

⁵⁹³ Ibid.

regard to the liberty of the subject within the State, it consists of the exercise of rights guaranteed by the law but does not entail any active participation in the government of the state”⁵⁹⁴. Indeed, the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen can be seen as seeking to protect the rights of the individual against the imposition of an arbitrary government, thus representing a movement towards a more modern interpretation. However, Jennings notes that this initial thought process was almost immediately challenged when attempting to form a government which could protect these rights⁵⁹⁵. Jennings argues that the modern conception of liberty was most closely associated with the English system of government, which many philosophers of the time, including Montesquieu, believed was propped up by the Aristocracy. The Revolution was meant to act as a complete break from the *ancien* regime, which included the Aristocracy who were seen as one of the major offenders under the *ancien* regime. Thus, members of the Constituent Assembly immediately dismissed this idea out of hand, fearing that this stood in opposition to the Revolution’s fundamental goals.

Instead, there was a movement towards this ancient liberty. For Jennings, it was Rousseau who was at the head of this charge towards ancient liberty. Debates concerning constitutionality after 1789 became dominated by a reference towards the ‘general will’. According to Rousseau, the “conception of an unerring general will was transposed onto the nation, whose sovereignty (i.e., power and authority), the revolutionaries said, lay in the unity of its members”⁵⁹⁶. The argument, simply put, was, why would individuals need protection from a government when they themselves had become part of the government? The abuses of the previous government were laid solely at the feet of the aristocrats and monarchy. Robespierre expressed this in clear terms, by stating that “the good individual was the good citizen, and the good citizen was the good patriot”⁵⁹⁷. As is shown throughout this thesis, this is the attitude taken by political elites to justify a number of policies and actions. Whilst not articulated in

⁵⁹⁴ Jean-Fabien Spitz, *La Liberté Politique : Essai de généologie conceptuelle* Paris OUF 1995, *Le mouvement républicain en France*. Paris Gallimard. 2005 in Jeremy Jennings ‘Liberty’ in Edward Berenson, Vincent Duclert and Christophe Prochasson (eds) *The French Republic: history, values, debates*. (Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London, 2011) p.96

⁵⁹⁵ Jeremy Jennings ‘Liberty’ in Edward Berenson, Vincent Duclert and Christophe Prochasson (eds) *The French Republic: history, values, debates* (Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London, 2011) p.96

⁵⁹⁶ Ibid. p.97

⁵⁹⁷ Ibid.

such overtly nationalistic terms, this narrative forms an important part in obtaining and maintaining public consent, as well as producing a unified political will behind the foreign policy produced by the executive.

Jenkins argues that as the Third Republic began to develop, notions of liberty began to embody what can be considered to be a more individualistic conceptualisation of liberty – one based on the person being a separate entity from the state. According to Jules Barni, “Liberty is, in essence, the capacity that allows man to direct his own actions, to dispose of himself, in a word, to be his own master rather than the property of another”⁵⁹⁸. Barni described the characteristics of liberty as being: hard work, sobriety, chastity and the sanctity of family. He argued that central to liberty was the right to property, and that connected to this, individuals (not governments) were the ones who had to solve issues of poverty. The idea of liberty being linked to individuality became predominant from 1870s onwards.

The experience of Bonapartism had convinced Barni that for political liberty to grow, administrative decentralisation was required⁵⁹⁹. Jules Ferry went further, calling for the establishment of an independent judiciary and the abolition of a standing army⁶⁰⁰. Ferry advocated a move away from the original Jacobian ideal of a strong centralised state, instead relying on “...forms of governance that the Jacobins had rejected as a regime of aristocratic corruption”⁶⁰¹. However, one idea from that Jacobian Revolution remained – that of secularism. For Jules Ferry, “intellectual Caesarism” needed to be banished, and only a secular state could protect this individual liberty from “perpetual Roman occupation”⁶⁰². Henceforth, the idea of secularism, or *laïcité*, would become strongly linked with liberty.

As with any of these concepts, equality can be a slippery concept. For most, the idea of complete or formal equality is either impossible or undesirable. Étienne Cabet argued for a completely egalitarian society, whereby there would be no private ownership of property, and labour would be given on equal terms, with necessities

⁵⁹⁸ Jules Barni, ‘Manuel républicain’, Paris: Germer Baillie, 1872 in Jeremy Jennings ‘Liberty’ in Edward Berenson, Vincent Duclert and Christophe Prochasson (eds) *The French Republic: history, values, debates* (Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London, 2011) p.100

⁵⁹⁹ Ibid. p. 101

⁶⁰⁰ Ibid.

⁶⁰¹ Ibid.

⁶⁰² Ibid. from Jules Ferry, *La République des citoyens*. (Paris : Imprimerie Nationale, 1996)

being taken as and when required from a centralised storehouse. Everyone would wear the same clothes, and live in the same houses⁶⁰³. Egalitarian ideologies such as this have not attracted much support. Nevertheless, they do pose an important question: what kind of equality are we talking about? Equality of opportunity, or equality of outcome? Which types of equality should take precedence: economic, social, or political? And how does this type of equality interact with liberty?

According to both Roederer and Tocqueville⁶⁰⁴, the Revolution of 1789 placed equality, and not liberty as its guiding philosophy. Its quest was to eliminate what it saw as unjust privilege. This was most epitomised in the totemic Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen 1789 (DDHC), proclaiming that “All men are born free and equal in their own rights”. Article 6 declared that “all citizens... are equally eligible for all public positions, places and employments, according to their capacities and without other distinction than that of their virtues”. This was certainly an honourable goal, to create a purely meritocratic society. Article 13 targeted what were considered to be the tax privileges which the nobility and clergy enjoyed, in stating that taxation “be equally apportioned among all the citizens according to their means”. This established that legality would be the root of and means by which equality would be enforced within French society. Charles Renouvier argued that “the law of the Republic admits of no distinction of birth among citizens or of any hereditary power”⁶⁰⁵. This was taken to mean that individuals were to be equal before the law, but would not guarantee equality of circumstances or outcome, for fear of infringing upon liberty. Jules Barni in his *Manuel Républicain* of 1872, argued that liberty ought to be the “first principle of republican government”, with equality being a “necessary consequence”⁶⁰⁶.

However, it would appear that Barni’s conceptualisation of equality was not as internally consistent as his words may have suggested. At the time, his conceptualisation of equality was limited to men only. He took the rather paradoxical view that women were equals of men as “moral persons”, yet “in general the life appropriate to women is not the life of politics but that of private life”, further adding

⁶⁰³ Ibid. p. 103

⁶⁰⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁵ Ibid. p.107 in Charles Renouviere, *Manuel républicain de l’homme et du citoyen*

⁶⁰⁶ Ibid. p.108

that “their true place is not at the forum but at the domestic hearth”⁶⁰⁷. It would take until the Constitution of 1946 before women’s suffrage would be enshrined in law.

It would seem therefore the French conceptualisation of equality is more interested in formal equality than in any true equality. Even now, whilst women can and do vote in France, they are still underrepresented in the French Parliament⁶⁰⁸, and persons from immigrant backgrounds often find themselves disadvantaged both in terms of educational attainment and unemployment⁶⁰⁹.

As such, any conceptualisation of equality outside of the basic notion of “equality before the law” is clearly not accurate, and this thesis shows in its later chapters how it becomes very clear that when French political elites use these Republican ideals to justify policy or defend France or Frenchness, they are using them in a very limited, and limiting manner.

Another Republican ideal to consider is the notion of *fraternité*. Ambroise-Rendu notes that *fraternité* attracted little notice when it was first introduced in 1791⁶¹⁰. Indeed, of the three concepts of *Liberté*, *Égalité*, and *Fraternité*, *fraternité* may seem to be the least influential. However, the notion of *fraternité* certainly plays a significant

⁶⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁸ Women currently fill 223 of 577 positions in the French Parliament, making up 39% of the National Assembly. Whilst this is significantly better than the 2012 intake (26% of the Assembly Members were female)(see Julia Zorthian ‘France’s Parliament now has more women than ever’ *Fortune* 20 June 2017 <http://fortune.com/2017/06/20/france-parliament-emmanuel-macron-women-record/> [accessed 28/08/2017]), it is still short of the 51.55% of women who make up the French population (see Demographic Balance Sheet 2016, National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies <https://www.insee.fr/en/statistiques/2382597?sommaire=2382613> [accessed 28/08/2017]).

⁶⁰⁹ A study by the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies found that the success rate in national French exams at secondary levels was 68.5% for children from Non-Immigrant families, whereas those from Immigrant families achieved a success rate of 58.8%. Similarly, the success rates in Mathematics was 66% for Non-Immigrant families, and 55.4% for those with Immigrant backgrounds. (See Ministère de l’Enseignement supérieur et de la Recherche, direction de l’Evaluation et de la Prospective (DEP), panel des élèves entrés au collège en 1995; INSEE, found in Dr Sonia Tebbakh, Muslims in the EU : Cities Report Preliminary research report and literature survey, 2007 : Open Society Institute EU Monitoring and Advocacy programme https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/sites/default/files/museucitiesfra_20080101_0.pdf p.29 [accessed 28/08/2017]) For more information regarding historical trends, see : Michèle Tribalat, “La réussite au bac des jeunes d’origine étrangère” [“Success at the Baccalaureat for Young People of Foreign Origin”], *Hommes et Migrations*, n°1201, September 1996, p. 36 and ‘An edgy inquiry’, *The Economist* 4 April 2015 <https://www.economist.com/news/europe/21647638-taboo-studying-immigrant-families-performance-fraying-edgy-inquiry> [accessed 28/08/2017]

⁶⁰⁹ ‘An edgy inquiry’, *The Economist*, 4 April 2015

⁶¹⁰ Anne-Clause Ambroise-Rendu (Translated by Arthur Goldhammer, ‘Fraternity’ in Edward Berenson, Vincent Duclert and Christophe Prochasson (eds) *The French Republic: history, values* (Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London, 2011) p.112

role within this thesis. Indeed, one sees that when discourses concerning the Responsibility to Protect Doctrine are introduced, they include similar conceptualisations.

The notion is ignored in the Constitution of 1793 and the Charter of 1830, only reappearing in the Charter of 1848⁶¹¹. However, for Ambroise-Rendu *fraternité* only truly emerged following the Revolution of 1848. “With the triumph of the Republic it at last became possible for fraternity to make its official entrance... rather than a government of fathers taking their children in hand, the Republic was portrayed as a band of brothers.”⁶¹²

The new Republic saw itself as more humanitarian due to its introduction of, for example, the Decree of the Abolition of Slavery [in its colonies] 27 April 1848 (for the second time). The Second Republic enshrined these ideas in the Preamble of its Constitution, stating that “It is the duty of the citizens to love their country, serve the republic, and defend it at the hazard of their lives... to cooperate for the common welfare by fraternally aiding each other”⁶¹³, as well as “it is also its duty, by fraternal assistance, to provide the means of existence to necessitous citizens, either by procuring employment for them, within the limits of its resources, or by giving relief to those who are unable to work and who have no relatives to help them”⁶¹⁴. In order to realise this vision, limitations on the hours of work, a guarantee of the right to work and the creation of a council of ombudsmen to hear workers’ complaints were all proposed⁶¹⁵.

Constitutional mentions of this sense of fraternity has continued into the modern day. Both the Preamble and Article 2 of the Constitution of 4 October 1958 state that France

⁶¹¹ Ibid.

⁶¹² Ibid. p.113

⁶¹³ French Constitution of 1848, Preamble VI <http://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/conseil-constitutionnel/francais/la-constitution/les-constitutions-de-la-france/constitution-de-1848-ii-republique.5106.html> [accessed 18/09/2017]

⁶¹⁴ French Constitution of 1848, Preamble VII <http://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/conseil-constitutionnel/francais/la-constitution/les-constitutions-de-la-france/constitution-de-1848-ii-republique.5106.html> [accessed 18/09/2017]

⁶¹⁵ Anne-Claude Ambroise-Rendu (Translated by Arthur Goldhammer, ‘Fraternity’ in Edward Berenson, Vincent Duclert and Christophe Prochasson (eds) *The French Republic: history, values, debates* (Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London, 2011) p.114

shall work towards the ideal of “Liberty, Equality and Fraternity”⁶¹⁶. But what meaning does fraternity serve in this modern context?

The idea of fraternity saw a development with the creation of Léon Bourgeois’ Solidarist movement. Similarly situated within the realm of social rights, it removed the “near monopoly”⁶¹⁷ the fraternal conception had. Solidarism sought to implement the progress promised by the 1789 Revolution. As Hayward notes, “...Joseph de Maistre had been right to affirm that “the French Revolution legislated for man as an abstraction”, in the course of the nineteenth century, the need to secure a closer approximation of reality to this abstraction had gradually dawned on those who had been groping their way towards the provision of social guarantees as a social responsibility”⁶¹⁸. Bourgeois therefore “conceived Solidarism as an extension of the fraternitarian French Revolutionary tradition from civil and political to social rights”⁶¹⁹.

For Bourgeois, *Solidarity* “sought to achieve social justice by a reparation of the evils engendered by a blind and amoral natural solidarity”⁶²⁰. This would mean adding to the rights enshrined in the DDHC 1789 with new duties, intended to invoke social justice. These duties were described by Bourgeois as debts, which he imagined vertically, and horizontally. By virtue of inheritance from one’s forebears, one would owe a debt to previous generations, which would be paid unto future generations. However, one would also owe a debt to those within the same generation. “Each person should agree to guarantee all others against the injustices, the evils, the risks of all kinds which arise at the same time from this solidarity.”⁶²¹ The extent to which the state would play a role in the enforcement of these debts was left vague. This led to

⁶¹⁶ French Constitution of 4 October 1958 <http://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/conseil-constitutionnel/english/constitution/constitution-of-4-october-1958.25742.html#article1> [accessed 18/09/2017]

⁶¹⁷ Anne-Clauze Ambroise-Rendu (Translated by Arthur Goldhammer, ‘Fraternity’ in Edward Berenson, Vincent Duclert and Christophe Prochasson (eds) *The French Republic: history, values, debates* (Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London, 2011) p.117

⁶¹⁸ J. E. S. Hayward, ‘The Official Social Philosophy of the French Third Republic: Léon Bourgeois and Solidarism’ *International Review of Social History* 6(11) 1961, 19-48. p.23

⁶¹⁹ Ibid. p.26

⁶²⁰ Ibid. p.26

⁶²¹ Léon Bourgeois, ‘Solidarité’ pp. 57, 177; cf. pp. 191, 197-98, 203-05, 232-33. Cited in J. E. S. Hayward, ‘The Official Social Philosophy of the French Third Republic: Léon Bourgeois and Solidarism’ *International Review of Social History* 6(11) 1961, 19-48. p.29

the ideas of Bourgeois being attacked by both laissez-faire economists and revolutionary socialists as being a “thinly disguised form of its opposite extreme”⁶²².

This miniature case study goes to show how even relatively innocuous terms such as fraternity can become hotly contested, able to serve a number of masters. Ambroise-Rendu notes that during the 2002 Presidential elections, two candidates used the word “Fraternity” in their campaign posters. One was Christine Taubira, a candidate representing the Centrist Radicaux de Gauche. The other being Bruno Mégret, founder and candidate for the ultranationalist *Mouvement National Républicain*, a splinter group of the *Front National*⁶²³.

However, one can also see the guarantees included within Bourgeois’ quote above⁶²⁴ as sharing many characteristics. The arguments mobilised to justify intervention based on the Responsibility to Protect Doctrine are based upon a similar logic; that citizens of a country have an expectation that their State will protect them from atrocities/humanitarian crises. If a state fails to act in such a way, then other states may step in to protect them. In this way, France, in seeking to intervene on behalf of civilians in Libya or Syria, is giving them solidarity.

Whilst the maxim of “*Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité*” continues to be the maxim of France as a nation, it does not form the entirety of French national identity. Indeed, the next section of this thesis briefly looks to the French Constitution, a body of text which confers the rights and responsibilities to both government and citizen alike.

⁶²² Ibid. p.32

⁶²³ Anne-Clause Ambroise-Rendu (Translated by Arthur Goldhammer, ‘Fraternity’ in Edward Berenson, Vincent Duclert and Christophe Prochasson (eds) *The French Republic: history, values, debates* (Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London, 2011) p.118

⁶²⁴ Léon Bourgeois ‘Solidarité’ pp. 57, 177; cf. pp. 191, 197-98, 203-05, 232-33 cited in J. E. S. Hayward, ‘The Official Social Philosophy of the French Third Republic: Léon Bourgeois and Solidarity’ *International Review of Social History* 6(11) 1961, 19-48. p.29

3.2 The French Constitution

The Fifth Republic emerged, like the Third and Fourth Republics, due to an international crisis. The Algerian War had been raging for years, and de Gaulle was invited back from political exile, becoming President of France. The new Constitution which followed was an opportunity to establish the executive as the predominant power. The Constitution of the Fourth Republic had placed the balance of power with Parliament, resulting in relative instability. To avoid this instability, the new Republic would place the power with the Executive.

De Gaulle had a hand in writing the constitution, and there is no greater example of his handiwork than that of Article 5 of the 1958 Constitution, whereby the role of the President is described as being “the guarantor of national independence, territorial integrity and due respect for Treaties”⁶²⁵. In addition to this, Article 15 makes the President the “Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. He shall preside over the higher national defence councils and committees”⁶²⁶.

The Prime Minister’s role in regards to Foreign Policy is also defined by Articles 20 and 21. Article 20 states that “The Government shall determine and conduct the policy of the Nation”⁶²⁷; and Article 21 tasks the Prime Minister with directing “the actions of the Government. He shall be responsible for national defence”⁶²⁸.

However, the most important article in regard to the centralisation of power in the hands of the President is Article 35:

A declaration of war shall be authorized by Parliament.

The Government shall inform Parliament of its decision to have the armed forces intervene abroad, at the latest three days after the beginning of said intervention. It shall detail the objectives of the said intervention. This information may give rise to a debate, which shall not be followed by a vote.

⁶²⁵ French Constitution of 4 October 1958 <http://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/conseil-constitutionnel/english/constitution/constitution-of-4-october-1958.25742.html#article1> [accessed 18/09/2017]

⁶²⁶ Ibid.

⁶²⁷ Ibid.

⁶²⁸ Ibid.

Where the said intervention shall exceed four months, the Government shall submit the extension to Parliament for authorization. It may ask the National Assembly to make the final decision.

If Parliament is not sitting at the end of the four-month period, it shall express its decision at the opening of the following session.

As can be seen above, the President need not ask for approval from Parliament to engage in a conflict. Nor does the President even need to inform Parliament military action has occurred until three days after the fact. The only time that Parliament may be required is if the action exceeds four months, but even then, if the four months fall when Parliament is not sitting, the Parliament is not recalled.

This centralised power indicates the importance of the President in the decision for military intervention. This is why this thesis seeks to primarily examine the discourse generated by the President, as it is the President who ultimately holds all of the power. The only time this power is diluted, is during a period of ‘Cohabitation’, whereby the Prime Minister would be able to exert some influence over the decision making process. However, in the case of this case study, both Sarkozy and Hollande were not in ‘Cohabitation’, and therefore had a dominant hand in developing policies, at least domestically. This is especially the case as neither President was proposing a military intervention which was planned to last any significant period of time.

Based on the principles mentioned above, a picture emerges from the traditions and norms founded throughout France’s 330 year Republican history. These ideas have stemmed from official sources, for example the Constitution or Declaration des Droits de l’Homme et du Citoyen 1789 (DDHC).

Part II President Sarkozy and Intervention in Libya

Following a series of protests in Tunisia, a wave of discontent began spreading across North Africa and the Middle East. In Libya, the initial site for the protests was in the city of Benghazi. The protests steadily became more violent as protesters began clashing with security forces on 15 February 2011⁶²⁹. As the protests began to spread across the country, its leader, Colonel Muammar Mohammed Abu Minyar Gaddafi, and the security forces became increasingly violent.

However, some of the Security forces defied their orders and joined with the protesters⁶³⁰. Deserters from the army, as well as former members of the Gaddafi administration, academics and clerics met in Bayda to discuss what should happen next. It was here that the National Transitional Council (NTC) was formed⁶³¹.

Recognising the increasing bloodshed as Gaddafi became more and more desperate, an initial United Nations Security Council Resolution, Resolution 1970, was passed. Its purpose was to freeze the assets of Colonel Gaddafi and his associates and restrict their ability to travel⁶³². Throughout March, Gaddafi's forces started to gain the upper hand, making their way east and retaking several cities. At this point, Resolution 1973 was passed, establishing a no-fly zone over Libya, as well as allowing UN member states to take "all necessary measures" to ensure the protection of civilians⁶³³.

The "necessary measures" as interpreted by several NATO states included bombing campaigns. On 19 March 2011, French, British and American military forces began Operation Odyssey Dawn, which was a mission to enforce a no-fly zone in Libya. More than 110 Tomahawk missiles were fired from American and British ships and

⁶²⁹ 'Libya protests: Second city Benghazi hit by violence' *BBC* 16 February 2011
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-12477275> [accessed 30/09/2017]

⁶³⁰ Anne Barker, 'Time running out for cornered Gaddafi' *ABC* 24 February 2011
<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2011-02-24/time-running-out-for-cornered-gaddafi/1955842> [accessed 30/09/2017]

⁶³¹ Lulu Garcia-Navarro, 'Provisional government forming in Eastern Libya' *NPR* 23 February 2011
<http://www.npr.org/2011/02/23/134003954/New-Government-Forms-In-Eastern-Libya> [accessed 30/09/2017]

⁶³² Resolution 1970 (2011) Adopted by the Security Council at its 6491st meeting, 26 February 2011
[http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1970\(2011\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1970(2011)) [accessed 30/09/2017]

⁶³³ Resolution 1973 (2011) Adopted by the Security Council as its 6498th meeting, 17 March 2011
[http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1973\(2011\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1973(2011)) [accessed 30/09/2017]

submarines, striking around 20 Libyan air and missile defence targets in western Libya⁶³⁴. Five days later, NATO agreed to assist in enforcing the no-fly zone⁶³⁵, before taking sole command of the air operations on 31 March 2011⁶³⁶.

Talks around the possibilities of ceasefires were discussed, but did not produce any lasting resolution. The African Union worked tirelessly to try to bring the conflict to a close, but the rebels rejected these proposals as they involved retaining Gaddafi in power⁶³⁷.

Throughout May and June, the EU and several other countries such as Germany began to recognise the NTC as the legitimate representatives of Libya⁶³⁸. Militarily, the rebel forces began to make progress in August, taking back the coastal cities they had lost to Gaddafi's previous assault. They were also able to capture the capital city, Tripoli⁶³⁹.

On 16 September 2011, the UN finally recognised the National Transitional Council as the legal representative of Libya⁶⁴⁰. This was after the UN Security Council had released \$1.5 billion of frozen assets to the rebel government on 25 August 2011⁶⁴¹.

Muammar Gaddafi remained on the run until 20 October 2011, when he was captured and killed in his home town of Sirte⁶⁴². The National Transitional Council declared

⁶³⁴ CNN Wire Staff, 'Gunfire, explosions heard in Tripoli' *CNN* 20 March 2011 <http://edition.cnn.com/2011/WORLD/africa/03/19/libya.civil.war/index.html> [accessed 26/02/2019]

⁶³⁵ Elise Labott and Paula Newton 'NATO announces agreement on enforcing no-fly zone over Libya' *CNN* 25 March 2011 <http://edition.cnn.com/2011/WORLD/africa/03/24/libya.nato/index.html> [accessed 26/02/2019]

⁶³⁶ NATO Factsheet - Operation Unified Protector Protection of civilians and civilian populated areas https://www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_2011_04/20110407_unified-protector-protection-civilians.pdf [accessed 26/02/2019]

⁶³⁷ 'Libyan rebels reject African Union road map' *Al Jazeera* 12 April 2011 <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2011/04/201141116356323979.html> [accessed 30/09/2017]

⁶³⁸ 'Germany recognises rebel leadership in Libya' *Deutsche Welle* 13 June 2011 <https://www.dw.com/en/germany-recognizes-rebel-leadership-in-libya/a-15150852> [accessed 26/02/2019]

⁶³⁹ Luke Harding, 'Libyan rebels enter Tripoli to topple Muammar Gaddafi's regime' *The Guardian* 22 August 2011 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/aug/21/libya-endgame-fighting-tripoli> [accessed 30.09.2017]

⁶⁴⁰ UN 66th General Assembly 'After much wrangling, General Assembly seats National Transitional Council of Libya as Country's Representative for sixty-sixth session 16 September 2011' <https://www.un.org/press/en/2011/ga11137.doc.htm> [accessed 30/09/2017]

⁶⁴¹ Richard Roth, 'Diplomats: Agreement reached on unfreezing Libyan funds' *CNN* 25 August 2011 <http://edition.cnn.com/2011/WORLD/africa/08/25/libya.un.agreement/index.html> [accessed 26/02/2019]

⁶⁴² 'Muammar Gaddafi killed as Sirte falls' *Al Jazeera* 21 October 2011 <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2011/10/20111020111520869621.html> [accessed 30/09/2017]

the official end of the war three days later⁶⁴³, with the UN formally declaring the end of NATO's mandate in the country, and NATO declaring the successful completion of Operation Unified Protector on 31 October 2011⁶⁴⁴.

This conflict was relatively short-lived, and involved a considerable amount of solidarity within the international community regarding the aims and outcomes of their operations. However, despite this seemingly multilateral contribution, there were three nations driving forward these Western interventions: the United States, the United Kingdom, and France.

Part II of this thesis examines France's role within this conflict. Specifically it analyses the common terms and phrases used by Nicolas Sarkozy and his administration to justify his intervention in Libya. What is displayed are references to France's own history and traditions, as well as the doctrine of Responsibility to Protect, making the case that it is France's duty to intervene to help foster democracy in this region. This is therefore covered in Chapter 5.

However, in order to fully appreciate the circumstances in which France found itself, it is first necessary to examine France's previous links to and engagements with Libya, as well as events across the globe which directly preceded the protests in Libya (Chapter 4).

⁶⁴³ CNN 2011 Libya Civil War Fast Facts *CNN Library* 29 March 2017
<http://edition.cnn.com/2013/09/20/world/libya-civil-war-fast-facts/index.html> [accessed 30/09/2017]

⁶⁴⁴ 'NATO and Libya (Archived) *NATO* 9 November 2015
https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_71652.htm [accessed 26/02/2019]

Chapter 4 - Contextualising Sarkozy's Position at the start of the Libyan Civil War

As mentioned above, there were a number of historical and political factors outside of the conflict which contributed to France's intervention in Libya. These contexts were the sum of decades of French Foreign, Security, and Trade Policy, colliding with (and potentially contradicting) France's own self-image. In order to explain the rhetoric used by the Sarkozy administration in support of military intervention in Libya, as well as to assess the veracity of French claims, this thesis first needs to examine the various decisions and policies leading up to this event.

This chapter addresses two mitigating factors which certainly had some impact on the decision for France to intervene militarily. This is by no means an argument that the other considerations, such as the threat to life of civilians in Benghazi, were not the primary reason for the intervention. Rather, it is an example of the complicated position that Sarkozy and his administration found themselves in, whereby pragmatic considerations would come up against its historical universalist claims to promoting *Liberté, Égalité* and *Fraternité* abroad.

Firstly, this chapter discusses the various financial and business relationships which had been formed between France and the Gaddafi regime, partly to explain how some of these dealings impacted on the situation to intervene militarily (4.1). Secondly, it examines France's conduct prior to its intervention in Libya (4.2). This section shows how France's slow reactions and diplomatic blunders led to much embarrassment, especially the series of French gaffes in relation to the protests in Tunisia.

4.1 Financial Ties

In 2007, Colonel Muammar Gaddafi touched down in Paris, his first visit to France in thirty-three years. It was also his first visit to a Western nation since his renunciation of terrorism. Gaddafi was treated to a lavish five-day stay, which included providing a large heated Bedouin-style tent for receiving guests in the garden of the Paris mansion which accommodates visiting dignitaries.

The visit was immediately controversial, with Rama Yade, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Human Rights and member of Sarkozy's own government, condemning the act, saying "Colonel Gaddafi must realize our country isn't a doormat upon which a leader, whether terrorist or not, can come to wipe off the blood of his crimes"⁶⁴⁵. The criticism was not limited to a single cabinet member however; Ségolène Royal described it as being "odious, shocking, and even inadmissible", before accusing the President of "stomping on traditional French defence of human rights". Perhaps the most damning condemnation came from France's Foreign Affairs Minister, Bernard Kouchner, who could muster little more enthusiasm than to say, "I am resigned to hosting him. It was necessary"⁶⁴⁶.

One of the main goals it seemed for Colonel Gaddafi's visit was to sign a series of trade agreements. Specifically, he was buying twenty-one Airbus aeroplanes, as well as signing a nuclear co-operation accord⁶⁴⁷. This accord in question was designed to produce a nuclear reactor to power a de-salination plant, which proved to be controversial with the German government. The company that would be producing the nuclear reactor was Areva, which at the time was the world's biggest nuclear reactor manufacturer. However, the German engineering company Siemens had a 34 per cent stake in Framatome, a nuclear power joint venture with Areva⁶⁴⁸. Due to Gaddafi and Libya's history, Germany had some misgivings about selling nuclear technology to

⁶⁴⁵ Bruce Crumley When Sarkozy met Gaddafi, *Time*, 10 December 2007
<http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1693121,00.html> [accessed 30/09/2017]

⁶⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁷ 'Gaddafi visit seals French deals' *BBC* 10 December 2007
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/7135788.stm> [accessed 30/09/2017]

⁶⁴⁸ Hugh Williamson and Theodor Treov, 'Germany Angry at France/Libya deal' *Financial Times* 27 July 2007
https://search.proquest.com/docview/229094042?accountid=9883&trfr_id=info%3Axri%2Fsid%3Apmo [accessed 30/09/2017]

such a ruler, especially as the sale would fall under the auspices of the European Union, thereby linking the two entities.

This was not however the largest source of controversy which came out of the interactions between the two leaders. Prior to the meeting, six healthcare workers were released from prison in Libya and returned to Europe. These healthcare workers (one Palestinian doctor, 5 Bulgarian nurses) had been arrested in 1999, accused of intentionally infecting 426 Libyan children with HIV. They had previously all been sentenced to death, but their sentences had been commuted following a deal with the European Union involving, amongst other things, compensation payments to the children⁶⁴⁹. Sarkozy, and his wife Cécilia, had been involved in the negotiations, and evidence emerged that arms sales had formed part of the deal to have the workers released. Sarkozy had previously denied that arms sales had formed part of the deal. However, the European defence and aerospace company EADS announced that it had signed a €296m (£200m) deal with Libya, and Sarkozy was accused of facilitating this deal in favour of the release of the prisoners. The finalisation of this deal came only two days after Gaddafi's son, Saïf al-Islam, had suggested that they had been promised arms⁶⁵⁰. Leading the criticisms at the time was François Hollande, who was the leader of the opposition. Whilst admitting that the arms deals were, of course, legal, he felt that the deal had been conducted improperly. In a French Radio interview, he argued that:

We were told there was no bartering... Then we learn the there was a civil contract over a nuclear reactor. I questioned the foreign affairs minister about this and a vague memorandum was given to us, but nothing about an arms contract... There's a real problem with method here. How can we, in a democracy, accept that Nicolas Sarkozy wants to be transparent when it's Gadafy's son who announces an arms contract has been signed, when the minister of foreign affairs knows nothing and the defence minister is still talking about a letter of intent.⁶⁵¹

⁶⁴⁹ 'Libya: Health Workers Released, but Serious Abuses Remain', *Human Rights Watch*, 23 July 2007 <https://www.hrw.org/news/2007/07/23/libya-health-workers-released-serious-abuses-remain> [accessed 06/03/2019]

⁶⁵⁰ Kim Wilsher, 'Libya and France sign £200 m arms deal' *The Guardian* 3 August 2007 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2007/aug/03/france.libya> [accessed 06/02/2019]

⁶⁵¹ Ibid.

However, the Sarkozy administration were keen to portray these deals as being worked out independent of the French state's own activities. Sarkozy's spokesman, David Martinon, justified the deal by telling *Le Parisien* newspaper that "if commercial contracts have been signed between Libya and French companies, we can only congratulate them... Should we reproach national firms for winning business with a partner, Libya, which respects its international obligations?"⁶⁵²

Whatever the case as to the origin of this deal, the mere possibility to have these sorts of deals with the Gaddafi regime can be traced to before Sarkozy's Presidency. Three years earlier, Jacques Chirac had travelled to Tripoli to visit Colonel Gaddafi; this had been the first trip to Libya by a French leader in fifty-one years. This trip formed part of accelerating trade talks between France, and to a larger extent the EU, and Libya. Of course, French companies had had a presence in Libya for decades⁶⁵³, but this latest opportunity signified a considerable opportunity for wider ranging economic ties between Europe and Libya.

This had, in part, come about following a recent development in Gaddafi's policy towards the West; he had agreed to stop developing weapons of mass destruction, as well as to denounce terrorism and acknowledge responsibility for the Lockerbie and UTA plane bombings in the 1980s⁶⁵⁴.

At stake were potential trade deals concerning the sales of weaponry, oil, and infrastructure. Gaddafi was searching for potential partners in both Europe and the United States, seeking to play one party off another. Indeed, whilst the US may have been a more profitable trading partner, Gaddafi had been critical of the US' role in the Iraq War. Engaging Europe in these discussions was therefore intended to obtain the best deal possible out of the competing parties⁶⁵⁵.

Chirac was keen to engage with Libya, hence his visitation to Libya. At the time, France was Libya's fifth-largest supplier of imports, with exports of €272 million in

⁶⁵² Ibid.

⁶⁵³ For example, the French oil company Total has been operating in Libya for over 60 years, <https://www.total.com/en/libya> [accessed 27/02/2019]

⁶⁵⁴ Michel Leclercq, 'Chirac cements ties with Libya' *Mail and Guardian* 25 November 2004 <https://mg.co.za/article/2004-11-25-chirac-cements-ties-with-libya> [accessed 27/02/2019]

⁶⁵⁵ 'Libya: Chirac visit ups the ante' *Stratfor* 25 November 2004 <https://worldview.stratfor.com/article/libya-chirac-visit-ups-ante> [accessed 27/02/2019]

2002. French imports from Libya were worth €756 million in 2003 and consisted almost entirely of oil⁶⁵⁶. Chirac was keen to look beyond Libya and Gaddafi's past transgressions, arguing that Libya had undergone "heavy turbulence. This difficult period is now happily completed"⁶⁵⁷. Indeed, Gaddafi praised France, stating that "President Chirac has taken some very positive positions on Palestine and the Iraq War. And as France feels its presence in Africa is a kind of obligation and as Libya is an important African country... our two countries can combine their efforts to help Africa"⁶⁵⁸. Chirac reciprocated, stating that he hoped France would be able to embark upon a "deep and trusting political dialogue" with Libya regarding the Maghreb, the Mediterranean and Africa⁶⁵⁹.

Beyond political and diplomatic ties, France was keen to maintain and grow its "economic involvement in the country", pursuing further development in "strategic sectors [such] as energy, infrastructure, telecommunications, transport, water and environment". Chirac also added that France would support Libya's "reform movement and the opening up of businesses" to the outside world⁶⁶⁰. Indeed, he admitted to reporters that "It is a promising market - we must do the maximum to support it"⁶⁶¹.

Most indicative of this attempt to open up Libya to Western business was Chirac's lobbying of the EU to withdraw its ban on the sale of arms to the country. This formed part of a general strategy on France's part to have a number of arms embargos withdrawn, including those against China⁶⁶². At the time, the US announced that it was resistant to the idea of the EU lifting the embargo⁶⁶³, but a year later George W Bush announced that the US would also lift its own trade embargo in Libya⁶⁶⁴.

⁶⁵⁶ Michel Leclercq, 'Chirac cements ties with Libya' *Mail and Guardian* 25 November 2004 <https://mg.co.za/article/2004-11-25-chirac-cements-ties-with-libya> [accessed 27/02/2019]

⁶⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶⁶¹ 'France rebuilds ties with libya' *BBC* 25 November 2004 <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/4037267.stm> [accessed 27/02/2019]

⁶⁶² Stephen Castle 'EU ends arms trade ban with Libya' *Independent* 12 October 2004 <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/eu-ends-arms-trade-ban-with-libya-28045.html> [accessed 27/02/2019]

⁶⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁶⁴ Timeline: Libya Sanctions *BBC* 15 October 2004 <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/3336423.stm> [accessed 27/02/2019]

The benefits of the lifting of this embargo were immediately apparent for France. For example, on 17 February 2005, the Defence Minister Michelle Alliot-Marie met with Gaddafi to discuss the sale of modern weaponry to his regime. The French package promised an update to Libya's Air Force, which included Mirage fighters which had been purchased from France during the 1970s, as well as overhauling several patrol boats from the same era. Gaddafi also discussed the potential purchase of two of France's newest combat aircraft, the newest iteration of the Rafale Aircraft, as well as the Eurocopter Tiger attack helicopter. Between 2005 and 2010, France would issue one hundred and eighty-seven arms sales licences to sell a mix of bombs, torpedoes, rockets and missiles; large calibre guns; fire control equipment; military aircraft and components, all of which accumulated to a total value of €381,688,627, a greater value of sales than any European nation⁶⁶⁵.

However, France's dealings with Libya allegedly involved more than just commercial transactions. Accusations began to emerge that the Gaddafi family had paid €50 million into Sarkozy's presidential campaign. Whilst the rumour had existed for a while, it began to gain traction when Ziad Takieddine, a French-Lebanese businessman came forward and stated that Gaddafi had contributed to the Presidential campaign, and specifically, it was he who had handed over the money to Sarkozy's then Chief of Staff, Claude Guéant⁶⁶⁶.

For a more comprehensive breakdown of the allegations that Sarkozy and his associates were having some form of underhanded relationship with the Gaddafi regime, Catherine Graciet's *Sarkozy/Kadhafi*⁶⁶⁷ is a good place to start. One particularly eye-popping story concerns Claude Guéant, Ziad Takieddine and Gaddafi's son Saïf al-Islam. The interview with Graciet describes how, after Sarkozy's election victory, they were tasked with organising a meeting between Claude Guéant and Saïf al-Islam. The plan was to invite Saïf to the Elysée. Instead, and without

⁶⁶⁵ Figures calculated from National reports 2005–2010; consolidated reports; Jane's Defence Weekly (2006); Jane's Defence Industry (2007); Jane's Defence Weekly (2007); International Defence Review (2007); Jane's Defence Industry (2008); Rettman (2011), as collected together in S. T. Hansen and N. Marsh 'Normative Power and Organised Hypocrisy: European Union member states' arms export to Libya' *European Security* (2015) 24:2 264-286 pp.278-280

⁶⁶⁶ Kim Wilsher, 'Gaddafi 'gave Nicolas Sarkozy €50m for 2007 Presidential campaign' *The Guardian* 15 November 2016 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/nov/15/muammar-gaddafi-allegedly-gave-nicolas-sarkozy-50m-euros-2007-presidential-campaign> [accessed 30/09/2017]

⁶⁶⁷ Catherine Graciet, *Sarkozy/Kadhafi Histoire Secrète d'une trahison* (Paris; Editions Du Seuil, 2013)

warning, Saïf and a few others were picked up, and dropped off at Ziad Takieddine's home. This was where the General Secretary of the Elysée first met Gaddafi's son⁶⁶⁸. Graciet later tells us that, once they had grown to trust each other a little more, Takieddine introduced Guéant to Abdallah Senoussi, a man implicated in the DC20 UTA plane disaster⁶⁶⁹.

Of course, it is important to note that all of these things that Sarkozy and Guéant allegedly did, or the people they allegedly met, have not been substantiated in a court of law, and therefore cannot definitively be said to have happened. Guéant disputed the evidence that supposedly links him to some of the backroom deals. However, an independent court did rule that some of the documents were authentic, implying that investigations would continue⁶⁷⁰.

And indeed, investigations into potentially improper campaign finance continued whilst this thesis was written. In March 2018, Sarkozy was questioned for two days, and charged by investigators regarding these alleged payments⁶⁷¹. More recently, Alexandre Djouhri lost his appeal against extradition to France, in relation to allegedly improper payments from the Libyan regime to Nicolas Sarkozy. Djouhri is a businessman who is accused of selling a villa in the south of France for an inflated price of €10m to officials connected to the Libyan regime through a sovereign wealth fund based in Switzerland, the Libyan African Portfolio (LAP). He then allegedly funnelled €500,000 of the proceeds of the sale into an account held by Mr Sarkozy's then Chief of Staff, Claude Guéant⁶⁷².

Whilst the maxim of "there is no smoke without fire" should not be used as a means of ascribing guilt, it is certainly true that this background rumbling of potentially improper connections did hurt Sarkozy's standing in France at the time. It certainly

⁶⁶⁸ Ibid. p.168

⁶⁶⁹ Ibid p.169

⁶⁷⁰ Kim Wilsher, 'Gaddafi 'gave Nicolas Sarkozy €50m for 2007 Presidential campaign' *The Guardian* 15 November 2016 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/nov/15/muammar-gaddafi-allegedly-gave-nicolas-sarkozy-50m-euros-2007-presidential-campaign> [accessed 30/09/2017]

⁶⁷¹ Angelique Chrisafis, 'Nicolas Sarkozy faces formal investigation over alleged Libya funding', *The Guardian*, 22 March 2018 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/mar/21/nicolas-sarkozy-former-president-back-in-police-custody-over-libya-case> [accessed 27/02/2019]

⁶⁷² Paul Peachey, 'Businessman loses extradition fight over secret Libyan backing for Sarkozy', *The National*, 26 February 2019 <https://www.thenational.ae/world/europe/businessman-loses-extradition-fight-over-secret-libyan-backing-for-sarkozy-1.830514> [accessed 27/02/2019]

provides an explanation as to why Sarkozy was so willing to take the punishment for having invited Gaddafi to Paris, especially considering that it must have been foreseeable. Indeed, in a not so subtle attack against his predecessor, François Hollande wrote in his book *A President Shouldn't Say That*: “as President of the Republic, I was never held for questioning [...] I never spied on a judge, I never asked anything of a judge, I was never financed by Libya”⁶⁷³.

Both of these aforementioned financial links certainly paint a complex picture of relations between the Libyan regime and the Sarkozy administration. However, let it be made clear that this thesis does not argue that the sole reason Sarkozy intervened in Libya was to dispose of a potentially problematic individual in the event that the investigation of his dealings with the regime were to continue. Indeed, *Mediapart* journalist Fabrice Arfi warned against interpreting Sarkozy’s role as being strictly personal: “I don’t believe that Sarkozy brought France and other countries to war in Libya exclusively to whitewash himself”. However, he added that “It’s difficult to imagine that there wasn’t some kind of personal or private dimension to Sarkozy’s pro-war activism in 2011”⁶⁷⁴.

Indeed, there would certainly seem to be a strong motivation to distance oneself as much as possible from an individual with whom one may have had inappropriate financial dealings, especially if one had spent the previous three years cultivating a strong relationship with them. Joe Penney argues that it would therefore be tempting to seek to remove Gaddafi from the situation, especially once it became clear that the US and most of the Arab states were also happy to be rid of the Libyan leader⁶⁷⁵. In his article, Jalel Harchaoui argued that “Once the war was triggered, [Sarkozy’s] attitude is deeply impacted by the scandal that he is the only one aware of at the time. So, it gives rise to a very uncompromising France pursuing a scenario where

⁶⁷³ ‘François Hollande: les phrase qui (le) tuent!’, *Le Point*, 12 October 2016
https://www.lepoint.fr/politique/francois-hollande-ces-phrases-qui-le-tuent-12-10-2016-2075360_20.php [accessed 27/02/2019]

⁶⁷⁴ Fabrice Arfi, as quoted in Joe Penney, ‘Why did the US and its Allies bomb Libya? Corruption case against Sarkozy sheds new light on ousting of Gaddafi’, *The Intercept*, 28 April 2018
<https://theintercept.com/2018/04/28/sarkozy-gaddafi-libya-bombing/> [accessed 27/02/2019]

⁶⁷⁵ Joe Penney, ‘Why did the US and its Allies bomb Libya? Corruption case against Sarkozy sheds new light on ousting of Gaddafi’, *The Intercept*, 28 April 2018
<https://theintercept.com/2018/04/28/sarkozy-gaddafi-libya-bombing/> [accessed 27/02/2019]

everything would be destroyed and everything related to the Gaddafis would be discredited”⁶⁷⁶.

However, Adam Holloway, a British Conservative MP dismissed this potential personal reason for intervention, stating that: “if Mr. Sarkozy had taken money from Gaddafi, you might expect it to make him less likely to intervene, if anything. For this reason, I don’t really think this is a factor. ... Indulging in regime change had nothing to do with intelligence (which should have said ‘Don’t do it’), but with David Cameron and Nicolas Sarkozy’s need to ‘do something’”⁶⁷⁷.

Whether or not Sarkozy’s decision to intervene militarily was partially in response to personal issues, it is still important to show that up until the military intervention, Sarkozy and France had been broadly supportive of the Gaddafi regime. Viewed in this context, the change from commercial crony to mortal enemy was certainly stark. The next part of this Chapter considers the beginnings of the Arab Spring, and how Sarkozy misjudged the mood of the nation.

⁶⁷⁶ Jalel Harchaoui as quoted in Joe Penney, ‘Why did the US and its Allies bomb Libya? Corruption case against Sarkozy sheds new light on ousting of Gaddafi’, *The Intercept*, 28 April 2018 <https://theintercept.com/2018/04/28/sarkozy-gaddafi-libya-bombing/> [accessed 27/02/2019]

⁶⁷⁷ Adam Holloway in *Ibid.*

4.2 The Arab Spring in Tunisia and the wrong side of history

The Arab Spring began with the self-immolation of a market vendor named Mohamed Bouazizi outside the provincial governor's office in Sidi Bouzid, Tunisia. His actions were in protest against what he considered to be widespread corruption. Bouazizi had had his cart, from which he sold fruit, confiscated. However, what could drive a man to cover himself with flammable liquid and set himself alight in front of a government building? We are told that "the breadwinner in a family of eight, Bouazizi argued with a policewoman who took away his goods and scales. The policewoman gave him a slap in the face and a slur against his father, who died when he was three"⁶⁷⁸. Corruption was rife throughout the country, and we are told that this single act ignited in many people a building animosity against those who had seemingly abandoned the poorer regions of Tunisia to their fate. "In the absence of clear leaders in Tunisia's uprising, Bouazizi has captured the imagination of millions and inspired copycat burnings in neighbouring Algeria, Mauritania and Egypt."⁶⁷⁹ Protests broke out across Tunisia, and by 14 January 2011, President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali had fled to Saudi Arabia. Waves of protest rapidly spread throughout the rest of the region too, with some successes. In Egypt, President Hosni Mubarak, who had been in power for thirty years, resigned on 11 February 2011 after 18 days of massive protests, including the now iconic occupation of Tahrir Square and the infamous "Battle of the Camels", where supporters of Mubarak clashed with protesters, riding into Tahrir Square on camels and horses, beating people with sticks.

A common refrain from academics and political actors from the early 2010s is that they felt that the Arab Spring could not have been predicted. And certainly in that early phase, events unfolded very rapidly. There were only twenty-eight days between the self-immolation of Mohammed Bouazizi on 14 December 2010⁶⁸⁰, and the resignation and flight of President Ben Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali to Saudi Arabia⁶⁸¹. Whilst some were surprised with the speed of the results, as well as how quickly they seemed to

⁶⁷⁸ Lin Noueihed Peddler's Martyrdom Launched Tunisia's Revolution *Reuters* 19th January 2011 <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2011/01/19/uk-tunisia-protests-bouazizi-idUKTRE70I7TV20110119> [accessed 28/05/14]

⁶⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁸⁰ 'Tunisia suicide protester Mohamed Bouazizi dies', *BBC* 5 January 2011 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-12120228> [accessed 30/09/2017]

⁶⁸¹ 'Tunisia: president Zine al-BBC Abidine Ben Ali forced out' *BBC* 15 January 2011 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-12195025> [accessed 30.09/2017]

spread across the MENA area, others were surprised with how slow other countries, especially France, were to react⁶⁸².

Alain Juppé has certainly been frank when looking back at these events, especially regarding the extent to which France was caught off guard by the Arab Spring. In a symposium on the Arab Spring, he sought to justify this by saying “no research centre, chancery or specialist could have predicted the scale or timing of this ‘Arab Spring’, even though there were warning signs”⁶⁸³. At another event, Juppé also sought to explain why they were slow to react to the changing landscape:

Our vision and our policies with respect to the Arab world have for years been inspired primarily by a concern of stability... But at the same time, we often saw the authoritarian regimes as bastions against extremism, safeguards against chaos. We allowed ourselves in the name of security and the fight against terrorism to demonstrate a certain level of tolerance for the governments that were flouting human rights and curbing their countries’ development. We turned a blind eye to certain abuses as if this region of the world didn’t have the right to freedom or modernity⁶⁸⁴.

And this was certainly the case in Tunisia. When the protests began, and the Ben Ali regime began to feel the pressure, France was caught attempting to sell them tear gas to help control the protesters. In a letter obtained by Reuters from François Fillon to Jean-Marc Ayrault, the Prime Minister admitted that permits were issued, authorising the sale of tear gas to the Tunisian government as late as 12 January, two days before President Ben Ali fled. Fillon clarified that they had not been exported, but that the export authorisations would have required the blessing of the Foreign Ministry. The

⁶⁸² Sold, K. (2012) Präsidentschaftswahlkampf 2012 in Frankreich. Mittelmeer und arabischer Raum: Primat der Innenpolitik [The Presidential election campaign in France 2012. The Mediterranean and Arab region: primacy of domestic politics] (Berlin: DGAP) in Laura-Theresa Krüger & Bernhard Stahl: The French foreign policy U-turn in the Arab Spring – the case of Tunisia, *Mediterranean Politics*, 2016 <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/13629395.2016.1253685?needAccess=true> [accessed 30/09/2017]

⁶⁸³ “Arab spring” symposium – Closing speech by Alain Juppé, Ministre d’Etat, Minister of Foreign Affairs, to the Arab World Institute 16 April 2011 <https://uk.ambafrance.org/Arab-spring-symposium-Closing> [accessed 30/09/2017]

⁶⁸⁴ Martin Indyk and Alain Juppé, The Arab Spring: Hopes and Challenges, The Brookings Institute, 6 June 2011 (transcript) https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/20110606_arab_spring_juppe.pdf pp 3-4 [accessed 12/06/2019]

authorisations thus were suspended on 18 January, following customs checks on 14 January.⁶⁸⁵

However, this was not the only source of embarrassment for the Sarkozy government in its handling of the Tunisian uprisings. In addition to the authorisation of tear gas sales to the country, the Foreign Minister Michèle Alliot-Marie herself provoked strong condemnation in the French Parliament when she offered the expertise of French Security Forces to help with the crowd control on 12 January (just two days before Ben Ali's flight from the country)⁶⁸⁶. Alliot-Marie was equally embroiled in controversy when it became known that not only had she holidayed in Tunisia in late 2010, at which time the protests had been occurring, but also that she and her family (including her partner Patrick Ollier, also a government minister) had used the private jet of a businessman who was allegedly close to Ben Ali. The jet, alleged the satirical newspaper *Le Canard Enchaîné*, belonged to Aziz Miled, who was a close associate of Belhasan Trabelsi (brother-in-law to Ben Ali). Michèle Alliot-Marie admitted that it was his jet, but denied the closeness of the relationship between Miled and Trabelsi, who she argued had been a victim of the regime⁶⁸⁷. However, despite her protestations, the scandal became too great and Alliot-Marie eventually resigned. In her resignation letter, Alliot-Marie stated that she felt that she had done nothing wrong and lashed out, arguing that she had "been the target of political attacks" and that the media had used this "to create suspicion, counter-truths and generalisation". She then became more accusatory, stating that "For the last two weeks, it is my family's private life that has been suffering real harassment at the hands of certain media... I cannot accept that some people use this [campaign] to try to make people believe in a weakening of France's international policy"⁶⁸⁸. Alliot-Marie would be replaced by the veteran politician Alain Juppé as Foreign Minister.

⁶⁸⁵ Brian Love, 'France okayed tear gas as Tunisia revolt peaked', *Reuters*, 1 February 2011 <http://www.reuters.com/article/uk-tunisia-france-teargas/france-okayed-tear-gas-as-tunisia-revolt-peaked-idUKTRE71077O20110201> [accessed 30/09/2017]

⁶⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁸⁷ Kim Wilsher, 'French Foreign Minister used Tunisian businessman's private jet', *The Guardian*. 2 February 2011 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/feb/02/france-minister-tunisia-private-jet> [accessed 30/09/2017]

⁶⁸⁸ 'French Foreign Minister Marie-Alliot quits over Tunisia' *BBC* 27 February 2011 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-12591452> [accessed 28/02/2019]

Whilst these multiple missteps by the Foreign Ministry forced Alliot-Marie to fall on her sword, she was not the only member of the administration to make proclamations which, in time, would be viewed unfavourably. The French Culture Minister, Frédéric Mitterrand, argued that the Ben Ali administration had been unfairly criticised, stating that “to say that Tunisia is a one-man dictatorship seems to me quite exaggerated”⁶⁸⁹, whilst the Agricultural Minister Bruno Le Maire also praised some of Ben Ali’s achievements⁶⁹⁰. Nicolas Sarkozy himself admitted that he had underestimated the popular anger against the Ben Ali administration. Indeed, in a peculiar admission that attempted to justify France’s inaction, Sarkozy declared that “Behind the emancipation of women, the drive for education and training, the economic dynamism, the emergence of a middle class, there was a despair, a suffering, a sense of suffocation. We have to recognise that we underestimated it”. During this press conference, however, Sarkozy appeared defensive; when asked whether French silence had contributed to an increased number of deaths, he “looked riled and said that was an exaggeration”⁶⁹¹. Sarkozy’s advisor Henri Guiano justified France’s non-intervention differently, telling RTL Radio that “It’s not for France to be the gendarme of the Mediterranean”⁶⁹².

However, Sarkozy’s critics were eager to condemn the French President. Opposition member and former Cabinet Minister Pierre Moscovici stated that “we really have a diplomacy without courage and without dignity. I am ashamed of what I have seen”. Another EU official pointed out that “Overall the French have been agnostic”, suggesting that it was effectively a policy “along the lines of ‘better the dictator you know than the dictator you don’t’”⁶⁹³.

⁶⁸⁹ Ian Traynor and Kim Wilsher, ‘Tunisian protests have caught Nicolas Sarkozy off guard, say opposition’ *The Guardian* 17 January 2011 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/jan/17/tunisian-protests-sarkozy-off-guard> [accessed 28/02/2019]

⁶⁹⁰ Angelique Chrisafis, ‘Sarkozy admits France made mistakes over Tunisia’, *The Guardian* 24 January 2011 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/jan/24/nicolas-sarkozy-tunisia-protests> [accessed 28/02/2019]

⁶⁹¹ Angelique Chrisafis, ‘Sarkozy admits France made mistakes over Tunisia’, *The Guardian*, 24 January 2011 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/jan/24/nicolas-sarkozy-tunisia-protests> [accessed 28/02/2019]

⁶⁹² Ian Traynor and Kim Wilsher, ‘Tunisian protests have caught Nicolas Sarkozy off guard, say opposition’, *The Guardian*, 17 January 2011, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/jan/17/tunisian-protests-sarkozy-off-guard> [accessed 28/02/2019]

⁶⁹³ Ibid.

This reluctance to act was also felt on the European level, with EU diplomats reporting that the French, Spanish, and Portuguese were all pressing for caution rather than decisive action. It was only after Ben Ali had fled the country to Saudi Arabia that French statements started referring to ‘democracy’ in Tunisia as being something worth supporting⁶⁹⁴.

It was at this point that the Marly Group launched their scathing attack on Nicolas Sarkozy’s foreign policy⁶⁹⁵. The Marly Group consisted of a group of French diplomats who had become disaffected with Sarkozy’s foreign policy. In particular, they argued that France was losing influence in the world, not because of its diplomats, but because of the policies that were being pursued. Indeed, they laid the blame on the government, which they claimed did not draw upon the expertise of foreign policy practitioners. It was for these reasons that France continued to support the Ben Ali and Mubarak administrations. They claimed that had the Élysée listened to the advice being provided, France would not have found itself on the back foot. The Marly Group accused the Sarkozy administration of amateurism, impulsiveness, and a preoccupation with the short-term effects a policy would have on media coverage. Indeed, because of this, foreign policy under Sarkozy often felt spontaneous and improvised, with an inconsistent foreign policy at work. The group therefore called on Sarkozy to heed their advice, and seek to produce a more stable foreign policy based on the counsel offered by his diplomatic corps⁶⁹⁶.

This had been a rather unprecedented intervention by foreign policy practitioners in an attempt to correct and rescue the country’s foreign policy. The extent to which this article had a direct impact on Sarkozy’s foreign policy is unclear; what is clear, however, is that France did become significantly more decisive in its treatment of Libya at the point when protests turned violent.

As has been mentioned above, it is not the purpose of this thesis to assess the extent to which any single factor catalysed France to intervene in the way that it did. However, the information provided here does certainly highlight significant reasons for France

⁶⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁹⁵ ‘La voix de la France a disparu dans le monde’, *Le Monde*, 22 February 2011
http://www.lemonde.fr/idees/article/2011/02/22/on-ne-s-improvise-pas-diplomate_1483517_3232.html [accessed 30/09/2017]

⁶⁹⁶ Ibid.

to act. A chance to correct the international community's perception of France, as well as the possibility of discrediting anything Gaddafi could say in relation to the two leaders' former relations, would certainly be important motivators.

Furthermore, establishing Sarkozy's former policy positions aids us in understanding the language used by President Sarkozy to justify intervention, allowing motivations to be interpreted from the words and phrases spoken, and the *doxa* utilised. The next Chapter analyses and assesses the various arguments deployed, and what the language used tells us about French Foreign Policy.

Chapter 5 - Intervention in Libya

As has been mentioned above, France played significant roles in driving forward the humanitarian intervention in Libya in 2011. The purpose of this part is to examine the arguments utilised to justify the intervention. This section therefore discusses the various stages of the intervention, to better examine how the French administration made its arguments to intervene.

This section examines the intervention in three separate parts. Firstly, this section deals with the justification for the intervention (5.1), how it was argued, and what kind of imagery they were drawing upon, both from the modern and from the historical context. Secondly, we discuss the nature of the intervention (5.2). Specifically, what the purpose of the no-fly zone was, and how the French were able to interpret it more broadly so as to go well beyond what the UN Security Council originally intended. Finally, we discuss the importance of the consent of the wider international community and multi-lateral support (5.3), particularly with regard to the question of whether (and in what forms) the use of force should have been allowed because both the Libyan citizens and the international community were supportive of it. In conducting an analysis of the texts that have been selected for this Discourse-Historical Approach, the various speeches and interviews provided will be contextualised against France's cultural and historical foreign policy tendencies, as well as observations concerning the build up to and initial conflict with the Gaddafi regime in Libya.

Ultimately, the French were able to successfully convince the international community that the conflict in Libya triggered the UN's Responsibility to Protect Doctrine. It is important to reiterate that the four criteria to legitimise an argument for the Responsibility to Protect are: those demanding intervention must have the right intention, that it must be the last resort, that the intervention itself must be proportional, and that there must be a reasonable chance of averting the crisis or atrocity which would otherwise trigger the norm⁶⁹⁷. It is therefore important to note that the various declarations made by the Sarkozy administration would also be seeking to set out how

⁶⁹⁷ 'Report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty' *International Development Research Centre* Ottawa 10 2001
<http://responsibilitytoprotect.org/ICISS%20Report.pdf> [accessed 27/09/2017] p. XII

the four aforementioned criteria would be met (once military intervention had been chosen as the appropriate course of action).

This chapter therefore examines consistent themes which emerge within the texts, relating to France as an entity, as well as explaining how they metamorphosed into an argument enabling the implementation of a no-fly zone.

5.1 Justification of Intervention – The Humanitarian Case

One of the major justifications given for the interventions by France, the United Kingdom, and the United States in Libya was that they needed to act in order to avert a humanitarian catastrophe. When discussing the humanitarian issues, a number of themes and *topoi* would appear. This section breaks down some examples which appear within the sample of texts analysed.

The first is the most-straight forward, namely describing the violent situation in which the Libyans were living. This is done by referencing a mix of actual atrocities which had already occurred, with the threat of new ones occurring were France not to act. This of course reflects primarily the topos of humanitarianism, as mentioned in Chapter 2.

The protests against Gaddafi were meant to begin in Benghazi on 17 February 2011, when there would be a “Day of Revolt/Rage”. In fact, protests began two days earlier, with the protests of 17 February being far more wide-ranging than had been anticipated. Protests were occurring in Ajdabiya, Darnah, Zintan, and a few other cities. Dozens were shot and killed in the opening days of the protests, and there were reports of Gaddafi having individuals (including former prison inmates) bussed in to act as counter protestors⁶⁹⁸. In the ensuing three days, hundreds more would die, and Benghazi would fall to the protestors. The defining moment in this initial conflict came with the fall of the Katiba, a stronghold containing much of the city’s arms stocks. It was at this point that soldiers under the Gaddafi regime began to abandon their posts, either joining in the protests, or simply withdrawing from the city⁶⁹⁹.

Benghazi became an important symbol in the West in relation to the uprising. This was where many of the protestors’ key victories over the Gaddafi regime occurred. This was heightened when the National Transitional Council set up its headquarters in the city⁷⁰⁰. As a result of this heightened profile for the city, it became an essential

⁶⁹⁸ Ian Black, ‘Libya’s Day of Rage met by bullets and loyalists’, *The Guardian*, 17 February 2011 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/feb/17/libya-day-of-rage-unrest> [accessed 02/03/2019]

⁶⁹⁹ Evan Hill, ‘The day the Katiba fell’, *Al Jazeera* 1 March 2011 <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/spotlight/libya/2011/03/20113175840189620.html> [accessed 02/03/2019]

⁷⁰⁰ ‘Libya Opposition launches council’ *Al Jazeera* 28 February 2011 <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2011/02/2011227175955221853.html> [accessed 02/03/2019]

target for Gaddafi's forces, as not only the second most populous city in Libya, but also one which had become a symbol of the newly organised opposition.

In the initial few weeks of the uprising, however, knowledge of the killings which had been committed was very limited. As such, the first declarations regarding the uprisings do not contain specific pieces of information. Instead, they refer to abstract and generalised threats to the population. These first statements tended to limit themselves to a more factual appraisal of the situation, just including one or two adjectives to give a phrase or sentence a little more bite or flavour.

The first public communiqué by Nicolas Sarkozy on the issue denounced “the unacceptable use of force against Libyans, who are simply exercising their fundamental right to freedom of assembly and expression”⁷⁰¹. In this communiqué, he also gave his condolences to the bereaved and expressed sympathy for those who had been injured. Finally, he called for “an immediate halt to the violence and for a political solution in order to respond to the Libyan people's aspiration to democracy and freedom”⁷⁰².

There are two main points to be made in relation to this initial communiqué. Firstly, we see the obvious references to ‘fundamental rights’, related to freedom of assembly and freedom of expression, covered more broadly within the spectrum of democracy and freedom. Here we find the first example of Sarkozy using the topos of *liberté*, arguing that as a simple expression of their democratic rights, the citizens should be allowed to protest. Secondly, this statement seems carefully worded so as to not place too much blame on the regime. Sarkozy condemned the government for the “unacceptable use of force”, but ended the statement with a general call for a “halt to the violence”. It would therefore seem that President Sarkozy was, at this point, not seeking to place all of the blame on the government. One could of course surmise at this point that no decisions had been made by the administration in terms of a policy towards the regime.

⁷⁰¹ Communiqué issued by Nicolas Sarkozy, President of the Republic regarding the Situation in Libya 21 February 2011 <https://uk.ambafrance.org/President-Sarkozy-calls-for-18667> [accessed 02/03/2019]

⁷⁰² Ibid.

It is clear, however, that over the next three days, following the battle in Benghazi and protests across the rest of the country, President Sarkozy adopted a different approach. The first sentence of President Sarkozy's statement to the Council of Ministers on 23 February 2011 stated that: "The continuing brutal and bloody crackdown against Libyan civilians is horrifying"⁷⁰³. Now, of course, much of the sentence is redundant; it goes without saying that a crackdown is violent and brutal, and that the images would be horrifying. But opening statements like this are not about subtlety, but rather creating an image to set the tone for the rest of the statement/speech. In this case, this was one of the first proclamations by Sarkozy on what would become the Libyan Civil War, and it set a clear tone for how his government would respond to the crisis.

What is most interesting about this statement is that, whilst the first sentence makes it implicit that Colonel Gaddafi's administration were the ones committing the violence, it never mentions him by name. Nor does it name any individuals involved in the violence. Instead, it lays the blame more generally against the administration, in saying that the use of force "against one's own people is contemptible"⁷⁰⁴. There could of course be a number of reasons for this. Based on France's economic ties to the country, refraining from personalising this crisis would allow France to continue to deal with Gaddafi had he called a halt to the conflict and enacted some reforms. Once again, Sarkozy called for an "immediate end to the violence in Libya" and urged the leaders of that country to "immediately engage in political dialogue to put an end to the ongoing tragedy"⁷⁰⁵, thereby placing the emphasis on all parties to stop fighting and reach a consensus.

In the final two paragraphs of this statement to the Council of Ministers meeting, Sarkozy asked that the Council of Ministers consider possible sanctions, something which could be interpreted as a gentle threat of coercion at the end of a statement mostly characterised by an appeal to reason. Gentle, that is, because he only asks that proposals be made and that there be a consideration of measures relating to "economic, commercial or financial relations with Libya"⁷⁰⁶. It may not have been in Sarkozy's

⁷⁰³ Statement issued by President Sarkozy at the Council of Ministers meeting Paris, 23 February 2011 <https://franceintheus.org/spin.php?article2176> [accessed 30/09/2017]

⁷⁰⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁰⁶ Ibid.

mind at the time, however the Doctrine of R2P does require that all reasonable measures be considered before resorting to the use of force.

Another method utilised by President Sarkozy in his statement to the Council of Ministers on 23 February was to attempt to close the gap between the listeners, the French public, and those whose plight he was describing (Libyans). This was done by drawing a comparison/connection between the two things. He stated that “France and the French people are following these events with shock and compassion”⁷⁰⁷. This argument that the French people were looking to the Libyan people echoed the ideas discussed in Chapter 3.1 relating to Bourgeois’ concept of Solidarism, linked of course to topos of fraternité.

In his press conference on 11 March 2011, these fraternal themes emerged once again, for example when he said: “Because the values put forward today by the Arab people are the values which the European nations had endorsed long ago”⁷⁰⁸. Unlike the previous example, here the sense of *fraternité* was broadened to encompass not just France, but the entire West. To see why, one must note where this press conference took place, and what the purpose of Sarkozy’s visit was. This press conference was held in Brussels, following a meeting of the EU to formulate a response to the situation in Libya. When analysing these texts, it is important to note the audience of the discourse to better understand what was being argued for, and who the texts were seeking to convince. In this case, it was in France’s best interests not to alienate European leaders by essentialising France’s experience at this time. Therefore, Sarkozy broadened the notion of *we* to include other Europeans (more on this is discussed in 5.3 when elaborating upon the requirement for multilateral solutions).

This topos of responsibility was raised once again when Sarkozy was asked about collaborating with the United Nations, the Arab League, and the African Union in responding to this crisis: “But in the end, Europe is the big neighbour; we share the

⁷⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁰⁸ Press Conference with Nicolas Sarkozy, President of the Republic, concerning the European Union’s position regarding the political and humanitarian situation in Libya, in Brussels, 11 March 2011 <http://discours.vie-publique.fr/notices/117000613.html> [accessed 03/03/2019] Author’s translation

Mediterranean. The Arab peoples have decided to fight for their freedom and for democracy. Our duty is to respond to that aspiration”⁷⁰⁹.

Once again, the closeness of France and North Africa is drawn out, both in geography, but also now in aspiration. Indeed, now that the Arab people were fighting for democracy, it was the responsibility of France to “respond to the aspiration”. This combines the topos of responsibility and the topos of fraternité once again, crafting links between the ideas of those sharing values with the French with a responsibility on the French to act to help them continue along this path.

One of the decisions made following the meeting of the European Council was to allow humanitarian agencies to travel to safe havens (whose locations had yet to be decided) throughout the region. There were already plans to send them to Tunisia and Egypt, and the European Council was hopeful that a humanitarian area would also be established in Libya. This was especially required for Libya, where the European Council wanted to establish areas to provide healthcare, schools, and a means to provide refuge for the tens of thousands of people who had been displaced. It is interesting to note that the prepared segment of this press conference was far more factual than other pieces of discourse we later examine. There was little use of emotive language to portray the situation. When discussing attacks against the civilian population, Sarkozy stated that the European Council expresses “its deep worry on the subject of the attacks, which includes airstrikes against non-violent Libyan civilians”⁷¹⁰. Here, the emotive terms “deep concern” and “non-violent Libyan civilians” were subdued, especially when taken in the context of the rest of the press conference. This also lays the groundwork for the R2P Doctrine, clearly showing that the Libyan state was not fulfilling its responsibility to protect its citizens from humanitarian dangers, and was indeed inflicting them upon the population.

These arguments can also be combined to strengthen the case for some sort of intervention. Consider, for example, this sentence from the Paris Summit for the

⁷⁰⁹ Translation from: “Mais enfin, l’Europe, c’est le grand voisin, nous avons la Méditerranée en partage. Les peuples arabes ont décidé de se battre pour leur liberté et pour la démocratie. Notre devoir, c’est de répondre à cette aspiration” Translation found at: Situation in Libya and the Mediterranean – Extraordinary European Council – Press conference given by Nicolas Sarkozy, President of the Republic (excerpts) Brussels, 11 March 2011 <https://uk.ambafrance.org/President-Sarkozy-s-press.18755> [accessed 03/03/2019]

⁷¹⁰ Ibid.

Support of the Libyan People, where he says that in Libya, “peaceful civilians who are demanding nothing more than the right to decide their future for themselves are in mortal danger. We have a duty to answer their anguished plea”⁷¹¹. The word order in this section is both very important and very persuasive. Firstly, we have the term “peaceful civilians”; obviously, the use of ‘peaceful’ here is intended to suggest that they are undeserving of the current conditions in which they find themselves. ‘Civilian’ is also chosen to intensify this sense of victimhood, arguing that they are incapable of defending themselves. This sense of injustice is strengthened by the fact that they are “demanding nothing more than the right to decide their future for themselves”. Here again, the topos of fraternité is invoked, the idea that their striving for liberty is something that everyone should be able to relate to. Then of course is the fact that they are in “mortal danger”, drawing attention to the stakes of the situation, as well as adding a layer of immediacy.

Next, it makes a direct call to action in stating that “we have a duty to answer”. There are a number of points which explain why this statement is effective. Firstly, we encounter both the topos of humanitarianism and the topos of threat, in stating that there is a threat to the individuals’ lives and rights, and that there is something France can do to prevent this. It is also suggestive of France’s *mission*, that France is in a position to help resolve the situation itself through its action (topos of burden). This also lends itself towards broader arguments of French exceptionalism (which is addressed later in this chapter). Finally is the “anguished plea” phrase, which once again adds a dramatic layer of immediacy, conveying emotions surrounding the unfairness and injustice of the situation, personalising the Libyans to the listeners.

Put simply, the situation being presented was that of a reasonable request for freedom from the Libyan population being brutally and violently denied, and France having the opportunity to rectify it.

Specifically, on this point, Sarkozy sought to distinguish the situation in Libya from the situations that had arisen in Tunisia and Egypt, thereby clarifying why Libya required international intervention. Sarkozy acknowledged that whilst there was also

⁷¹¹ Paris Summit for the Support of the Libyan People – Statement by Nicolas Sarkozy, President of the Republic. Paris, 19 March 2011 <https://franceintheus.org/spip.php?article2241> [accessed 30/09/2017]

brutality under the Mubarak and Ben Ali regimes in Egypt and Tunisia respectively, he distinguished this type of violence by describing it as “*civiles*”. Here, he argued that because the Egyptian and Tunisian regimes did not use armed forces such as soldiers or airplanes, the two scenarios cannot be compared to the more existential threat that the Gaddafi regime poses. Indeed, he argues that both in Tunisia and Egypt there was a refusal by the Army to fire upon protestors, in a way that the Army had not refused to do so in Libya.

As argued in Chapter 4, France had reacted too slowly to events in Tunisia, and had remained supportive of the Ben Ali regime until just before Ben Ali himself fled the country. It is also true that the Egyptian Army were not involved in many violent skirmishes with protestors. Instead, pro-Mubarak supporters were given free rein to attack protestors with bricks and firebombs⁷¹².

Therefore, the relatively high level of threat that Gaddafi posed the protestors was what obliged the self-appointed guardians of the wider world to intervene. He himself admitted that if the army had said they would not fire upon protestors, then that would have created a different scenario which would have required radical rethinking of the situation. However, Gaddafi and the Libyan regime effectively committed “*actes de guerre*” against their own people, certainly necessitating additional consideration and pressure by the international community⁷¹³.

It is interesting, however, that throughout the press conference on 11 March 2011, Sarkozy emphasised that, whilst military force was an option on the table, it was only to be used as a last resort. Whilst he was open to the use of force, the diplomatic solution was always seen as the preferred option. Whilst he had effectively ruled out working with Gaddafi himself, he reasoned that it was indeed possible to work with those who had formerly worked for the regime, but were now working to enact a transition towards democracy. This is an essential part of the R2P framework, as force may only be authorised if no other option is capable of working. He was also able to

⁷¹² AP, ‘Mubarak supports attack anti-government protestors’, *The Independent*, 2 February 2011 <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/africa/mubarak-backers-attack-anti-government-protesters-2201971.html> [accessed 03/03/2019]

⁷¹³ Press Conference with Nicolas Sarkozy, President of the Republic, concerning the European Union’s position regarding the political and humanitarian situation in Libya, in Brussels, 11 March 2011 <http://discours.vie-publique.fr/notices/117000613.html> [accessed 03/03/2019]

side himself with those whom he had considered to be true representatives of the Libyan people due to their desire to enact democratic norms.

By 15 March however, Alain Juppé was arguing that instead of enacting a no-fly zone, which would be difficult to manage, the type of intervention the international community should be looking to conduct was airstrikes on key airports to prevent Gaddafi from using his air force⁷¹⁴. Alain Juppé's argument was significantly stronger than had previously been articulated. Juppé was clear to differentiate the nations undergoing the Arab Spring once again, arguing that the action to be taken needed to be tailored to the individual nation. For Libya, he argued that "our main concern being to protect the civilian population"⁷¹⁵. Much of the content of this speech is discussed in sections 5.2 and 5.3; however one striking element in relation to this speech is the confirmation that "without wishing to dwell on the recent past, I can't resist the urge to recall the fact that France was the first country, along with Britain, to say Colonel Gaddafi must be prevented from using violence to restore his authority"⁷¹⁶. Here, he establishes France as being at the forefront of the protection of human rights, reinforcing France's status as a protector of human rights, and bestowing upon it a sense of leadership (*topos of grandeur*).

Three elements will be discussed in relation to this passage. Firstly, one has the basic idea that 'violence' is not a legitimate means to regain authority over the country. Obviously, this suggests that he would be likely to use violence to achieve his goals, which when combined with the previous mention of protecting the "civilian population", one is asked to assume that this is whom the violence will be used against.

Secondly, it is also important to note that implicitly, France's position at this point was to consider the National Transitional Council (NTC) to be the legitimate representatives of the Libyan people, and not the Gaddafi regime. However, Juppé's phrasing here suggested that if Gaddafi were to use other means to restore his authority in the country, then this would be acceptable. However, based on the facts, France's

⁷¹⁴ Hearing of Alain Juppé, Minister of State, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, before the National Assembly Foreign Affairs committee (excerpts). Paris, March 15, 2011 (<https://franceintheus.org/spip.php?article2244>)

⁷¹⁵ Ibid.

⁷¹⁶ Ibid.

prior support for the NTC meant it would have been unlikely for France to support Gaddafi again in the short to medium term.

Thirdly, Juppé was keen to accentuate France's leadership in attempting to prevent violence against civilians. Again, he relied on both the topos of danger (against the civilians) and the topos of humanitarianism to justify France's position, but was also seeking to increase France's *rang* by taking a position of leadership in seeking to resolve this crisis. It is striking too that this message came from Alain Juppé, who had replaced Alliot-Marie in the role of Foreign Minister. Alliot-Marie's time as Foreign Minister ended because of her support of the repressive Tunisian regime. It was therefore important for France to reclaim the narrative of its role in the Arab Spring. From this point on, one would see a far more assertive French discourse regarding its own conduct in Libya.

A particular example of the stronger rhetoric used by the Sarkozy regime can be found in Sarkozy's statement at the Paris Summit for the Support of the Libyan People on 19 March 2011. Between Juppé's speech at the National Assembly Foreign Affairs Committee and Sarkozy's speech at the Paris Summit, Resolution 1973 authorised the creation of a no-fly zone and demanded a ceasefire (amongst other things)⁷¹⁷. The Summit was therefore a means for a number of world leaders to meet and discuss a joint policy for the implementation of the Resolution.

Here, Sarkozy took a much stronger and emotionally engaging line than he had done previously. The opening three paragraphs consider what had been decided regarding the implementation of Resolution 1973, the practicalities of using French aircraft to implement the no-fly-zone and attack any armoured vehicles which threatened unarmed civilians, and reiterated the global consensus of these actions (to be discussed in greater detail in part 5.3). Again, the topos of humanitarianism and the topos of threat were called upon, similar in tone to what had been discussed previously regarding the threats to unarmed civilians, and the warning issued by the international community against Gaddafi. In the fourth paragraph, he advised that Gaddafi "has

⁷¹⁷ Resolution 1973 (2011) Adopted by the Security Council as its 6498th meeting, 17 March 2011 [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1973\(2011\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1973(2011)) [accessed 30/09/2017]

completely disregarded this warning. Over the past few hours, his forces have intensified their deadly offensives”⁷¹⁸.

From this point on, Sarkozy’s rhetoric became significantly more emotive; it was at this point where we began to see more naked examples of France’s Republican ideology at play. He started the fifth paragraph, stating that “Arab peoples have chosen to free themselves from the servitude to which they have felt bound for far too long. These revolutions have given rise to immense hope in the hearts of all those who share the values of democracy and human rights”⁷¹⁹. Again, we have this idea that the “Arab peoples”, in seeking to reject their former authoritarian leaders and embracing democracy, were moving towards liberty by freeing themselves from “servitude”. Whilst this statement had the specific purpose of reporting the decisions made in order to implement Resolution 1973, it also served a broader purpose for France to announce its position regarding the Arab Spring. Sarkozy was keen to re-write France’s own history in this regard, for only a few months prior, France was offering to support regimes who were keeping Arab peoples in “servitude”.

More broadly, he deflected the blame away from France and other Western nations who were content to maintain the status quo; instead, he placed the blame on the individuals rebelling, since it was they who “felt bound” to the old systems. This was a consistent position for Sarkozy, who made the infamous gaffe in a speech in Dakar in 2007 that “The tragedy of Africa is that the African has not fully entered into history ... They have never really launched themselves into the future”⁷²⁰.

Of course, this idea presupposed that nations such as France exist in this future of other nations; namely, that nations should have sought to be more like it in order to progress. In these circumstances, this meant democracy and human rights, ideas which are enshrined within France’s Republican ideals. The France conjured by Sarkozy’s words

⁷¹⁸ Paris Summit for the Support of the Libyan People – Statement by Nicolas Sarkozy, President of the Republic. Paris, 19 March 2011 <https://franceintheus.org/spip.php?article2241> [accessed 30/09/2017]

⁷¹⁹ Ibid.

⁷²⁰ Diadie Ba, ‘Africans still seething over Sarkozy speech’, *Reuters*, 5 September 2007 <https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-africa-sarkozy/africans-still-seething-over-sarkozy-speech-idUKL0513034620070905> [accessed 06/03/2019]

acts almost as a proud parent, when speaking of the “immense hope in the hearts of all those who share the[se] values... ”⁷²¹.

These paternalistic themes continue when Sarkozy noted: “But they are not without danger. The future of these Arab peoples belongs to them. In the midst of the difficulties and trials of all kinds that they must face, these Arab peoples need our help and support. It is our duty”⁷²².

Here Sarkozy displayed the topos of burden, or in other words, France’s *mission*. France has historically held an opinion of itself as a nation whose role has been to spread its culture and ideas to the rest of the world, sometimes articulated as its *‘besoin de rayonnement’*⁷²³. France was founded within revolution and has historically been supportive (when in its own interests) of revolutions similarly modelled from the early days of American Independence. This French exceptionalism was a founding element for the Republic, and informed much of its policy. De Gaullian notions of *grandeur* can be seen as another element of this, namely, France seeking to increase its *rang* to achieve its rightful place in history and the international order. Therefore, when France’s foreign policy is understood in this way, it is clear to see that intervening in this way could be seen as their ‘duty’.

Throughout this statement (and others), Sarkozy was keen to point out that any intervention by France was not to be interpreted as an imposition of French values, and that the Arab peoples’ future was their own. Specifically, in the seventh paragraph, he noted that French intervention “is not to impose a final outcome on the Libyan People but in the name of universal conscience, which cannot tolerate such crimes”⁷²⁴.

Sarkozy concluded his statement with a summation of the state of events as they stood, accompanied by an appeal to Gaddafi. He firstly stated that the aim of the intervention was to “protect civilians from the murderous madness of a regime which, in killing its

⁷²¹ Paris Summit for the Support of the Libyan People – Statement by Nicolas Sarkozy, President of the Republic. Paris, 19 March 2011 <https://franceintheus.org/spip.php?article2241> [accessed 30/09/2017]

⁷²² Ibid.

⁷²³ Often linked to the quote by President Pompidou, arguing that “of all countries, France has held most profoundly to the export of its language and culture... This is the ambition of our intellect, perhaps our genius”, cited in Gordon Cumming, *‘Aid to Africa: French and British Policies from the Cold War to the New Millenium’* (Routledge, Oxford; 2017) (Google Books version)

⁷²⁴ Ibid.

own people, has lost all legitimacy... They cannot be deprived of their rights through violence and terror... Our determination is total”⁷²⁵.

Here we find a distillation of all of the techniques used thus far; Sarkozy once again brought attention to the spectre of civilians’ deaths, whilst making the strongest critique until this point of the Gaddafi regime. Again, Sarkozy invited his audience, which predominately can be seen to be the remainder of the international community, to associate with the Libyan people, in contradistinction to the “murderous” Gaddafi regime.

The declarations made by the Sarkozy administration consciously attempted to build an association between the ‘Libyan people’ and ‘civilians’. Of course, there were many civilians who participated in the protests and uprisings, but the opposition forces were also made up of those who had deserted Gaddafi’s army⁷²⁶. However, the conflict was instead conceptualised as one which was between a powerful state, ruled by an unpopular authoritarian leader, and a downtrodden civilian population, yearning to become free and democratic.

It was this day, 19 March 2011, on which France’s Air Force began to enforce the no-fly zone. The executive, and specifically Prime Minister François Fillon, Foreign Minister Alain Juppé, and Minister for Defence Gérard Longuet explained the decision before the National Assembly on 22 March 2011.

These statements open with an explanation of the Arab Spring, describing how “a wind of democracy and freedom has been blowing through the Arab world. The Tunisian people, then the Egyptian people, have expelled their leaders and abolished the authoritarian regimes in place since decolonisation”⁷²⁷. Of course, France’s actions, or lack thereof in relation to the Tunisian and Egyptian uprisings, went unmentioned.

⁷²⁵ Ibid.

⁷²⁶ For example: David Botti, ‘Libya’s Defectors’ *The New York Times* 25 February 2011 <https://www.nytimes.com/video/world/africa/10000000664162/tc-022511-libya.html> [accessed 06/02/2019] and Ian Black, ‘Libya: Defections leave Muammar Gaddafi isolated in Tripoli bolthole’, *The Guardian*, 23 February 2011 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/feb/23/muammar-gaddafi-libya-tripoli-uprising> [accessed 06/03/2019]

⁷²⁷ Intervention by the armed forces to implement UNSCR 1973 – Government statement in the National Assembly – Speeches by François Fillon, Prime Minister; Alain Juppé, Ministre d’Etat, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs; and Gérard Longuet, Minister for Defence and Veterans (excerpts) Paris, March 22, 2011 <https://franceintheus.org/spip.php?article2247> [accessed 06/03/2019]

However, we are once again offered the notions of “democracy and freedom”, acting as a reason to support the uprisings. Relying on this topos of fraternité, this seeks to make those on whose behalf France has acted seem more deserving, thereby also feeding into the idea of France’s *mission*.

When the no-fly zone was first implemented, and the French carried out missions against advancing ground forces, French leaders were quick to publicise what they had been able to achieve, and remind people of what had been saved. The aforementioned combined speeches of the executive from 22 March 2011 were keen to accentuate France’s achievements. Indeed, when Libya began its own protests, they hoped that it would resolve itself equally quickly. However, “the Gaddafi regime decided to drown in blood the revolt that threatened it. In the space of two weeks, the Libyan People’s hopes turned into a nightmare”.

These two sentences set up the stakes and suggested the consequences of French inaction; that democracy and liberty would not have been able to take hold as Gaddafi killed those who stood against him. Both the topos of danger and the topos of humanitarianism acted as powerful motivating factors for action. Specifically, it was argued that “Last Thursday, Benghazi – the last bastion of freedom in Libya – seemed condemned to fall into the hands of the troops loyal to Gaddafi. The revolution seemed to be living through its final hours”⁷²⁸.

Sentences like this seek to dramatise events, framing the events as a battle between good and evil. Similarly, like with any such tale, when all seems lost, the hero finds a way to save the day. Here, we are told that: “Two days later, hope was reborn in Benghazi. They waved French flags and they waved the flags of another Libya, with its dreams of democracy and modernity”.⁷²⁹

The heroic France therefore came to intervene and save the revolution. Patriotic images were conjured with the waving of French flags, seeking to elicit images of Bastille Day celebrations and foster solidarity between the French and those in Benghazi.

⁷²⁸ Ibid.

⁷²⁹ Ibid.

This statement acknowledged the risks of armed intervention. However, notions of France's damaged prestige through inaction were raised: "But wouldn't the moral and political doubt be more profound and devastating if we'd done nothing? Wouldn't we be burdened by a huge sense of guilt if- through caution and weakness- we'd stood by and witnessed the repression of an unarmed people?"⁷³⁰

France's sense of *rang* and *grandeur* was challenged here, attempting to imagine a world in which France felt unable to act to support its very own values through its own weakness. As discussed in Part I, French foreign policy remains the reserve of the President of the Republic. Unlike in the United Kingdom, the National Assembly does not need to give its consent for military action before it is enacted. Furthermore, foreign policy, and specifically the use of military assets, tends not to be too contentious an issue, with only limited criticism normally being faced. It is therefore submitted that this entire speech was less an attempt to convince the assembly members to support the action (though this may have been a secondary aim for those who were sceptical) but as an act of national unity. It offered France a chance to enact a performative patriotism, to celebrate France's uniqueness and leadership in this crisis.

Indeed, it gave the standing administration a chance to reiterate its own Republican credentials, affording an opportunity to show France's power in upholding its *mission*.

The final two paragraphs emphasised this, stating that:

France hopes a new era will begin tomorrow in the Mediterranean region, free of colonialist baggage and outdated attitudes; a new era based on the notions of respect and dignity, in which the fear and rejection of others give way to the sharing of common values. (...)

At a time when France is engaged militarily, when our armed forces are bravely fulfilling their mission, I know, ladies and gentlemen deputies, that I can count on your sense of national unity.

In Benghazi the *tricolore* flag has been raised, and this gesture compels us to accept our duty. As I stand here I know you, the nation's representatives, are concerned to uphold a certain idea of France and liberty. Today there is neither Right nor Left, there is only the Republic, which commits itself from the heart, courageously but also with clarity and moment.⁷³¹

⁷³⁰ Ibid.

⁷³¹ Ibid.

Here he described a vision of the Mediterranean region after the Arab Spring; one which emulates the values that the French Republic was built upon. Moreover, France's *mission* was laid bare, to support the Libyans struggling against a repressive regime to build a new society mirroring France's own. Indeed, the fact that those in Benghazi are flying the *tricolore* creates almost an obligation for France to intervene on their behalf. The final sentence accentuated this, arguing that there were no political divisions, only unity under the banner of the French Republic who must act.

Having discussed the humanitarian argument surrounding the French intervention and how Republican ideas are mobilised to reinforce French exceptionalism through its own commitment to uphold these values, I now further discuss the logic behind the specific usage of French air power to inhibit Gaddafi's ability to effectively use his own air power.

5.2 Instruments of intervention – UN Resolutions and the decision to implement a no-fly zone

As has been chronicled above, France, and the rest of the world, was slow to react to the outbreak of protests throughout the MENA region. Despite the embarrassment of being caught supporting Tunisia's Ben Ali, the reaction from the Sarkozy administration was still one of caution.

A number of factors needed to be taken into account before France would be able to make a decision. Protests had broken out in Tunisia in December 2010, following which President Ben Ali fled on 14 January 2011⁷³². Protests in Egypt broke out in earnest during the Day of Anger on 25 January 2011, with President Mubarak resigning on 11 February 2011⁷³³.

Both of these resignations had occurred within a month of the protests, and without the need for intervention by outside forces. It would therefore seem that France was keen to monitor how the Libyan regime would react to protests before issuing a declaration on it, and beginning to consider the need for air strikes.

It is for this reason that both the statements on 21 February 2011⁷³⁴ and 23 February 2011⁷³⁵ did not commit France to any specific action. The statement on 21 February 2011 only contained a general call for a more peaceful response to the protests⁷³⁶. The Statement on 23 February went further, once again calling for an end to the violence, but also arguing that “the international community cannot stand by in the face of these massive human rights violations”⁷³⁷. He advanced, asking his Foreign and European

⁷³² Angelique Chrisafis and Ian Black, ‘Zine al-Abadine Ben Ali forced to flee Tunisia as protesters claim victory’, *The Guardian*, 15 January 2011 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/jan/14/tunisian-president-flees-country-protests> [accessed 07/03/2019]

⁷³³ ‘Hosni Mubarak resigns as president’, *Al Jazeera* 11 February 2011 <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/02/201121125158705862.html> [accessed 07/03/2019]

⁷³⁴ Communiqué issued by Nicolas Sarkozy, President of the Republic regarding the Situation in Libya 21 February 2011 <https://uk.ambafrance.org/President-Sarkozy-calls-for-18667> [accessed 02/03/2019]

⁷³⁵ Statement issued by President Sarkozy at the Council of Ministers meeting Paris, 23 February 2011 <https://franceintheus.org/spin.php?article2176> [accessed 30/09/2017]

⁷³⁶ Communiqué issued by Nicolas Sarkozy, President of the Republic regarding the Situation in Libya 21 February 2011 <https://uk.ambafrance.org/President-Sarkozy-calls-for-18667> [accessed 02/03/2019]

⁷³⁷ Statement issued by President Sarkozy at the Council of Ministers meeting Paris, 23 February 2011 <https://franceintheus.org/spin.php?article2176> [accessed 30/09/2017]

Affairs Minister (at this point still Michèle Alliot-Marie) to propose sanctions against Libya which related to, inter alia, “the possibility of bringing them to justice, prohibiting access to EU territory and monitoring financial transactions”⁷³⁸.

Similar attitudes had emerged with other member states of the Security Council, leading to the passage of Resolution 1970 in the UN on 26 February 2011⁷³⁹. This resolution was adopted with unanimous consent by all members of the Security Council, and sought to levy a number of different sanctions against the Libyan government. The Resolution opened with a demand for there to be a cessation to the violence, and for steps to be taken to “fulfil the legitimate demands of the population”⁷⁴⁰. It moved on to the Security Council urging the Libyan authorities to respect human rights and international humanitarian laws, as well as allowing international human rights monitors to enter the country; ensuring the safety of all foreign nationals and their assets, as well as facilitating their safe passage from Libya if they so wish; ensuring the safe passage of humanitarian and medical supplies, and humanitarian agencies and workers, into the country; and lifting the restrictions on all forms of media in the country⁷⁴¹. In addition to this, the resolution also referred the situation to the International Criminal Court for an investigation into potential international crimes⁷⁴².

This Resolution also implemented an arms embargo to prevent any trade being conducted with the regime, in addition to a travel ban and asset freeze on Colonel Gaddafi and his family members. This marked the first step in what would be a careful escalation of measures seeking to pressure Gaddafi into ceasing hostilities. Following the adoption of this Resolution, Gérard Araud (Permanent Representative for France in the UN) stated that the decision by the Security Council:

recalls the responsibility of each State to protect its own population and of the international community to intervene when States fail in their duty. We hope that the responsible parties of the Libyan regime will hear the message of the international

⁷³⁸ Ibid.

⁷³⁹ Resolution 1970 (2011) Adopted by the Security Council at its 6491st meeting, 26 February 2011 [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1970\(2011\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1970(2011)) [accessed 30/09/2017]

⁷⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁷⁴¹ Ibid. p.2

⁷⁴² Ibid. pp. 2-3

community and put an end to the unacceptable violence committed against their own people, who have the right to democracy, freedom and justice.⁷⁴³

Here, the topos of humanitarianism is employed, describing the legitimacy of the protestors' cause in seeking to have "democracy, freedom and justice". This also explains that the Libyan authorities should have done all that they could in order to end the "unacceptable violence", something which was made all the more unreasonable due to the apparent reasonableness of the opposition's demands. However, this statement also started the process of making the justifications for action under the Responsibility to Protect framework.

As explained in Chapter 1.3, the Responsibility to Protect norm was established following a report in 2001, making the argument that whilst the primary responsibility for the protection of people rested with the state itself, a residual responsibility also rested upon the international community as a whole, if the individual state in question failed to live up to its responsibilities⁷⁴⁴.

In the implementation of this idea, the UN advocated a three-stage system. The first stage concerned the primary responsibility of the state itself to not commit, or allow to be committed, atrocities within its own territory. Secondly, other states and the international community (i.e. intergovernmental organisations) had a responsibility to assist states in enacting this primary responsibility, if they were willing to accept this outside help. Finally, step three indicated that if this primary responsibility was not being honoured, and the state, either through action or inaction was failing to protect its own people, then other states would be permitted to step in and use means provided by the UN Charter⁷⁴⁵.

The first sentence in the aforementioned Araud quote specifically invoked this point in describing how the responsibility fell with the state to protect its own people, and that if it ceased doing this, it was the role of the international community to do so instead. However, it should be understood that this was not necessarily a precursor to military intervention, as the quote again offered an opportunity for the Libyan Regime

⁷⁴³ Statement by Mr. Gérard Araud, Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations 26 February 2011 <https://onu.delegfrance.org/26-February-2011-Security-Council> [accessed 07/03/2019]

⁷⁴⁴ Secretary General Presents his Annual Report to General Assembly SG/SM7136 20 September 1999 <http://www.un.org/press/en/1999/19990920.sgsm7136.html> [accessed 27/09/2017]

⁷⁴⁵ Ibid.

to prevent further international intervention by ceasing hostilities and succumbing to the rebel's demands.

Alain Juppé was keen to articulate that all options remained on the table in his interview with TF1 on 1 March⁷⁴⁶. Firstly, he was keen to emphasise his hesitation at utilising military intervention. He argued that “when you’ve embarked on a military operation, you’ve then got to plan for its consequences”. Instead he emphasised the diplomatic avenues and international embargoes implemented, stating that “we’re trying to increase pressure to bring down Gaddafi”⁷⁴⁷.

When pressed on French military intervention, Juppé deflected, reiterating that all options were on the table. When the interviewer suggested that the United States were potentially gearing up to intervene following its decision to send ships to the region and asked Juppé whether France would follow suit, Juppé stated that the decision to intervene ultimately rested on the existence of a mandate provided by the UN Security Council. However, when asked whether France would veto military action, he stated “I didn’t say that. We must discuss it and see, also, how the situation is going to develop... we must see how the situation develops. Depending on that, we’ll adapt. No option is definitively ruled out, particularly the idea of imposing a no-fly zone”⁷⁴⁸. When pushed further on whether France was in favour of the no-fly zone option, Juppé responded “We’re in favour of it being studied, of course”⁷⁴⁹.

This attitude continued to be present for Juppé, when during a joint press conference with William Hague, he stated that “We also agree about thinking and even acting to plan a no-fly zone over Libya, if the threat Gaddafi is making to use force against the Libyan people materializes in the coming days”⁷⁵⁰. When asked again whether he felt that there would be military action in Libya, Juppé stated that “given the threats being

⁷⁴⁶ Interview between Alain Juppé, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, and TF1 (excerpts) 1 March 2011 <https://uk.ambafrance.org/Alain-Juppe-discusses-Libya-crisis> [accessed 07/03/2019]

⁷⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁵⁰ Statements by Alain Juppé, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, at a Joint Press Conference with William Hague, First Secretary of State, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland 3 March 2011 <https://uk.ambafrance.org/Alain-Juppe-s-statements-in-Paris> [accessed 07/03/2019]

brandished by Colonel Gaddafi, we have to get ready to act and this is why we've given our agreement to planning for a no-fly zone above Libya"⁷⁵¹.

Here, Juppé also specifically name drops the idea of Responsibility to Protect in response to the offer by Hugo Chavez to act as mediator to diffuse the crisis:

I remind you that, a few years ago, the United Nations adopted a new concept, namely the responsibility to protect: governments must protect populations against war crimes, and when they don't do it the international community has grounds to take their place. That's where we are today, so obviously no mediation aimed at enabling Colonel Gaddafi to remain in power is welcome.⁷⁵²

Juppé here was specifying France's line of arguments moving forward: that if the attacks against the general populace continued, then the international community would need to intervene. This is reflected throughout every further statement by representatives of the Sarkozy administration.

Juppé further accentuated France's position in responding to a query posed by an Assembly Member on 6 March 2011. He confirmed that, provided the existence of a UN mandate, France would be "prepared to intervene, with others, to protect the people by blocking Gaddafi from using his aircraft"⁷⁵³. He also signalled a move towards more aggressively pursuing this as a policy option, saying that "That's what we're working on. At the European Council on Friday, which will be devoted exclusively to the situation in Libya and south of the Mediterranean, France will make strong proposals"⁷⁵⁴.

These proposals were continuing to be explored during a meeting with the EU, as explained by Sarkozy. He reiterated France and the rest of the European community's desire for a diplomatic solution to the Libyan crisis. He also acknowledged reservations regarding the implementation of a no-fly zone over Libya, and

⁷⁵¹ Ibid.

⁷⁵² Ibid.

⁷⁵³ Reply given by Alain Juppé, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, to a question in the National Assembly 6 March 2011 <https://uk.ambafrance.org/Alain-Juppe-on-international> [accessed 07/03/2019]

⁷⁵⁴ Ibid.

specifically putting into practice a no-fly zone over a territory approximately three times larger than France.⁷⁵⁵

Unlike previous statements, Sarkozy was keen to explain in greater detail what France would not be doing, stating that “France’s position has never been an option involving ground troops, nor a military option involving NATO, and France has always had reservations about the no-fly zone, even if it hasn’t decided to rule that option out”⁷⁵⁶.

His preferred option instead, was for there to be “strictly defensive operations aimed at a few military targets, in the event of defenceless civilian populations being massacred in a large-scale military action against them”⁷⁵⁷. This, of course, had the advantage of being a much easier objective to achieve, as targets would have already been established, and France would not have had to continually monitor, as he had already explained, a massive land mass.

However, there were key elements which France had required before military intervention would be allowed: in the case that diplomatic options failed, and where the Libyan air force were launching air strikes against defenceless protestors, they would require “a clear judicial basis – [following] a decision by the United Nations...”⁷⁵⁸.

There are political reasons for France’s requirement for authorisation from the United Nations (as discussed in section 5.3). However, there are also legal ramifications to this; as explained in Chapter 2.4, the Responsibility to Protect was only a relatively newly-established norm, and did not create new rights for nations to step in to protect the populations of other nations. Therefore, the UN’s legal framework would still have

⁷⁵⁵ Press Conference with Nicolas Sarkozy, President of the Republic, concerning the European Union’s position regarding the political and humanitarian situation in Libya, in Brussels, 11 March 2011 <http://discours.vie-publique.fr/notices/117000613.html> [accessed 03/03/2019]

⁷⁵⁶ Ibid. Translated from “la position de la France n'a jamais été d'une option militaire au sol, d'une option militaire de l'OTAN, et a toujours été réservée sur la no-fly-zone, même si nous n'avons pas décidé de fermer cette option”.

⁷⁵⁷ Press Conference with Nicolas Sarkozy, President of the Republic, concerning the European Union’s position regarding the political and humanitarian situation in Libya, in Brussels, (Excepts – English Translation) 11 March 2011 <https://uk.ambafrance.org/President-Sarkozy-s-press,18755> [accessed 07/03/2019]

⁷⁵⁸ Ibid.

needed to be used to justify any intervention, i.e. a Resolution authorising the use of force.

It is clear that the points raised above by Sarkozy became specific talking points for the administration, because we find them repeated by Alain Juppé in his hearing before the National Assembly Foreign Affairs Committee four days later⁷⁵⁹, in which he reiterated that France was not supportive of the idea of implementing a no-fly zone. He found that “even though certain members are hostile to it; for our part, we consider it obsolete”⁷⁶⁰. Indeed, he explained again that upholding a no-fly zone over such a vast country would be difficult to maintain, and that France’s preference would be, “on the basis of a UN Security Council resolution, targeted strikes on military positions, because it’s air bombardments that enabled Colonel Gaddafi to upset the power balance with the rebel movement”⁷⁶¹.

However, despite France’s hesitation regarding the effectiveness of a no-fly zone, France went on to propose its inclusion, amongst other things, in the draft Resolution placed before the UN on 17 March 2011. In his Security Council statement, he summarised the Arab Spring up until that point, drawing distinctions between what had occurred in Tunisia, Egypt and Morocco, with Libya, where “the will of the people has been crushed by the murderous repression led by Colonel Al-Qadhafi’s regime against his own people”⁷⁶². He then described the attacks against civilians, and its effect in driving the UN to pass, unanimously, Resolution 1970. However, Juppé lamented that “these measures have not been sufficient. Throughout the country, violence against the civilian population has only increased”⁷⁶³.

Indeed, the conflict between the Gaddafi regime and the rebels had escalated into a civil war the month proceeding the Day of Rage. As the fighting became more intense, the regime had begun to attack both military and civilian targets indiscriminately. Initially, it had started with soldiers firing on protesters in Benghazi, killing more than

⁷⁵⁹ Hearing of Alain Juppé, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, before the National Assembly Foreign Affairs Committee (excerpts), Paris 15 March 2011 <https://franceintheus.org/spip.php?article2244> [accessed 08/03/2019]

⁷⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁷⁶¹ Ibid.

⁷⁶² Statement by Mr Alain Juppé, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs to the UN Security Council (UN Translation) 17 March 2011 <https://onu.delegfrance.org/17-March-2011-Security-Council> [accessed 08/03/2019]

⁷⁶³ Ibid.

a hundred participants⁷⁶⁴; it was then reported to be occurring across the country, with Libya's own Deputy Ambassador to the UN, Ibrahim Omar Al Dabashi, stating that "The regime is killing whoever gets out to the street. He [Gaddafi] has his mercenaries everywhere on the streets and whenever any demonstrator appears they just kill them"⁷⁶⁵. It also became apparent that the assault against civilians was becoming more concerted, with warplanes being used to implement what one resident of Tripoli described as "a policy of scorched earth"⁷⁶⁶.

As more defections occurred and the rebel forces became stronger, so too did Gaddafi's resolve to survive. The breaking point, which drove the international community to intervene, was the precursor to the Second Battle of Benghazi. Gaddafi's loyalist forces had steadily been marching eastward towards Benghazi, having driven rebels from Brega on 15 March, and capturing Ajdabiya on 17 March. The ultimate goal of this offensive was, undeniably, the capture of Benghazi. As has been mentioned previously, Benghazi had become symbolic of the uprising, and was also coincidentally the headquarters to the Libyan National Transitional Council; not to forget, it was also still home to a large number of civilians. It was therefore feared that Gaddafi would target all indiscriminately in his advance into the city.

Gaddafi did little to dissuade the international community that this was not his objective. On 17 March, Gaddafi sent the warning to the residents of Benghazi that "We are coming tonight... You will come out from inside. Prepare yourselves from tonight. We will find you in your closets"⁷⁶⁷. However, following news of the upcoming UN vote on a potential no-fly zone, Gaddafi was also quick to fire warnings

⁷⁶⁴ Jo Adetunji, Peter Beaumont and Martin Chulov, 'Libya protests: More than 100 killed as army fires on unarmed demonstrators', *The Guardian* 20 February 2011

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/feb/20/libya-protests-benghazi-muammar-gaddafi> [accessed 08/03/2019]

⁷⁶⁵ 'Libya in Crisis – Monday 21 February', *The Guardian*, 21 February 2011

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/blog/2011/feb/21/libya-uprising-middle-east-protests> [accessed 08/03/2019]

⁷⁶⁶ Richard Spencer, 'Libya: Muammar Gaddafi fires on his own people', *The Telegraph*, 21 February 2011 <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/libya/8339347/Libya-Muammar-Gaddafi-fires-on-his-own-people.html> [accessed 08/03/2019]

⁷⁶⁷ David D. Kirkpatrick and Kareen Fahim, 'Quaddafi Warns of Assault on Benghazi as UN vote nears', *The New York Times*, 17 March 2011 <https://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/18/world/africa/18libya.html> [accessed 08/03/2019]

at the international community more widely, threatening military and civilian targets in the region:

Any foreign military act against Libya will expose all air and maritime traffic in the Mediterranean Sea to danger and civilian and military facilities will become targets of Libya's counter-attack... The Mediterranean basin will face danger not just in the short-term, but also in the long-term.⁷⁶⁸

This belligerent attitude on the part of Gaddafi, as well as his actions up until this point, served to justify the international community's decision to act. Therefore, the draft resolution sought to first implement the no-fly zone; however, as has been stated above, this was not France's preferred option. Juppé therefore left it to "the members of the Arab League and those Member States that so wish to take the measures necessary to implement its provisions"⁷⁶⁹. However, aspects of the Resolution were suitably vague for the purposes of France, whereby the Resolution also "authorizes these same States to take all measures necessary, over and above the no-fly zone, to protect civilians and territories, including Benghazi, which are under the threat of attack by Colonel Al-Qadhafi's forces"⁷⁷⁰.

Juppé finalised his statement with a call to action:

We do not have much time left. It is a matter of days, perhaps even hours. Every hour and day that goes by means a further clampdown and repression for the freedom-loving civilian population, in particular the people of Benghazi. Every hour and day that goes by increases the burden of responsibility on our shoulders.

If we are careful not to act too late, the Security Council will have the distinction of having ensured that in Libya law prevails over force, democracy over dictatorship and freedom over oppression.⁷⁷¹

Here, he relied on all of the *topos* mentioned in section 5.1 above, depending on the idea of solidarity between the member states of the United Nations Security Council (all of whom, bar China, were democracies) and the "freedom-loving civilian

⁷⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁶⁹ Statement by Mr Alain Juppé, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs to the UN Security Council (UN Translation) 17 March 2011 <https://onu.delegfrance.org/17-March-2011-Security-Council> [accessed 08/03/2019]

⁷⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷⁷¹ Ibid.

population”. He called upon the topos of threat when describing how “every hour and day that goes by means a further clampdown and repression”, and also triggering the topos of responsibility, by stating that “every hour and day that goes by increases the burden of responsibility on our shoulders... if we are careful not to act too late, the Security Council will have the distinction of having ensured that in Libya law prevails over force...”⁷⁷².

However, these topoi provide the justification for military interventions under the Responsibility to Protect norm. As stated above, much of the discourse being generated by the French administration was based along the lines of the Libyan government attacking its own population, and that it was the responsibility of France and the international community to seek to protect this population.

However, the Responsibility to Protect Doctrine also suggested rules surrounding the application of military force. As was described in Chapter 1.3, the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty produced guidance on when military intervention under this norm may be appropriate⁷⁷³.

Firstly, they proposed that the intervention must have the “right intention”, that of seeking to halt or avert human suffering. According to the Commission, this “is better assured with multilateral operations, clearly supported by regional opinion and the victims concerned”⁷⁷⁴. This is discussed in greater detail in the next section; however, it is key to point out at the moment that statements provided by both Sarkozy and Juppé were keen to emphasize that the Libyan people were the drivers of the process, and that any intervention would require regional support. Indeed, as seen above, the implementation of the no-fly zone was to be delegated to members of the Arab League.

Secondly, the intervention needed to be considered the last resort, after every non-military option had been explored, and that there were reasonable grounds to believe that any “lesser measure” would not have succeeded⁷⁷⁵. With every speech, diplomatic

⁷⁷² Ibid.

⁷⁷³ ‘Report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty’ *International Development Research Centre Ottawa* 10 2001
<http://responsibilitytoprotect.org/ICISS%20Report.pdf> [accessed 27/09/2017] p. XII

⁷⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁷⁵ Ibid.

options are always emphasized over any other option, with the idea that only after these options were no longer viable, would France seek a multilateral intervention.

Thirdly, it was advised that proportional means were to be utilized, meaning that the minimum level of force would be used to secure the objective. It was important, therefore, that for this to be effective, the objective must be very clearly defined. Here, the objective was articulated as being the protection of civilian life, and not regime change (though this was the inevitable outcome of the intervention as enacted). In fact, the no-fly zone, the pre-emptive strikes against airfields and pro-regime armoured units articulated as defensive measures, were all evaluated to be proportional. This benefitted the rebel forces in their fight against the pro-regime forces, however the principle of double effect was employed to argue that this was just a side effect.

Finally, there had to be a reasonable prospect that the action taken would have resulted in the desired effect: protection of civilians. Since most civilians were situated in urban areas, and this was where Gaddafi's indiscriminate attacks were occurring, it was argued that preventing the use of Gaddafi's more destructive tools in his arsenal would sufficiently protect civilians. This argument also stated "the consequences of action must not likely be worse than the consequences of inaction"⁷⁷⁶. Much of the arguments articulated by Sarkozy and Juppé claimed that inaction would lead to catastrophe.

Resolution 1973 was passed on the very same day, with ten votes for, and five abstentions (Brazil, China, Germany, India, and Russian Federation)⁷⁷⁷. Following Gaddafi's continued advance on Benghazi and other cities, France launched Operation Harmattan on 19 March 2011⁷⁷⁸. French, British and American forces were involved in the larger airstrikes, however French fighter jets were the first to strike, destroying four tanks at 4:45pm (local time)⁷⁷⁹.

⁷⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷⁷ 'Security Council Approves 'No-Fly Zone Authorizing 'All Necessary Measures' to Protect Civilians, by Vote of 10 in Favour with 5 abstentions' *United Nations Security Council* 17 March 2011 <https://www.un.org/press/en/2011/sc10200.doc.htm> [accessed 08/03/2019]

⁷⁷⁸ 'L'opération Hamattan' Ministère des Armées, *DICOD*, 27 September 2011 <https://www.defense.gouv.fr/actualites/operations/l-operation-harmattan> [accessed 08/03/2019]

⁷⁷⁹ Colin Freeman and Sean Rayment, 'Libya: British forces fire missiles at Gaddafi', *The Telegraph*, 19 March 2011 <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/libya/8393128/Libya-British-forces-fire-missiles-at-Gaddafi.html> [accessed 08/03/2019]

Sarkozy spoke this same day at the Paris Summit for the Support of the Libyan People regarding the intervention. Despite having already obtained the authorisation of the UN, he strove to again reiterate the key arguments justifying the intervention, drawing particular attention to the fact that France was still demanding that Colonel Gaddafi call a ceasefire, and announce the “withdrawal of the forces that have attacked civilian populations in recent weeks” to avoid military intervention. This ensures that Gaddafi had one final opportunity to prevent such action, which fulfils the last resort element of R2P. Instead however, “Colonel Gaddafi has completely disregarded this warning. Over the past few hours his forces have intensified their deadly offensives”⁷⁸⁰.

He highlighted the multilateral nature of the operation, stressing that “The future of Libya belongs to the Libyans. We do not want to make decisions for them. Their fight for freedom is theirs. If we intervene *alongside* [emphasis added] Arab countries, it is not to impose a final outcome on the Libyan people but in the name of universal conscience, which cannot tolerate such crimes”⁷⁸¹. This helped to serve the purpose of accentuating the fact that he had obtained regional support in working “alongside” Arab countries. It also addressed the potential post-colonial optics of the intervention. This is also reiterated in his conclusion, where he stated that “Everyone must now shoulder their responsibilities. It is a grave decision that we have had to take. Alongside her Arab, European and North American partners, France is determined to assume her role in history”⁷⁸², thereby portraying that the operation was proceeding with the right intention.

Sarkozy was also keen to reiterate that even at this late stage, there could still have been a diplomatic solution available: “There is still time for Colonel Gaddafi to avoid the worst by meeting all the international community’s demands, immediately and without reservations. The door of diplomacy will be re-opened once the attacks cease”⁷⁸³. This further cemented the idea that the intervention was reasonable and proportional.

⁷⁸⁰ Paris Summit for the Support of the Libyan People – Statement by Nicolas Sarkozy, President of the Republic. Paris, 19 March 2011 <https://franceintheus.org/spip.php?article2241> [accessed 30/09/2017]

⁷⁸¹ Ibid.

⁷⁸² Ibid.

⁷⁸³ Ibid.

Furthermore, Sarkozy suggested that the intervention was already having positive results, that “Our aircraft are already preventing air attacks on the city. Other French aircraft stand ready to intervene against any armoured vehicles that threaten unarmed civilians”⁷⁸⁴, therefore already achieving its primary goal of helping protect civilians from Gaddafi’s pro-regime military advances.

This success was accentuated during the Prime Minister’s statement before the National Assembly, stating that: “the aim of our air force’s action is indeed a total cessation of the violence and of all attacks and atrocities against the Libyan civilian population. And proof of it is that on Sunday, when our fighter planes failed to detect any Libyan units attacking the civilian population, they did not make use of their weapons”⁷⁸⁵.

Fillon was also clear as to the limits of France’s involvement in the conflict, when stating that “By depriving the Gaddafi regime of its military superiority, we want to offer the Libyan people a chance to regain their confidence, define a political strategy and decide their future, because, ladies and gentlemen deputies, it’s not our role to replace them”⁷⁸⁶. Of course, there are also more pragmatic reasons for limiting this, beyond the obvious post-colonial overtones of an intervention involving land forces.

Indeed, the risk of servicemen and women dying, and pictures of coffins with flags draped atop them is minimised when the main part of your force is based in a fighter plane on a ship in the Mediterranean.

It can be seen from the wording of Resolution 1973, that France and other Western nations favoured an ambiguous wording which would allow for a number of different actions. Paragraph 4 of Resolution 1973 (2011) states that it:

Authorizes Member States that have notified the Secretary-General, acting nationally or through regional organizations or arrangements, and acting in cooperation with the Secretary-General, to take all necessary measures, notwithstanding paragraph 9 of resolution 1970 (2011), to protect civilians and civilian populated areas under threat of

⁷⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁸⁵ Intervention by the armed forces to implement UNSCR 1973 – Government statement in the National Assembly – Speeches by François Fillon, Prime Minister; Alain Juppé, Ministre d’Etat, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs; and Gérard Longuet, Minister for Defence and Veterans (excerpts) Paris, March 22, 2011 <https://franceintheus.org/spip.php?article2247>

⁷⁸⁶ Ibid.

attack in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, including Benghazi, while excluding a foreign occupation force of any form on any part of Libyan territory, and requests the Member States concerned to inform the Secretary-General immediately of the measures they take pursuant to the authorization conferred by this paragraph which shall be immediately reported to the Security Council⁷⁸⁷.

This allowed France the capability to intervene as it saw fit; this could include the imposition of the no-fly zone, ‘defensive’ air strikes against Gaddafi’s air bases and armour, or, potentially, a more robust military response, if required. However, Juppé could be confident in that France’s contribution would probably need to be minimal in order to complete the mission, and that it could achieve this without losing any planes. Juppé noted that Libya might have bought around 400 fighter jets over the previous forty years, but probably fewer than twenty were actually operational⁷⁸⁸.

The use of air power could therefore be seen as an effort by France to have as large an impact on the Libyan crisis as possible, whilst also devoting as few resources as possible. In many ways, the ability to obtain a multilateral consensus in relation to the crisis was itself the greatest victory they could have achieved. The next section of this chapter discusses the process by which France sought to, and actually obtained, multilateral cooperation, as well as how this was discussed in their public declarations.

⁷⁸⁷ Paragraph 4, Resolution 1973 (2011)

[http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1973\(2011\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1973(2011)) [accessed 01/10/2017]

⁷⁸⁸ Hearing of Alain Juppé, Ministre d’état, Ministre of Foreign and European Affairs, before the National Assembly Foreign Affairs Committee (excerpts) Paris, March 15, 2011
<https://franceintheus.org/spip.php?article2244> [accessed 02/10/2017]

5.3 Sources of Legitimacy – consent and multi-national support

As has been discussed extensively in Chapter 1, France's foreign policy in the post-Cold War era has consisted of attempting, wherever possible, to obtain multinational support in international interventions. There are a multitude of political and pragmatic reasons for pursuing such a policy; Chapter 1 explains some of these, for example, affording a means for smaller countries to exert a larger influence over international affairs than would otherwise be granted, but for their membership of an organisation such as the UN. Pragmatically, military interventions are expensive endeavours, therefore co-opting the resources of other nations/organisations to work together and achieve a common goal seems sensible.

However, as has also been explained in the previous section, there is a requirement for there to be an international consensus for the Responsibility to Protect Doctrine to be employed. It is for this very reason that the idea of coalition building and gaining consent played a massive part in the justification of airstrikes against Gaddafi's forces. This section therefore examines how this consent agreement was described discursively, paying particular attention to the way in which France played up its own role in establishing and leading said cooperation.

Early into its response to the anti-government protests, France was keen to show the unanimity of its opinion with a number of different multinational organisations and nations. For example, in his address on 23 February, Sarkozy opened with criticisms of the government's actions against Libyan civilians, stating that "France and the French people are following these events with shock and compassion". He then stated that "the UN Security Council and Secretary-General, the League of Arab States, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and almost all States in the world have denounced these unacceptable actions", before stating that "France again calls for an immediate end to the violence in Libya..."⁷⁸⁹.

Here Sarkozy sought to use the number, variety and prestige of each of the organisations mentioned to reinforce the notion that France's approach was indeed correct, since it had near universal support from the international community. In

⁷⁸⁹ Statement issued by President Sarkozy at the Council of Ministers meeting Paris, 23 February 2011 <https://franceintheus.org/spin.php?article2176> [accessed 30/09/2017]

particular, Sarkozy was eager to note that the League of Arab States and the Organization of the Islamic Conference were also against the actions of Gaddafi, these being groups who represent regional interests. One can also see that France centres itself within these sentences. Firstly, he suggested (without explicitly saying) that France has been highly critical of Gaddafi's actions. He then stated that a number of other organisations had also done so, thereby suggesting that they had followed France's leadership in doing so. This was done before referring back to France in stating that they are 'again' calling for an end to the violence, thus suggesting to the listener or reader that some time had passed since the first request, and thereby suggesting that France was the first, or, at least, among the first to do so.

The theme of France seeking to drive international opinion continued into the penultimate paragraph, where he stated that the French Foreign and European Minister went to the European Union to advocate for sanctions against those involved in violence. As was discussed in Chapter 1, France had long seen the EU as one of the potential or preferred receptacles for a unified European Security policy, one which France itself sought to dominate. But also, as was shown in Chapter 4, Gaddafi had built up significant trading relations with a number of European nations, in particular France, the United Kingdom and Italy. Therefore, a European-wide approach would be particularly devastating to the Gaddafi regime. Sarkozy therefore indicated that he was willing to take the first step in considering suspending France's own trading arrangements with Libya⁷⁹⁰.

The next step in the multinational condemnation of the Gaddafi regime came with the passage by the UN Security Council of Resolution 1970. Gérard Araud opened his statement following its passing with that fact that the Resolution passed with unanimous support from all fifteen Security Council members⁷⁹¹. As part of the Resolution, the situation was referred to the High Commissioner for Human Rights as there was evidence that human rights abuses were being carried out, which needed investigating. This, of course, acted once again as a sign that an international response was required in response to the crisis.

⁷⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁷⁹¹ Statement by Mr. Gérard Araud, Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations 26 February 2011 <https://onu.delegfrance.org/26-February-2011-Security-Council> [accessed 07/03/2019]

The statement also served to follow up on Sarkozy's comments on 23 February, that France would pursue trade sanctions against the Libyan Regime. Here, Araud announced that the decision had been taken to place an embargo on arms sales, as well as sanctioning those at the top of the Gaddafi regime for their role in attacks against civilians⁷⁹². France, being the driving force behind developments by the international community, as well as referring to previous statements, became an important tool in the portraying the situation as being resolved under the leadership of France.

Part of the efforts to keep the solution as being a predominately French affair was to resist the involvement of NATO. As was mentioned previously, France during the Fifth Republic had viewed NATO with suspicion, assuming it to be dominated by the United States. France's approach to a military intervention would be to keep it as a Franco-British operation, with support of the US. Early on, when discussing potential military options, Alain Juppé warned that "it's worth thinking long and hard about this, quite simply because I don't know how the Arabs on the street, how Arab people throughout the Mediterranean would react if NATO forces were seen landing on southern Mediterranean soil. Let's think carefully about it; I believe it could be extremely counter-productive"⁷⁹³. This statement played towards the rather controversial legacy the United States' intervention in Iraq had left, with many nations and organisations in the region viewing the United States (even under President Obama) with suspicion. The suggestion that the UN would be the only good faith actor in these circumstances sought to maintain France's influence on the confluence of events.

In the meantime however, Juppé hoped that the internationally-implemented trade embargoes would result in Gaddafi stepping down from power. This, in Juppé's mind, seemed certain, with him stating that "he's going to be brought down. He'll be brought down because he's already very isolated in Tripoli. He's lost control of the greater part of Libyan territory"⁷⁹⁴. This delegitimisation of the regime, followed by France's

⁷⁹² Ibid.

⁷⁹³ Interview between Alain Juppé, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, and TF1 (excerpts) 1 March 2011 <https://uk.ambafrance.org/Alain-Juppe-discusses-Libya-crisis> [accessed 07/03/2019]

⁷⁹⁴ Ibid.

subsequent support for the NTC one week later would be used to establish that there was support for France and its approach in Libya.

In this interview, Juppé pushed his vision of how a different entity could help the situation, that of the Union for the Mediterranean. The Union had been conceptualised as part of the Barcelona Process in 1995, which called for greater cooperation between Europe and the Mediterranean nations, with a particular focus on peace and security in the region. However, it would not come into being until 2008, with President Sarkozy signing on behalf of France (who had co-presidency of the organisation with President Mubarak of Egypt)⁷⁹⁵. Obviously, it had been established under the previous status quo, which Juppé recognised as he calls for a “restructuring” whilst still “remaining open to these governments and people”⁷⁹⁶.

These aforementioned themes were continued by Juppé into his joint statement with William Hague on 3 March 2011, in stating that the two foreign ministers had discussed a relaunching and restructuring of the Union for the Mediterranean, as well as integrating it into the EU’s Neighbourhood Policy, to deal with the new geo-political scenario⁷⁹⁷. The Union for the Mediterranean, of course, represented another organisation that France may have felt that they could go on to dominate.

In this Press Conference, Juppé had slightly conflicting comments regarding the potential role of NATO; he spoke of having general approval for NATO’s planning project for the implementation of a no-fly zone over the country, but was still adamant that the actual decision to intervene would require additional information on the ground, and that in order to do so “we absolutely need the governments of the region and other participants to take part in such an operation”⁷⁹⁸. He also stated that “France, as far as she’s concerned, doesn’t think in the current context that a military intervention of the NATO powers would be well received in the southern

⁷⁹⁵ Joint Declaration of the Paris Summit for the Mediterranean, Paris 13 July 2008 https://ufmsecretariat.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/ufm_paris_declaration1.pdf [Accessed 10/03/2019]

⁷⁹⁶ Interview between Alain Juppé, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, and TF1 (excerpts) 1 March 2011 <https://uk.ambafrance.org/Alain-Juppe-discusses-Libya-crisis> [accessed 07/03/2019]

⁷⁹⁷ Statements by Alain Juppé, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, at a Joint Press Conference with William Hague, First Secretary of State, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland 3 March 2011 <https://uk.ambafrance.org/Alain-Juppe-s-statements-in-Paris> [accessed 07/03/2019]

⁷⁹⁸ Ibid.

Mediterranean. It could be counter-productive”⁷⁹⁹. However, Juppé acknowledged the need for NATO’s involvement by arguing that the circumstances necessitated preparations to act quickly if Gaddafi were to follow through with his threats⁸⁰⁰.

Juppé also repeated his previous statement that France’s position in relation to Gaddafi was that he no longer represented the Libyan people, arguing that he “has discredited himself by using violence against his people... So we’re very clearly demanding that he go”⁸⁰¹. Of course, this pre-empted France’s declaration that it considered the NTC the true representative of Libya. However, it also served to justify any action taken against the Gaddafi regime on behalf of what Paris and the wider international community would come to argue was actually representing the will of the Libyan people.

However, before any military intervention, both the United Kingdom and France were keen to use all diplomatic means first, arguing that “We also envisaged stepping up the pressure that must be exerted on the Gaddafi regime to get him to step down”⁸⁰². Throughout this statement, as one would expect with a joint statement, Juppé referred to “we”. France and the United Kingdom have a long history of defensive co-operation, something which had been strengthened under Sarkozy and Cameron with the Lancaster House Treaties, signed on 2 November 2010⁸⁰³. Whilst the treaty had not come into force by this point, it was a clear indication of the potential partnership between the two nations, one which would be sought to enact the no-fly zone.

Despite the relatively warm words towards NATO when speaking with William Hague, Juppé was far more critical when speaking to a French audience. He reiterated, when speaking responding to a question from an Assembly Member, that when considering the situation: “It’s now a question of stopping the bloody crackdown being

⁷⁹⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰⁰ Ibid.

⁸⁰¹ Ibid.

⁸⁰² Ibid.

⁸⁰³ Treaty between the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the French Republic for Defence and Security Co-operation, London 2 November 2010 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/238153/8174.pdf [accessed 10/03/2019]

pursued by Colonel Gaddafi's regime. France has taken a very clear position: NATO isn't the right organization to do it"⁸⁰⁴.

Instead, Juppé was clear to highlight both the need to gain the support of other nations and organisations, and that it was France's job to drive the case forward. He pointed out that France had done much to contribute positively to the situation:

France was one of the first powers to tell him this so clearly. We then worked at the United Nations and in Brussels to ensure swift and robust sanctions were imposed... We also mobilized major humanitarian aid with our partners: two French convoys have already arrived in Benghazi, and we're taking part in the airlift that is enabling Egyptians to be taken back to their country of origin⁸⁰⁵.

But also, France still had much work to do. Indeed, if they were to intervene to protect civilians, they would need a UN mandate, but this would need to have been done in conjunction with the African Union and Arab League. He admitted that this was "what we're working on. At the European Council on Friday, which will be devoted exclusively to the situation in Libya and south of the Mediterranean, France will make strong proposals"⁸⁰⁶.

In his press conference on 11 March 2011, Nicolas Sarkozy would reiterate once again the points that Juppé had raised in the prior weeks. Sarkozy imagined a hypothetical situation in which a group of protesters were struck by one of Libya's warplanes: what would be France's reaction? Sarkozy reiterated what is needed in order to legitimise military interventions: "a clear judicial basis- a decision by the United Nations – and support regional – regional support are the political authorities like those in Libya [National Transitional Council] and the Arab League, nobody is wishing for it, but it is clear that Europe sends a message, and doesn't want to exclude this option"⁸⁰⁷.

⁸⁰⁴ Reply given by Alain Juppé, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, to a question in the National Assembly 6 March 2011 <https://uk.ambafrance.org/Alain-Juppe-on-international> [accessed 07/03/2019]

⁸⁰⁵ Ibid

⁸⁰⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁰⁷ Conférence de presse de M. Nicolas Sarkozy, Président de la République, notamment sur la position de l'Union européenne face à la situation politique et humanitaire en Libye, à Bruxelles 11 mars 2011 Translated : « En posant des verrous : un besoin démontrable - ce que je vous indiquais : des avions de chasse militaires qui frapperaient une foule de manifestants sans défense -, une claire base juridique - une décision des Nations Unies -, et le soutien régional - le soutien régional, ce sont les

The Sarkozy administration sensed that the protests starting in Tunisia, and spreading across North Africa would continue. At the 11 March 2011 Press conference, Sarkozy stated that:

Now, of course the process isn't complete yet. We, the French, are convinced that this process will gradually, one way or another, impact all the States in the region and that this is only the start of a process whose future direction or ending nobody knows.⁸⁰⁸.

This statement also showed that the Sarkozy administration was acknowledging that this was forming part of a larger movement. This obviously significantly increased the importance of intervention as this could spread across the region, leading to significant issues later. Because the area being affected, North Africa and the Middle East, were closely linked to France's own strategic interests, it was essential for France to involve itself. This, however, was framed also as a European issue. As mentioned in Chapter 2, France had in the post-Cold War period attempted to embed some of its own strategic policy within a wider European framework. It is for this reason that in a later sentence, Sarkozy brought up the spectre of Bosnia, and referred specifically to the "fingers pointed at Europe" for its failure to intervene sooner in the crisis. However, he was confident that the approach taken by the European Council was very strong, whilst still admitting that there were slight differences of opinion within the member states⁸⁰⁹.

France had, it seemed, also successfully managed to convince the EU as a whole to agree to back the National Transitional Council as the current representatives of Libya. The National Liberation Council had begun to coalesce on 24 February 2011⁸¹⁰. However, just a few short weeks later, France had officially recognised this as the

autorités politiques que nous considérons en Libye et la Ligue arabe, personne ne le souhaite, mais il est clair que l'Europe envoie un signal et n'a pas voulu exclure cette option »

⁸⁰⁸ Original: « Alors, bien sûr, le processus n'est pas abouti. Notre conviction à nous, Français, c'est que ce processus impactera petit à petit, d'une manière ou d'une autre, l'ensemble des Etats de la région, qu'on n'est qu'au début d'un processus dont nul ne sait dans quel sens cela va aller et comment cela va se terminer » Translation found at: Situation in Libya and the Mediterranean – Extraordinary European Council – Press conference given by Nicolas Sarkozy, President of the Republic (excerpts) Brussels, 11 March 2011 <https://uk.ambafrance.org/President-Sarkozy-s-press,18755> [accessed 03/03/2019]

⁸⁰⁹ Press Conference with Nicolas Sarkozy, President of the Republic, concerning the European Union's position regarding the political and humanitarian situation in Libya, in Brussels, 11 March 2011 <http://discours.vie-publique.fr/notices/117000613.html> [accessed 03/03/2019]

⁸¹⁰ National Transitional Council website <http://ntclibya.org/>

legitimate government of Libya⁸¹¹. This, at the time, caused much consternation amongst the other European leaders; Baroness Catherine Ashton, the EU's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, stated that "we cannot unilaterally rush into recognising groups"⁸¹². Both the Foreign Ministers of Italy and Spain were unmoved in offering their own opinion, instead saying that they wanted the European Union to make a decision so that they could act with one voice⁸¹³; Franco Frattini stated that "Italy wants a European decision that everyone shares unanimously because that's how we act credibly," whilst Spain's Trinidad Jiménez affirmed that "The possibility of this recognition must be the result of agreement among all of the countries of the European Union"⁸¹⁴.

Yet the following day, when Nicolas Sarkozy took a Press Conference following a meeting with EU members, he was able to announce a number of approaches that the EU had taken. Firstly, that the European Council "unanimously requests that Colonel Gaddafi and his henchmen leave", and had wanted to "clarify that there is no way in which Colonel Gaddafi can be recognised as a representative"⁸¹⁵. This can certainly be seen at the time as evidence that the European community had turned against the Libyan Regime, and Gaddafi particularly. Indeed, the usage of the term "henchman" was a strong indication that Europe now considered Gaddafi and those who worked for him to be criminals, and thereby not a person with whom they should be treating.

Secondly, the Europeans, despite their earlier criticism of Sarkozy, were now content with whom they should be supporting in this conflict: "The European Council has decided... to greet and support the National Transitional Council, based in Benghazi, [and] that it from now on be considered the political representative"⁸¹⁶.

Sarkozy was very clear in his statement that France, or anyone else, were not there to override the will of the people in stating that: "What will they become and evolve in

⁸¹¹ BBC 'Libya: France recognises rebels as government' 10 March 2011
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-12699183> [accessed 01/10/2017]

⁸¹² Ibid.

⁸¹³ Ibid.

⁸¹⁴ Ibid.

⁸¹⁵ Press Conference with Nicolas Sarkozy, President of the Republic, concerning the European Union's position regarding the political and humanitarian situation in Libya, in Brussels, 11 March 2011 <http://discours.vie-publique.fr/notices/117000613.html> [accessed 03/03/2019]

⁸¹⁶ Ibid.

to? That is for the Libyans to decide, not us”⁸¹⁷. This fed both into the idea that France was to try and only play a supporting role in the establishment of a new Libya, and not be the main actor; this would be useful in attempting to justify that its intervention, if required, would be in good faith, and not subject to any challenge nor would it compromise their arguments using the Responsibility to Protect norm.

In many ways, Sarkozy’s statement here could be seen in large part as an attempt to broaden the scope of his Republican arguments. Here, he extended concepts typically associated with France, and the French Republic, to the entire EU. As mentioned above, France sought to drive its own defence policy through the EU, so it would only make sense that it would view the EU, when fulfilling this role, as an extension of itself. “But finally, Europe, it is the great neighbour, we have the Mediterranean in common. The Arab peoples have decided to fight for their liberty and for their democracy. Our duty, is to respond to this aspiration”⁸¹⁸. Once again, the topos of responsibility and of solidarity was utilised to draw Europe into acting. It universalised France’s values to the broader European Union, conceptualising France’s aspirations and European aspirations as one and the same.

The spirit of partnership (led by France) is key in all of the statements made by the Sarkozy regime. This is particularly the case of Alain Juppé who stated, when speaking before the National Assembly, that “We must take this new scenario into account in our approach to the southern Mediterranean region, not in order to teach lessons or export our standards but in order to support our partners in their democratic transition, in a spirit of trust, friendship and openness”⁸¹⁹. It is therefore for this reason that France *ought* to be allowed to intervene, in order to assist the local populace in achieving their aspirations. Years earlier, France had been critical of the US’ intervention in Iraq for invading for its own reasons, without the support of the international community or placing the citizens of that country’s needs first. Therefore, France wanted to

⁸¹⁷ Ibid.

⁸¹⁸ Ibid.

⁸¹⁹ Hearing of Alain Juppé, Minister of State, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, before the National Assembly Foreign Affairs committee (excerpts). Paris, March 15, 2011

(<https://franceintheus.org/spip.php?article2244>)

accentuate that this international intervention was different, in so far as the Libyans were willing them to intervene.

France, however, and the work of Alain Juppé, was key in establishing the international consensus which had begun to emerge. He stated that he “had a lot of trouble securing agreement among the participants in the G8, which, while not being a decision-making body, nevertheless brings together four members of the Security Council”⁸²⁰, placing France in the driving seat of efforts to establish “measures aimed at exerting sufficient pressure on Colonel Gaddafi”⁸²¹.

However, his efforts also reached other organisations, and Juppé was honest regarding the struggles which still faced the French in establishing a common policy moving forward amongst multiple organisations. “The second point of agreement was the necessary involvement of the Arab countries. To enter Libya under the NATO banner would be the best way of turning Arab opinion against us. The Arab League called for a no-fly zone, but our Russian friends pointed out that this declaration was a little ambiguous and accompanied by reservations; as for the African Union, it doesn’t take entirely the same line. President Sarkozy is working to organise a summit between the European Union, the African Union and the Arab League”⁸²². Therefore, compromises would need to have been achieved in order to obtain sufficient consensus for a Resolution in the UN.

As was mentioned in Chapter 5.2, France itself was not particularly supportive of the idea of a no-fly zone, as it opined that it would be of limited use over such a large country; instead preferring a more direct approach involving airstrikes against military targets. Yet, in order to maintain the support of the Arab League, the no-fly zone remained part of the proposed resolution⁸²³. However, this was left to others to “take the actions necessary to implement”, whilst France had also obtained what it truly

⁸²⁰ Ibid.

⁸²¹ Ibid.

⁸²² Hearing of Alain Juppé, Minister of State, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, before the National Assembly Foreign Affairs committee (excerpts). Paris, March 15, 2011 (<https://franceintheus.org/spip.php?article2244>)

⁸²³ Statement by Mr Alain Juppé, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs to the UN Security Council (UN Translation) 17 March 2011 <https://onu.delegfrance.org/17-March-2011-Security-Council> [accessed 08/03/2019]

desired, that which allowed it to take “all measures necessary, over and above the no-fly zone” to inhibit Gaddafi’s ability to attack civilians⁸²⁴.

One of the strengths of the proposal put forward by Juppé was the fact that the “international community has reacted in near unanimity”. However, Juppé centered the efforts of France as being the one to drive forward the resolution text, which combined the requests of all of the disparate groups: “France sought to contribute its utmost to the international momentum by working alongside the United Kingdom, the United States and others to prepare the draft resolution before the Council”⁸²⁵. Here, Juppé effectively subordinated the efforts of the other nations below its own, thereby demonstrating France’s *rang* on the international scene, acting as a leader, as other nations, including the UK and the US in these circumstances, are portrayed as followers.

Following the successful adoption of Resolution 1973, Sarkozy was keen for France to capitalise on its diplomatic success by holding a Summit in Paris for the Libyan People. Those in attendance included, inter alia, Ban Ki Moon for the UN; Herman Von Rumpuy and Catherine Ashton on behalf of the EU; Hillary Clinton of the US; David Cameron for the UK; Angela Merkel for Germany; Amr Moussa for the League of Arab States; Hoshiyar Mahmoud Zebari representing Iraq; Sheikh Abdullah Bin Zayed Al Nahyan for the United Arab Emirates; and Mr Taïeb Fassi-Fihri of Morocco⁸²⁶.

Here, Sarkozy reiterated the fact that there had been a United Nations Security Council decision made, and that it was their responsibility to enforce it. Here, we see who Sarkozy saw as the most important allies at this juncture, when saying that “Yesterday, France, the United Kingdom, the United States and Arab countries issued the following warning to Colonel Gaddafi and the forces he is using”⁸²⁷. However, in light of Gaddafi’s rejection of the demands, Sarkozy was clear that in order to prevent the further deaths of civilians, and “to enable the Libyan people to choose their own

⁸²⁴ Ibid.

⁸²⁵ Ibid

⁸²⁶ Paris Summit for the Support of the Libyan People Communiqué 19 March 2011 www.ambafrance-us.org/spip.php?article2241 [accessed 10/06/2019]

⁸²⁷ Paris Summit for the Support of the Libyan People – Statement by Nicolas Sarkozy, President of the Republic. Paris, 19 March 2011 <https://franceintheus.org/spip.php?article2241> [accessed 30/09/2017]

destiny”, “we [France] are intervening in Libya, under a mandate of the United Nations Security Council, with our partners and in particular our Arab partners”⁸²⁸.

Many of the arguments made by Sarkozy and Juppé were predicated on gaining the support of Arab nations to legitimise their role. France yearned to be seen as standing side-by-side, as evidenced by the closing remarks of the statement, that: “Alongside her Arab, European and North American partners, France is determined to assume her role in history”⁸²⁹. A key theme is therefore displayed, that all parties are equal in this endeavour, but that France is standing in front.

France’s desire to gain support of Arab nations could also be interpreted as a means to address any post-colonial image one could interpret from this form of intervention. The government’s statement at the National Assembly addressed this when it said: “France hopes a new era will begin tomorrow in the Mediterranean region, free of colonialist baggage and outdated attitudes; a new era based on the notions of respect and dignity, in which the fear and rejection of others give way to the sharing of common values. (...)”⁸³⁰.

However, it is a little unclear what was meant by “colonialist baggage and outdated attitudes”. Was it saying, for example, that they hope the postcolonial structures, which had been set up after decolonisation, confer favours to the former colonial masters which needed to be swept away? This would be consistent. One of the constant themes of Alain Juppé’s many speeches was that France needed to dispel the notion of having to back authoritarian regimes to prevent something worse.

In a closing speech at the ‘Arab Spring’ Symposium, Alain Juppé said, “For too long we thought that the authoritarian regimes were the only bastions against extremism in the Arab world. Too long, we have brandished the Islamic threat as a pretext for justifying to an extent turning a blind eye on governments which were flouting

⁸²⁸ Ibid.

⁸²⁹ Ibid.

⁸³⁰ Intervention by the armed forces to implement UNSCR 1973 – Government statement in the National Assembly – Speeches by François Fillon, Prime Minister; Alain Juppé, Ministre d’Etat, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs; and Gérard Longuet, Minister for Defence and Veterans (excerpts) Paris, March 22, 2011 <https://franceintheus.org/spip.php?article2247> [accessed 30/09/2017]

freedom and curbing their country's development"⁸³¹. If this is what they mean, then it could also more broadly be applied to any situation whereby the ancient tendrils of colonialism, such as within the murky system of Françafrique, are still manifest. Perhaps it could be the end of clientelism in Africa. Of course, if this were indeed what was being proposed, there would be a certain irony to Sarkozy achieving it by helping remove Gaddafi from power.

In many ways, this final speech can be seen as something of an attempt by the French executive to celebrate its achievements, and France's exceptionalism. After painting the dire situation in which Libyan civilians found themselves, suddenly they are saved. "What happened?" asks Fillon. "Gaddafi was banking on the international community being powerless. And it must be admitted we nearly descended into an endless cycle of appeals and warnings, whose sole consequence was offended speeches. France refused to accept this fate."⁸³²

Indeed, this statement highlights the diplomatic efforts of Sarkozy and Juppé in gaining international consensus, as well as providing practical assistance in the short term to attempt to alleviate the situation:

From the beginning of the crisis in Libya, France took the initiative of demanding sanctions against the Libyan regime, both at the United Nations and within the European Union; of involving the International Criminal Court...; of sending humanitarian aid on a large scale to Benghazi hospital and the Tunisia-Libya border; and of helping the thousands of refugees fleeing the fighting to go back to their countries of origin, by means of an airlift from Tunisia.⁸³³

Key to this was the fact that "France fought tirelessly in all the international forums to persuade all her Western, Arab and African partners", pointing particularly to the initial Resolution 1970, at the European Council meetings of 11 March and the G8 Foreign Ministers' meeting in Paris⁸³⁴. The statement also argued that essential to the

⁸³¹ "Arab spring" symposium – Closing speech by Alain Juppé, Ministre d'Etat, Minister of Foreign Affairs, to the Arab World Institute 16 April 2011 <https://uk.ambafrance.org/Arab-spring-symposium-Closing> [accessed 30/09/2017]

⁸³² Intervention by the armed forces to implement UNSCR 1973 – Government statement in the National Assembly – Speeches by François Fillon, Prime Minister; Alain Juppé, Ministre d'Etat, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs; and Gérard Longuet, Minister for Defence and Veterans (excerpts) Paris, March 22, 2011 <https://franceintheus.org/spip.php?article2247> [accessed 30/09/2017]

⁸³³ Ibid.

⁸³⁴ Ibid.

success was the Sarkozy and Juppé's declarations to the UN to pass Resolution 1973, and the Conference held on 19 March to decide how to implement the Resolution.

They note that it was France who was the first to launch missions into Libya on 19 March, and that since then they were "deploying more than 20 fighter planes a day, their missions planned in consultation with our allies"⁸³⁵. In the first few days, it was only France flying aircraft into the no-fly zone, whereas the British and Americans were using Tomahawk Cruise missiles fired from ships and submarines from the Mediterranean⁸³⁶. However, Fillon ensured to explain that "the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and the League of Arab States are notified in advance of actions to implement it"⁸³⁷.

The initial aftermath of the French intervention in Libya was seen as a coup, especially considering how France's initial response to the Arab Spring had been received; France had been able to adapt to the situation, and come out of it seemingly as a world leader.

Through its diplomatic efforts, France had been able to secure international consensus on the need to intervene in the Libyan conflict so as to seek to prevent Gaddafi's forces overrunning Benghazi, and potentially killing thousands of civilians.

France had also repaired some of its lost prestige. Inaction in Tunisia had particularly cost France, jeopardising the position that France held for itself as a protector of human rights and fundamental values. However, through its arguments, France was seen to be a global leader again, defending the rights of democratic protestors.

Whilst France would ultimately lose complete control over the mission, eventually having to cede to NATO following pressure from the UK, the US and Turkey⁸³⁸, the

⁸³⁵ Ibid.

⁸³⁶ Chris McGreal, Ian Black, Toby Helm and Kim Willsher 'Allied strikes sweep Libya as west intervenes in conflict' *The Guardian* 20 March 2011 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/mar/19/libya-air-strikes-gaddafi-france> [accessed 11/03/2019]

⁸³⁷ Intervention by the armed forces to implement UNSCR 1973 – Government statement in the National Assembly – Speeches by François Fillon, Prime Minister; Alain Juppé, Ministre d'Etat, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs; and Gérard Longuet, Minister for Defence and Veterans (excerpts) Paris, March 22, 2011 <https://franceintheus.org/spip.php?article2247> [accessed 30/09/2017]

⁸³⁸ Nicholas Watt, 'Setback for Nicolas Sarkozy as NATO wins command of Libyan campaign', *The Guardian*, 24 March 2011 <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/wintour-and-watt/2011/mar/24/libya-nato> [accessed 11/03/2019]

immediate effects on France's *rang* could still be seen months later; upon their arrival in Benghazi in September 2011, Cameron and Sarkozy were both mobbed by crowds eager to see and hear the leaders speak. In the crowds, British and French flags could be seen waving as the leaders were greeted as heroes⁸³⁹. France had been able to effectively re-write its history. Forgotten on the international stage, at least for the briefest moment, was France's support for the Ben Ali regime in Tunisia.

France's success could be put down to a number of things. There certainly was an appetite within the greater international community to respond to the atrocities committed by the Gaddafi regime. However, as shown in the next part, this is not always enough to secure a successful intervention. More so, the entire conflict here was described as a simple expression of democratic will being crushed by a repressive regime. There were no complicating entanglements, other than with the nations pushing for the intervention (France and the United Kingdom).

France was able to secure this intervention whilst exhibiting much of its traditional posturing and rhetoric, relying on tropes of France's *mission* and exceptionalism, in adopting missions to defend human rights and democratic freedom. It articulated these values in a way which was compatible with the arguments it was positing surrounding the need to act in accordance with the Responsibility to Protect norm, being able to convince other nations of the validity and urgency of these arguments.

Despite the international prestige stemming from the intervention, the intervention's impact was insufficient on Sarkozy's domestic audience to save him from electoral defeat in the presidential election. Instead, it would be François Hollande who would assume the Presidency, as well as the responsibility of France's foreign policy. Hollande would have his own opportunity to advocate for a military intervention, and Part III examines the ways in which this played out differently.

⁸³⁹ 'Libya: Cameron and Sarkozy mobbed in Benghazi' *BBC* 15 September 2011 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-14934352> [accessed 11/03/2019]

Part III President Hollande and Intervention in Syria

Sarkozy's intervention in Libya during the Arab Spring, whilst popular with the French people and the wider international community, was not sufficient to earn him the victory in the 2012 election; losing by approximately 1.1 million votes⁸⁴⁰ to the candidate for the Parti Socialiste (PS), François Hollande.

Hollande had been involved in politics since 1980, having first served as an advisor to Jacques Attali and Max Gallo, before conducting several semi-secretive actions at the behest of President Mitterrand (1981-95). Between 1997 and 2008, Hollande was leader of the Parti Socialiste; and his former partner, Ségolène Royal, had acted as Minister for Environment 1992-1993, and stood as a candidate for presidency in 2007 and for leadership in 2011⁸⁴¹. Therefore, Hollande had significant experience operating within French political life.

However, President Hollande's presidency was beset by a number of missteps and gaffes, leading him from one crisis to another. From his election on 15 May 2012, Hollande's popularity steadily declined, resulting in him serving only one term as President of the Republic.

Hollande's electoral campaign had positioned him as an anti-Sarkozy. Upon his arrival, he and the rest of his government took a 30% pay cut⁸⁴², in a bid to differentiate himself from what was perceived as the excesses of the previous regime. Hollande also sought to introduce gender equality within the cabinet, including a 50/50 split between men and women⁸⁴³. However, whilst these acts, in of themselves, can be seen to be relatively laudable, this thesis argues that Hollande's actions were indicative of

⁸⁴⁰ Presidential Elections Results 2012 [https://www.interieur.gouv.fr/Elections/Les-resultats/Presidentielles/elecresult_PR2012/\(path\)/PR2012//FE.html](https://www.interieur.gouv.fr/Elections/Les-resultats/Presidentielles/elecresult_PR2012/(path)/PR2012//FE.html) [accessed 12/03/2019]

⁸⁴¹ C Hamar and A Chemin, *Jospin & Cie. Histoire de la gauche plurielle, 1993-2002* (Paris ; Privé, 2002); C Bartolone *Une élection 'imperdable'* (Paris : L'Archipel, 2007); M-E Malouines and C Meeus, *La Madone et le Culbato* (Paris : Fayard, 2006)

⁸⁴² 'New French govt agrees 30% pay cut for president, ministers', *France 24*, 17 May 2019 <https://www.france24.com/en/20120517-new-french-cabinet-take-30-pay-salary-cut-ayrault-hollande-socialists-government-example> [accessed 17/03/2019]

⁸⁴³ Angélique Chrisafis, 'François Hollande delivers diversity and equality as first cabinet revealed', *The Guardian*, 16 May 2012 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/may/16/francois-hollande-cabinet> [accessed 17/03/2019]

a propensity to be seen to be doing the *right* thing, rather than by actually thinking out policy in terms of what was practical, or what would result in the most optimum outcome.

The opening few weeks of Hollande's presidency, at least in terms of foreign policy, were rather successful. During his presidential campaign, Hollande had made assertions that he wished to renegotiate the Eurozone fiscal policy, attempting to secure additional resources to be pumped into the European economy. The EU had, up until this point, been participating in a policy of austerity, which Hollande had felt should be reversed. In this endeavour, the President found allies in Italy, Greece, and more importantly, the German SPD party. Following the poor showing by the Christian Democratic Union in the North-Rhine Westphalia elections in 2012, and with the national elections fast approaching in 2013, Angela Merkel was keen to encourage a change of emphasis. With the Eurozone seemingly agreeing to a short term change in approach, Hollande went to the United States to advise of France's withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan. Amongst other things discussed in these meetings, President Obama also stated that the United States wished to see a stimulus package in the Eurozone. Of course, what each of these leaders meant by their statements was slightly different. However, from the outside, it appeared that Hollande had been on the right side of history.

John Gaffney argues that Hollande attempted to generate for himself a persona of being 'normal', and that his conduct would be to take a more straight-talking approach to the Presidency and the creation of policy⁸⁴⁴. This persona was crafted to be, as far as possible, anti-Sarkozy. He cultivated this persona early into his presidency, remaining in his adopted home town of Tulle (where he had been Mayor between 2001 and 2008) to deliver his first speech as President⁸⁴⁵. Upon returning from his first presidential trip to the United States, Hollande participated in an interview with FR2 at their studio, rather than summoning interviewers to the Elysée, as had been the practice under Sarkozy (though Hollande would later return to this approach). Gaffney

⁸⁴⁴ John Gaffney, 'France in the Hollande Presidency: The Unhappy Republic' (Palgrave Macmillan; Basingstoke, 2015) pp.69-103

⁸⁴⁵ David Revault d'Allonnes, 'Hollande à Tulle : « Qui la vie est belle ce soir ! », *Le Monde* 6 May 2012 https://www.lemonde.fr/election-presidentielle-2012/article/2012/05/06/hollande-a-tulle-que-la-vie-est-belle-ce-soir_1696738_1471069.html [accessed 20/03/2019]

notes that during this interview he reiterated his ‘normal’ disposition, but also that “he wanted to ‘*Faire Simple*’, i.e. not just *be* normal, but *do* things in a simple, straightforward manner”⁸⁴⁶. However, whilst trying to portray himself as a simple man, he was also clear that France was “*un grand pays*”, which would mean that, as the personal representative of France, Hollande would also attract some of its *grandeur*.

As discussed in Chapter 1, France’s foreign policy during the Fifth Republic has had a particular continuity, with the only fundamental differences being whether its policy was more Gaullist or Atlanticist. Hollande and the PS had been critical of Sarkozy’s decision to finally reintegrate into NATO; however, he would not seek to leave the military command structure. As a whole, the PS’ foreign policy did not seek to differentiate itself much from the UMP position, and foreign policy had not really played a significant part in the 2012 Electoral Campaign.

As has been shown previously, French foreign policy has largely proceeded along a single track, allowing for the President to only apply a certain level of personalisation to it. Hollande’s emergence from relative obscurity meant that the public perception of Hollande’s foreign policy persona was largely unknown. Therefore, he would need to take every opportunity afforded to him to establish his own credentials.

This section of this thesis looks at how Hollande attempted to use the crisis in Syria to stamp his own identity and persona on French foreign policy in such a way as to significantly enhance France’s *rang* amongst the wider international community, and by virtue of this also improve his own standing as President. Firstly, we look into the circumstances leading up to the conflict. This includes both Hollande’s handling of other foreign crises, as well as how the Arab Spring had unfolded up until this point (Chapter 6). Chapter 7 then analyses the ways in which Hollande and his cabinet described the Syrian issue. It examines their behaviours, language, and how the use of particular *topoi* led to a rift between France and the rest of the international community, thereby leaving France ostracised, whilst the United States and Russia created their own solution. Ultimately, this is an examination of how the

⁸⁴⁶ Ibid. p.75

operationalisation of Republican rhetoric can be used ineffectively, not only in preventing the desired outcome, but also in alienating allies.

Chapter 6 - Preamble to intervention.

In understanding Hollande's rhetoric and conduct during the Ghouta crisis, it is first important to understand how Hollande's presidency had developed both in terms of domestic affairs, and events occurring abroad. Events in both of these spheres add important context to help understand why Hollande took the position that he did. Therefore, this chapter firstly discusses in more detail Hollande's domestic progress, and how his promising early start began to become undone, as well as describing how the projected persona of Hollande as a 'normal man' began to crack (6.1). Secondly, we set out the circumstances Hollande had inherited in regards to the Arab Spring, as well as briefly touching upon the intervention in Mali (6.2).

6.1 Hollande, normalcy, and a cracked persona

As has been mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, Hollande attempted to portray himself as a ‘normal’ man, inhabiting the Presidency. This was built, at least in part, to draw himself in contradistinction with Sarkozy. As part of his election campaign, Hollande had argued that he would strip out the cult of personality which had formed around Sarkozy, and instead make ‘the Presidency’ and France itself the focal point. This would also contain a moral element, with Hollande promising a move away from the unscrupulous connections and tabloid exposés which had dominated the Sarkozy era. Indeed, Hollande was keen to remind others of the supposed lack of moral fortitude of Sarkozy, often stooping to basic name calling (such as when he described Sarkozy as a “un sale mec”, a low-life or a bad guy⁸⁴⁷). Therefore, he would be the one to return the Presidency to what it *should* be, separated from drama and excess, and for Hollande, the means for achieving it would be by taking a slower, more deliberate approach to the Presidency.

However, the presidency has always been conceptualised as a bombastic role, with the President acting as the figurehead of the country. It seemed, therefore, that Hollande was advocating that he should take a role which was normally more related to that of the Prime Minister. Would Hollande therefore be able to achieve such a significant change in the profile of the presidency, and would it be desirable?

Despite claims of the avoidance of scandal and drama, the first year of Hollande’s Presidency saw three separate crises which laid bare the fiction of Hollande as being ‘normal’, as well as significantly damaging his political capital domestically. Firstly, there was Valériegate.

Following the aforementioned relative successes of Hollande’s first foreign trips, and with the PS being in control of the National Assembly and the Senate, Hollande looked to be in a relatively strong position. However, what would have initially seemed to have been a relatively innocuous tweet, sent by Hollande’s partner, Valérie

⁸⁴⁷ Mattieu Croissandeau, ‘Presidentielle. Le Nouvel appétit de Hollande’, *Le Parisien* 4 January 2012 <http://www.leparisien.fr/election-presidentielle-2012/candidats/presidentielle-le-nouvel-appetit-de-hollande-04-01-2012-1796102.php> [accessed 27 March 2019]

Trierweiler, placed Hollande and his presidency into the very heart of the type of salacious gossip he had promised to avoid.

The tweet in question involved Trierweiler tweeting her support for the Socialist candidate Olivier Filorni in the La Rochelle constituency. Filorni was a dissident candidate, who was standing against the official candidate, Ségolène Royal. Prior to Hollande's relationship with Trierweiler, he had been in a relationship with Royal from the late nineteen-seventies until 2007, and they shared four children.

It was well known at the time that the relationship between Trierweiler and Royal could be described as frosty. However, it was thought that this was the extent of the ill-will between the two women, until this tweet. What emerged thereafter was the story of an incredibly jealous woman, who sought to defeat Royal (who she considered to be her rival) at every opportunity. This included: lobbying Hollande's team to remove Royal from Hollande's campaign video highlighting socialism's 100-year history; declaring that Hollande was not to touch, speak, appear with, or kiss at a campaign meeting with Royal in Rennes; and when Royal give Hollande a small reconciliatory kiss at a celebratory event concerning Hollande's victory on 6 May, Trierweiler strode up to him and said "kiss me on the mouth"⁸⁴⁸.

However, a number of factors elevated this event from an insignificant, soap opera incident to a more significant challenge to the Hollande Presidency. Firstly, Trierweiler presented herself as independent, and was seen by many as the quiet power behind the throne (supposedly, she was the one to push Hollande towards running for President). Furthermore, she, like Hollande, wanted to carry on and be seen as living a 'normal', professional life, as opposed to some 'potiche', or trophy wife. However, by indulging her more base instincts, she had brought herself, and Hollande by association, into disrepute. Indeed, she had conducted herself in a manner not too dissimilar to Cécilia Albéniz, President Sarkozy's second wife. Also, like Trierweiler, Albéniz too became embroiled in a minor incident at the beginning of Sarkozy's

⁸⁴⁸ John Gaffney, 'Valerigate: a farce that threatens to undermine Hollande', *New Statesman* 22 June 2012 <https://www.newstatesman.com/blogs/politics/2012/06/valerigate-farce-threatens-undermine-hollande> [accessed 02/02/2020]

Presidency, announcing their separation, then divorce, before declaring that she had begun dating her former lover, Richard Attias.

Distancing himself from the style of Sarkozy was a central tenet of Hollande's electoral position. He argued that he would bring about the end of a so-called *OK! Magazine* style presidency. However, within a few short months as leader of the nation, he had done that very thing. In his televisual debates with Sarkozy, he explicitly said that he would bring back decorum and gravitas to the role. Of particular note was the infamous "*Moi Président*" refrain used on 2 May, where Hollande, in response to the question of "what kind of president do you intend to be?", launched into "a three minute tirade" against the Presidency of Sarkozy, and in particular how it had brought the office of the presidency into disrepute⁸⁴⁹. Hollande's outburst at the time had greatly thrown Sarkozy and his team, and had served as a shot in the arm for the Hollande campaign. Yet, here Hollande stood, partaking in the same sort of scandal as had previously stalled Sarkozy's presidency.

This immediately dented Hollande's domestic popularity, and served to dispel the notion of any 'normalcy' within this presidency. The obvious charge of hypocrisy against Hollande, falling victim to the same vice as Sarkozy, was his inability to separate the personal from the professional. Furthermore, criticisms began to emerge over the President's indecisiveness, and particularly his ability to manage crises as they arrived.

Initially, there was the issue of whether Hollande should even involve himself with the Parliamentary elections. Hollande had personally contacted Royal to offer her support, which seemed to have been the inciting incident to Trierweiler. Whilst their personal history, and the fact that as Socialists, their manifestos would naturally complement each other's, Trierweiler's intervention suddenly had commentators asking whether it was appropriate for the President to act in such a "partisan way, particularly as he had said he would not (unlike his predecessor...)"⁸⁵⁰. Obviously, the

⁸⁴⁹ Alexandre Lemarie, "'Moi président...'" La tirade de Hollande qui agace le camp Sarkozy, *Le Monde*, 3 May 2012 https://www.lemonde.fr/election-presidentielle-2012/article/2012/05/03/moi-president-la-tirade-de-hollande-qui-agace-le-camp-sarkozy_1695054_1471069.html [accessed 28/02/2019]

⁸⁵⁰ John Gaffney, 'France in the Hollande Presidency: The Unhappy Republic' (Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke; 2015) p.92

apparent hypocrisy of Hollande claiming to not get involved in the elections, only to U-turn and support his former partner, and then the unsightly public support of Royal's rival led to much public lampooning⁸⁵¹.

The public perception of Trierweiler did not improve in subsequent months; she seemed to be shown again and again as a hypocrite, which would go on to drive public distrust. In spite of her claims that she wanted to exist mostly independent of the Presidency, she would later say that she wanted to be a link between the Presidency and the people. Despite asking for privacy from the media, she constantly sought out to be at the centre of attention, appearing on magazine covers and giving interviews throughout most of early and mid-2012. She would often try to centre herself into a story when going on trips abroad; for example, during a visit to Algeria in January 2013, she told a group of children that she had “fallen in love with the man [Hollande] rather than the President”; this was before returning home for a series of events with children's charities, appearing at fashion shows for Yves Saint Laurent and Dior, and being seen socialising with the Princess of Monaco. In May, she went on a humanitarian trip to Mali, where, as Gaffney notes, she was seen “looking immaculate – perfect ‘brushing, high heels – she was photographed and filmed playing African drums on a mud floor surrounded by poor women with no shoes at all”⁸⁵², before attending the Cannes Film Festival. With the dissonance between Trierweiler's words and deeds, the public became increasingly distrustful of her, eventually leading to a 67% disapproval rate. Her unpopularity also began to bleed into Hollande's popularity, or lack thereof. Beyond Valériegate however, Hollande was to fall into another crisis, the Cahuzac scandal.

The Jérôme Cahuzac affair engulfed the Hollande government in early 2013. It concerned whether or not the Budget Minister Jérôme Cahuzac had a secret overseas bank account, and if he did, whether he should resign. The story had emerged on 4 December 2012 by *Mediapart*, claiming that he had a secret Swiss Bank Account.

⁸⁵¹ Royal would eventually lose her election to Falorni, With Royal only securing 37% of the vote, compared to Falorni's 63%.

⁸⁵² John Gaffney, 'France in the Hollande Presidency: The Unhappy Republic', (Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke; 2015) p.91

Despite initially denying having one, he later admitted to its existence, and resigned on 19 March 2013.

As mentioned above, Hollande defined his presidential campaign on the basis of a moral purity which had been lacking under the previous presidency. However, questions began to emerge as to how much Hollande had known about this when Cahuzac had been hired. Neither answer to this question would show Hollande in a particularly strong light; either he was aware, and was therefore a hypocrite, or he was not aware of this fact, and was therefore incompetent. It seemed more likely that the latter was the case, however Hollande's election strategy to draw comparisons between himself and Mitterrand were now to be used against him. The press eagerly reminded Hollande of this fact, drawing distinction between Hollande's conduct and the authoritative Mitterrand, who would have never allowed one of his own ministers to lie to him. These comparisons which had helped him obtain power were now being used to lampoon him.

Hollande's spring of 2013 did not improve with the release of Carla Bruni-Sarkozy's song *Le Pingouin*. Hollande had been accused of being dismissive of the outgoing presidential couple during his inauguration day, and therefore Bruni-Sarkozy's song concerning a rude and silly penguin was seen to be an allusion to Hollande. As both the derision and revelations began to increase, and just before his trip to Morocco, Hollande decided to make a rushed announcement that Cahuzac's lies were unforgivable, and that measures would be introduced to prevent such conduct in the future.

That the declaration had been made in such a dismissive fashion as he left the country did not go unmentioned by the media, who all brought back the familiar imagery of Hollande as an ostrich sticking his head in the sand. He hurriedly held a short press conference before returning from Morocco, but by now the damage had been done. Indeed, by 8 April 2013, Hollande was promising reforms which included requiring government ministers to declare details of their incomes, assets and tax arrangements. This crisis began to override the basic functioning of the government, impeding on one of the major platforms of Hollande's candidacy, being the rejuvenation of the French economy.

Major pressure came from other political parties. On 3 April 2013, the Finance Minister Pierre Moscovici faced questions in the National Assembly relating to his knowledge of Cahuzac's financial arrangements (Moscovici denied knowledge at the time, though suspicions remained that this was not the case). The opposition UMP argued for a cabinet reshuffle; the National Front argued for a new election; whilst the Left Front and the Greens (who were in coalition with the socialists) argued for a new constitution. Some of these options were broadly supported, with some polls suggesting that 65% of the population wanted Parliament to be dissolved, and others suggesting that 60% wanted at least a reshuffle⁸⁵³. The Hollande government had lost control of events, and the public saw that this was the case.

To try and give a sense of the government attempting to reassert its control, ministers began to release details of their assets. Those with a lesser asset position were the first to declare (though it seemed that they were declaring property value based on when it had been purchased, and not its contemporary value). The ministers seemed to not own cars, preferring to use ministerial cars or bicycles. The main source of wealth seemed to be in the form of property, with there being eight millionaires in the government.

Despite revealing the extent of the ministers' personal fortunes, rumours did not abate. Indeed, rumours emerged that the treasurer of Hollande's 2012 presidential campaign, and personal friend, Jean-Jacques Augier had accounts for tax-avoidance in the Cayman Islands. Laurent Fabius was also included in the rumours too⁸⁵⁴, and with speculation being rife surrounding the entire cabinet, public confidence in the process was low⁸⁵⁵.

Hollande's continuous moralising regarding the supposed excesses of the previous regime, followed by accusations and suspicions regarding his own cabinet, served to build mistrust in Hollande's intentions, and his ability to carry out said intentions. Indeed, one poll showed that 70% thought that politicians spoke too much about

⁸⁵³ Agnes Poirier, 'Hollande fights back in tax evasion scandal', *CNN*, 11 April 2013 <https://edition-m.cnn.com/2013/04/11/opinion/opinion-poirie-french-tax-evasion-scandal/index.html> [accessed 03/04/2019]

⁸⁵⁴ Joseph Bamat, 'French Foreign Minister denies tax evasion rumour', *France 24*, 8 April 2013 <https://www.france24.com/en/20130408-france-foreign-minister-tax-evasion-rumour-fabius-cahuzac-swiss> [accessed 06/04/2019]

⁸⁵⁵ AFP, 'Pour 70% des francais, on parle trop de moralisation politique, pas assez de chômage', *L'Express*, 12 April 2013 https://www.lexpress.fr/actualites/1/societe/pour-70-des-francais-on-parle-trop-moralisation-politique-pas-assez-chomage_1239725.html [accessed 06/04/2019]

morality, and that 55% believed that all politicians were corrupt⁸⁵⁶. This lack of trust could indeed be linked to the 2008 Financial Crisis; France's economy, like many Western nations', had been significantly harmed, and the policies under Sarkozy had not led to the kinds of recovery that the French people thought were reasonable. This was one of the conditions which had led to Hollande's ascension to the Presidency. However, this too had been poorly managed over the first eighteen months of Hollande's time in power.

As aforementioned, Hollande and his government had taken a pay cut to generate the idea that they were taking the French economy seriously, and were not above the French populace. However, despite this opening salvo, change was slow to arrive. Hollande, being the arch-party man, had been able to combine various wings of the Parti Socialiste into his cabinet, blending the 'left' wing of Arnauld Montebourg and Benoît Hamon, with the 'Aubryists' of Pascal Lany and Marylise Lebranchu, and several of his own allies, such as Michel Sapin and Stéphanie Le Foll. However, in having to accommodate a number of different policy positions, measures were slow to be formulated and adopted. Other than a handful of small measures (for example, slightly increasing the minimum wage), few substantial proposals were set forth.

The public perception was that measures to help improve the economy would be slow-arriving due to the need for consultations. Furthermore, fears began to spread that there was no long term plan for the economy: for many in the general populace, there was a sense of growing danger Peugeot-Citroën had announced eight thousand redundancies; unemployment was rising; Air France had also announced five thousand job losses. However, in the face of looming crisis, and entering into the summer period, Hollande decided to do what most French citizens do at this time of year, and go on holiday for three weeks.

Again, Hollande was keen to differentiate himself in style from his predecessor, and decided to do the normal thing. Whilst he took a different tact to Sarkozy in terms of holiday planning, eschewing yachts for a simpler beach holiday in Brégançon, this did not win himself favours with a French populace who was not necessarily looking for a different style of leader, just one who more effectively spoke to their concerns.

⁸⁵⁶ Ibid.

Therefore, when Hollande and Trierweiler returned from holiday, his popularity had already fallen to below 50%.

Over the first twenty-four months of his Presidency, Hollande seemed to introduce very little in terms of new economic policy, instead content to repeal or tweak measures introduced by Sarkozy, or marginally increasing tax. Before Hollande stood the challenge of revitalising the economy. His government had set a target of reducing France's budget deficit to 3% of GDP by the end of 2013, and make up a shortfall in public finances of around €33 billion. Whilst Hollande tried to suggest that the super-rich and businesses would be the ones to face the brunt of his measures in order to meet his targets, Hollande would inevitably have to resort to some form of austerity. Hollande had been critical of the Eurozone's 'one-size-fits-all' approach in relation to its imposition of austerity. The challenge, therefore, was for Hollande to find a balance of achieving his goals without alienating his own constituents.

In the first two years of his Presidency leading up to the Syrian crisis, Hollande was ineffective at implementing any significant economic policies, as well as being unable to keep discipline of message in relation to its economic policy. His inability to command control over the media narrative has already been shown to have been an issue during the Cahuzac affair and the Trierweiler incident; this led to his ever decreasing popularity.

Key to Hollande's electoral success had been winning over a combination of different demographics. Gaffney explains that the Socialists saw themselves as being the party of "teachers and social workers and an army of state employees who made up the inefficient quarter of France's divided workforce"⁸⁵⁷. Hollande's policies seemed, however, to be unpopular with every demographic. As mentioned above, Hollande's plans initially involved raising taxes against the wealthiest in society (for those earning over €1 million). However, the highest constitution court in the land was to reject the constitutionality of the tax charge⁸⁵⁸. Hollande would eventually find another way of introducing the tax by imposing it against the companies who paid individual salaries

⁸⁵⁷ John Gaffney, *France in the Hollande Presidency: The Unhappy Republic* (Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke; 2015) p.83

⁸⁵⁸ 'French 75% income tax struck down by constitutional council', *BBC*, 29 December 2012 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-20864114> [accessed 06/04/2019]

over €1 million⁸⁵⁹. However, beyond this, Hollande offered little to make up the shortfall other than tax increases across the broader society. Due to the government's lack of message discipline, it often offered conflicting advice regarding their intentions. There was also very little in terms of policies which sought to encourage growth; this disquiet led to Hollande's dwindling public support.

As mentioned above, one of the important pillars of Hollande's support was from the public sector. The civil service in France is vast, employing twice as many workers as Germany. However, there was a widespread view that France's public service was inefficient, and in need of reform⁸⁶⁰. However, in losing support within other demographics, Hollande sought not to alienate this group. Instead, he had pledged an increase of sixty thousand teachers, as well as reversing Sarkozy's policy of hiring only one civil servant for every two who retired.

Indeed, Hollande appeared to have no 'big ideas' relating to the problem of the economy, either in relation to how to diminish the deficit, or on how to establish growth. As has previously been mentioned, Hollande's collaborative approach, in seeking to consult various different factions in his party, led many to assume that Hollande had no great strategy. Gaffney notes that in order to step away from the hyper-mediatised Sarkozy who would often be seen on the news, Hollande reverted to a more old-fashioned approach of having a weekly briefing from the government spokesperson Najat Vallaud-Belkacem. However, the President and his team struggled to deal with the new climate of 24-hour news and its constant demands for governmental reaction⁸⁶¹.

Indeed, Hollande's more 'relaxed' approach here was a liability, leading to a government which looked uncoordinated and unresponsive. Gaffney notes that throughout 2012, gaffes became commonplace, as often, there would be a lack of coordination between the messaging of different ministers, or that often Hollande himself would make a proclamation without having consulted anyone else in his

⁸⁵⁹ Associated Press, 'Francois Hollande wants 75% company tax on salaries over 1m euros', *The Guardian*, 28 March 2013 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/mar/28/francois-hollande-tax-salaries> [accessed 06/04/2019]

⁸⁶⁰ Z. Shépard, *Absolument débordée* (Paris: Albin Michel, 2010)

⁸⁶¹ John Gaffney, *France in the Hollande Presidency: The Unhappy Republic* (Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke; 2015) p.83

government⁸⁶²; this was made most clear in its response to social media. The lack of clarity surrounding the new tax measures being brought in in 2012 led to the rise of two movements, the ‘*Pigeons*’ and the ‘*Poussins*’. A group of small businesses began to protest online the potential new measures which were being introduced. Petitions were signed which garnered thousands of signatures. When there was a potential threat of the protests actually occurring in the real world, the government backed down⁸⁶³. The government’s own attempts to use social media were equally flawed. Attempts to secure deals with Airbus and Lion Air, and then later deals for the sale of Rafale fighter jets to India were advertised greatly, only for them to later have to be played down when the sales became less secure.

Another example where Hollande’s speeches to the media came back to haunt him related to the potential closure of Florange blast furnaces in Lorraine. During the campaign trail, he had argued that, were he to be elected President, that they would stay open. Yet, in November 2012, the government announced their closure. Whilst eventually the workers at the furnace were found new jobs, the notion of Hollande being someone who could not keep his promises suddenly became a stick with which his Presidency could be beaten.

Therefore, when we reached the crisis in Syria, Hollande’s presidency was already under serious attack, with his government having already been affected by a number of moderate crises; this had been exacerbated by his administration’s slow reaction, which had left him look weak. Furthermore, his inability to produce significant measures to respond to the French economic slump had meant that Hollande needed something to reinvigorate his Presidency⁸⁶⁴. Furthermore, we have seen how there was a general lack of coordination within Hollande’s cabinet which meant that messaging by different ministries would be confused, or sometimes contradictory.

It was this context, both in terms of the character of Hollande’s administration, and the circumstances in which he found himself, that he sought to address the chemical

⁸⁶² Ibid. P.84

⁸⁶³ D Pingaud, ‘*L’homme sans com*’ (Paris: Seuil, 2013)

⁸⁶⁴ By February 2013, President Hollande’s approval rating had already fallen to 30% - ‘Francois Hollande least popular President for 30 years, says poll’, *The Telegraph*, 28 February 2013 <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/francois-hollande/9900260/Francois-Hollande-is-least-popular-French-president-for-30-years-says-poll.html> [accessed 06/04/2019]

weapons attack in Ghouta. However, before we move in to a detailed analysis of those specific events and the conduct of Hollande within them, we first need to contextualise both the Arab Spring, and Hollande's foreign policy up until that point.

6.2 Foreign Policy under Hollande

When Hollande became President, a number of issues remained unresolved concerning the series of protests and uprisings which had become known as the Arab Spring. Protests continued in Egypt following the slow arrival of elections⁸⁶⁵. In Libya, violence had continued despite the defeat of the Gaddafi regime. The anti-Gaddafi forces had been made up of a variety of different groupings, whose only common goal was the removal of Gaddafi from power. Now, weaponry was freely available, and factional enmity had emerged as the varying militias from different cities sought to achieve advantage in the vacuum generated by the fall of the old regime. Adding to this tension was the emergence of Islamist forces in the East of the country⁸⁶⁶.

Of course, the effects of the Arab Spring went far beyond the countries which had initially participated in the protests. One such example involved the Northern Mali conflict, which also marked the first significant military intervention under the Hollande Presidency. Therefore, the first part of this section examines this conflict, as well as Hollande's reaction to it (6.2.1), before moving on to analyse the situation in Syria before the Chemical Weapons attack in Ghouta (6.2.2).

⁸⁶⁵ Liam Stack, 'Worried Egyptians Jam Tahrir Square, but Unity is elusive', *The New York Times*, 20 April 2012 <https://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/21/world/middleeast/anxious-egyptians-jam-tahrir-square-in-protest.html> [accessed 07/04/2019]

⁸⁶⁶ Nic Robertson, Paul Cruickshank and Jomana Karadsheh, 'Concern grows over jihadist numbers in eastern Libya', *CNN* 15 May 2012 <https://edition.cnn.com/2012/05/15/world/africa/libya-militants/index.html> [accessed 07/04/2019]

6.2.1 Conflict in Mali: Prelude to Hollande's militarism?

The conflict itself has significant historical context, tracing back to Malian independence from France and various Tuareg ethnic groups seeking to gain autonomy in the Northern Region. The causes of this conflict need not be discussed too significantly for the purposes of this thesis, sufficed to say that it came to a head on 16 January 2012 with the first attacks breaking out in Ménaka. On the following day, attacks also occurred in Aguelhok and Tessalit. Fighting continued between the rebels and the government forces, with the rebels capturing Ménaka on 1 February 2012 following a tactical retreat by government forces.

The primary rebel faction at this time was the National Movement for the Liberation of the Azawad (NMLA). What made them such a threat at this time is that their forces had been bolstered by combatants who had previously been fighting for Gaddafi in Libya⁸⁶⁷. Moreover, the power vacuum stemming from the conflict in Libya also allowed arms stockpiles to be raided and exported to other countries, including Syria and Mali⁸⁶⁸. Due to this, and the lack of coordination by the government forces, the Rebel forces were able to get within 135 kilometres of Timbuktu by 14 March 2012⁸⁶⁹.

Continued military defeats and the general mismanagement of the conflict led to significant discontent within the army. On 21 March, the Defence Minister Sadio Gassama arrived to give a speech to his troops. However, his words were insufficient in addressing the grievances of the troops, who instead attacked him. Disruption became rife throughout the army, and some soldiers began to attack government buildings, and the presidential palace in Bamako⁸⁷⁰.

The following morning the army took control of Bamako. Lieutenant Amadou Konare, who was taken to be the spokesperson for a new group, the National Committee for

⁸⁶⁷ 'Ex-Gaddafi Tuareg fighters boost Mali rebels' *BBC* 17 October 2011

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-15334088> [accessed 10/04/2019]

⁸⁶⁸ C J Chivers, 'Looted Libyan Arms in Mali May Have Shifted Conflict's Path', *The New York Times*, 7 February 2013 <https://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/08/world/africa/looted-libyan-arms-in-mali-may-have-shifted-conflicts-path.html> [accessed 10/04/2019]

⁸⁶⁹ Reuters, 'Mauritania denies collusion as Mali rebels advance', 14 March 2012, <https://af.reuters.com/article/maliNews/idAFL5E8EE7LD20120314?pageNumber=2&virtualBrandChannel=0> [accessed 11/04/2019]

⁸⁷⁰ News Desk, 'Mali soldiers attack presidential palace in Bamako, raising Coup fears', *PRI*, 22 March 2012 <https://www.pri.org/stories/2012-03-22/mali-soldiers-attack-presidential-palace-bamako-raising-coup-fears> [accessed 11/04/2019]

the Restoration of Democracy and State (NCRDS), went on television to announce that the group had taken power from “the incompetent regime of Amadou Toumani Touré”⁸⁷¹. Later, Captain Amadou Sanogo announced that he, and the grouping he represented, had suspended the constitution and assumed control of the country. Reasons put forward for their actions included Touré’s inability to deal with the Tuareg insurgency, as well as the lack of resources given to the army to contain the insurgency⁸⁷².

The coup was generally condemned by the international community, with criticism coming from the UN Security Council, the African Union, and the Economic Community of Western African States (ECOWAS), with the later organisation threatening to close the borders of surrounding nations and freeze Malian assets if the NCRDS were to not surrender power within seventy-two hours⁸⁷³.

Benefitting from the chaos sown in the capital, the NMLA continued their advance southwards to capture towns which had been abandoned by the governmental forces⁸⁷⁴. On 30 March and 31 March 2012, the rebels captured both Kidal in the Kidal region⁸⁷⁵, and Ansongo and Bourem in the Gao region⁸⁷⁶. Finally, the following day rebels attacked and captured Timbuktu with ease⁸⁷⁷. Content with their progress, the rebels would then declare the northern part of the country as independent on 6 April. This declaration was, of course, rejected by the African Union and the European Union⁸⁷⁸.

⁸⁷¹ ‘Renegade Mali soldiers say seize power, depose Toure’, *Reuters*, 22 March 2012 <https://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFJJOE82L00620120322> [accessed 17/4/19]

⁸⁷² ‘Renegade Mali soldiers announce takeover’, *BBC*, 22 March 2012 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-17462111> [accessed 17/04/2019]

⁸⁷³ ‘Ecowas gives Mali leaders ultimatum to relinquish power’, *BBC*, 30 March 2012 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-17557926> [accessed 17/04/2019]

⁸⁷⁴ David Lewis, Tiemoko Diallo, ‘Soldiers loot in Mali after coup, AU says president safe’, *Reuters* 23 March 2012 <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mali-army/soldiers-loot-in-mali-after-coup-au-says-president-safe-idUSBRE82L09C20120323?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews> [accessed 24/04/2019]

⁸⁷⁵ ‘Mali coup: Rebels seize desert capital Kidal’ *BBC* 30 March 2012 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-17562066> [accessed 24/04/2019]

⁸⁷⁶ ‘Update 4 – Mali coup leader seeks help as rebels seize towns’ *Reuters* 30 March 2012 <https://af.reuters.com/article/maliNews/idAFL6E8EU3F020120330?pageNumber=2&virtualBrandChannel=0> [accessed 24/04/2019]

⁸⁷⁷ ‘Mali Tuareg rebels enter Timbuktu after troops flee’ *BBC* 1 April 2012 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-17576725> [accessed 24/04/2019]

⁸⁷⁸ ‘Mali Tuareg rebels declare independence in the north’, *BBC*, 6 April 2012 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-17635437> [accessed 24/04/2019]

However, over the next eight months, conflict continued in the north of the country. Divisions began to emerge within the rebel forces, as the NMLA began to fight with the Islamist forces in the north. As early as 5 April, the NMLA was forced to step in to free Algerian hostages who had been captured by Islamist forces in Gao⁸⁷⁹. These divisions continued to deteriorate, leading to violent clashes and Islamist forces capturing the town of Gao. The dominant group in relation to the Islamist forces at the time was the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MOJWA) (though other factions did exist). The MOJWA drove the NMLA out of Gao, before moving on to capture Kidal⁸⁸⁰. The successes continued with Douentza on 1 September 2012⁸⁸¹ and Ménaka on 19 November 2012⁸⁸². They were also able to successfully resist an attempt by NMLA forces to recapture Gao three days earlier⁸⁸³.

It was this rise of Islamist forces which changed the dynamic of the conflict. Firstly, the now displaced NMLA began peace talks with the Malian government, with some parts of the organisation moving away from the arguments of independence for the northern parts of the country. They continued to fight the Islamist forces, eventually recapturing Kidal⁸⁸⁴. However, a much larger development came when both the Malian government and ECOWAS called for foreign military intervention; this resulted in the UN Security Council passing a French Resolution requesting an African-led military force to help fight Islamist forces⁸⁸⁵. Resolution 2071 requested that the Malian government and ECOWAS create a specific plan regarding the kind

⁸⁷⁹ 'Pour libérer les otages algériens: des négociations avec Belmokhtar sont en cours', *El Watan*, 8 April 2012 http://www.elwatan.com/actualite/pour-liberer-les-otages-algeriens-des-negociations-avec-belmokhtar-sont-en-cours-08-04-2012-165949_109.php# [accessed 24/04/2019]

⁸⁸⁰ Zoe Flood, 'Trouble in Timbuktu as Islamists extend control', *The Telegraph*, 29 June 2012 <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/mali/9365390/Trouble-in-Timbuktu-as-Islamists-extend-control.html> [accessed 24/04/2019]

⁸⁸¹ 'Mali Islamists take strategic town of Douentza', *BBC*, 1 September 2012, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-19454080> [accessed 24/04/2019]

⁸⁸² 'Mali: MNLA et Mujao se déchirent pour prendre Ménaka', *RFI*, 20 November 2012, <http://www.rfi.fr/afrique/20121120-mali-mnla-menaka-mujao-aqmi-ansongo-gao> [accessed 24/04/2019]

⁸⁸³ 'New fighting breaks out in Northern Mali', *France 24*, 16 November 2012 <https://www.france24.com/en/20121116-malian-tuaregs-Gao-MNLA-> [accessed 24/04/2019]

⁸⁸⁴ 'French, Malian Troops Retake Timbuktu', *VOA News*, 28 January 2013 <https://www.voanews.com/a/french-forces-seize-control-outside-timbuktu/1592063.html> [accessed 24/04/2019]

⁸⁸⁵ Michelle Nichols, 'U.N. Security Council asks for Mali plan within 45 days', *Reuters*, 12 October 2012 <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mali-crisis-un/u-n-security-council-asks-for-mali-plan-within-45-days-idUSBRE89B17U20121012> [accessed 24/04/2019]

of military intervention required⁸⁸⁶. Following the creation of a suitable plan, Resolution 2085 was passed. The Resolution authorised the deployment of an African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA) of one year⁸⁸⁷.

France played a significant role in the Malian conflict, intervening militarily on 11 January 2013 with Opération Serval⁸⁸⁸. This timely intervention was seemingly sparked by the capture of Konna by Islamist forces the day before, a city which was sixty kilometres from Sévaré military airport, and only six hundred kilometres from the capital city, Bamako⁸⁸⁹.

France's early intervention in the conflict revolved around providing air support to halt the advance of Islamist forces; this included Mirage 2000-D jets operating from Chad which struck twelve targets between 11 and 12 January. The effectiveness of such attacks was difficult to establish at first, but it was claimed that half a dozen armed pick-up trucks and a command centre had been destroyed⁸⁹⁰. During the first two days of its intervention, a French pilot was also killed after his helicopter was downed⁸⁹¹.

Following the Malian assault on the city (backed by French troops), initial reports indicated that the rebels had been driven from Konna. Indeed, Admiral Edouard Guillaud himself indicated that the rebels had been driven northwards following the combined military efforts of the Malians and French⁸⁹². Yet, only a couple of days

⁸⁸⁶ United Nations Security Council Resolution 2071 12 October 2012
[https://undocs.org/S/RES/2071\(2012\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/2071(2012)) [accessed 27/04/2019]

⁸⁸⁷ United Nations Security Council Resolution 2085 20 December 2012
[https://undocs.org/S/RES/2085\(2012\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/2085(2012)) [accessed 24/04/2019]

⁸⁸⁸ 'Hollande: L'OPÉRATION AU Mali "n'a pas d'autre but que la lutte contre le terrorisme", *Le Monde* with AFP, AP, and Reuters, 12 January 2012
https://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2013/01/12/la-france-demande-une-acceleration-de-la-mise-en-place-de-la-force-internationale-au-mali_1816033_3212.html [accessed 27/04/2019]

⁸⁸⁹ John Irish, Bate Felix 'Malian army beats back Islamist rebels with French help', *Reuters*, 11 January 2012 <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mali-rebels/malian-army-beats-back-islamist-rebels-with-french-help-idUSBRE90912Q20130111> [accessed 27/04/2019]

⁸⁹⁰ Henry Samuel, Mike Pflanz and David Blair, 'France launches airstrikes on al-Qaeda in Mali', *The Telegraph*, 11 January 2013
<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/mali/9796618/France-launches-air-strike-on-al-Qaeda-in-Mali.html> [accessed 05/05/2019]

⁸⁹¹ 'French pilot killed in Mali fighting', *DW*, 12 January 2013 <https://www.dw.com/en/french-pilot-killed-in-mali-fighting/a-16517183> [accessed 05/05/2019]

⁸⁹² Nathalie Guibert, 'Mal:- après la mort rapide d'un officier, l'opération militaire s'annonce compliquée', *Le Monde*, 12 January 2012 https://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2013/01/12/mali-apres-la-mort-rapide-d-un-officier-l-operation-militaire-s-annonce-tres-dure_1816237_3212.html [accessed 05/05/2019]

later, this was proven to be inaccurate⁸⁹³. Furthermore, in reaction to the disruption at Konna, the rebels retaliated by capturing the town of Diabaly within a short few hours⁸⁹⁴.

Over this period, various organisations and nations committed to deploy troops to the area. ECOWAS, the UN Security Council and the European Union all began preparations⁸⁹⁵, with the United Kingdom⁸⁹⁶, Canada⁸⁹⁷ and other European nations also advising that it would be sending airplanes for assistance⁸⁹⁸.

However, as January and early February came around, it became increasingly clear that conventional combat favoured the French and Malian government forces, with their superior resources and support. French troops were reported to have been involved in fighting in Diabaly⁸⁹⁹. On 18 January, the Malian army finally recaptured Konna from the rebels⁹⁰⁰, with them also being driven from Diabaly on the same day⁹⁰¹. Other cities began to fall to the northwards-advancing Malian and French armies, the most substantial being that of Timbuktu. The combined forces arrived the city on 27 January 2013; that same day, that army was able to secure the airport, with

⁸⁹³ 'France military says Mali town Konna 'not recaptured', *BBC*, 15 January 2013
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-20907386> [accessed 05/05/2019]

⁸⁹⁴ 'Mali Islamists seize town amid French intervention', *BBC*, 14 January 2013
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-21009368> [accessed 05/05/2019]

⁸⁹⁵ 'France confirms Mali military intervention', *BBC*, 11 January 2013
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-20991719> [accessed 05/05/2019]

⁸⁹⁶ Peter Beaumont, Cass Jones, and Kim Willsher, 'Britain to send aircraft to Mali to assist French fight against rebels', *The Guardian* 13 January 2013
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jan/12/mali-somalia-france-rebels-islamist-francois-hollande> [accessed 05/05/2019]

⁸⁹⁷ 'Canada C17 Joins allied efforts en route to Mali', *CBC*, 15 January 2013
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/canadian-c-17-joins-allied-efforts-en-route-to-mali-1.1305804> [accessed 05/05/2019]

⁸⁹⁸ For example Christian W. 'Air Force cargo plane heading to Mali', *Copenhagen Post Online*, 15 January 2013 <http://cphpost.dk/news/international/air-force-cargo-plane-heading-to-mali.html> [accessed 05/05/2019]

⁸⁹⁹ 'Mali conflict: French 'fighting Islamists in Diabaly', *BBC*, 16 January 2013
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-21038856> [accessed 05/05/2019]

⁹⁰⁰ Le Monde avec AFP, 'L'armée malienne affirme avoir repris le contrôle de Konna' *Le Monde* 18 January 2013 https://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2013/01/18/l-armee-malienne-affirme-avoir-repris-le-controle-de-konna_1818883_3212.html [accessed 05/05/2019]

⁹⁰¹ 'Mali army retakes key towns from rebels', *Al Jazeera*, 18 January 2013
<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2013/01/2013118122039129487.html> [accessed 05/05/2019]

the rest of the city being recaptured the following day⁹⁰². In celebration of this most recent victory, President Hollande visited the city, where he was greeted as a hero⁹⁰³.

Following their defeats, the rebel forces were in complete retreat, falling back to the Adrar des Ifogas region in North-Eastern Mali⁹⁰⁴. The rebels altered their approach to reflect the changes in their circumstances: instead relying on guerrilla tactics. The French forces also adapted their approach, launching Operation Panther on 19 February⁹⁰⁵. Whilst France pursued the militants in the North, suicide bombings and car bombings shook the towns of Gao⁹⁰⁶, Kidal⁹⁰⁷ and Timbuktu⁹⁰⁸.

Despite the attacks on urban areas, the French and Malian forces did continue to score successes in the field. Firstly, Algerian news sources claimed that on 28 February, one of the leaders of al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, Abdelhamid Abou Zeid, had died in fighting with French and Chadian forces⁹⁰⁹ (this was later confirmed by DNA testing on the body⁹¹⁰). Whilst the Islamists had not been completely defeated, much of the fighting had now been stopped. As such, the French looked to hand over some

⁹⁰² 'French-led operation looks north after Timbuktu', *France 24*, 29 January 2013 <https://www.france24.com/en/20130129-french-led-operation-looks-north-after-timbuktu-liberated> [accessed 05/05/2019]

⁹⁰³ David Blair, 'Timbuktu hails France's President Francois Hollande, its saviour in a suit', *The Guardian*, 2 February 2013 <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/mali/9844615/Timbuktu-hails-Frances-President-Francois-Hollande-its-saviour-in-a-suit.html> [accessed 06/05/2019]

⁹⁰⁴ Adam Nossiter and Peter Tinti, 'Mali War Shifts as rebels Hide in High Sahara', *The New York Times* 9 February 2013 <https://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/10/world/africa/new-focus-in-mali-is-finding-militants-who-have-fled-into-mountains.html> [accessed 05/05/2019]

⁹⁰⁵ 'French soldier killed in northern Mali, Hollande says', *France 24*, 19 February 2013 <https://www.france24.com/en/20130219-french-soldier-paratrooper-killed-northern-mali-hollande-ifoghas> [accessed 06/05/2019]

⁹⁰⁶ 'Mali rebels launch guerrilla attack on Gao', *Al Jazeera*, 11 February 2013 <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2013/02/2013210112741105848.html> [accessed 06/05/2019]

⁹⁰⁷ 'Mali car bomb 'targets Tuareg checkpoint' in Kidal', *BBC*, 27 February 2013 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-21595018> [accessed 06/05/2019]

⁹⁰⁸ Scot Sayare, 'Islamist Fighters Slip Back Into Timbuktu and Are Repelled by French and Malians', *The New York Times* 31 March 2013 <https://www.nytimes.com/2013/04/01/world/africa/islamist-fighters-repelled-in-assault-on-timbuktu.html> [accessed 06/05/2019]

⁹⁰⁹ Réduction 'AQMI: L'Emir l'Algérien Abou Zeid aurait été neutralisé par les forces françaises' *Algerie Focus* <https://www.algerie-focus.com/2013/02/aqmi-lemir-lalgerien-abou-zeid-aurait-ete-neutralise-par-les-forces-francaises/?cn-reloaded=1> [accessed 06/05/2019]

⁹¹⁰ 'France confirms death of Islamist commander Abou Zeid', *BBC*, 23 March 2013 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-21912281> [accessed 06/05/2019]

of the responsibility to the UN, under an operation which was termed MINUSMA⁹¹¹. Eventually, the government and the Tuareg signed a peace deal on 18 June 2013⁹¹²⁹¹³.

In the intervention in Mali, Hollande may have thought that he had found an easy win in terms of French policy and public opinion. That is not to say, of course, that this is what drove the conflict; the need to combat Jihadist groups is still an important goal for Western governments within the context of the Global War on Terror. Hollande would have hoped that it may have turned public opinion in his favour, especially when considering that his early inaction and the Cahuzac affair had driven his popularity downwards.

And indeed, Hollande did enjoy a slight bump in approval ratings, with a BVA poll seeing his approval increase from forty per cent to forty-four per cent in January, with the organisation commenting that “his intervention in Mali, largely supported by public opinion, has enabled him to counter an image of a lack of authority that had begun to become a negative stamp for him”⁹¹⁴.

However, this was to be tempered by two other polls. Firstly, that the intervention itself was backed by seventy-five per cent of the French electorate⁹¹⁵ and secondly, seventy-two per cent of French persons polled felt that Hollande had been ineffective in his domestic agenda⁹¹⁶. This illustrates what had been alluded to in the previous part; namely, that foreign policy matters do not have a great impact on the domestic fortunes of presidents. As remarked above, the seemingly successful intervention in Libya (as it seemed at the time) was insufficient to earn Sarkozy another term.

⁹¹¹ United Nations Security Council Meeting Coverage SC/10987 ‘Security Council Established Peacekeeping Force for Mali Effective 1 July, Unanimously Adopting Resolution 2100 (2013) 25 April 2013 <https://www.un.org/press/en/2013/sc10987.doc.htm> [accessed 06/05/2019]

⁹¹² ‘Mali and Tuareg rebels sign peace deal’, *BBC*, 18 June 2013 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-22961519> [accessed 06/05/2019]

⁹¹³ The Peace deal would eventually be broken following clashes between protesters and government forces, however this occurred after the events in Syria, which are the focus of this chapter.

⁹¹⁴ Hugh Carnegie, ‘Mali war casts Hollande in positive light’, *Financial Times*, 29 January 2013 <https://www.ft.com/content/550cc81e-6a05-11e2-a7d2-00144feab49a> [accessed 06/05/2019]

⁹¹⁵ James Hurling, ‘Hollande Mali Intervention Backed by 75% of French, Poll Finds’, *Bloomberg*, 15 January 2013 <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2013-01-15/hollande-mali-intervention-backed-by-75-of-french-poll-finds> [accessed 06/05/2019]

⁹¹⁶ Hugh Carnegie ‘Mali war casts Hollande in positive light’, *Financial Times*, 29 January 2013 <https://www.ft.com/content/550cc81e-6a05-11e2-a7d2-00144feab49a> [accessed 06/05/2019]

Hollande's conduct in Mali had only garnered him a modest bump in his support, as such interventions would always be subservient to his domestic progress.

The public persona Hollande had crafted was one of an ordinary man; as previously mentioned, this was in part due to his desire to differentiate himself from Sarkozy, but also as a recognition that Hollande is, in many ways, an ordinary person. This was something which had not gone unremarked, with a great many column inches being dedicated to Hollande's ordinariness⁹¹⁷.

Hollande's speech in Timbuktu displayed his more casual approach to diplomacy, displaying a level of informality in his approach. It also illustrated his need to try and balance previous declarations. In age old tradition for French presidents, Hollande had previously announced that France would no longer pursue *françafrique*⁹¹⁸. Therefore, Hollande wanted to make clear that France's intentions were pure: "France stands alongside you, not to serve any particular interest – we have none –, to protect this or that faction, or in favour of this or that Malian party... No, we stand alongside you for the sake of the whole of Mali and for West Africa."⁹¹⁹

Hollande tried to be clear that he, and France, had no ulterior motive for intervening. However, when compared with the speeches of Sarkozy, it is noticeable that the tone is quite different. In particular, the tone of the "to protect this or that faction, or in favour of this or that Malian party" segment portrayed an informality of speech, as though to attempt to seem at the same social level as his audience, as opposed to seeming haughty; again, this was a common criticism of Sarkozy. However, in many ways such rhetoric lacked the kind of command which was normally expected of the President of the Republic. This thesis therefore argues that one change found in the rhetoric of Hollande during the Syrian conflict is that it becomes more forceful and aggressive, as he begins to try and mould himself into the more prototypical president. His language becomes more dominated by allusions to French power and strength, as

⁹¹⁷ For example Tony Cross, 'Why is Francois Hollande so boring?', *Rfi*, 19 April 2012 <http://en.rfi.fr/economy/20120419-why-francois-hollande-so-boring> [accessed 06/05/2019]

⁹¹⁸ AFB, 'Hollande: 'Le temps de la Françafrique est révolu'', *Libération*, 12 October 2012 https://www.liberation.fr/planete/2012/10/12/hollande-met-fin-a-la-francafrique_852877 [accessed 06/05/2019]

⁹¹⁹ Speech by M. Francois Hollande, President of the Republic Bamako, 2 February 2013 <https://franceintheus.org/spip.php?article4310> [accessed 06/05/2019]

he attempts to mobilise a more muscular image of the Republic in his attempt to build prestige and affirm France's *rang*.

The next section of this thesis explains the specific case of Syria, describing the events immediately leading up to and during the chemical weapons attack in Ghouta.

6.2.2 The Civil War in Syria

This section provides a brief summary of the protests in Syria which led to the Syrian Civil War, as well as the events which led up to chemical weapons attack in Ghouta, after which there is a discussion of Hollande as a presidential candidate, and his foreign policy experience up to this point.

The Syrian experience of the Arab Spring is probably its most violent manifestation. As of December 2018, the conflict had been raging for around seven years, with more than 560,000 killed in the fighting, with over half a million injured and twelve million Syrians displaced⁹²⁰. However, it started in a very similar fashion to all of the other examples in the Arab Spring, with protests against the underlying economic conditions and the lack of certain freedoms. The state cracked down very harshly; in the southern city of Derra, some teenagers spray painting revolutionary slogans were arrested and tortured. When more protests broke out, they were shot at by security forces⁹²¹. Protesters began arming themselves, some to protect themselves, whilst others sought to drive out government forces.

Groups of protesters, as well as former soldiers, began to group together into brigades who began fighting for territory. By 2012, the fighting had reached Damascus and Aleppo⁹²². What has made this conflict more complicated, and infinitely more damaging, is how the fighting forces are scattered, fighting for different causes. Initially, the main force involved was the Free Syrian Army. However, this rebel group splintered into smaller groups as the conflict continued.

Furthermore, the Assad family come from a Shia Alawite minority sect within Syria. However, due to their position, many Alawites have benefitted, leading to a sense of injustice amongst the Sunni majority. As such, the conflict has taken on a slightly

⁹²⁰ Haaretz and Reuters Timeline, 560,000 Killed in Syria According to Updated Death Toll, *Haaretz*, 10 December 2018 <https://www.haaretz.com/middle-east-news/syria/560-000-killed-in-syria-s-war-according-to-updated-death-toll-1.6700244> [accessed 06/04/2019]

⁹²¹ Middle East Unrest: three killed at protest in Syria, *BBC*, 18 March 2011 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-12791738> [accessed 30/9/17]

⁹²² 'Syria: The Story of Conflict', *BBC*, 11 March 2016 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-26116868> [accessed 30/09/2017]

sectarian character (though it is important not to overstate this⁹²³). In addition to that, other groups have also tried to take advantage of the chaos. Kurdish groups in the North and the West have sought to use it as an opportunity to try and break away, making a new state. Also, many radical Islamic fundamentalist groups exist, though the most famous and influential is, of course, Daesh. There are also the regional powers like Saudi Arabia and Iran, who both have their own preferred outcome. Of course, there is also Russia's interest. These disparate groups have created a situation where not one group is strong enough to defeat the government, (especially when they are fighting amongst themselves), but since there are so many, the government cannot defeat them either.

War crimes abounded, as both the government and the smaller militias became ever more desperate and entrenched. The UN has evidence of all sides being complicit in the use of torture and rape and the blocking of access to food or water through sieges⁹²⁴.

At many stages of the conflict, all sides have become increasingly desperate. It is perhaps for this reason that Chemical Weapons were used in the Ghouta area of Damascus on 21 August 2013⁹²⁵. Rockets had been launched into the district, which was under rebel control, loaded with Sarin gas. The death toll varies widely depending on the source, but the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development put the number at no fewer than two hundred and eighty one⁹²⁶, with estimates from Médecins Sans Frontières putting it around three hundred and fifty

⁹²³ Jamie Lemon, 'How has the Syrian conflict been increasingly conceived as an ethno-religious conflict, and to what extent does this affect the way in which the West treats the conflict?' 2013 MA Dissertation

⁹²⁴ For updates, see United Nation Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights Independent Enquiry of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic <http://www.ohchr.org/en/hrbodies/hrc/iicisyrria/pages/independentinternationalcommission.aspx> [accessed 30/09/2017]

⁹²⁵ United Nations Security Council Report of the United Nations Mission to Investigate Allegations of the Use of Chemical Weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic on the alleged use of chemical weapons in the Ghouta area of Damascus on 21 August 2013 <https://disarmament-library.un.org/UNODA/Library.nsf/780cfafd472b047785257b1000501037/5f61477d793185d285257be8006b135a/%24FILE/A%2067%20997-S%202013%20553.pdf> [accessed 30/09/2017]

⁹²⁶ Syria/Syrian chemical programme – National executive summary of declassified intelligence Paris 3 September 2013 (Eng translation by French Defence Ministry) https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/Syrian_Chemical_Programme.pdf [accessed 03/06/2019]

five⁹²⁷, with other estimates going as high as one thousand five hundred⁹²⁸. At the time, the government claimed that it had been the rebels who had used the weapons, whereas the rebels claimed that it was the government forces. Three days before the Ghouta attack, a UN Inspectors team had arrived to investigate a different report of chemical weapon usage in Khan al-Asal, but in light of the new revelations, Ban Ki Moon placed an express request to the Syrian government to allow the team on the ground to investigate the new attack.

It would take until 16 September before the report was released, which confirmed that Sarin gas had been used. However, it was careful not to allocate blame anywhere; the report simply stated that a war crime had occurred. However, independently of the United Nations Report, countries also produced their own reports seeking an explanation, as well as the knowledge of who to blame. The French reached their own conclusion with their aforementioned report, which concluded that the only actor who could possibly have committed the attack was the Syrian regime.

The report also reasons that the Syrian regime intentionally organised an assault in the region using artillery and bombs in order to try and obfuscate their culpability by delaying inspectors access and trying to destroy evidence of the attack, including by setting an intense fire to try and disperse the sarin chemical into the atmosphere⁹²⁹.

This chapter has shown the ways in which President Hollande had fallen victim to his failure to engage directly with a number of domestic issues, which had led to a perception of him being unable to lead. Hollande's attempts to portray himself as a normal "everyman", in contradistinction to President Sarkozy's "ultra-Président" had backfired, losing him any momentum gained in his election victory. However, he had also seen that his intervention in Mali had led to a slight increase in his popularity.

⁹²⁷ Médecins Sans Frontières, 'Thousands suffering neurotoxic symptoms treated in hospitals supported by MSF', 24 August 2013 <https://www.msf.org/syria-thousands-suffering-neurotoxic-symptoms-treated-hospitals-supported-msf> [accessed 02/02/2020]

⁹²⁸ Office of the Press Secretary 'Government Assessment of the Syrian Government's use of Chemical Weapons on August 21, 2013', *The White House*, 20 August 2013 <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2013/08/30/government-assessment-syrian-government-s-use-chemical-weapons-august-21> [accessed 02/02/2020]

⁹²⁹ Ibid.

The intervention in Mali had been justified under pragmatic terms; Mali had asked for assistance and there was a need to prevent Islamist groups taking hold under the Global War on Terror. However, Hollande had a new challenge to contend with in terms of a chemical weapons attack in a country in which France, and Hollande, had very little influence. In the XXIst Ambassador's conference, President Hollande had already stated that France would punish those responsible⁹³⁰. However, how would Hollande go about "punishing" those responsible?

The next chapter shows how President Hollande sought to justify military intervention in Syria, as well as examine how he went about trying to convince other parties of the need to intervene.

This thesis shows how Hollande attempted to utilise a more personal and tough persona to justify the need for military intervention. It displays how Hollande worked to mobilise different elements of the previously described French Republican ideals to call for France's intervention, and in doing so, attempt to reinforce French ideals and French exceptionalism through a more muscular and paternalistic approach.

Ultimately, the next chapter examines how this approach was unsuccessful; that relying on an antiquated view of what a French leader should be, based on paternalistic instinct and chasing some sense of *grandeur*, left him inflexible to changing circumstances. This would ultimately lead to Russia and the US resolving the crisis (albeit temporarily) with very limited input from France.

⁹³⁰ 21st Ambassadors' Conference – Speech by M. François Hollande, President of the Republic. Paris, August 27, 2013 (<https://franceintheus.org/spip.php?article4855>) [accessed 11/06/2019]

Chapter 7 - Intervention in Syria

The chemical weapons crisis took place over a period of five weeks, beginning with an attack using sarin gas on 21 August 2013 on Ghouta. The attack seemingly mobilised Western leaders to re-engage with the Syrian crisis in a far more robust way, and none more so than President Hollande.

President Obama had previously drawn a “red line” over the usage of chemical weapons in Syria by the Assad regime, therefore Hollande had assumed that his aggressive rhetoric regarding the “punishment” of the Assad regime would be supported by his American and British allies.

However, as France’s rhetoric ramped up, both the United Kingdom and the United States began to back down. Firstly, Prime Minister Cameron lost an important vote in the Commons, effectively ruling out British involvement. Then, Obama made the argument that whilst he was in support of an intervention, he would first seek out the support of his congress.

With hindsight, this was utilised as a delaying tactic by Obama to try and bide his time whilst he sought out a diplomatic solution. In a later interview, Obama would tell Jeffrey Goldberg that departing from the “Washington playbook” in seeking to avoid military confrontation was one of his proudest moments⁹³¹.

However, in spite of the indications given out by the Obama administration, the Hollande regime continued to push for military interventions in the UN, and during the G20 summit. Here, a solution emerged, carefully choreographed to allow the US and Russia to de-escalate, and for Syria to seemingly relinquish its chemical weapons stockpiles without further intervention from Western powers. However, France had been left wholly out of the process, and had still been arguing for military intervention the day before. They would later argue that this had been a ruse all along, and that the pressure stemming from the threat of an intervention is what led to the compromise position. A basic reading of the facts would render this unlikely. However, whether

⁹³¹ Jeffrey Goldberg, “The Obama Doctrine”, *The Atlantic* April 2016
<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2016/04/the-obama-doctrine/471525/> [accessed 06/06/2019]

this is true or not, the handling of the situation had been poor, leading to a loss of *rang* for France on the international stage, and placing significant strain on US/French relations.

This chapter examines the justifications President Hollande used to try to gain support for military intervention in Syria. It is shown that President Hollande takes a much harsher tone in attempting to justify airstrikes, relying on a more muscular republicanism, based the idea of France being the *gendarme* of the world and seeking to right the wrongs committed on an international scale. Instead of using Sarkozy's approach of playing up the civilian casualties, Hollande instead wished to make an example of Assad. Unfortunately, for Hollande, this tactic did not produce the desired effects. Instead, he was left isolated during the negotiations between the US, Russia, and Syria.

In order to fully understand the proposed intervention, four separate elements are examined, in a similar approach that was adopted in Part II. Firstly, this chapter looks at the ways in which the intervention was justified, again discussing the imagery and emotions drawn up to argue that French intervention was necessary (7.1). Secondly, the nature of the intervention needs to be examined: what purpose would military airstrikes serve, and would this meet the Responsibility to Protect and France's own criteria for military intervention? (7.2). Furthermore, the chapter argues that Hollande and France's rhetoric surrounding the idea of building international consensus specifically did not chime with its overly aggressive tone, eventually leading not only to a failure to intervene militarily, but also gave the impression that France had been left outside of alternative decision making processes (7.3). Finally, we examine the ensuing results from this strategy. We examine the events of the G20 summit in Russia, the decisions made, as well as how Hollande and his regime attempted to mask the embarrassment of the situation by advocating that the resolution for Syria to hand over its chemical weapons had been its endgame all along (7.4).

7.1 Emotive Argumentation: Appeal to Humanitarianism/Punishment

A number of arguments were mobilised to establish the need for French intervention, and these arguments are explored in this section. As mentioned above, the tone taken by the Hollande administration was particularly emotive, playing up the devastating effects of the chemical weapons attacks. Linked to this sense of outrage was a requirement that France be the one to punish the wrongdoers who had committed such an atrocity. When events turned away from intervention, the Hollande presidency attempted to re-write history by attempting to argue that its rhetoric was merely to drive Syria towards a position whereby it would voluntarily surrender its chemical weapons. This section charts this development, paying particular attention to the ways in which Hollande mobilised the various *topoi* linked to French Republicanism.

As mentioned above, the attacks took place on 21 August 2013, six days before the Annual Ambassador's Conference in which the President of the Republic sets out their vision for France's economic and security policy on the international stage. It is not surprising then that of the myriad of topics about which Hollande spoke, he chose to open with the Chemical Weapons attack in Syria, and what France's response should be.

Perhaps understandably, Hollande began by referring to the universality of the world's condemnation of the use of chemical weapons, stating that the world was "horrified"⁹³². This was a large part of France taking leadership, relying on the topos of universality in assuming that its own reaction is shared by the rest of the world. In this case, most nations were, naturally, condemning the attacks. In the next paragraph, Hollande explained the context; that "using weapons that the Community of Nations banned 90 years ago in all of its international agreements is shameful"⁹³³. Here, Hollande again accentuates the idea that there had been an international consensus on acceptable actions, and that a party had breached it, appealing to the topos of history by invoking the days of regular chemical warfare during the First World War. Such a

⁹³² Speech by M. Francois Hollande, President of the President for the 21st Ambassadors' Conference, Paris, 27 August 2013 <https://franceintheus.org/spip.php?article4855>

⁹³³ Ibid.

breach of international law would therefore demand an answer. But whom had been the one to breach these conventions?

Here Hollande took a bold stance, stating that “everything leads us to believe that it was the regime that committed this despicable act, which condemns it once and for all in the eyes of the world”⁹³⁴. Suspicions fell upon Assad’s regime as being the most likely party to have both the reasons and capability to launch such an attack, and this had been echoed by both President Obama and Prime Minister Cameron⁹³⁵. However, unlike the governments of individual nations, international organisations such as the United Nations had to be more careful in ascribing guilt, waiting for their own investigation to be conducted. UN investigators were already in country investigating accusations of a previous usage of chemical weapons when the attack in Ghouta occurred. Despite UN demands, it took several days to agree a ceasefire to enable investigators on site to examine whether chemical weapons had been used⁹³⁶.

Next, Hollande was keen to point out that the conflict had much wider ranging security interests which needed to be considered. Indeed, beyond the death toll, Hollande linked it to violence in the region, “with attacks in Lebanon, the flow of refugees into Jordan and Turkey, and the unleashing of deadly violence in Iraq”⁹³⁷. This linked the single usage of chemical weapons to a larger problem, one which would need to be addressed to prevent further problems emerging on a global stage. Here, the topos of burden emerged, suggesting that the international community should intervene to resolve such problems.

This call to action for France intensified when he went on to say that the “chemical massacre in Damascus cannot remain without a response... France stands ready to punish those who took the appalling decision to gas innocent people”⁹³⁸. Here, France took a rather stark stance in seeking to “punish” those responsible; we also see a more

⁹³⁴ Ibid.

⁹³⁵ ‘Syria: Obama and Cameron threaten ‘serious response’, *BBC*, 25 August 2013 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-23830590> [accessed 15/05/2019]

⁹³⁶ Ian Sample, ‘UN investigators in Syria: under fire, in record time, sarin is confirmed’, *The Guardian* 16 September 2013 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/sep/16/un-inspectors-syria-sarin-gas> [accessed 15/05/2019]

⁹³⁷ Speech by M. Francois Hollande, President of the President for the 21st Ambassadors’ Conference, Paris, 27 August 2013 <https://franceintheus.org/spip.php?article4855>

⁹³⁸ Ibid.

emotional response to events, one which invited the listener to view France as some sort of avenging force, seeking to act as the *gendarme* of the world.

Punishment could have taken many different forms; for example France could have supported further sanctions (though considerable sanctions had already been levied against the Syrian regime at this point). However, earlier statements by Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius suggested that such punishment would be more militaristic, indicating that “if it's true [the chemical weapon attack], the position of France is that there needs to be a reaction... That reaction can take the form of force”⁹³⁹.

As shown throughout this section, the human rights and humanitarian arguments for intervention formed a strong part of Hollande’s justifications. And yet, this point forms a relatively small part of his speech, being relegated towards the end, placed between the discussion of Tax Avoidance and potential partnerships with China, India, Japan, Brazil, South Africa, and Russia. In the coming days, Hollande played up France’s role as a defender against human rights abuses (though not as much as other themes; as discussed later). Yet, this theme still only as four lines dedicated to it.

The first statement followed on from the previous paragraph in discussing the frankness required when speaking of other countries, stating that “I [Hollande] have a duty to express everywhere our commitment to respect for human rights”⁹⁴⁰. This section mostly targeted Russia, placing emphasis on “combating homophobia, which is taking on worrying proportions”⁹⁴¹. However, Hollande did appeal to France’s history in stating that “France prides itself in defending them [human rights] when they are flouted”⁹⁴². Whilst this did reference back to France’s revolutionary history and the DDHC, the same emphasis was not placed on its historical significance in the same way as Sarkozy had done when describing France’s apparent call to action in Libya. Throughout this speech, it would seem that the human rights abuse and

⁹³⁹ Donna Abu-Nasir, ‘France calls for force after Syrian gas attacks’, *The Age*, 24 August 2013 <https://www.theage.com.au/world/france-calls-for-force-after-syrian-gas-attacks-20130823-2sgzs.html> [accessed 15/05/2019]

⁹⁴⁰ Speech by M. Francois Hollande, President of the President for the 21st Ambassadors’ Conference, Paris, 27 August 2013 <https://franceintheus.org/spip.php?article4855>

⁹⁴¹ Ibid.

⁹⁴² Ibid.

atrocities were defined in more general ways, referring more to international norms, than by locating it within France's own history.

In his Joint Declaration with the President of the Syrian National Coalition Al-Assi al Jarba⁹⁴³, Hollande endeavoured to show that whilst the chemical weapons attack had been a significant escalation, it was only the most recent in a long line of terrible acts. Hollande referred to the pain and suffering the Syrian people have had to endure. However, he was rather vague as to the events or specific atrocities, other than the fact that there have been over 100,000 deaths since the beginning of the conflict. The intent of Hollande's segment of the Declaration dealt more with France's initial reaction to the war, as well as arguing for an international response. It argued that cooperation is needed to resolve such an issue, but also that the international community at large should assume some responsibility for the way in which events had played out.

Instead, it is left (perhaps for the verisimilitude) to President Al-Assi Al Jarba to present the horror of the events. Obviously, the intention of his presence was to seek assistance from the international community to, at the very least, stop the regime's usage of chemical weapons. However, it seemed more likely that they were hoping for military assistance to overthrow Assad, in the model of the intervention of Libya.

Therefore, Al-Assi Al Jarba utilised extremely emotive language. For example, his initial paragraph after thanking France for its friendship: "a week ago these truly heroic people suffered through a terrible bombardment, a terrible massacre with chemical weapons committed by this criminal regime"⁹⁴⁴.

The idea of criminality continued, with him stating that "this crime must not remain unpunished. It is necessary that there is a force to dissuade this criminal regime..."⁹⁴⁵ The phrase of the crime will not remain unpunished continues later, where he argued that "Punishment will be imposed in this criminal, on its death machine and on those who used these weapons"⁹⁴⁶. Al-Assi Al Jarba continued by condemning both the

⁹⁴³ Joint Declaration of Mr Francois Hollande, President of the French Republic, and Ahmad Al-Assi Al Jarba, President of the Syrian National Coalition, on the Situation in Syria, Paris, 29 August 2013 <http://discours.vie-publique.fr/notices/137001987.html>

⁹⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁴⁶ Ibid.

specific use of chemical weapons in this instance, and, more broadly, the usage of chemical weapons in any context⁹⁴⁷.

Most of the statement referred to the perpetrators of the attack, rather than the victims. However, he did speak of the more than “1,400 martyrs” who died, as well as the “thousands more who were injured”⁹⁴⁸. The attacks were also referred to as “Crimes against humanity”⁹⁴⁹; it was interesting to note that they decided to focus more explicitly on the Assad regime and the attacks themselves, rather than the civilian casualties. Perhaps it was considered that the act itself would be a greater driver of international action, rather than a purely humanitarian argument.

The tenor of Hollande’s general response to the usage of chemical weapons did not evolve much in his interview with *Le Monde* on 31 August 2013. Indeed, Hollande used phrases like “crimes against humanity”, or once describing the attacks as “horrifying”⁹⁵⁰. However, the usage of these terms was done in a more technical sense; as a matter of fact, rather than as an attempt to draw an emotional response from a potentially sympathetic audience. Here, Hollande seemed to rely more on the acts as triggers for international law, rather than as atrocities. This could be, in part, a direct response to Sarkozy. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Hollande sought to differentiate himself from *l’hyper-président* in many ways; perhaps this was an attempt to seem more statesmanlike, as opposed to Sarkozy’s more emotive language.

At the end of the interview, Hollande was asked whether he believed that another intervention would have public support. He responded, arguing that this would not really be a consideration, taking for granted the support of the French public as being against the usage of chemical weapons, and understanding that it was France’s role to halt it in any way possible. He mentioned as well that when he intervened in Mali, the French were not completely aware of the breadth of terrorism in the Sahel, but now they understood that French troops were sent to assist a friend in need, and were proud.

⁹⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁵⁰ Interview between President Francois Hollande and Le Monde, *Le Monde*, 31 August 2013 https://www.lemonde.fr.international/article/2013/08/30/francois-hollande-au-monde-il-ne-s-agit-pas-de-renverser-le-dictature-syrien_3468865_3210.html [accessed 26/04/2019]

He therefore drew parallels between Mali and Syria, as well as relying on the topos of fraternité as it was France's responsibility to aid another who seeks help.

This is also said of the parliament. He mentioned earlier in the interview that he supported the intervention in Libya, and that he was convening a special session in the National Assembly and Senate to debate the issues in Syria⁹⁵¹. Ultimately, the authority to use the armed forces lies with the President (but for the caveats mentioned in Part I), therefore such a session would be most useful to help Hollande provide further justifications for the need to intervene.

In opening the debate on the situation in Syria, Prime Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault spoke of the importance of setting forth the facts of the situation in Syria in front of not just the ruling party, but also that of the opposition⁹⁵². Ayrault also talked about elected representatives being able to see the variables which had led the President and his government to the policy upon which they have decided. Here, Ayrault was drawing the contradistinction between the Syrian regime and the French Republic; differentiating the transparency, consensus building, and ultimately liberty found in the French Republic as opposed to the dictatorship of Syria. As mentioned above, the purpose of this debate in the National Assembly and Senate was largely a means for Hollande to publically display his republican credentials, performing and reaffirming the French identity for all to see.

Again, Ayrault's opening reflected a rather factual recounting of events, with minor flavours of emotion. He explained how the meeting of members of parliament takes place at a significant point. He clarified how it was Assad who committed an "unforgiveable" act in using chemical weapons against his own population. He also went into detail about how the UN had confirmed that chemical weapons had been used, but that France's own intelligence, formed from the evidence they had collected, pointed the blame at the Syrian regime. Finally, this act could not go without response⁹⁵³.

⁹⁵¹ Ibid.

⁹⁵² Déclaration du Premier ministre, M. Jean-Marc Ayrault, Paris, 3 septembre 2013 <https://basedoc.diplomatie.gouv.fr/exl-doc/FranceDiplomatie/PDF/bafr2013-09-03.pdf> [accessed 29/05/2019]

⁹⁵³ Ibid.

Ayrault clearly set out what was at stake: firstly, to prevent Assad from using chemical weapons against his own people in the future, and secondly to send a wider message “to those who would seek to imitate this act in the future”⁹⁵⁴. This was sold as a security consideration for France as well as other nations, within the context of the fight against weapons of mass destruction.

Throughout this section, the topos of danger is consistently brought up; the idea being that those who flout international law and are not duly reprimanded continue to do so, creating ever greater issues and becoming even bolder in their contravention of international laws and norms. In order to prevent such continuation, France, and the international community at large, must react accordingly.

At the conclusion of his statement, Ayrault drew attention to the fact that not only was this debate unique, but also that the constitution itself did not require a vote to even take place. This was therefore presented as Hollande seeking additional consensus out of respect for the norms of democracy, as well as wanting to take an opportunity for the government to transparently discuss its logic. Ayrault explained that, ultimately, a vote would not occur unless the President allows it, but that as an international decision had not been taken, there was no need to hold one at the time. Here, Hollande was presented as being magnanimous in holding a debate in the National Assembly and Senate, whilst also re-affirming the notion that it was he, as President, who still maintained the final power as to whether France would use its military.

In doing this, Hollande was able to make allusions towards respecting democratic institutions, whilst also re-affirming the Presidency’s supremacy in this regard. In many ways, this could be seen as a demonstration of the effectiveness of the French Republican model. It also indicated the President’s confidence regarding the authority of the office over foreign policy, knowing that there would be little opposition. This was also helped as there was no specific decision which needed to be taken as a response had yet to be formulated.

⁹⁵⁴ Ibid.

Justification for military intervention came the same day with France's report into the usage of chemical weapons⁹⁵⁵. Since it was produced by intelligence services, the general tone was sombre and factual, containing details of Syria's pre-existing chemical weapons stocks, as well as describing how these types of weapons had been utilised previously during the conflict. It also speculated regarding what the potential reasons behind the attacks may have been, as well as laying the blame at the Assad regime's door.

The report did spend significant time describing the particular horror of the attacks, concentrating not only on the scale and demographics of the casualties, but also the unique horrors of the types of chemical weapons used. It described how analysis of the video footage revealed a minimum of 281 deaths, of which in one hospital it was reported that "half of the victims were women and children and, in 50% of the cases, death was instantaneous"⁹⁵⁶. However, the team who produced the report's own impact modelling predicted the casualty list to be much higher, agreeing with reports by several different sources⁹⁵⁷.

Presented to the reader is a description of the symptoms of the chemical agent used:

"the death symptoms (to include generalized convulsions, nausea, vomiting, moisis, foaming from the nose and mouth, dyspnea, suffocation, loss of consciousness) are clinical signs of poisoning due to the use of chemical agents... the observation of many low-age children suffering violent symptoms (convulsion among others), on eight different sites), lead to the conclusions that a falsification or manipulation by the opposition is highly improbable"⁹⁵⁸.

This was a truly horrific attack, and the report generated did not flinch from this fact. It was the scale of the attack which led many nations to feel the need to intervene. It is important to remind the reader at this point that this thesis is not attempting to argue that Hollande invented a crisis as a means of giving himself and France an opportunity to take a leadership position on the international stage, but rather seized upon an

⁹⁵⁵ Syria/Syrian chemical programme – National executive summary of declassified intelligence Paris, 3 September 2013 (Eng translation by French Defence Ministry)

https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/Syrian_Chemical_Programme.pdf [accessed 03/06/2019]

⁹⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁵⁸ Ibid.

opportunity which was created by the Syrian conflict to attempt to push for intervention and try to resolve one of the larger humanitarian disasters of the time. It is not in the attempt, but rather in the execution which, whilst understandable given the terrible events of Syria, forced France into an inflexible stance which was overtaken by changing attitudes in France's allies.

The debate in the National Assembly and Senate concerning the attacks continued into the following day. Laurent Fabius, in his declaration during the debate, became by far the most emotive orator of the French executive when dealing with this issue. As has been shown above, Hollande and Ayrault referenced the casualties of the conflict, but Fabius spent significantly more time describing the unique horror of the events, to really stir emotions. His opening sentence describes how “in the early hours of 21 August, a few kilometres from the centre of Damascus, nearly 1,500 civilians, including hundreds of children, died, asphyxiated, in their sleep. Murdered by the Syrian regime, in what is, in the early part of this century, the most massive and most terrifying use of chemical weapons”⁹⁵⁹.

Fabius drew the horror from the events and spoke of the videos taken by those involved in the attacks such as the doctors and victims, paying tribute to them that despite their fear, there were “also aware of their duty to inform the world of the horror of what had just occurred”⁹⁶⁰. Fabius spoke also of the “victims’ agony” and the “rows of children’s corpses”⁹⁶¹.

This intensified focus on the victims and how they suffered could be seen as a reaction to Western leaders’ increased reluctance to involve themselves in potential military action in Syria. The United States had already decided to delay its planned intervention by seeking approval from a hostile congress. Therefore, focussing on the victims could be seen to have been a way of creating a link on an emotional level between the various countries’ representatives, their respective populations, and the Syrian people in opposition-held territory.

⁹⁵⁹ Syria/government declaration and debate at the National Assembly and Senate – Speech by Laurent Fabius Minister of Foreign Affairs, in the Senate, 4 September 2013 <https://uk.ambafrance.org/Laurent-Fabius-explains-reasons> [accessed 04/06/2019]

⁹⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁹⁶¹ Ibid.

After discussing the evidence France holds laying the blame at the Syrian regime's feet, Fabius then presented a choice for those listening to his speech: allow events to play out as they were, or intervene to prevent the situation from getting any worse. It was at this point that the concept of punishment re-emerged, along with a discussion of Assad himself. Fabius referred to the "terrible message" which would be sent to Assad if the international community were not to intervene, effectively granting tacit approval of his actions. The Foreign Minister quoted Assad when he described "liquidating" his opposition⁹⁶².

Assad became the focal point of the crime, as it is "Bashar al-Assad [who] has violated *his* obligations under the 1925 Protocol... *he* has flouted international humanitarian law by carrying out indiscriminate attacks... *he* has committed a war crime. *He* has committed what the UN Secretary-General described as a crime against humanity"⁹⁶³ (emphasis added). The conflict became more personalised, Fabius admitted, saying that "we want to see the departure of Mr Bashar al-Assad, who doesn't hesitate to directly threaten our country and who even believes he can intimidate the national representatives"⁹⁶⁴. However, Fabius argued that a show of strength now could have brought Assad to a political settlement which, he inferred, would hopefully lead to the victory of the moderate Syrian opposition⁹⁶⁵.

Fabius again made appeal to the past, relying on the topos of history, specifically referring to the First World War and the West's own experiences with chemical warfare. He argued that in not acting to prevent further use of such weapons, and especially since such weapons had been banned, would constitute an "appalling step backwards"⁹⁶⁶. Fabius here also relied on the topos of universality, as there was an assumption that the nations who would be involved in such a military action (the US and Western European countries), would react well to this argument due to their shared history in recognising the appalling nature of chemical weapons during the First World War, and their subsequent collective efforts to ban such weapons' utilisation with the Geneva Protocol 1925. He also created responsibility again by assuming that Assad

⁹⁶² Ibid.

⁹⁶³ Ibid.

⁹⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶⁶ Ibid.

would do this again, therefore any inaction in stopping Assad from using chemical weapons would inherently implicate the international community.

In responding to questions raised during the debate in the National Assembly, Prime Minister Ayrault and Minister of Defence Jean-Yves Le Drian did not deal as explicitly with the plight of the Syrian people, nor the “punishment” of Assad. Instead, there was a more sober appraisal of the facts in terms of the events which transpired. Only after laying out all of the facts was it conceded that it was a “large scale attack which killed hundreds of civilians and was carried out by a regime pursuing its work of terror and of liquidating its people – as Bashar al-Assad said in a recent interview”⁹⁶⁷.

Here Assad’s own words were used against him to suggest that he was callous, that the deployment of chemical weapons was a means to an end and that he was, at best, indifferent to the suffering of his people. Such a leader constituted a threat, not only to his own people, but also to the larger international community. It was for this reason that the international community needed to intervene, lest Assad grow emboldened. This idea is explored in more detail in the next part.

Inherent within the arguments featured in this first part are the topoi of threat/danger, and of humanitarianism, being inextricably linked in this scenario. The threats are numerous, being Assad against his population, or the wider international norms, be they agreements not to attack civilians, or limitations on the usage of chemical weapons. Assad’s attitude and willingness to breach international law to gain an upper hand clearly breaches the topoi of humanitarianism. Such an action therefore demands a response which addresses the wrongdoing. However, what kind of action would be required? The next section examines how a suitable response was articulated, with particular reference to the Doctrine of the Responsibility to Protect.

⁹⁶⁷ Government statement and debate in the National Assembly and Senate – Speeches by M. Jean-Marc Ayrault, Prime Minister, and M. Jean-Yves Le Drian, Minister of Defence (excerpts), Paris, 4 September 2013 <https://uk.ambafrance.org/Defence-Minister-calls-for-end-to> [accessed 07/06/2019]

7.2 The Responsibility to Protect: France as driver of international norms

As has been stated in previous chapters, this section of the thesis examines the ways in which France sought to appeal to the international community using the previously established norms of the Responsibility to Protect. Here, it is shown that France would lean heavily on this justification, as well as presenting itself as the self-appointed champion of the doctrine. This part of the thesis also explains how France's military action and general foreign and military policy, as well as its specific focus on the use of airstrikes for the aforementioned "punishment", would serve as a showcase not only for France's humanitarian credentials, but also of its independence and power projection.

As mentioned above, this thesis does not judge the efficacy of Hollande against the achievements of Sarkozy. Indeed, this thesis acknowledges that the argument to intervene militarily in Syria was more challenging due to the involvement of Russia. Beyond Russia's strategic interests in Tartus, Russia is also of a position which tends to resist international interference in other states. Russia had given its approval (although tacitly) for the intervention in Libya. However, the conduct of France, the US, and the UK in pursuing goals beyond what had been strictly authorised by the UN Resolution had led Putin to look dimly upon that intervention⁹⁶⁸. This would mean that achieving Security Council approval was always going to be nearly impossible.

In his speech at the 21st Ambassadors' Conference, Hollande marked out three principles which would drive their foreign policy. Firstly, he spoke of the importance of France's "Independence"⁹⁶⁹. Here, however, we get a very particular conceptualisation of independence, as it was held in conjunction with France's international commitments. He stated that "Independence, which leads us every moment to decide, in full sovereignty while being loyal to our alliances, to European

⁹⁶⁸ Louise Riis Anderson and Tim Dunne, 'In Defense of Liberal Intervention', *Danish Institute for International Studies*, 3 June 2014 <https://www.diis.dk/en/research/in-defense-of-liberal-intervention> [accessed 11/06/2019]

⁹⁶⁹ Speech by M. Francois Hollande, President of the Republic for the 21st Ambassadors' Conference, Paris, 27 August 2013 <https://franceintheus.org/spip.php?article4855>

solidarity and to our bilateral agreements. It's this freedom that makes France useful to the world and to peace"⁹⁷⁰.

Such a statement suggested that France holds a special place within the international order; somewhere it has carved out a path, within the tangle of treaties and accords, which allows it to act in ways in which it can help protect the international order using its own discretion. Indeed, the benefits of such an approach were explained where Hollande opined that "this is the best way of ensuring borders are respected, disputes are settled and collective security prevails". France, as conceptualised in this statement, was therefore best placed to be making the decisions as to what action is taken to achieve peace. This conceptualisation of France's place in the world order fits neatly within the conceptualisation of *grandeur* as promoted by de Gaulle.

This point was also raised in his final principle for French foreign policy, that of "dialogue"⁹⁷¹. However, at the centre of this dialogue should have been France, as it "wants to be a bridge between continents and avoid what some people [sic] have called the clash of civilisations. It wants to be a "landmark power" – i.e. a nation that speaks beyond its interests alone"⁹⁷². This, of course, attempted to present France as an altruistic power, seeking to act in the best interests of the world, even if it did not necessarily serve France's agenda. However, as was argued by Paul-Marie de la Gorce, international peace was considered by France as one of its national interests⁹⁷³. For France, an international power with diplomatic and trading relationships around the world, attaining peace in the swiftest way possible was often in the country's best interests.

In addition to discussing French Foreign Policy, Hollande spent a significant amount of time discussing international law and international norms. Specifically, he referred to the need for it to "evolve with the times"⁹⁷⁴. The one particular development of recent times which Hollande decided to mention here is the "Responsibility to Protect". Here, he drew attention to the fact that international law could not remain

⁹⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁹⁷¹ Ibid.

⁹⁷² Ibid.

⁹⁷³ Paul-Marie de la Gorce, 'Intervention Extérieure et préservation des intérêts français' in Pierre Pascallon (ed) *Les Interventions Exterieures de l'Armée Française* (Bruylant, Brussels, 1997)

⁹⁷⁴ Speech by M. Francois Hollande, President of the President for the 21st Ambassadors' Conference, Paris, 27 August 2013 <https://franceintheus.org/spip.php?article4855>

static as “a pretext for allowing large-scale massacres to be perpetrated”, which is why he “recognize[s] the principle of “the responsibility to protect” civilians”⁹⁷⁵. Hollande set out his vision of international law as being something which should, in cases of large-scale massacres, be interventionist in nature.

Interventionism in this manner does not necessarily mean the use of military force, as Article 138 of the 2005 Resolution introducing the Responsibility to Protect Doctrine stated the responsibility to protect populations from crimes against humanity “through [any] appropriate and necessary means”⁹⁷⁶. This, of course, can include dialogue, which was the final principle which Hollande mentioned as being important to French foreign policy⁹⁷⁷. However, in speaking of dialogue, it was unclear whether this approach truly reflected the situation in Syria, especially when considering Hollande’s threats of “punishment”. Of course, these could only be threats, or namely attempts to coerce the Assad regime into compliance. However, as the crisis continued, it appeared less and less that this was the French President’s actual plan. This argument is strengthened of course by the next section in Hollande’s speech, which referred to the importance of France’s military capabilities. He argued that in order for France to be able to enact its foreign policy principles, it would need to have had the ability to act, depending on “firstly its diplomacy, but also its military capabilities”⁹⁷⁸. As conceptualised here, these two principles would work hand in hand; however, the rhetoric and arguments emerging in the initial aftermath of the chemical weapons attack certainly indicated that the latter was more important in this instance than the former.

This was certainly supported in Hollande’s Joint Declaration with Al-Assi Al Jarba two days later⁹⁷⁹. In Hollande’s section of the declaration, he discussed more generally that a response was needed from the international community. He argued that a two-pronged approach was required, by which he meant that if there were the spectre of

⁹⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁷⁶ Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 16 September 2005 A/RES/60/1 Distribution General 24 October 2005 <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N05/487/60/pdf/N0548760.pdf?OpenElement> [accessed 27/09/2017]

⁹⁷⁷ Speech by M. Francois Hollande, President of the President for the 21st Ambassadors’ Conference, Paris, 27 August 2013 <https://franceintheus.org/spip.php?article4855>

⁹⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁷⁹ Joint Declaration of Mr Francois Hollande, President of the French republic, and Ahmad Al-Assi Al Jarba, President of the Syrian National Coalition, on the Situation in Syria, Paris, 29 August 2013 <http://discours.vie-publique.fr/notices/137001987.html>

necessary force present (and specifically the army), then a diplomatic solution could emerge⁹⁸⁰. Al-Assi Al Jabra assumed a similar position, arguing that to dissuade the regime from using chemical weapons, then it would be necessary for there to be an established international force, led by the French⁹⁸¹. Prima facie, it would seem that he was making a similar argument to Hollande earlier. However, with repeated references to the different forces, be they “international” or “UN”, in addition to the arguments that the Assad regime should be punished in some way, it was far more likely that Al-Assi Al Jabra had in mind a more direct confrontation with Assad.

However, one must keep in mind throughout this analysis, the conditions required to effectively trigger the Responsibility to Protect Doctrine: one must have the right intention, it must be the last resort, the means being utilised must be proportional, and that there must be reasonable prospects that the action decided upon would actually resolve the crisis, and the action was likely to produce better results than inaction⁹⁸².

President Al-Assi Al Jarba sought to make the argument that because of the nature of Assad’s conduct, via the use of chemical weapons in clear breach of international treaties, that collective action must be taken. The right intention was therefore established, especially as the request came from someone who was considered to be the spokesperson of Syrians, and that he was requesting multilateral support. Furthermore, Hollande was keen to discuss in his declaration the support France had offered, and was again offering, making available not only its political aid, but also its humanitarian aid⁹⁸³.

However, despite this support offered by France the conflict had already lasted a year and killed 100,000 people⁹⁸⁴. Therefore an intervention beyond humanitarian aid would be required to prevent such a massive number of casualties. However, what

⁹⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁹⁸¹ Ibid.

⁹⁸² ‘Report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty’ *International Development Research Centre Ottawa* 10 2001
<http://responsibilitytoprotect.org/ICISS%20Report.pdf> [accessed 27/09/2017] p. XII

⁹⁸³ Joint Declaration of Mr Francois Hollande, President of the French republic, and Ahmad Al-Assi Al Jarba, President of the Syrian National Coalition, on the Situation in Syria, Paris 29 August 2013
<http://discours.vie-publique.fr/notices/137001987.html>

⁹⁸⁴ Ibid.

these previous two statements lacked was any detail surrounding what kind of intervention would be proposed beyond general threats.

Some details began to emerge in Hollande's interview with *Le Monde* on 31 August 2013. At this point, Hollande had received sufficient information to be able to lay the blame solely at the feet of the Assad regime. When asked whether the French authorities had sufficient evidence to prove whether chemical weapons had been used, Hollande responded by saying that it was not a question of whether they had been used, but by whom⁹⁸⁵. Hollande argued that the opposition forces did not have the capability to launch such chemical weapons as all of the stocks were controlled by the Assad regime. Furthermore, the site of the attack was of great strategic importance to the regime, and it had acted quickly to remove any traces from the location. Therefore, this made it the most likely culprit of the attacks⁹⁸⁶.

When asked about the legality of any military action, Hollande pointed out that a chemical weapons attack would breach the Protocol of 1925, and that Ban Ki-moon himself had already stated that such an attack would constitute a crime against humanity. All that remained at this point was a decision from the international community.

Here, we saw a little more detail as to what the purpose of a military intervention would be. When asked about what the aim of a war would be, he clarified that war was not what was being proposed, but rather some form of sanction against the Assad regime to dissuade further use of chemical weapons. That action needed to be taken in order to show the Syrian government that the international community would not tolerate the use of chemical weapons. Furthermore, the suggestion was made that the situation had become worse specifically because the Security Council had not taken a decision to step in earlier⁹⁸⁷. Indeed, Hollande argued that by not stepping in now, there would be further casualties, both within, and without Syria as the usage of such weapons would become more normalised⁹⁸⁸.

⁹⁸⁵ Interview between President Francois Hollande and Le Monde, *Le Monde*, 31 August 2013
https://www.lemonde.fr.international/article/2013/08/30/francois-hollande-au-monde-il-ne-s-agit-pas-de-renverser-le-dictature-syrien_3468865_3210.html [accessed 26/04/2019]

⁹⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸⁸ Ibid.

The fourth condition of there being reasonable prospects of the intervention succeeding includes an element which addresses the fact that the action must likely result in a better situation than inaction. In appealing to the history of the events, Hollande suggested that this was already the case. This also doubles as an argument that military action was indeed a last resort, as previous actions resulted in continued use of chemical weapons. However, the strength of this argument is dubious, especially as the international response to the Syrian conflict was one of relative inaction. Furthermore, as time would show, not all non-military options had been considered, and it was this fact, amongst other things, which would result in a non-military resolution, at least in the short term.

Specifically, Hollande once again argued that the Security Council would need to call for action, and that there would need to be support from the Arab League (who had been the ones to bring the attacks to the attention of the international community), and from other European nations able to render assistance. Therefore, the “right intention clause” gains greater assurances with the level of support such an operation would require.

What was not included in this interview, however, was the argument that the response would be proportional as the actual response had not been formulated. France at this point was remaining rather vague in terms of actually what specific action would be taken, instead relying on vague threats of intervention. Hollande had ruled out more widespread regime change, arguing that he would not support an international intervention which sought to “liberate” Syria or enact regime change, but rather something would have to be done to prevent further attacks against the country’s population⁹⁸⁹.

The declaration by Prime Minister Ayrault on 3 September 2013 announcing that a debate should be held in the National Assembly and Senate regarding the situation in Syria added little specificity to France’s plans in relation to the type of intervention it was seeking⁹⁹⁰. Instead, Prime Minister Ayrault articulated that the government felt it

⁹⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁹⁰ Statement by the Prime Minister M. Jean-Marc Ayrault, 3 September 2013 <http://basedoc.diplomatie.gouv.fr/exl-doc/FranceDiplomatie/PDF/bafr2013-09-03.pdf> [accessed 30/05/2019]

was important that it should make available the evidence and reasoning behind its recent policy towards Syria⁹⁹¹.

However, the context of this debate in regards to events around the world was very important; on 30 August 2013, the Cameron government in the United Kingdom had just been defeated by the Opposition, effectively ruling out the United Kingdom's involvement in any military action⁹⁹². The following day, Obama had decided to make an abrupt turn and seek congressional approval, against the advice of many of his advisors. At the time, it seemed a gamble as he faced a Republican Congress, with no guarantee of winning a vote⁹⁹³. Congress was not due to sit until 9 September, which in many ways could be interpreted as the Obama administration re-assessing the landscape following the defeat in the British Commons.

However, whilst this stopped the clock for the US, France interpreted this as a means to continue to push for an intervention. In many ways, the debate in the National Assembly and Senate could be interpreted as more than just an aspect of performative Republicanism, but as a show of support from the French parliament to the US to continue pushing for military intervention.

It was then surprising how subdued Ayrault's opening statement was in relation for the need for military intervention. In many ways, it reflected the more ordinary approach taken by Hollande as President, disposing of more bombastic rhetoric for a more level-headed, pragmatic approach.

Another interesting point raised from this is that the particular nature of what military action was to be taken was still not mentioned in the speech. Throughout his statement, Ayrault used euphemistic phrasing, such as requiring a "response", or "sanctioning" the use of chemical weapons⁹⁹⁴. This was particularly strange when France's actions indicated that it was already planning on airstrikes just before the US decided to ask

⁹⁹¹ Ibid

⁹⁹² 'Syria crisis: Cameron loses Commons vote on Syria action', *BBC*, 30 August 2013 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-23892783> [accessed 30/05/2019]

⁹⁹³ Paul Lewis, 'US attack on Syria delayed after surprise U-turn from Obama', *The Observer*, 1 September 2013 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/aug/31/syrian-air-strikes-obama-congress> [accessed 30/04/2019]

⁹⁹⁴ Statement by the Prime Minister M. Jean-Marc Ayrault, 3 September 2013 <http://basedoc.diplomatie.gouv.fr/exl-doc/FranceDiplomatie/PDF/bafr2013-09-03.pdf> [accessed 30/05/2019]

Congress. France had spy planes concentrated on the coast of Cyprus, and Rafale fighter jets loaded with missiles. Indeed, Hollande planned to release a report to justify its intervention (which is examined shortly)⁹⁹⁵. However, none of this was mentioned in Ayrault's discussion on the crisis in Syria.

Ayrault's justification for the need for some form of intervention did not really evolve from the arguments previously articulated by Hollande. However, Ayrault did focus on an element of the criteria of Responsibility to Protect Doctrine, and that is of the proportionality of the event. Ayrault reiterated Hollande's argument that an intervention would only serve the purpose of dissuading the regime from using chemical weapons again. Ayrault stated that an intervention would need to be "firm and proportionate which aims to neither overthrow the regime, nor liberate Syria"⁹⁹⁶. He clearly indicated that the French government was still of the opinion that the Syrian crisis could be resolved by a political solution⁹⁹⁷. This established the clear limitations of France's intentions, and prioritising a specific target helped to support the legitimacy of the intervention. However, much more detail regarding what France would intend to do would be required to truly fulfil the requirement.

The same day that Ayrault opened the debate on intervention, the French administration also released its report on the chemical weapons attack⁹⁹⁸. This report used evidence the French Security services had collected to explain what had happened, and laid the blame at the feet of the Assad regime. The report served little purpose in terms of the Doctrine of the Responsibility to Protect beyond further accentuating the "right intention" aspect, drawing a clear line between previous uses of chemical weapons by the regime to the attack in Ghouta, making the argument that

⁹⁹⁵ David Axe, 'French Bombers Were Loaded Up, Syrian Rebels Were Deployed – Awaiting Obama's Okay To Attack', *Medium*, 4 October 2013 <https://medium.com/war-is-boring/french-bombers-were-loaded-up-syrian-rebels-were-deployed-all-awaiting-obamas-okay-to-attack-69247c24253f> [accessed 31/5/2019]

⁹⁹⁶ Statement by the Prime Minister M. Jean-Marc Ayrault, 3 September 2013 <http://basedoc.diplomatie.gouv.fr/exl-doc/FranceDiplomatie/PDF/bafr2013-09-03.pdf> [accessed 30/05/2019]

⁹⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁹⁸ Syria/Syrian chemical programme – National executive summary of declassified intelligence Paris, 3 September 2013 (Eng translation by French Defence Ministry) https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/Syrian_Chemical_Programme.pdf [accessed 03/06/2019]

this was becoming a consistent threat to the Syrian population. Therefore, any intervention would necessarily have had the right intention.

The following day, the debate in the National Assembly continued on. The Minister of Foreign Affairs Laurent Fabius, Prime Minister Ayrault and Minister of Defence Jean-Yves Le Drian all gave speeches. With the report having been released a day earlier, discussion regarding the implementation of measures against the Syrian government became more concrete. Fabius reiterated many of the key points raised in the Security report, that chemical weapons had been used on multiple occasions during the Syrian conflict, including on 21 August against a civilian population comprised of women and children, that it was the government forces who had used the weapons as part of a strategy to recapture the city, and that they had conspired to use artillery to destroy all evidence⁹⁹⁹.

Fabius argued that the UN's own investigation was not designed to assign blame, but rather to just confirm that chemical weapons had been used. However, various national and supranational organisations were found to agree with France, including their "American, British, German and Turkish partners", in addition to the Arab League, all arguing that it was the Syrian regime who were ultimately responsible for the attack¹⁰⁰⁰.

Fabius argued that the choice before the international community was simple: either act or ignore the situation. Here, we see one of the rare allusions to the fact that military intervention was required as peaceful options had proved ineffective: "Can we make do with condemning them, and with calling on the international community to wake up, so that peace negotiations that have not been forthcoming finally begin?"¹⁰⁰¹

Fabius drew a distinction between this specific event, and the wider conflict. For the conflict at large, he stated that France's policy was to seek a political settlement. However, in response to the chemical weapon attack, the international community had to act to prevent future attacks of its ilk, not only by the Syrian regime, but also by

⁹⁹⁹ Syria/government declaration and debate at the National Assembly and Senate – Speech by Laurent Fabius Minister of Foreign Affairs, in the Senate, 4 September 2013
<https://uk.ambafrance.org/Laurent-Fabius-explains-reasons> [accessed 04/06/2019]

¹⁰⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰¹ Ibid.

Iran and North Korea¹⁰⁰². Fabius went further, arguing that a military intervention now would help pave the way towards a political resolution to the conflict, as such tactics would no longer be available to Assad¹⁰⁰³.

Fabius maintained the legitimacy of intervention due to the Syrian regime's breach of the 1925 Chemical Weapons Protocol, as well as of the Geneva Convention. Furthermore, Syrian authorities intentionally retarded attempts to achieve peaceful settlement by delaying and refusing the presence of human rights and chemical weapons monitors, as well as impeding the provision of humanitarian aid.

Also, in an unusual move for France, he stated that whilst authorisation from the Security Council would be "preferable", it was not mandatory. This was in a direct response to the continued use of the veto by Russia and China, who had thrice blocked measures designed to resolve the Syrian crisis, and had also had a hand in stopping France's draft resolution to address the conflict¹⁰⁰⁴. Therefore, France could argue that this was indeed a last resort as all diplomatic attempts to resolve the situation had been blocked by other members of the Security Council.

Next in the speech came the proposal; the phrase "firm and proportionate" again emerged to describe what the response should have been. Fabius himself described the action as being "considered and collective... A one-off response with meaningful but targeted objectives"¹⁰⁰⁵. Clear limitations were placed on the action, that "there is no question of sending in ground troops. There is no question of launching military operations to overthrow the regime"¹⁰⁰⁶. As mentioned previously, the purpose for these debates was as much for the international community and France's allies as it was for France itself. As such, this debate could be seen as reinforcing the point for America that any intervention would be a short term endeavour.

Fabius acknowledged that it was France's desire to be rid of Assad, whom he argued would readily threaten France. However, the real objective at this time was solely to deter the Assad regime from using chemical weapons again. Fabius directly addressed

¹⁰⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰⁶ Ibid.

criticisms of acting that it could make the situation worse by stating that “doing nothing in the face of the Syrian people’s suffering plays into the hands of the extremists. Ensuring that the Syrian regime’s crimes do not go unpunished is, on the contrary, a way for our democracies to support the moderate Syrian opposition”¹⁰⁰⁷. Indeed, the argument referred to by Hollande and Ayrault was more explicitly stated by Fabius, and addresses the fourth point regarding the Responsibility to Protect, namely that there must always be a reasonable chance of the action succeeding, and it must not likely make the situation worse.

Fabius therefore was far more focused in his arguments; seeking to demonstrate in more detail how the Responsibility to Protect Doctrine arguments applied to the current circumstances, effectively leading to the conclusion that a French-led intervention was the only way of moving forward. Fabius articulated these arguments in the clearest and most concise manner of any of the government’s foreign policy spokespersons.

These arguments for intervention were again reiterated by Prime Minister Ayrault and Minister of Defence Jean-Yves Le Drian during the same 4 September 2013 debate. They argued that an intervention would serve two objectives: “on the one hand, the objective is to punish the use of chemical agents by Bashar al-Assad against civilians and, on the other hand, to deter him from continuing and restore the ban on the use of weapons of mass destruction”¹⁰⁰⁸. They argued that defining the intervention against these objectives allowed it to be a “firm, significant, targeted and proportionate response to the violation of an essential norm of international law”¹⁰⁰⁹. Explicitly ruled out was ground intervention. Furthermore, the assault would have a purely retaliatory aim and there would be “strict collateral damage limitation”¹⁰¹⁰. The aim here would be to justify, not show, that the scope would be limited, and therefore proportional, but also that there would be no further engagement required. This was why the ideas

¹⁰⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰⁸ Government statement and debate in the National Assembly and Senate – Speeches by M. Jean-Marc Ayrault, Prime Minister, and M. Jean-Yves Le Drian, Minister of Defence (excerpts) Paris, 4 September 2013 <https://uk.ambafrance.org/Defence-Minister-calls-for-end-to> [accessed 07/06/2019]

¹⁰⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰¹⁰ Ibid.

of a no-fly zone or humanitarian corridor were also rejected as they would require continued presence¹⁰¹¹.

This could be seen as an attempt to win over American support to the idea of a very limited engagement. In seeking to limit civilian casualties, this served not only to appease the international community at large, but also to argue that such an intervention would not make the situation any worse.

This part has looked at the various ways in which the French administration sought to explain how the action they were proposing, retaliatory strikes in order to prevent Assad's further usage of chemical weapons, would conform to the norm of the Responsibility to Protect. We have also seen how the argument for how the strikes themselves would occur, with limited scope and duration, was also aimed at persuading the US to follow through with the intervention. These arguments rely heavily on the topoi of cooperation, of fraternité, and of burden. France must act pragmatically in order to support the population for fear of the situation getting worse, and the use of chemical weapons becoming banalised. Furthermore, the only way that such an endeavour (aimed at preventing a worsening of the situation) could succeed was for multiple countries to work together. Only then would it be truly successful. Furthermore, it was France's duty to intervene not only because it was able to do so, but also because it had a moral responsibility to do so in order to protect the civilian population from the atrocity of chemical warfare.

The next section explores France's efforts in building international consensus and France taking its supposedly rightful place within the international order. Specifically, it shows how France views itself as being naturally positioned to engage with such issues due to its history and culture, before the final section examines how such arguments were viewed by other nations.

¹⁰¹¹ Ibid.

7.3 International Consensus and the Rhetoric of French exceptionalism

As mentioned above, the purpose of President Hollande's speech at the Ambassador's Conference was to set out the vision for France's foreign policy moving forward. However, it also served as an opportunity for the President to promote and celebrate the actions they, and the country, had taken. In this instance, it linked both the topos of responsibility with the idea of French exceptionalism. Hollande explained that "during the past year, France has acted"¹⁰¹². Hollande explained that France "led" by holding the Friends of Syria Conference in 2012, as well as being the first nation to recognise the Syrian National Coalition as Syria's representative. Hollande also stated that France had "promptly provided humanitarian and material assistance to the opposition so that it could carry on with its fight"¹⁰¹³. Later, Hollande once again singled out France as being the one who should act, as "it is our responsibility to seek the most appropriate response to the Syrian regime's atrocities"¹⁰¹⁴.

However, just as previous French foreign policy dictated, France strove to act as part of an international response. Indeed, the statement demanded that the international community take collective action to respond to the crisis. It suggested that the "international community cannot fail to react to the use of chemical weapons"¹⁰¹⁵. The implication here was that the international community would lose some of its legitimacy if it did not act to resolve the crisis. Internationalism, and the act of working with international partners, is often central to France's legitimisation of its actions on the international scale. For French foreign policy, it is often important to be seen to be working with others at the head of an international coalition. Here, Hollande noted that that he had been holding "numerous consultations with our – particularly American and European – allies, as well as our Arab partners, to consider all the options"¹⁰¹⁶. Being at the head of such a coalition and driving its actions is a way of ensuring the understanding of France's *rang* as one of the world's most influential

¹⁰¹² Speech by M. Francois Hollande, President of the Republic for the 21st Ambassadors' Conference, Paris, 27 August 2013 <https://franceintheus.org/spip.php?article4855>

¹⁰¹³ Ibid.

¹⁰¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰¹⁵ Speech by M. Francois Hollande, President of the Republic for the 21st Ambassadors' Conference, Paris, 27 August 2013 <https://franceintheus.org/spip.php?article4855>

¹⁰¹⁶ Ibid.

powers. This was, of course, both served by, and a responsibility resulting from, being a permanent member of the UN Security Council.

However, in approaching these possibilities, military options were certainly at the top of their minds, whereby Hollande had decided to “increase our military support for the Syrian National Coalition”¹⁰¹⁷. Ultimately, Hollande ended the section relating to Syria with a sentence which indicated what France’s tone during the crisis would be, “only through this firmness will we see a political solution prevail one day in Syria”¹⁰¹⁸. Clearly, France’s idea of a political solution in this situation was to be the surrender of the Assad regime, and France was willing to intervene to bring this about.

Important to the idea of international intervention was the idea of consent; that the country’s representatives were allowing other states to conduct themselves on their sovereign soil. Of course, the Responsibility to Protect norm does have ways around this general rule, allowing the Security Council to authorise the use of force. However, it is always useful to be able to show that the actions potentially being undertaken are supported by those in the region. At the beginning of his Ambassadors’ Conference speech, Hollande referred to the numerous consultations held with American and European allies, Arab partners, and the Syrian National Coalition. With the US and European allies, Hollande was drawing attention to the growing consensus in the Western world relating to the events occurring in Syria. When referring to Arab partners and the Syrian National Council, Hollande was suggesting that furthermore they were seeking cooperation, that the relevant parties involved were working together to resolve the issue. This suggested that any solution found would be following the consultations of relevant parties, and by association, presumably their permission. Hollande therefore could infer consensus in his decision, even if there potentially was not any.

In the next section of his speech, Hollande discussed more broadly the foreign policy his administration would be pursuing. He tried to suggest that the foreign policy being formulated by himself and Laurent Fabius was somehow different from that adopted by Sarkozy (though as shown throughout this chapter, this is not really the case).

¹⁰¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰¹⁸ Ibid.

Throughout this thesis I have described how an important feature of France's foreign policy is the idea of *rang*, and that France holds a responsibility in the world due to its status as an influential power and permanent member of the Security Council. This is brought up in his opening line: "For France to live up to its responsibility is the goal and the pride of the foreign policy I have been conducting with Laurent Fabius since my election"¹⁰¹⁹. Here, Hollande was relying on what is found to be a more personal approach, anthropomorphising the policy. Speaking of pride and responsibility accentuates the fact that Hollande was attempting to conjure in the mind of the listener a notion of French exceptionalism; that it was only right that France play a role on the global stage, that it was both France's duty, and its joy to serve.

This was only natural, of course, for France. When describing France's Foreign Policy principles, Hollande argued that France "wants to be a "landmark" power. Here was perhaps the clearest indication of France's desire to enhance and confirm its *rang*. In this context, Hollande was describing how France wished to be a "bridge between the continents"¹⁰²⁰, acting as a power-broker and peace maker on the international stage. This, of course, was done because France wants to be "a nation that speaks beyond its interests alone". Whilst it may not necessarily hold the military power of the United States, Russia, or even China, France could be influential in other ways, such as using its diplomatic ties to act as peace-maker. This is a role befitting a permanent member of the Security Council, and affirms France's position amongst the great powers.

Dialogue is an important tool in France's arsenal in terms of international diplomacy. However, Hollande admitted that its military is equally important to allow it to be effective. Indeed, he stated that its principles "depends on [France] having the means to act: firstly its diplomacy, but also its military capabilities", which give it a special role further strengthened by its status as a permanent member of the Security Council"¹⁰²¹. Here we see France as being defined as being "special" because of its ability to use diplomatic and military means to achieve its goals, which are further enhanced by its membership of the UN Security Council.

¹⁰¹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰²⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰²¹ Ibid.

As explained in previous chapters, France takes its role on the Security Council very seriously, both as a mark of prestige, as well as a means of increasing its influence on the world. Yet, Hollande felt it was important that France be seen to be pulling its weight. At the time of this speech, and as explained in Chapter 6, France was still in the midst of an economic downturn. However, in this speech, Hollande acknowledged that whilst cuts may need to be made elsewhere in other departments, “France must ensure that its defence tool remains reliable”¹⁰²². Why? Hollande reasoned that “it’s the essential condition for preserving our credibility and deciding on an intervention whenever our country deems it necessary, in the framework of international law”.

Again, we see reference to France operating within international norms when acting militarily; one would be forgiven for thinking that this would be taken for granted. However, Hollande wanted to accentuate this point. He linked France’s *rang* with its ability to maintain its military and having the ability to intervene militarily anywhere in the world. Credibility is seen as an important asset when operating in the international community, and for Hollande the ability to use France’s military resources abroad is vital in maintaining this credibility. Perhaps one could also consider this within his domestic context considering his lack of credibility at home following the numerous scandals and falling approval figures mentioned in the previous chapter. It was important for Hollande then to prove that he too had credibility.

The concept of French intervention in the international order was an important theme throughout the Ambassadors’ Conference Speech. Beyond the situation in Syria, Hollande had discussed climate change, Mali, trade, and human rights (though only briefly). At the speech’s resolution, Hollande summed up the quandary when discussing France’s responsibility: “There are times when this responsibility is tough: do we commit France or not? Do we act or not? Do we take decisions or not? Do we intervene or let things take their course?”¹⁰²³

In making a decision, however, Hollande placed himself at the centre of the decision-making process, drawing parallels from himself to previous presidents. “This question

¹⁰²² Ibid.

¹⁰²³ Ibid

has been put to the Head of State at specific moments in our country's history"¹⁰²⁴. Hollande did not name-check the Presidents in particular, but one must assume that he was referring to leaders such as de Gaulle. Hollande acknowledged that within the next few days another such decision would need to be made.

Hollande's final substantive paragraph continued his rhetorical questions: "Do we act or not? Do we get involved or leave it to others?"¹⁰²⁵ Hollande answered, setting out what was ultimately his vision for France under his presidency: "France has decided to exercise its responsibility everywhere, for itself and for world stability"¹⁰²⁶. France under Hollande is therefore argued to be essential for world stability, that there was a responsibility for France to lend its talents and resources for the betterment of the international order. Hollande was continuing what he established as his country's legacy of stepping up when it has been required.

Part of "stepping up", as has been discussed previously, is pursuing dialogue. This included building relationships with the Syrian National Coalition, the group which was widely considered at the time to represent the official opposition to the Syrian regime. On 29 August, Hollande issued a joint statement with Ahmad Al-Assi Al Jarba, President of the Syrian National Coalition. Hollande accentuated the connections between the two individuals, as well as the SNC and France, by reminding those listening that this was the second time that he had welcomed the organisation to France¹⁰²⁷.

Furthermore, Hollande was also keen to reaffirm France's support of the SNC, whom it argued was the sole representative of the Syrian population, an opinion which was shared by a large part of the international community¹⁰²⁸. Hollande also strongly emphasised the political and humanitarian assistance France had provided, as well as the support it had offered to other Gulf countries, thereby showing its willingness to

¹⁰²⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰²⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰²⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰²⁷ Joint Declaration of Mr Francois Hollande, President of the French Republic, and Ahmad Al-Assi Al Jarba, President of the Syrian National Coalition, on the Situation in Syria, Paris, 29 August 2013

<http://discourse.vie-publique.fr/notices/137001987.html> [accessed 27/05/2019]

¹⁰²⁸ Ibid.

work with regional actors and utilise its own resources on the other side of the world in the interests of international humanitarianism.

Beyond this, Hollande demanded that the chemical weapons attack which had occurred required an appropriate reaction from the international community. Indeed, Hollande argued that a solution could only be found if the international community would be able to come together and offer a political solution, as being the only alternative to a military one. This would require the international community to draw a sharp line that the usage of chemical weapons was an unacceptable escalation in the conflict¹⁰²⁹.

These thoughts were echoed by President Al-Assi Al Jarba, who thanked the French President for both his personal position and the position of his government in supporting the SNC. This sentiment even extended to the French people, whom had displayed “sympathy and compassion”¹⁰³⁰. The solution to the current crisis from Mr Al-Assi Al Jarbi’s perspective was to create an international force to dissuade the Syrian regime from using chemical weapons. Whilst the SNC President was keen to thank both the United States and the United Kingdom, he felt that it should be the French at the head of any force¹⁰³¹.

At this point, the Syrian conflict had been raging for over two years. Hollande acknowledged himself that the international community had been unable to find a response to “the Syrian Question”¹⁰³². However, he felt confident that the utilisation of chemical weapons was sufficient to change their approach.

When asked what country would be involved in an intervention, Hollande accentuated that first the Security Council would need to authorise an action, at which point a coalition would form, preferably as large as possible¹⁰³³. For Hollande, the cornerstone would be based around the Arab League, who had been the one to initially condemn the attack and alert the international community. European nations would lend their

¹⁰²⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰³⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰³¹ Ibid.

¹⁰³² Interview between President Francois Hollande and Le Monde, *Le Monde*, 31 August 2013 https://www.lemonde.fr/international/article/2013/08/30/francois-hollande-au-monde-il-ne-s-agit-pas-de-renverser-le-dictature-syrien_3468865_3210.html [accessed 26/04/2019]

¹⁰³³ Ibid.

support too; however he acknowledged that few countries had the capacity to impose sanctions in “the appropriate means”¹⁰³⁴. France, naturally, remained ready to take its part, though Hollande advised that it would decide as to its specific role following discussion with its allies. At this point, however, the United Kingdom had already ruled out any military intervention in Syria. Despite this, Hollande argued that this would not affect France’s decision, and indeed indicated that he had had an “extensive exchange with Barack Obama”¹⁰³⁵.

This interview with *Le Monde* took a far more pragmatic approach than Hollande’s previous proclamations. It is also interesting to note that whilst there was discussion concerning working within the international system, Hollande did not play up France’s role as he had done previously. Gone then were the strong proclamations that France was leading the way to drive action against the Syrian regime. Instead, France was portrayed as just awaiting direction from the Security Council, at which point it would dutifully fulfil its requests. Indeed, when pressed on whether France was too frequently resorting to interventionism, especially looking at the two in Libya and Mali with a potential third in two years in Syria, Hollande responded that all three had their own unique context, but that France would accept its responsibilities “in the name of its values and its principles”¹⁰³⁶. Specifically, in the case of Syria, it would await the wider response of the international community to the attacks¹⁰³⁷.

Hollande did not completely dismiss France’s actions up until this point. When asked what the aims of a war would be, Hollande discussed how they were pursuing some form of sanction, rather than protracted conflict or invasion. Hollande justified France’s role in trying to resolve the conflict via other means. He discussed briefly how France took the initiative in organising a meeting of the “Friends of Syria” in 2012, as well as recognising the Syrian National Council as representing the Syrian people. Hollande also spoke more generally of the material and humanitarian aid, as well as the more recent military aid it was providing some of the rebel factions. This appeals to a historic topos of threat, as well as the topos of history. Here, Hollande

¹⁰³⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰³⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰³⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰³⁷ Ibid.

argued that previous actions had been insufficient in resolving the crisis, and that beyond this, not taking stronger action had led to this escalation.

France's leadership would become more essential as allies began to have their doubts over the intervention. France was prepared to act on 31 August 2013. However, after the United Kingdom had ruled out intervention, and President Obama had decided to go to Congress to seek approval to intervene, France had to make a strong argument to justify an intervention's necessity. Part of this was for the French government to call for its own debate to illustrate the legislature's support for the international community to take action.

In his statement opening the debate, Prime Minister Ayrault began by establishing the facts of the case: there had been a chemical weapons attack in Syria. Specifically, the United Nations had agreed that this is the case, but had not assigned blame. However, French intelligence had been able to ascertain with some certainty that it was Assad who had been the one to use these weapons, and that there needed to be a response¹⁰³⁸.

Here we see how French intelligence was leading the way, providing greater insight into the attacks than the international community had been able to provide. France's intelligence work enabled Ayrault to argue with some confidence that it was Assad who had used chemical weapons against its population. In order to prevent future attacks of this nature, Ayrault maintained that the international community had to intervene, and that it was directly linked to both France, and the rest of the international community's collective security.

After talking about what broadly should be done, Ayrault specified what France's aims were, and more specifically, were not. As mentioned above, the Responsibility to Protect norm required that there be specific aims to the action, and that the means be proportional. Ayrault was clear then that France did not intend to overthrow Assad, and that they wanted a political resolution. This, in many ways, could also be seen as an attempt to allay the fears of Obama and the American administration, who were seemingly getting cold feet regarding a military intervention.

¹⁰³⁸ Declaration by Prime Minister Mr Jean-Marc Ayrault, 3 September 2013
<http://basedoc.diplomatie.gouv.fr/exl-doc/FranceDiplomatie/PDF/bafr2013-09-03.pdf> [accessed 03/06/2019]

Ayrault explicitly stated that France would not act alone, but rather would build a coalition of other nations to act. At the head of this task, one finds Hollande. Here we see a more active Hollande at the spearhead of a French attempt to build consensus. This is what Hollande had been attempting to do throughout the entire crisis according to Ayrault, casting the President as a diplomat. Of course, this also establishes that if an intervention was indeed going to take place, then it would be France's and, by reflection, Hollande's victory. Why would France do this? Ayrault said that it is because, "France defends the respect of international law"¹⁰³⁹. Here we can interpret this statement to refer not only to the ban on the use of chemical weapons, but also the enforcement of the Responsibility to Protect.

The same day as the debate, France also released its report into the chemical weapons attack. This report opened by stating that the majority of the intelligence within has been drawn from French sources, though it did integrate "some complementary elements received through cooperation with our closest partners"¹⁰⁴⁰.

However, the focus of this report went beyond just establishing the facts of that attack. Whilst that was, of course, the primary purpose, the report also served to accentuate the primacy of French intelligence services in this matter, thereby justifying France's apparent leadership in calling for intervention.

After explaining the historic capabilities of the Syrian chemical weapons programme, the report explained the role French intelligence services and French researchers played in establishing what had happened. Here, we see that it was French competent services who obtained biomedical, environmental and material evidence from previous attacks in Saraqeb and Jobar, thereby confirming the use of sarin¹⁰⁴¹.

However, French intelligence claimed to have information beyond just the causes of death for the victims and the basic chronology of events at the scene, but also could place the blame on the Syrian government and speak to their aims. They claimed that the way in which the chemical weapons were used was consistent with military tactics

¹⁰³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴⁰ Syria/Syrian chemical programme – National executive summary of declassified intelligence, Paris, 3 September 2013, (Eng translation by French Defence Ministry) https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/Syrian_Chemical_Programme.pdf [accessed 03/06/2019]

¹⁰⁴¹ Ibid.

utilised by the Syrian regime, and also consistent with intelligence from “several of our partners” concerning “specific preparations in the days just before August 21”¹⁰⁴². They also referred to “several sources mention[ing] the use of artillery rockets, different from those of the best known ammunition stock (missiles and bombs). Our technical analyses confirm that the rest of the rockets observed on that occasion... allow the use of chemical agents”¹⁰⁴³.

French intelligence also had evidence that the Assad regime “feared a wider attack from the opposition on Damascus at the moment”¹⁰⁴⁴. Indeed, the targets seemed to have been picked explicitly to soften rebel positions. Additionally, the French were certain that the attack had been committed by the regime because the opposition groups did not have the expertise, nor the experience to use such weaponry.

This report represented the reason for France’s argument to intervene militarily. It is important to note that this was the earliest report on the attacks which laid the blame in this much detail. France was keen to be the first to issue a report which would give credence to their approach in being at the forefront of this issue.

On the following day, the Minister of Foreign Affairs made the case for intervention before the National Assembly. As aforesaid, Fabius’ speech was by far the most bombastic in relation to style, as well as the most effective in bringing the various themes previously espoused by Hollande and Ayrault. After relaying the events in rather emotive terms, Fabius discusses the conclusions France had been able to draw following its own investigation. France, Fabius said, was of the opinion that the attacks in Ghouta were committed by the regime, that the regime had previously used chemical weapons in Saraqib and Jobar, and that the regime had conspired to hide evidence of its usage of these weapons with significantly concentrated bombardment of the city. Therefore, the regime “bears full responsibility”, and more importantly, “we [France] share this certainty with our American, British, German, and Turkish partners”¹⁰⁴⁵.

¹⁰⁴² Ibid.

¹⁰⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴⁵ Syria/government declaration and debate at the National Assembly and Senate – Speech by Laurent Fabius Minister of Foreign Affairs, in the Senate, 4 September 2013 <https://uk.ambafrance.org/Laurent-Fabius-explains-reasons> [accessed 04/06/2019]

As it was France who first produced a detailed report purporting to evidence the Syrian regime's crimes, it could argue that the international community was falling into line with its own conclusions. The strength of these findings went undisputed in the Foreign Minister's statement, as he asked rhetorically "given these indisputable facts, what should we choose: action or resignation?"¹⁰⁴⁶

Fabius placed France at the centre of attempts to drive resolution to the Syrian conflict; that France were the first to recognise the Syrian National Coalition, they "offer it our [France's] support to respond to the humanitarian emergency, to promote a political solution. And we tirelessly pursued our contacts with our European partners, our allies, the countries of the region, Russia and China, to seek solutions to this tragedy"¹⁰⁴⁷. France here sought to somewhat implicate the international community in the recent events by suggesting that France had been the one seeking solutions which had been duly ignored by the community at large.

However, Fabius argued that the chemical weapons attack represented a tipping point, which indicated that not just the fate of Syria but also international peace and security at large were at risk. This risk was twofold: firstly, the listener was invited to consider the effect inaction would have in emboldening regimes such as Iran or North Korea, and secondly Fabius argued that a diplomatic solution to the conflict would only be possible if the Assad regime could not use chemical weapons to win the war¹⁰⁴⁸.

Therefore, Fabius stated that Hollande had "chosen to take action: legitimate, collective and considered action"¹⁰⁴⁹ which gave the international community a chance to resolve the situation. However, the international community here was to be interpreted more broadly than just the UN. Fabius acknowledged that "explicit authorization of the Security Council would be preferable. But, here again, let's be realistic. Russia and China have blocked any response to the Syrian tragedy for two and a half years now... the seriousness of the threat associated with the use of chemical weapons compels us to take action"¹⁰⁵⁰.

¹⁰⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵⁰ Ibid.

As previously discussed, France had been prepared to launch airstrikes against the Syrian regime on 31 August 2013 in conjunction with the US before Obama had decided to go to Congress. Therefore, France could be viewed as being perfectly content in acting without a UN Security Council declaration.

Hindsight would prove that Obama was not keen on engaging in a military solution, despite his previous “red line” advising that there would be repercussions for continued usage of chemical weapons. However, Hollande did not read this as being the situation, and therefore still tried to convince the US to intervene with France. Fabius confirmed that “France will not act alone and will combine its efforts with those other partners, beginning with the United States of America, with which it has always aligned itself at critical moments when the cause was just”¹⁰⁵¹. This was to invoke America’s own image of being a supporter of international norms relating to weapons of mass destruction. France attempted to build a kindred spirit between the two nations, as well as create a wider expectation that it was only right that the US intervene.

France justified its use of force here merely as a way of coercing Assad to the negotiating table, at which point the conflict could be brought to an end. France therefore conceptualised this as a means to a political solution, one which would be led by France, as “France will continue to take the lead in promoting a political solution”¹⁰⁵².

In his conclusion, this idea was discussed again as we find reference to France’s burden in relation to the international order. In summing up the stakes, “doing nothing is not an option, in any case not for France. By not responding, we allow Bashar al-Assad to continue his atrocities... Together with its partners, France will therefore assume its responsibilities”¹⁰⁵³. France once again casted itself in the role of *gendarme* of the international community, taking on a role bestowed upon it by its own history and traditions.

¹⁰⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵² Ibid.

¹⁰⁵³ Ibid

These traditions, as they were, were once again referred to in the government statement and debate stated by Ayrault and Jean-Yves Le Drian during the debate. In concluding the need for intervention, and specifically one led by France, it was said that:

France decides for itself, because it has military and intelligence capabilities that few countries have. It has special responsibilities in the international arena, and a certain view of how the international order is respected and of what is called effective multilateralism. It also has duties in terms of national security, which give it a responsibility to intervene¹⁰⁵⁴.

France was therefore conceptualised as a nation which had a responsibility to the international community, that because of its assets and capabilities (which they note few countries have to the extent of France), it was best placed to do so. Discussing matters, such as the protection of international norms, was seen as a natural part of the French political discourse because of France's aforementioned "responsibility to intervene"¹⁰⁵⁵, as would be its assumption of a leadership role within the international community.

The idea that foreign policy and military intervention was necessary, and necessitated a strong show of French unity, was raised by Fabius during his statement, in saying that "the government is convinced that the gravity of this moment calls for transparency and republican dialogue"¹⁰⁵⁶. Here, the republican dialogue refers to the debate in the National Assembly and Senate which was currently taking place, and the expectation would be for the Assembly Members and Senators to unify behind the government's policy to emphasise France's consensus, thereby highlighting its solidarity with the Syrian people in line with France's own values.

Fabius argued that by stepping in militarily and preventing further chemical weapon attacks, France could help the moderate Syrian opposition succeed over the more extreme alternatives. In doing so, they "will be true to our values, on which France's

¹⁰⁵⁴ Government statement and debate in the National Assembly and Senate – Speeches by M. Jean-Marc Ayrault, Prime Minister, and M. Jean-Yves Le Drian, Minister of Defence (excerpts), Paris, 4 September 2013 <https://uk.ambafrance.org/Defence-Minister-calls-for-end-to> [accessed 07/06/2019]

¹⁰⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵⁶ Syria/government declaration and debate at the National Assembly and Senate – Speech by Laurent Fabius Minister of Foreign Affairs, in the Senate, 4 September 2013 <https://uk.ambafrance.org/Laurent-Fabius-explains-reasons> [accessed 04/06/2019]

commitment throughout the world is based. Indeed, France has a special responsibility. It's an opportunity and a duty which contribute to the greatness of our country. Let's be united in order to be true to this vocation"¹⁰⁵⁷. In seeking to support the democratic aspirations of the Syrian opposition, and support civilians against chemical weapons attacks by their own government, France could be seen as its truest and best self. During this debate, Fabius called upon others to make this a reality by supporting the government's plan and producing a uniform response to the crisis.

This section has looked at the assumptions contained within the rhetoric of Hollande's executive in dealing with this crisis concerning what France's role is, and what it should be. We see how France attempts to position itself as a world leader, as well as a problem solver, how it is inherent to the French Republican character to step in to protect international norms and laws, especially when dealing with chemical weapons and weapons of mass destruction.

France imagines its reactions, and its solutions will be universally shared. Due to its history and culture, as well as its status as a large power, it is well suited to finding solutions to international crises, and implementing them. This appeal to history is of course a common technique, and can be powerful in mobilising domestic forces in supporting a policy.

However, France's attempts to represent itself as a natural leader in this field are not necessarily borne out in reality. The next section of this chapter addresses the actual reaction to France's rhetoric, to show how the rest of the international community reacted, and how France, in turn, sought to rewrite the history of the previous three to four weeks to seem that it had achieved everything it had wanted, in a way that it had wanted.

¹⁰⁵⁷ Ibid.

7.4 The G20 Resolution: rewriting recent history

On Monday 9 September 2013, a brief opportunity emerged following an apparent ‘slip up’ from US Secretary of State John Kerry. When asked what it would take to head off airstrikes, Kerry responded by stating that Syria would need to relinquish all their chemical weapons¹⁰⁵⁸. Within hours, Sergey Lavrov, Russian Foreign Minister announced that he had called on the Syrian leadership to “not only agree on placing chemical weapons storage sites under international control, but also on its subsequent destruction and fully joining the treaty on prohibition of chemical weapons”¹⁰⁵⁹.

Up until this very moment, Hollande had remained optimistic regarding the potential of US-backed military intervention. During the G20 conference, Hollande continued to lobby for Obama’s support, with the two meeting on 6 September for 45 minutes. During this conversation, President Obama was supposedly non-committal, advising that the situation was “difficult” regarding obtaining Congressional support, and when asked when they could potentially organise a new date for the strikes, Obama replied that they should “let our chiefs of staff work together”¹⁰⁶⁰. Furthermore, John Kerry, as late as 7 September, seemed supportive of interventions, arguing that “this is truly our Munich! It’s the moment to choose responsibility over appeasement”¹⁰⁶¹. However, two days later, Kerry made his seemingly off-the-cuff remark, completely changing the landscape.

The following day, Laurent Fabius gave a press conference in response to the new agreement being formed¹⁰⁶². In the statement, Fabius reiterated France’s goals: to punish those responsible for the attack and to create a deterrence against them doing

¹⁰⁵⁸ Dan Roberts and Julian Borger, ‘Syria Crisis: Obama welcomes Russia’s chemical weapon proposal’, *The Guardian*, 10 September 2013 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/sep/09/us-russian-proposal-syria-chemical-weapons> [accessed 01/10/2017]

¹⁰⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶⁰ Benjamin Barthe, Natalie Guibert, Yves-Michel Riols, Christophe Ayad “Chronique syriennes (1/3): A l’été 2013, le choc de l’attaque chimique en banlieue de Damas » *Le Monde*, 13 February 2014 https://abonnes.lemonde.fr/international/article/2014/02/13/chroniques-syriennes-1-3-a-l-ete-2013-le-choc-de-l-attaque-chimique-en-banlieue-de-damas_4365000_3210.html [accessed 07/06/2019]

¹⁰⁶¹ Benjamin Barthe, Natalie Guibert, Yves-Michel Riols, Christophe Ayad Chronique syriennes (3/3): L’été ou la France a presque fait la guerre en Syrie *Le Monde*, 15 February 2014 https://abonnes.lemonde.fr/international/article/2014/02/15/intervention-en-syrie-comment-les-americaains-ont-lache-les-francais-3-3_4367078_3210.html [accessed 07/06/2019]

¹⁰⁶² Introductory remarks by M. Laurent Fabius, Minister of Foreign Affairs, during his press conference, Paris, 10 September 2013 <https://franceintheus.org/spip.php?article4879> [accessed 01/10/2017]

it again. Fabius was cautiously optimistic, but also wary, as he “didn’t want it to be used as a diversionary tactic”¹⁰⁶³.

In the press conference, Fabius also warned that “we won’t let ourselves be dragged into delaying tactics, so we must have rapid results. France wants to act in good faith to ensure that a firm, specific and verifiable response to the Syrian chemical threat can finally be found, with the two objectives we’ve had from the outset – punishment and deterrence – and still the same method: well-considered firmness”¹⁰⁶⁴. France had been losing control of the situation on the international stage since the British vote had ruled the United Kingdom out of airstrike action. However, France could not be seen to climb down themselves, and therefore had to maintain their ‘firm’ persona.

France had placed itself in an awkward position regarding the opposition forces in Syria. As Hollande had been keen to remind listeners, France was the first nation to recognise the Syrian National Council, and as such, had formed close bonds. Therefore, France would not want to appear too allied to this new US and Russian proposal for fear of alienating Gulf countries or the Syrian opposition¹⁰⁶⁵. Despite this, Hollande needed to acknowledge now that military intervention seemed highly unlikely at this time.¹⁰⁶⁶

As it would appear that military strikes were off the table, France had to find a new way of retaining a semblance of influence on the process. In his statement, Fabius disclosed that he and Hollande wanted to “take the initiative” and propose a draft Resolution for the purposes of this agreement. This Resolution would:

- 1) Condemn the Syrian regime for the 21 August attack in Ghouta
- 2) Force the Assad regime to reveal details regarding its full chemical weapons programme
- 3) Put in place mechanisms which ensure the inspection and monitoring of the agreement by the International Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons
- 4) Detail the “serious consequences” for non-compliance with the resolution

¹⁰⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶⁵ David Revault d’Allonnes, *Les Guerres du président* (Paris, Seuil ; 2015) p.70

¹⁰⁶⁶ Xavier Panon, *Dans les coulisses de la diplomatie française* (Paris, L’Archipel; 2015) p.193

5) Take the perpetrators of the 21 August attacks through the international criminal justice system.¹⁰⁶⁷

This would seem like an embarrassing climb down for the Hollande regime, after appearing to be so ‘gung-ho’ in relation to its declarations over the Syrian conflict. Publically, however, Hollande had a very different interpretation of how events had played out. On 15 September, François Hollande went on *TF1* to have an interview with Claire Chazal.

In this interview, President Hollande recontextualises France’s role in the crisis. Chazal opened the interview by discussing generally the events in Syria. Hollande acknowledged the nature of the disaster, referring to the 120,000 deaths, half of the population being displaced and 2 million refugees. However, even within this “procession of horror” the attacks of 21 August stand out; he referred to it as a “chemical massacre”¹⁰⁶⁸. It was the unique nature of this attack which drove Hollande to feel the need to intervene. He described how such a breach of international law, as well as conventions which ban the usage of chemical weapons, demanded a response from Hollande and France on principle. The appropriate response, according to Hollande, would therefore be the threat of airstrikes by France, the US, and, for a time, the United Kingdom¹⁰⁶⁹.

Chazal challenged Hollande over his usage of the word “punishment”, asking whether he regretted using it. Hollande justified his calling for Assad’s punishment as he believed that it led to the international community’s reaction. Hollande argued that had he not taken such a strong position, Assad may have continued gassing his own population. Hollande maintained that the pressure France and the United States had exerted in calling for the regime’s punishment persuaded Russia of the need to step in and convince the Syrian regime to seek out compromise in this matter¹⁰⁷⁰.

¹⁰⁶⁷ Introductory remarks by M. Laurent Fabius, Minister of Foreign Affairs, during his press conference, Paris, 10 September 2013 <https://franceintheus.org/spip.php?article4879> [accessed 01/10/2017]

¹⁰⁶⁸ Interview between Mr François Hollande and TF1 on the situation in Syria, and on government policy, 15 September 2013 <http://discours.vie-publique.fr/notices/137002098.html> [accessed 08/06/2019]

¹⁰⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷⁰ Ibid.

Chazal challenged the specific importance of France in obtaining this compromise, as the terms would be fully negotiated in a meeting in Geneva, and the French had not been invited. Hollande side-stepped the point somewhat, arguing that the accord being drafted in Geneva, whilst important, was but one of many steps required to get to where they need to go. Hollande accentuated the importance that France was not alone in this, that international issues required an international response. Whilst the Americans and Russians were, at the time, discussing measures in Geneva, he would be meeting with John Kerry, William Hague and Laurent Fabius (the Foreign Ministers for the US, UK and France respectively) in the coming days to discuss the UN Resolution to enshrine the agreement¹⁰⁷¹. Throughout this interview, Hollande stood his ground that only once a UN Resolution had been passed should the deal be seen as concrete. It is of course important to enshrine any agreement in international law to ensure later compliance. However, with the negotiations being conducted between Russia, the US, and Syria, little room was left for France to play a role here. Therefore, any potential means of retaining France's *rang* in this situation was to help progress the Resolution.

Chazal and Hollande then moved the discussion onto the practicalities of the Resolution itself. Specifically, Chazal brought up the difficulties in verifying that all of Syria's chemical weapons sites had been disclosed, and that they had all been destroyed. Hollande spoke of a deadline of the first week of January 2014, which he acknowledged was ambitious. Hollande argued that in order to ensure that the Resolution is followed, it would need to include certain sanctions. When asked whether sanctions could involve airstrikes, Hollande advised that it would be for the Security Council to decide what would be appropriate¹⁰⁷².

In questioning the trustworthiness of the Putin regime, Hollande was able to argue that Russia's involvement was actually a good thing. He reminded the viewer of Russia and China's obstinacy in the Security Council, vetoing previous attempts to regulate the conflict. However, now that they had intervened, they too could act as guarantors that the Syrian regime fulfils its obligations. This could therefore be seen as a win for

¹⁰⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷² Ibid.

Hollande, as his argument that the threats of “punishment” were what had brought this issue to its current conclusion seemingly vindicated his position¹⁰⁷³.

The final few questions regarding the Syrian conflict concerned France’s general conduct during this conflict, as well as discussing the efficacy of military interventions. Chazal noted the issue of increased refugee flows generated by the conflict and whether airstrikes would be effective in resolving the crisis. Hollande acknowledged that the drawn-out conflicts in Iraq (in which the French had not sent troops) and Afghanistan had added doubt in the public’s minds as to the effectiveness of military intervention. Chazal also added the Arab Spring as an example where military intervention had its limits; a point which Hollande acknowledged in stating that the Libyan intervention had not played out in the way the French had expected. As a counterpoint, however, Hollande pointed out that he had withdrawn French troops from Afghanistan, and that he considered the Malian intervention to have been successful. He addressed arguments that perhaps France should not intervene in affairs which were not its own, but for Hollande, these were indeed “our affair! The security of France is my responsibility”¹⁰⁷⁴. Now that France had gained some success through its threats, it was only right that it pushed on to find a peaceful solution to the crisis.

Hollande was asked whether he was surprised by Prime Minister Cameron and President Obama going to their respective Parliaments; he dodged the question somewhat, by replying that it was purely an institutional question, but that the French President had sufficient power to make those types of decision himself. When asked on whether he had thought of going to Parliament, Hollande responded by stating that they were no longer in a position which would require him to do so, though the military option must always remain available.

Specifically, the military option remains within the Presidency itself. When summing up the Syrian question, Hollande personalised the authority of the Presidency over the army. He thanked the army for giving effect to his decisions in Mali and Syria. Indeed, the role of the president is “to choose the option, in the name of all Frenchmen, which

¹⁰⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷⁴ Ibid.

appears to be the best”¹⁰⁷⁵. It had been noted by Gaffney¹⁰⁷⁶ that this was a direct reference to de Gaulle’s *Memoires*. In this case, the threat of military intervention was what Hollande considered to be the most effective solution, that the credibility of a military option was what makes diplomacy possible¹⁰⁷⁷. Indeed, in this specific example, the threat itself had led to “a solution which France and the world had hoped for, which is a diplomatic solution”¹⁰⁷⁸.

Obviously, Hollande in this interview was keen to portray himself, and France, as being equally important as the other major powers at this time, and that the situation had played out as he had already planned. However, the facts of the situation did not bear this out. Effectively, Hollande’s argument was that the talk of “punishment” was only ever intended to coerce Syria to the negotiating table. Yet, it was clear from evidence which had emerged in the interim that France was preparing to launch its attacks on Syria on 31 August 2013¹⁰⁷⁹.

Also, Hollande’s inability to read the situation in relation to Obama’s reticence to intervene must also be noted. Hollande had convinced himself that airstrikes were still a likely outcome. However, many in Paris were unsure as to how to interpret John Kerry’s seemingly impromptu declaration; a Defence Minister advisor felt that the US administration had duped the French, but others in the Elysée thought that it had indeed been improvised¹⁰⁸⁰. However, it would seem that the plan had actually stemmed from conversations between Israeli and Russian officials; the Israelis proposed the plan to Russian officials as a means of avoiding military intervention, and after the Russians had indicated their interest, it was brought to the Americans¹⁰⁸¹.

¹⁰⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷⁶ John, Gaffney, ‘Political Leadership and the Politics of Performance: France, Syria and the Chemical Weapons Crisis of 2013’, *French Politics*, 12, 3 (2014), 218-234. P.228

¹⁰⁷⁷ Interview between Mr Francois Hollande and TF1 on the situation in Syria, and on government policy, 15 September 2013 <http://discours.vie-publique.fr/notices/137002098.html> [accessed 08/06/2019]

¹⁰⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷⁹ For a full breakdown of the appraisal of the preparations for airstrikes on 30 and 31st August, see Jeffrey Lewis and Bruno Tertrais Beyond the Red Line: The United States, France, and Chemical Weapons in the Syrian War, 2013-2018 April 2018 No 06/2018 *Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique* <https://www.frstrategie.org/web/documents/publications/recherches-et-documents/2018/201806.pdf> pp.16-20 [accessed 08/06/2019]

¹⁰⁸⁰ Xavier Panon, *Dans les coulisses de la diplomatie française* (Paris, L’Archipel; 2015) p.190

¹⁰⁸¹ This information was originally revealed by the ambassador Michael B. Oren in his book *Ally: My Journey Across the American-Israeli Divide*, and elaborated on in Jodi Rudoren, ‘Israeli Helped Inspire U.S.-Russia Weapons Deal With Assad, Memoir Says’, 15 June 2015, *The New York Times*

Furthermore, despite the arguments otherwise by Hollande, had France still been playing a key role in the resolution of the situation, then Hollande or senior figures from the administration would have been present in the Geneva talks. Instead, France would have to settle with proposing the Resolution to the Security Council. Therefore, the final work being analysed for this thesis relates to excerpts from Laurent Fabius' speech in New York on 27 September 2013¹⁰⁸².

The speech followed the successful passage of Resolution 2118 (2013)¹⁰⁸³. Fabius came across as semi-triumphant at the top, proclaiming that “this evening, amid the Syrian tragedy, the Security Council has at last lived up to its name... The Resolution we've just adopted meets the three requirements set by the French President and me at the beginning of this week”¹⁰⁸⁴. These being: that the security council recognised chemical weapons as a threat to international peace and security, and as such, the Security Council would be acting as guarantor for the chemical disarmament; the resolution held that whomever is responsible for such crimes would go to court; and finally, measures under Chapter VI of the UN Charter would be used against the Assad regime if they failed to meet their new obligations¹⁰⁸⁵.

Fabius, however, tempered this optimism with a warning: “This resolution is not a point of arrival”¹⁰⁸⁶. This warning echoed Hollande's statement in the previous interview. Doubts existed as to the trustworthiness of the Syrian regime, but according to the Resolution, measures also existed to ensure that compliance was kept. It was for the Security Council to decide whether Syria's cooperation had been “unconditional” and “transparent”¹⁰⁸⁷. However, Fabius was keen to note that “France, like all of us, will be careful to ensure this”¹⁰⁸⁸.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/16/world/middleeast/israeli-helped-inspire-us-russia-weapons-deal-with-assad-memoir-says.html> [accessed 8 June 2019]

¹⁰⁸² Speech by M. Laurent Fabius, Minister of Foreign Affairs (excerpts) New York, September 27, 2013 <https://franceintheus.org/spip.php?article4939>

¹⁰⁸³ United Nations Security Council Resolution 2118 (2013) http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_res_2118.pdf [accessed 02/10/2017]

¹⁰⁸⁴ Speech by M. Laurent Fabius, Minister of Foreign Affairs (excerpts) New York, September 27, 2013 <https://franceintheus.org/spip.php?article4939>

¹⁰⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸⁸ Ibid.

The second half of Fabius' statement looked to the future of the international community's engagement with the Syrian conflict. He acknowledged that whilst the current Resolution could resolve the chemical weapons issue, prolonged conflict increased the humanitarian crisis inflicted upon everyday civilians. Much of the discourse espoused by both Fabius and Hollande pointed to the lack of coordination and willingness to deal with the conflict within the international community, picking out Russia and China as being particularly guilty of this fact. Therefore, Fabius announced that "France wants to take advantage of this unity finally obtained at the Council in order, with you, to move the political process forward, which alone will enable the fighting to be stopped and peace to be restored"¹⁰⁸⁹. The vehicle for this political progress would be the Geneva II meetings, which would hopefully bring together representatives of the Syrian National Coalition and the Assad administration.

Fabius concluded his statement with one, final emotive appeal. Once again recognising the importance of the Resolution passed, Fabius also stated that the Security Council must go further, "shoulder[ing] its responsibilities in full"¹⁰⁹⁰. He invited all listeners to "think only of the Syrian people and their agony, which must be stopped as quickly as possible. This will be the position of France, which will remain firm and consistent, providing its total support to the search of peace"¹⁰⁹¹.

But how are we to appraise the efforts of France during this period? Did it achieve its aims? As of June 2019, the Syrian conflict continues to rage on. It is estimated that 570,000 people have died in Syrian territory in the last eight years¹⁰⁹². Peace talks have been insufficient in stopping the cataclysmic loss of life.

Furthermore, despite apparently fulfilling their obligations, chemical weapons were not completely removed from the warzone. Indeed, in direct contradiction of the

¹⁰⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹² Syrian Observatory for Human Rights "More than 570 thousand people were killed on the Syrian territory within 8 years of revolution demanding freedom, democracy, justice, and equality", 15 March 2019 <http://www.syriahr.com/en/?p=120851> [accessed 08/06/2019]

Chemical Weapons Convention signed by Syria in 2013, chlorine had been weaponised for an attack in Douma in April 2018¹⁰⁹³.

However, problems with the agreement could be seen back when it was signed. In his press conference on 10 September, Laurent Fabius made a series of five proposals which France would be asking to be included in the Resolution¹⁰⁹⁴. However, they would not all make their way into the implemented Resolution. Specifically, the measure holding the Syrian regime to account for the 21 August chemical weapons attack is nowhere to be seen, instead being replaced with a more general condemnation of the usage of chemical weapons in the country¹⁰⁹⁵.

Indeed, Fabius had almost put the process in jeopardy holding onto France's desire to punish Syria by demanding that there be a reference to war crimes in the draft of the agreement. Vladimir Putin responded by threatening to cease the process if Syria were threatened like that again. A new draft was swiftly drawn up, and Fabius took it to Moscow personally to have it agreed. It included an agreement that Syria sign up, from 14 October 2013, to the Chemical Weapons Convention¹⁰⁹⁶.

There were also other potentially unintended consequences of the drafting of the Resolution. Some interpreted the requirement for the Assad government to ensure compliance for the next year as implicitly having to keep Assad in power, or at the very least not actively seek to remove him¹⁰⁹⁷. Again, Hollande had stated that whilst he was in favour of removing Assad, France would continue to pursue a political settlement to remove Assad. This would effectively require the opposition forces to push him into a position to seek peace. France openly admitted to providing support to the Free Syrian Army, and may have been looking to use the massive threat to

¹⁰⁹³ Anthony Deutsch, 'Chemical weapons agency: 'toxic chemical' used in attack on Syrian rebel town last April', 1 March 2019 *Reuters* 1 March 2019 <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-chemicalweapons/chemical-weapons-agency-toxic-chemical-used-in-attack-on-syrian-rebel-town-last-april-idUSKCN1QI57V> [accessed 08/06/2019]

¹⁰⁹⁴ Introductory remarks by M. Laurent Fabius, Minister of Foreign Affairs, during his press conference, Paris, 10 September 2013 <https://franceintheus.org/spip.php?article4879> [accessed 01/10/2017]

¹⁰⁹⁵ Resolution 2118 (2013) S/RES/2118 (2013) 27 September 2013 United Nations Security Council https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_res_2118.pdf [accessed 08/06/2019]

¹⁰⁹⁶ John Gaffney, 'Political Leadership and the Politics of Performance: France, Syria and the Chemical Weapons Crisis of 2013' *French Politics* (2014) 12, 218–234. p.228

¹⁰⁹⁷ Thierry Meyssan, 'The consequences of Resolution 2118, 7 October 2013, *Voltaire net* <https://www.voltairenet.org/article180454.html> [accessed 08/06/2019]

civilians as an excuse to render assistance, as it had done in Libya. However, the Resolution effectively legitimises the rest of the Assad regime's conduct in the war.

Therefore, how successful could one consider Hollande to be during this crisis? On one hand, France's intervention did result in the red line regarding chemical weapons being upheld, even if Hollande was not able to play the role he had intended. This however requires an interpretation of events based solely on Hollande's representation that his aim was indeed to peacefully enforce the international community's norms relating to chemical weapons. It is submitted that on the basis of the facts, this does not seem likely.

Indeed, this must be interpreted as a grand failure on the part of Hollande. Clinging so long to notions of 'punishment' and 'firmness', and Hollande's inability to read the inflexibility of Russia's position, and the reticence of the US to engage in an intervention, resulted in France playing a minimal role in the resolution of the crisis.

Hollande's argument that the threats were only to drive Syria towards negotiations and compliance with international law fails on the fact that Hollande had planned to launch airstrikes 31 August without UN Security Council approval¹⁰⁹⁸. Hollande's subsequent conduct, it is argued, was to attempt to get the US to support the use of airstrikes.

Another failure of Hollande's was in relation to his argumentation. Unlike Sarkozy, Hollande did not articulate the case for R2P particularly strongly. It is possible that Hollande did indeed realise that Russia would never support a Resolution through the Security Council, and therefore focused solely on convincing the US of military intervention's value (the UK had of course already been ruled out following the Commons Vote in Parliament). However, even accounting for this, the fact that Hollande's arguments were tailored to a narrow reasoning, characterised mostly by France's relationship to the situation rather than the Syrian populace's needs, means that even if this had been his intention, it would have been unlikely that it would have ever been successful.

¹⁰⁹⁸ Jeffrey Lewis and Bruno Tertrais, 'Beyond the Red Line: The United States, France, and Chemical Weapons in the Syrian War, 2013-2018' *Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique* April 2018 No 06/2018 <https://www.frstrategie.org/web/documents/publications/recherches-et-documents/2018/201806.pdf> pp 16-17

Conclusion

As was mentioned in the introduction, this thesis had as its aim: to discover how France's rhetorical framing justifying of military intervention in Libya and Syria affected the build-up and outcomes of French and International actions in these two examples. At its core, this research wanted to establish how, if at all, the discourse generated by significant figures can dictate the success or failure of international intervention.

The examples of Libya and Syria were chosen in part because they provided suitably similar circumstances to establish whether patterns would emerge in the discursive practice of French administrations. Both situations involved conflicts stemming from and arguments referencing the protests of the Arab Spring. Both also involved proposed airstrikes to protect civilian populations from the violent acts of their respective states.

Differences also exist between these two examples. Firstly, the two examples take place two years apart, with different Presidents from different political parties leading the charge. This, however, is not considered a limitation for the purposes of this research, as it allows a comparative analysis of foreign policy and international intervention discourse generation across two different examples in a more controlled manner.

However, the situations themselves also contained subtle and not so subtle differences. As is explained in Part II, Libya is a North African country with strong trading links to Italy and France, but relatively few interests with other nations¹⁰⁹⁹. Therefore, were France to act against Libya, they were unlikely to be too disruptive to any other Security Council member, and to those who may have been slightly disrupted, such as the US, a quick resolution to the fighting would probably be worth the risk. Syria, on the other hand, is different. Russia has a key strategic interest in Syria with its lease on a naval base in Tartus, giving Russia readily available access to the Mediterranean Sea it would not otherwise have. It is therefore logical to assume that Russia has a good working relationship with the current leader President Assad, and would therefore be

¹⁰⁹⁹ Libya Exports By Country Trading Economics (2012)
<https://tradingeconomics.com/libya/exports-by-country> [accessed 12/06/2019]

reluctant to allow activities which could lead to regime change, jeopardising their access to an important resource.

However, this again does not to prove to be too much of a challenge. This thesis, in concluding as to the relative efficacy of Sarkozy and Hollande's rhetoric regarding military intervention, has taken into account the relative difficulties, and judges each situation on its own merits.

A direct comparison of result between the two examples would be of limited value due to the differences in geo-political circumstances. Instead, a comparison is drawn on the similarities and differences in the arguments proposed by Sarkozy and Hollande, as well as their relative success. The next point to discuss is how this thesis obtained and evaluated the arguments of these respective administrations.

The methodology utilised was Wodak's Discourse-Historical Approach from the Critical Discourse Analysis School. The key benefit of using this methodology is the ability to analyse argumentation schemes via the use of *topoi*. The *topoi*, to reiterate Reisigl and Wodak, "can be described as parts of argumentation that belong to obligator, either explicit or inferable, premises"¹¹⁰⁰. When the listener hears or reads a certain *topoi*, other elements of the argument are also inferred. The *topoi* used for any given piece of research are often a combination of already established versions, and ones explicitly designed based on the specific historical or cultural context.

Therefore, this thesis is, at its heart, an examination of the ways in which prospective policies and activities are communicated to ensure the greatest chance of obtaining the desired result, which in this case is either the peaceful return to international human rights norms, or legitimately mandated military intervention.

This thesis chose, as the basis of its *topoi*, various aspects of French Republican identity, including *Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité*, and the concept of *grandeur*. Furthermore, the Responsibility to Protect Doctrine was also included because arguments for the interventions in both Libya and Syria were formulated along these lines.

¹¹⁰⁰ M Reisigl and R Wodak, *Discourse and Discrimination: Rhetorics of Racism and Antisemitism* (London: Routledge, 2001) p.74

Relating to the specific raw data, this thesis examines eleven speeches/documents in relation to the Libyan crisis, and ten speeches/documents regarding the Syrian crisis. As much as possible, the documents were chosen to cover different periods throughout their respective crises to see how arguments or approaches may have changed in relation to changing circumstances.

Next is a brief summary of the findings of my thesis. Regarding the situation in Libya first, the protests following the self-immolation of Tarek el-Tayeb Mohamed Bouazizi in Tunisia seemingly caught the Sarkozy administration by surprise, to the extent that a number of gaffes were made regarding the support of the Tunisian leader Ben Ali, who shortly thereafter fled the country. Therefore, the Libyan situation represented an opportunity for Sarkozy to re-write its history as it were in relation to France's commitment to human rights and humanitarianism, and specifically its support of the democratic movements which came to be known as the 'Arab Spring'.

And indeed, this is exactly how it was perceived at the time. Sarkozy was able to successfully make the argument that an international response was required. Specifically, France, and its allies, were able to successfully convince the Security Council to pass a Resolution which would allow France, the UK and the US (later to be replaced by NATO) to impose a no-fly zone and prevent Gaddafi's air force free reign to attack civilians in Benghazi and other rebel-held cities. Indeed, shortly following the intervention Sarkozy and Cameron were considered heroes in Libya, after successfully orchestrating an intervention which likely saved thousands of civilians' lives.

There are a number of reasons why France was successful in helping organise, pass and implement Resolution 1973. There was, of course, some desire within the international community to prevent the death of civilians in this situation, especially as the fatalities in the conflict began to increase. As aforementioned, fewer countries willing or able to block the passage of this resolution were involved in the diplomacy.

However, this thesis also argues that Sarkozy was able to successfully marry together certain elements of French Republicanism with the Responsibility to Protect Doctrine in such a way as to produce a compelling and coherent argument.

Specifically, Sarkozy was able to adequately argue that the imposition of a no-fly zone over Libya would meet the four criteria for R2P (right intention; reasonable chance of success; proportional; and is last resort), whilst also describing the plight of the Libyan population and events in terms compatible with French Republicanism, and specifically utilising the principles of *Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité*. Sarkozy was able to make a positive case for intervention regarding the potential hopes and aspirations of a civilian population reaching out towards democracy. He was able to argue for the kinship of these individuals, and build sympathy for their plight.

Sarkozy was able to do this despite his and France's well known relations with the Colonel and the country, and France's support of the former Tunisian leader Ben Ali. As explained in Chapter 4, as well as Chapter 1.4, Sarkozy's strength was not in Foreign Policy, which practitioners at the time felt was too improvised and chaotic. This thesis finds nothing to dispute that. And yet, Sarkozy was able to demonstrate France's *grandeur* and increase its *rang*, at least for a time.

Despite the international prestige however, it was not sufficient to save Sarkozy in the following Presidential election. Following that campaign, it would be François Hollande who would assume the Presidency, and it would be he who would face a similar trial.

Part III of this thesis therefore analysed the approach taken by Hollande to argue for the necessity of military intervention in Syria following a chemical weapons attack in Ghouta on 21 August 2013.

Early on, President Hollande declared that "France stands ready to punish those who took the appalling decision to gas innocent people"¹¹⁰¹. How this punishment would come about was the next question. The United States had proposed the use of airstrikes as a deterrent against those who would use chemical weapons. This idea was supported by both France and the United Kingdom. Whilst France would not need permission from its Parliament to launch such a strike, the United Kingdom would. And so, Prime Minister Cameron set up a debate in Parliament on 29 August 2011 on the issue of whether the United Kingdom would intervene if the UN were to find that the Syrian

¹¹⁰¹ Speech by M. Francois Hollande, President of the President for the 21st Ambassadors' Conference, Paris, 27 August 2013 <https://franceintheus.org/spip.php?article4855>

government was responsible. In a surprising turn of events, the government's measure was rejected, by a majority of 285-272¹¹⁰². However, responding to a question from *Le Monde*, President Hollande said that the British Parliament's vote would not affect his decision as to whether to punish or not¹¹⁰³.

America took a slightly different approach to the circumstances; after seemingly being willing to go forth with airstrikes without a vote on the morning of 31 August, Obama changed his mind shortly after seeing the results from the British Parliament vote. This had caught the French off guard, as they had been preparing their planes for a strike at the time¹¹⁰⁴. It would later become apparent that Obama had been seeking to bide time trying to come up with a different solution, as the congressional vote would not occur until 9 September¹¹⁰⁵.

However, during this period Hollande was seemingly under the belief that the argument for military intervention could still be won, and that he could convince Obama to push ahead with the airstrikes with France. It is submitted that this was Hollande's only option due to the threat of the Russian veto in the UN Security Council.

The arguments mobilised by Hollande in support of air strikes struck a slightly different tone. Rather than playing towards the humanitarian tragedy of the events (although this argument did feature in his rhetoric, it was not as prominent as it was under Sarkozy), Hollande focused more on the breach of international norms in utilising chemical weapons. This line of attack placed more emphasis on the need to prevent Assad using chemical weapons again, and that only a show of force would

¹¹⁰², Syria Crisis, Cameron loses Commons vote on Syria action, *BBC*, 30 August 2013 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-23892783> [accessed 30/09/2017]

¹¹⁰³ Reuters/JPost Staff 'France says it could take military action in Syria without Britain', *The Jerusalem Post*, 30 August 2013 <http://www.jpost.com/Middle-East/France-says-it-could-take-military-action-in-Syria-without-Britain-324778> [accessed 30/09/2017]

¹¹⁰⁴ Jeffrey Lewis and Bruno Tertrais, 'Beyond the Red Line: The United States, France, and Chemical Weapons in the Syrian War, 2013-2018', *Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique* April 2018 No 06/2018 <https://www.frstrategie.org/web/documents/publications/recherches-et-documents/2018/201806.pdf> pp.16-17

¹¹⁰⁵ Mark Lander and Jonathan Weisman, 'Obama delays Syria Strike to Focus on a Russia Plan', *The New York Times*, 10 September 2013 <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/11/world/middleeast/syrian-chemical-arsenal.html?pagewanted=all&mcubz=0> [accessed 30/09/2017]

suffice to dissuade him. Therefore, his regime needed to be punished (surgical airstrikes were the most popular and feasible option).

However, these arguments were to have no sway on President Obama. During the G20 Summit during which time another solution ‘emerged’. In what is now known to have been a carefully staged ruse, John Kerry threw out the idea that airstrikes could be prevented if the Syrians were to willingly hand over all of their chemical weapons¹¹⁰⁶. A short few hours later, the Russians called on the Syrians to hand over their weapons¹¹⁰⁷.

Between 12 and 14 September, the framework for a US/Russian deal surrounding the renunciation of Syria’s Chemical Weapons stock continued¹¹⁰⁸. Afterwards, a timetable had been agreed listing the tasks which Syria had to complete.

President Hollande himself spoke very little of the subject during these negotiations, presumably as France had been side-lined due to their inability to see the terrain change before them. Hollande would finally reappear to do an interview with *TF1* once a deal had been arranged¹¹⁰⁹. France was given the role of proposing the Security Council Resolution, though this also almost ended in disaster when Fabius demanded that there be reference to war crimes within the Resolution. Russia strongly protested, and Fabius was forced to personally go to Moscow to approve the wording.¹¹¹⁰

François Hollande later claimed that the purpose of the threat of military intervention was only a tool to force an agreement such as the one which was eventually reached. However, the facts would suggest that this was not the case, and instead the entire management of the situation had been a complete failure.

¹¹⁰⁶ Julian Borger and Patrick Wintour, ‘Russia calls on Syria to hand over chemical weapons’ *The Guardian*, 9 September 2013 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/sep/09/russia-syria-hand-over-chemical-weapons> [accessed 30/09/2017]

¹¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁰⁸ Paul Adams, ‘Syria talks: Can US/Russia deal bring hope to Syria?’, *BBC*, 14 September 2013 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-24096397> [accessed 30/09/2017]

¹¹⁰⁹ Interview between Mr Francois Hollande and TF1 on the situation in Syria, and on government policy, *TF1*, 15 September 2013 <http://discours.vie-publique.fr/notices/137002098.html> [accessed 08/06/2019]

¹¹¹⁰ John Gaffney, ‘Political Leadership and the Politics of Performance: France, Syria and the Chemical Weapons Crisis of 2013’ *French Politics* (2014) 12, 218–234. p.228

As mentioned earlier, the likelihood of Hollande being able to get punitive airstrikes authorised by the UN Security Council was almost non-existent. Furthermore, the likelihood of Obama following through with unilateral airstrikes at the time also seemed quite slim. However, the reason that Hollande's handling of the situation is argued to be a failure is less to do with the failure to obtain his objective, but rather the manner in which France lost any leadership role within the process.

As mentioned in Chapter 1.1, *grandeur* is a Gaullist idea. Whilst de Gaulle did not provide a specific definition of the term, it is generally understood to describe the idea of France being a leader, a nation which is respected, as it ought to be. This concept is linked to France's *rang*, her position in the international order. This is relevant because Hollande's actions in the short term damaged France's prestige, thereby detrimentally affecting France's position in the global order. After seeking to lead the way in dealing with a crime against humanity, France had been excluded from the conversations regarding the solution of this problem.

This thesis finds the articulation of Hollande's policy as being part of the problem. It is true that Hollande's position in of itself was problematic, especially when considering the relative positions of Russia, the US, and the UK. However, Hollande articulating his arguments predominately in terms of punishment meant other arguments based on different criteria seemed insincere. For example, Hollande used some arguments around the topoi of R2P. However, with Hollande advocating punitive measures, the concept of France having the "right intention" with its airstrikes seemed insincere.

Therefore, what conclusions can be drawn more generally from these two examples? A key difference between the two leaders again relates to the articulation of their ideas and its interaction with *grandeur*. Sarkozy, in advocating for intervention, sought to place the victims, real or potential, at the centre of his argument. He represented them as wanting the same things as the French, or for that matter any democrat: the argument that France, the UK, the US, and the international community at large had a duty to help cultivate these aspirations. In successfully passing the Resolution in the Security Council after becoming the 'face' of the issue meant that France's *grandeur* was implicitly recognised.

This is drawn in sharp contrast with Hollande, whose arguments advocating for punishment cast France in the role of an enforcer, a *gendarme* of the world. The egocentricity of the way these arguments were advocated made it seem that the airstrikes would be all about France and its *grandeur*. In making the crisis about France's response, it not only lessened the likelihood of any intervention gaining support from other parties, it also meant that if airstrikes failed to go ahead then France's *rang* would also be damaged.

The aim of this thesis was to examine how rhetorical framing by France affected the outcomes in the 2011 Libyan and 2013 Syrian crises. In using the Discourse-Historical Approach, this thesis provides a unique way of analysing discursive practices in relation to the history and culture from which the discourse comes. This thesis shows that such a practice can reveal the inherent meanings found within language.

This thesis evidently adds significant value to the literature surrounding the interventions in Libya and Syria by providing a lens through which France's actions within this period can easily be understood. This thesis also provides one of the few comparative studies between the two similar situations. It also provides value relating to the understanding of the usage of the Responsibility to Protect Doctrine in the cases of Libya and Syria.

This thesis also opens up new avenues relating to a more general understanding of the effectiveness and implementation of Responsibility to Protect. As a doctrine, it contains many caveats and rules as to when it can be used. The Responsibility to Protect Doctrine requires Security Council approval before any proposal can be implemented. Therefore, diplomacy and negotiations will often be necessary if a state believes that its criteria has been met. One of the contributions this thesis makes to the literature, as well as a providing a potential future avenue for research, is that it provides a framework through which these kinds of debates can be understood. The strength of this methodology is the flexibility it allows to develop *topoi* which allow for a greater understanding of a particular event or discourse.

More generally, this thesis gives examples of the kinds of arguments which can be most effective in justifying the doctrine's applicability, as well as ones which are less effective.

One of the limitations of this thesis regards the extent to which certain factors can be proven to be significant over others. This thesis took at its core the role France played in the events leading up to interventions in Libya in 2011 and Syria in 2013. Of course, France was not the only actor involved, and based on the scope of this thesis it is difficult to establish the total extent to which France drove events as opposed to the United States or the United Kingdom.

It is therefore viable to take this research further in this specific field and examine either the Libyan or Syrian intervention taking into account the multiple parties and their unique historical contexts. This also can provide a fuller understanding of the ways in which arguments from different cultural contexts interact with one another.

However, within the context of this thesis, it has been shown that the arguments made by President Sarkozy helped justify the necessity for a no-fly zone over Libya, and that the arguments made by President Hollande were insufficient in justifying the use of punitive airstrikes in Syria. Ultimately, this thesis demonstrates that the ways in which arguments are made do matter.

Appendix 1: Speeches concerning the intervention in Libya, made by President Sarkozy and Alain Juppé, Francois Fillon and Gérard Longuet

1. Situation in Libya – Communiqué issued by the Presidency of the Republic. Paris, 21 February 2011
<https://uk.ambafrance.org/President-Sarkozy-calls-for,18667>

President Sarkozy condemns the unacceptable use of force against Libyans, who are simply exercising their fundamental right to freedom of assembly and expression.

He extends his condolences to the bereaved and expresses his sympathy to the injured.

President Sarkozy calls for an immediate halt to the violence and for a political solution in order to respond to the Libyan people's aspiration to democracy and freedom./.

2. Statement issued by President Sarkozy at the Council of Ministers meeting. Paris, February 23, 2011
<https://franceintheus.org/spip.php?article2176>

The continuing brutal and bloody crackdown against Libyan civilians is horrifying. France and the French people are following these events with shock and compassion. Such use of force against one's own people is contemptible.

The UN Security Council and Secretary-General, the League of Arab States, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and almost all States in the world have denounced these unacceptable actions.

France again calls for an immediate end to the violence in Libya and urges the leaders of that country to immediately engage in political dialogue to put an end to the ongoing tragedy.

The international community cannot stand by in the face of these massive human rights violations.

I am asking the Minister of Foreign and European Affairs to propose to our European Union partners that we swiftly adopt concrete sanctions to ensure that all those involved in the ongoing violence are aware they must accept the consequences of their actions. These measures relate, among other things, to the possibility of bringing them to justice, prohibiting access to EU territory and monitoring financial transactions.

In addition, I would like us to consider suspending economic, commercial and financial relations with Libya until further notice.

3. Security Council - Libya - Statement by Mr. Gérard Araud, Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations 26 February 2011
<https://onu.delegfrance.org/26-February-2011-Security-Council>

Permanent Representative of Libya made to this Council a moving appeal for assistance. France welcomes the fact that the Council has today unanimously and forcefully responded to that appeal.

In the face of the continued brutal and bloody repression and the threatening statements made by the Libyan leadership, the Security Council has reiterated its demand for an immediate stop to the use of force against the civilian population. As the High Commissioner for Human Rights said, and as recalled in resolution 1970 (2011), crimes against humanity may be being committed in Libya. That is why we have decided to refer the matter to the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court so that he can initiate an investigation and so that the Court might judge the principals responsible for crimes. Today, faced with the atrocities we have seen, impunity is no longer an option. The International Criminal Court in this matter once again finds justification for its existence.

We have also decided to impose an embargo on arms — the arms that President Al-Qadhafi has chosen to turn against his own people. We have, finally, decided to sanction the individuals who are at the head of a regime that has chosen to commit atrocities.

The text, unanimously adopted today, recalls the responsibility of each State to protect its own population and of the international community to intervene when States fail in their duty. We hope that the responsible parties of the Libyan regime will hear the message of the international community and put an end to the unacceptable violence committed against their own people, who have the right to democracy, freedom and justice.

A wind of liberty has arisen south of the Mediterranean. The Security Council had to meet this date with history on the side of the Libyan people. That is the historic significance of the vote this evening — a vote that we hope will open, beyond Libya, a new era for the international community as a whole.

4. Interview given by Alain Juppé, Ministre d'Etat, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, to "TF1" (excerpts) 1 March 2011
<https://uk.ambafrance.org/Alain-Juppe-discusses-Libya-crisis>

FRANCE/LIBYA/REFUGEES

Q. – As we've seen in our special correspondents' reports, the situation is very critical on the Tunisian border, overwhelmed by the floods of foreign refugees. What does France intend doing to help Tunisia?

THE MINISTER – We've already acted to avert a humanitarian catastrophe – in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya.

Q. – You're talking about the two planes sent to Cairo?

THE MINISTER – On the decision of the Prime Minister, we sent two planes, which are due to deliver several tonnes of medical equipment, and medical staff to help the Cyrenaica region. Moreover, we're in the process of looking at how the French Navy could also come to the aid of the Egyptians fleeing Libya and those turning up at the Tunisian border. Here, we have the possibility of helping them return to their country of origin, i.e. Egypt.

MILITARY OPTIONS

As regards the military intervention being talked about at the moment, it's worth thinking long and hard about this, quite simply because I don't know how the Arabs on the street, how Arab people throughout the Mediterranean would react if NATO forces were seen landing on southern Mediterranean soil. Let's think carefully about it; I believe it could be extremely counter-productive. And when you've embarked on a military operation, you've then got to plan for its consequences.

Before getting to that stage, we're trying to increase pressure to bring down Gaddafi, and he's going to be brought down. He'll be brought down because he's already very isolated in Tripoli. He's lost control of the greater part of Libyan territory.

The threat in particular – which was for the first time held up by the United Nations Security Council – to bring him before the International Criminal Court may, I believe, get people thinking.

Q. – That's France's position. As is clearly understood, the United States has another option: the US military is deploying its forces all around Libya. Does France agree and will she do the same?

THE MINISTER – I don't believe we can say that. The Americans are moving their ships; they haven't decided to intervene militarily. And for us, there's a rule...

Q. – The White House is preparing for an emergency situation.

THE MINISTER – Yes, but that doesn't mean it's decided to intervene militarily. In any case, there's a very strict rule for us: it's the United Nations Security Council that has the legitimacy to decide about peace or war, because intervening means waging war.

NO-FLY ZONE

Q. – Does that mean France would veto an armed intervention?

THE MINISTER – I didn't say that. We must discuss it and see, also, how the situation is going to develop. We're being sent reports that aren't verified. We were told, for example, that planes sent by Gaddafi had bombed the crowd. Apparently that's not exactly true.

So we must see how the situation develops. Depending on that, we'll adapt. No option is definitively ruled out, particularly the idea of imposing a no-fly zone.

Q. – Is France in favour of that option?

THE MINISTER – We're in favour of it being studied, of course.

Q. – But it requires pre-emptive action, as stressed by the Americans, who point out that the anti-aircraft defences would have to be destroyed.

THE MINISTER – Again, in the framework of a United Nations Security Council resolution.

UNION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN'S ROLE

Q. – You've insisted a great deal on the relaunch of the Union for the Mediterranean. In what way could this moribund organization help resolve the situation?

THE MINISTER – It's a visionary idea. It's clear that today a large part of our destiny is going to be played out on either side of the Mediterranean.

Obviously, President Sarkozy's original initiative must be completely reviewed, because a whole series of revolutions are currently taking place, revolutions that nobody anticipated: no foreign ministry, no government, no international relations expert... So it's tremendously promising and I, for my part, hope with all my heart that the Arab peoples succeed in this transition towards democracy.

So we must restructure the Union for the Mediterranean while remaining open to these governments and peoples. I can tell you that my first trip outside the European Union and France, of course, will be to Egypt next weekend. I'll go there to show clearly that France is very mindful of what's happening over there. (...).

5. Statements by Alain Juppé, Ministre d'Etat, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, at his joint press conference with William Hague, First Secretary of State, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland 3 March 2011
<https://uk.ambafrance.org/Alain-Juppe-s-statements-in-Paris>

THE MINISTER – Ladies and gentlemen, I'm delighted to welcome William Hague, my British counterpart, to Paris today.

Since my appointment we've spoken on the telephone, and I'd like to thank William Hague for making the trip to Paris. He knew I had a very busy schedule in the coming days, because I'm going to travel to Egypt. I thank him again very warmly for coming to me.

As you know, this is a very positive period for the bilateral relationship between the United Kingdom and France, with the historic turning-point of our 31st summit last November and, in particular, the signature of the UK-France Defence Treaty, which I worked on a bit when I was at a nearby ministry only a few days ago.

LIBYA/REFUGEES/SANCTIONS/NO-FLY ZONE

Today we devoted the bulk of our meeting to the situation in Libya and, more generally, the south of the Mediterranean, because our heads of State and government, President Sarkozy and Prime Minister Cameron, asked us to prepare together the European Council of 11 March, which will be devoted to these issues.

We reached agreement quickly and with no difficulty, because we utterly condemn the attitude of Colonel Gaddafi, who has discredited himself by using violence against his people.

So we're very clearly demanding that he go.

We then exchanged views on the humanitarian aid that should be provided to all those suffering from the current situation in Libya, particularly the refugees who are hurrying to the Tunisian border or hoping to return to Egypt. We also envisaged stepping up the pressure that must be exerted on the Gaddafi regime to get him to step down – pressure of an economic and financial nature, of course. We also agree about thinking and even acting to plan a no-fly zone over

Libya, if the threat Gaddafi is making to use force against the Libyan people materializes in the coming days.

EU/MEDITERRANEAN

In the framework of preparations for the forthcoming summit, we also emphasized the necessity of more effectively coordinating the immigration policies of the countries north of the Mediterranean, with the aim, of course, of rebalancing economic development between the north and south of our shared sea, to enable all those in the south to enjoy the freedom, employment, work and wellbeing they expect in their countries.

Finally, we also discussed the idea of relaunching the policy of cooperation between the north and the south – in other words, restructuring the Union for the Mediterranean, which we realize is a more necessary idea than ever, by integrating it into the European Union's overall Neighbourhood Policy.

That's what I wanted to say – very quickly and simply – while thanking William again for his presence here in Paris.

NATO/NO-FLY ZONE

Q. – This question is for both ministers. Do you agree with the warning by the American Secretary of Defence that there's been too much loose talk about possible military measures in Libya? Given that establishing a no-fly zone would have to begin with air raids on Libya, do you really think this is reasonable, after what happened in Iraq?

THE MINISTER – The Gaddafi regime's threat to bomb the civilian population in the cities is unacceptable, and its implementation would be criminal. So we have to prevent such a development. That's why France has approved NATO's planning project for a no-fly zone in Libya. We're open to this idea; we're working with our partners on this point. Regarding the conditions for establishing this no-fly zone, we'll take the decision when the situation is clearer than it is at present. We don't think it can solely be a matter of intervention by a few Western countries. We absolutely need the governments of the region and other participants to take part in such an operation. So William and I have the same viewpoint on this subject, as you can see, whether it be during NATO meetings in Brussels or in our discussion today.

VENEZUELA/MEDIATION OFFER

Q. – President Chavez has proposed his good offices to try to defuse the crisis. Do you see any chance of success in this proposal? What's your reaction to it?

THE MINISTER – For the moment, I can see nothing [in it]. Perhaps William can see more... To expand on my answer, I'd say that a head of State who orders crowds to be fired on and threatens to go and bomb civilian populations has, for us, lost all legitimacy to exercise power, and what we demand is that he go.

I remind you that, a few years ago, the United Nations adopted a new concept, namely the responsibility to protect: governments must protect populations against war crimes, and when they don't do it the international community has grounds to take their place. That's where we are today, so obviously no mediation aimed at enabling Colonel Gaddafi to remain in power is welcome.

UNION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN

Q. – You've just been talking about relaunching the Union for the Mediterranean process. We know that up to now, the major obstacle has been the Palestinian problem. Would France and Britain be ready today and very soon to recognize the Palestinian State unilaterally, as the Palestinians are asking, before September? Second question, if you will allow me: very soon the Special Tribunal for Lebanon is going to issue indictments. The Lebanese majority is refusing to cooperate with the tribunal. How are you going to deal with this? My question goes to France, who sponsored the resolution, and also to Britain.

THE MINISTER – On the Union for the Mediterranean, as I've said several times over the past few days, we mustn't abandon this initiative just because it's been at a standstill over the past two years, since it was launched in 2008. We know the reason for this standstill: the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The revolution, the revolutions taking place today to the south of our shared sea are one more reason to relaunch this initiative, and this is what we're going to try to do by restructuring the Union for the Mediterranean, by linking it perhaps better than has been the case in the past to the European Union Neighbourhood Policy, and I'm pleased to see that France and Britain see eye to eye on this objective.

To answer your question more specifically, we want the next European Council to vigorously call for the peace process to restart and the dialogue between Israel and the Palestinian Authority to get going again. At this stage we don't think a unilateral decision to recognize the Palestinian State will achieve this. I think we've got to favour dialogue as the solution, but this dialogue has to get under way and for this we're determined to bring all pressure to bear. On the situation in Lebanon, France wants – as she's very clearly said – the Special Tribunal for Lebanon to be able to go on doing its job and pursue the investigations which have already been carried out – we've said this clearly to the Lebanese authorities – and we'll decide our position on the basis of that decision.

LIBYA/NATO MILITARY ACTION

Q. – Do you envisage military action in Libya and if so, in what form?

THE MINISTER – I've already answered that question. France, as far as she's concerned, doesn't think in the current context that a military intervention of the NATO powers would be well received in the southern Mediterranean. It could be counter-productive. That said, given the threats being brandished by Colonel Gaddafi, we have to get ready to act and this is why we've given our agreement to planning for a no-fly zone above Libya.

6. Libya – Reply given by Alain Juppé, Ministre d'Etat, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, to a question in the National Assembly 6 March 2011
<https://uk.ambafrance.org/Alain-Juppe-on-international>

Mme Martinez, I share your concern about the situation in Libya. By cracking down with unacceptable brutality on the movements hostile to him, Colonel Gaddafi has lost all legitimacy: he must go.

I remind you that France was one of the first powers to tell him this so clearly. We then worked at the United Nations and in Brussels to ensure swift and robust sanctions were imposed. I find it hard to understand why there's such a lot of clamour over the situation in Libya; it escapes me... It concerns the lives and deaths of thousands of people!

So we worked at the United Nations and in Brussels to ensure swift and robust sanctions were imposed. We also mobilized major humanitarian aid with our partners: two French convoys have already arrived in Benghazi, and we're taking part in the airlift that is enabling Egyptians to be taken back to their country of origin. A French ship is also available at the Tunisian border to contribute to this.

It's now a question of stopping the bloody crackdown being pursued by Colonel Gaddafi's regime. France has taken a very clear position: NATO isn't the right organization to do it. We need a United Nations mandate. We're prepared to intervene, with others, to protect the people by blocking Gaddafi from using his aircraft. Finally, it's necessary to do so in full coordination with the Arab League and the African Union. That's what we're working on.

At the European Council on Friday, which will be devoted exclusively to the situation in Libya and south of the Mediterranean, France will make strong proposals.

During my visit to Egypt, my conviction that France has a specific role to play was strengthened: people are waiting for her. And we'll accept our responsibilities.

7. Conférence de presse de M. Nicolas Sarkozy, Président de la République, notamment sur la position de l'Union européenne face à la situation politique et humanitaire en Libye, à Bruxelles le 11 mars 2011.
<http://discours.vie-publique.fr/notices/117000613.html>

Personnalité, fonction : SARKOZY Nicolas.

FRANCE. Président de la République

Circonstances : Conseil européen extraordinaire sur la situation en Libye et en Méditerranée, à Bruxelles (Belgique) le 11 mars 2011

ti :

LE PRESIDENT - Mesdames et Messieurs, bonjour. C'était un Conseil européen, en tout cas pour sa première partie, d'une très grande importance. La France avait souhaité cette réunion du Conseil européen afin que la réaction de l'Europe soit à la hauteur des événements historiques qui se déroulent en ce moment même dans un certain nombre de pays d'Afrique du Nord et du Golfe.

La conviction qui est la nôtre, est qu'il s'agit d'un mouvement historique qu'il convient de saluer. Des peuples arabes exigent à leur tour la démocratie, le progrès social et la croissance économique. Ce mouvement historique, notre conviction, c'est qu'il ne s'arrêtera pas, qu'il impactera l'ensemble des pays selon un rythme qui leur appartient de décider et que l'Europe, qui partage avec ces pays une zone géographique - la Méditerranée -, se doit d'être à la hauteur de l'événement. D'abord, parce que les valeurs qui sont mises en avant aujourd'hui par les peuples arabes sont des valeurs que les nations européennes ont fait leurs, il y a déjà bien longtemps. Deuxièmement, parce que nous sommes des voisins géographiques et nous sommes donc au premier rang impactés et concernés par la réussite de ces révolutions arabes. Et c'est ce qui avait fait que la France a demandé la réunion de ce Conseil européen.

Indépendamment de ce contexte, le Conseil européen s'est penché d'abord sur la question libyenne. Les décisions que nous avons prises sont donc les suivantes : le Conseil européen est unanime pour demander le départ du colonel KADHAFI et de ses séides, le Conseil précisant qu'en aucun cas, le colonel KADHAFI ne peut être reconnu comme un interlocuteur du Conseil européen.

C'est un point majeur qui fait l'unanimité : M. KADHAFI n'est pas un interlocuteur pour l'Europe.

Le Conseil européen a décidé - je cite les mots de mémoire - de saluer et d'encourager le Conseil national de transition, basé à Benghazi, qu'il considère désormais comme un interlocuteur politique. Donc, le premier temps du raisonnement : M. KADHAFI n'est plus un interlocuteur, il doit partir.

Deuxième temps du raisonnement : le Conseil national de transition basé à Benghazi est, pour le Conseil européen, l'interlocuteur politique. Son action est saluée et encouragée. Que deviendra le Conseil et est-ce qu'il évoluera ? C'est aux Libyens naturellement d'en décider, pas à nous. Mais il était très important, notamment pour la France, que soit reconnu le statut d'interlocuteur politique à ce Conseil national de transition pour éviter un risque de « somalisation », c'est-à-dire d'un pays dont on dirait : « le dirigeant actuel n'est plus un interlocuteur, mais il n'y a plus d'interlocuteur ». Donc l'interlocuteur politique, c'est le Conseil national de transition. C'est la deuxième décision.

Troisième décision : le Conseil décide que l'Union européenne permettra l'accès des agences et des opérateurs humanitaires à des zones humanitaires, dont nous n'avons pas précisé où elles seraient, pour traiter la question des déplacés. Dans un premier temps, certainement en Tunisie et en Egypte. Mais nous souhaitons qu'assez rapidement ces zones humanitaires puissent exister en Libye, qu'elles soient protégées pour gérer la question des dizaines de milliers de personnes déplacées et qu'il y ait dans ces zones humanitaires des moyens sanitaires, des écoles, de façon à pouvoir accueillir ces populations déplacées.

Le Conseil européen, par ailleurs, exprime sa profonde inquiétude au sujet des attaques, y compris aériennes, contre des civils libyens non violents. Le Conseil européen, pour protéger la population civile, ses Etats membres, examinera - le Conseil examinera, les Etats membres examineront - toutes les options nécessaires, pourvu qu'il y ait un besoin démontrable d'une action, une claire base juridique des Nations Unies et le soutien régional - je veux dire la Ligue arabe. C'est dans le texte du Conseil européen.

Le Conseil européen a décidé, sur proposition de la France, de proposer l'organisation dans les prochaines semaines, très rapidement, d'un Sommet tripartite Ligue arabe - Union africaine - Union européenne pour évoquer l'ensemble de la situation, et notamment pour parler de la refondation nécessaire de l'Union pour la Méditerranée.

Le Conseil européen a également décidé la convocation sans délai d'un Conseil JAI, c'est-à-dire d'un Conseil des ministres de l'Intérieur pour concerter la politique migratoire au niveau de l'Europe et renforcer les moyens de Frontex. Les ministres de l'Intérieur européens devront d'ailleurs prendre contact avec leurs homologues de l'autre côté de la Méditerranée pour voir comment on peut organiser la maîtrise des flux migratoires, d'un côté et de l'autre de la Méditerranée.

Mesdames et Messieurs, j'en terminerai en vous disant que, par ailleurs, le Conseil européen a souhaité saluer, comme il se doit, le très important discours du Roi du Maroc proposant une transformation constitutionnelle de son pays pour faire évoluer encore un peu plus loin le Maroc vers une monarchie constitutionnelle et une démocratie. Le Conseil a tenu à saluer cette démarche historique, spontanée et volontaire, comme étant particulièrement exemplaire.

Mesdames et Messieurs, j'ai le texte en anglais, je ne lis même pas le texte en français. Je vais devoir retourner maintenant, pour un deuxième Sommet que la France avait demandé - Sommet de la zone euro -, parler de la gouvernance économique de la zone euro. Je dois y retourner à 17h30 mais d'ici là, bien sûr, si vous avez des questions, je m'y prêterai bien volontiers.

QUESTION - Est-ce que les autres pays du Conseil européen ont décidé d'envoyer une représentation diplomatique, comme la France, auprès du Conseil national de transition ?

LE PRESIDENT - Non. Il faut que je sois très précis, parce qu'il y a eu de longs débats. Vous comprenez bien que la situation est mouvante dans un certain nombre de pays, notamment en Libye. Il a fallu harmoniser les positions de vingt-sept personnes. Tout le monde considère que M. KADHAFI n'est plus

un interlocuteur. Tout le monde considère qu'il ne peut plus être quelqu'un avec qui on discute. Tout le monde considère que le Conseil national de transition, par ailleurs, est un interlocuteur politique, qui doit être salué et encouragé. Cela veut dire que ceux qui veulent le reconnaître comme tel - ce qu'a fait la France, ce qu'a fait le Parlement européen, puisque j'ai entendu le président du Parlement européen, qui a d'ailleurs salué la France comme pays leader pour avoir reconnu l'opposition libyenne. D'autres pays considèrent que l'on doit discuter politiquement avec ce Conseil, que c'est parfaitement nécessaire, mais préfèrent attendre un petit peu que sa composition soit stabilisée. Mais pour tous, l'expression, c'est saluer et encourager ce Conseil, et le considérer comme un interlocuteur politique. Pour moi, c'est très clair. C'est un interlocuteur politique. C'est avec eux que l'on discute et je crois que, d'ailleurs, de ce point de vue, la décision prise par le Parlement européen est sans ambiguïté. J'ajoute : quel est l'autre choix ?

QUESTION - Monsieur le Président, quel accueil a reçu la proposition franco-britannique d'actions ciblées et purement défensives en Libye en cas d'utilisation d'armes chimiques ou d'utilisation de l'aviation de l'armée du colonel KADHAFI contre les civils ?

LE PRESIDENT - Je tiens à rappeler que, même si c'est la partie - ce que je comprends - qui vous intéresse, la proposition franco-britannique, à ma connaissance, comportait six points. Vous ne parlez que d'un, puisque la proposition franco-britannique consistait à dire que : le Conseil de transition, c'est un interlocuteur politique ; il faut des zones humanitaires ; M. KADHAFI doit partir ; il doit y avoir un Sommet tripartite. C'était l'ensemble.

Sur cette question, il n'y a pas, en Europe, ceux qui sont partisans d'une option militaire et ceux qui sont partisans d'une option politique. Tout le monde est partisan d'une option politique et diplomatique. J'avais eu l'occasion, moi-même, au départ, de dire toutes mes réserves sur une action de l'OTAN et de souligner toute la complexité d'une no-fly-zone sur un territoire - la Libye - qui est grosso modo grand comme trois fois la France, et les moyens que cela mettait en œuvre. Donc, l'option militaire massive, comme l'a très bien dit d'ailleurs le ministre d'Etat, Alain JUPPE - à qui je tiens à rendre hommage

pour son déplacement en Egypte et pour la réunion qu'il a tenue hier avec les ministres des Affaires étrangères sur ce sujet - ; donc, la position de la France n'a jamais été d'une option militaire au sol, d'une option militaire de l'OTAN, et a toujours été réservée sur la no-fly-zone, même si nous n'avons pas décidé de fermer cette option.

Mais la question qui se pose à un certain nombre de pays, dont les Britanniques et nous, c'est : qu'est-ce qui se passe si des populations pacifiques civiles en train de manifester, sans violence et pacifiquement, sont la cible des quelques avions de M. KADHAFI, en l'occurrence les MIG ou de quelques hélicoptères qui tirent sur la foule ? Et la question que nous avons posée avec M.

CAMERON, c'est : à ce moment-là, doit-on regarder les images ou doit-on réagir ? C'est la raison pour laquelle, M. JUPPE et moi-même, nous avons parlé d'opérations possibles, strictement défensives, ciblées sur quelques objectifs militaires au cas où des populations civiles sans défense se verraient massacrer par une action militaire massive sur eux.

Nous avons posé un certain nombre de conditions : un mandat des Nations Unies - du Conseil de Sécurité -, le soutien des partenaires - nous visions naturellement la Ligue arabe et par ailleurs les autorités libyennes que nous reconnaissons comme des interlocuteurs politiques - et bien sûr des agressions massives, par des moyens militaires, sur des populations désarmées non violentes et civiles. C'est dans ce cadre-là que se pose la question. Et nous sommes très satisfaits, M. CAMERON et moi, que le texte du Conseil européen exprime sa profonde inquiétude au sujet des attaques aériennes et indique que pour protéger la population civile, les Etats membres examineront, je cite, toutes les options nécessaires.

Et vous comprenez bien que toutes les options nécessaires examinées par les Etats européens dans ce cas ne sont pas que des options diplomatiques. En posant des verrous : un besoin démontrable - ce que je vous indiquais : des avions de chasse militaires qui frapperaient une foule de manifestants sans défense -, une claire base juridique - une décision des Nations Unies -, et le soutien régional - le soutien régional, ce sont les autorités politiques que nous considérons en Libye et la Ligue arabe, personne ne le souhaite, mais il est clair

que l'Europe envoie un signal et n'a pas voulu exclure cette option. Je crois qu'en vous disant cela, j'ai résumé l'état d'esprit du Conseil où personne n'est favorable à une option militaire. Personne ne l'envisage de façon massive, terrestre.

Lors de mon entretien avec les autorités du Conseil national de transition libyen - nos interlocuteurs politiques désormais -, eux-mêmes m'ont dit combien serait maladroite une intervention étrangère que nous n'envisageons nullement. Mais il y a un « mais », c'est le cas de figure précis où des attaques systématiques seraient engagées contre des populations civiles qui seraient massacrées par des moyens militaires.

QUESTION - Monsieur le Président, est-ce qu'il y a le temps de poursuivre les voies internationales - donc les Nations Unies, la Ligue arabe, l'Union africaine - ou est-ce qu'à votre avis, à un certain moment il faudra prendre aussi une décision européenne ou d'un certain groupe de pays européens ?

LE PRESIDENT - La délibération est claire, il faut une claire base juridique pour intervenir ; un mandat des Nations Unies, c'est nécessaire, c'est préférable et nous le souhaitons. S'il n'y a pas ce mandat et qu'il y a une demande régionale et libyenne, nous verrons à ce moment-là. Mais vous comprenez quand même que la réunion du Conseil européen était très attendue en Libye, elle est très regardée par les différents peuples arabes. Si nous avons décidé d'exclure toute autre option aujourd'hui, quel signal aurions-nous envoyé ? Cela ne veut pas dire qu'on veut, cela ne veut pas dire qu'on souhaite. Mais enfin, l'Europe, c'est le grand voisin, nous avons la Méditerranée en partage. Les peuples arabes ont décidé de se battre pour leur liberté et pour la démocratie. Notre devoir, c'est de répondre à cette aspiration. Alors, bien sûr, le processus n'est pas abouti. Notre conviction à nous, Français, c'est que ce processus impactera petit à petit, d'une manière ou d'une autre, l'ensemble des Etats de la région, qu'on n'est qu'au début d'un processus dont nul ne sait dans quel sens cela va aller et comment cela va se terminer. Mais au moins le Conseil européen, avec ses décisions et en proposant, à la demande de la France, un sommet tripartite, se comporte en partenaire régional de premier plan. Souvenons-nous, dans d'autres crises - je pense à la Bosnie - d'autres sujets,

vous-mêmes et vos confrères à l'époque aviez pointé du doigt l'absence de réaction de l'Europe, son absence totale, enfin plutôt son suivisme dans certains cas, alors même qu'il s'agissait de notre région. Mais je ne peux pas vous dire comment cela va se terminer ou comment cela va aller, mais la décision du Conseil européen me semble être une décision très forte. Cela ne veut pas dire qu'il n'y a pas des différences de sensibilité, naturellement.

QUESTION - Monsieur le Président, une précision : le mandat de l'ONU est-il nécessaire ou est-il seulement préférable ? C'est le premier point. Deuxième point : dans la mesure où toutes les conditions que vous avez évoquées sont réunies, est-ce que la France et la Grande-Bretagne seraient disposées à engager leurs seules forces militaires dans ces actions très précises ou bien demanderaient-elles le concours d'autres forces comme celles des États-Unis par exemple ?

LE PRESIDENT - Je ne souhaite pas aller plus loin là-dessus. Il y a trois conditions : des faits incontestables, une résolution des Nations Unies, le soutien régional. Nous verrons, c'est un cadre qui a été fixé et je crois que ce cadre est satisfaisant, qu'il envoie un message à tous ceux qui doivent le recevoir et permet de dire que l'Europe assume et prend ses responsabilités. Qu'aurait-on dit si l'Europe décidait, avant même d'y réfléchir, de renoncer à toutes les options ? Il y a un cadre qui est fixé, maintenant il faut faire vivre ce cadre. Il y aura bien d'autres événements, les choses vont très vite comme vous le savez ; vous l'avez vu en Tunisie, vous l'avez vu en Égypte, on le constate aujourd'hui en Libye. C'est ce cadre et je veux m'en tenir à ce cadre. Chacun, me semble-t-il, a fait un pas l'un vers l'autre et s'il y avait eu des malentendus, ils ont pu être levés.

Je comprends d'ailleurs la sensibilité d'un certain nombre de nos partenaires européens des pays d'Europe de l'Est. Eux-mêmes ont le souvenir des processus de transition où d'anciens ministres associés au pouvoir précédent ont joué un rôle au début de la transition qui n'était pas le rôle à la fin de la transition. Et eux-mêmes - ce que je peux parfaitement comprendre -, quand il s'agit de discuter avec tel ou tel qui a été ministre de M. KADHAFI, se disent : « est-ce que c'est le bon interlocuteur ? ». Ce n'est pas absurde de raisonner comme

cela. Mais nous leur avons fait valoir que ces gens qui ont travaillé avec M. KADHAFI aujourd'hui, ils risquent leur vie, ce n'est pas rien, et ils ont engagé un processus démocratique. Est-ce que ces gens-là seront à la fin du processus démocratique libyen ? Je n'en sais rien ; d'ailleurs, ce n'est pas à moi d'en décider, je ne suis pas libyen. Mais ils risquent leur vie ces gens, ils sont sincères. Et quel autre choix avons-nous ? Pour discuter avec qui ? Vous voyez, ce ne sont pas tant des problèmes politiques, ce sont aussi des problèmes de sensibilité. Enfin, si vous prenez d'autres révolutions comme la Révolution des Oeillets au Portugal : avant d'être la démocratie que nous connaissons, il y a eu des étapes - enfin, pour ceux qui se sont intéressés à cette révolution au Portugal -, cela n'a pas été tout de suite des démocrates absolus, il y a eu des gens qui ont été dans les premières équipes qui avaient collaboré avec la dictature de M. SALAZAR. Et je pourrais prendre d'autres exemples : vous regardez en Tunisie, le Premier ministre actuel a été un proche de M. BOURGUIBA. Comment faire autrement ? Je ne voudrais pas citer des pays - enfin il y a la Pologne. Il n'y a pas un pays, me semble-t-il, qui soit passé d'une situation de dictature à une situation de démocratie parfaite, avec des gens qui, dans le cadre de la démocratie, tout d'un coup sont sortis de nulle part alors qu'ils n'avaient exercé aucune responsabilité avant ! Je ne sais pas si je me fais comprendre, mais ce serait parfaitement impossible de dire : « vous avez travaillé avec M. KADHAFI, donc on ne peut pas travailler avec vous ». S'ils prennent la responsabilité - ils risquent leur vie - de créer un mouvement démocratique en Libye, bien sûr qu'ils ont travaillé dans le cadre d'un système, comment pouvaient-ils faire autrement par ailleurs ? Est-ce qu'ils seront à l'arrivée du processus démocratique dans quelques mois ou dans quelques années ? Nul ne le sait. Mais les refuser par principe ? Nous, on les considérerait donc comme des interlocuteurs politiques non crédibles, mais eux en Libye, seraient vécus comme des opposants suffisamment crédibles pour risquer leur vie. Dites-moi quelle situation ! Voilà le choix que nous avons fait et voilà la raison pour laquelle la France - le Parlement européen aussi - a décidé de reconnaître ces gens. J'ajoute qu'il faut les encourager. Qu'est-ce qu'on veut : les pousser à la division ? Qu'il y ait dans chaque ville un nouveau conseil ? On favoriserait qui à ce moment-là ? Je crois que c'est sage de faire comme cela. J'ajoute que j'ai trouvé des gens assez raisonnables, en tout cas

ceux avec qui j'ai discuté. Le Président du Parlement européen me faisait la même remarque ; et je sais que le Président VAN ROMPUY va les rencontrer et que Mme Cathy ASHTON les a rencontrés aussi.

QUESTION - Monsieur le Président, vous évoquez les transitions démocratiques en cours dans la région, notamment en Tunisie et en Égypte où elles ont lieu. La situation est loin d'être stable. A ce propos, est-ce que la réponse de l'Europe vous semble à la hauteur, sur la base des discussions que vous avez pu avoir aujourd'hui sur le document de la Commission européenne et du Service d'action extérieure ?

LE PRESIDENT - Pour vous répondre franchement, je pense qu'on n'est qu'au début d'un processus qui va nous engager à aller beaucoup plus loin, incontestablement, mais qui nous amène à attendre aussi, enfin, à respecter ces révolutions arabes. C'est à eux de conduire ces révolutions et à mener leur processus, ce n'est pas à nous de définir ce dont ils ont besoin. Alors ce qui est sûr, c'est que nous aurons l'occasion de refonder l'Union pour la Méditerranée qui est plus nécessaire que jamais. Il faut pour cela que nous ayons en face des interlocuteurs avec qui nous puissions, nous, construire cette relation. J'ai voulu ne pas me précipiter, s'agissant d'un grand pays ami comme la Tunisie et s'agissant d'un autre très grand pays ami comme l'Égypte. Pourquoi ? Ceux qui m'appelaient à me précipiter dans la conférence de reconstruction de la Tunisie, qui avait été annoncée par le Premier ministre GHANNOUCHI qui a dû démissionner à la suite d'un vaste mouvement de foule, qu'aurait-on dit ? Quant à l'Égypte, le ministre d'État, Alain JUPPE, a fait un voyage très réussi là-bas ; le Premier ministre David CAMERON y avait été avant et y avait rencontré un Premier ministre égyptien qui a changé deux jours après. Donc, certainement, on devra aller plus loin, réinventer un certain nombre de mécanismes pour les aider. Mais attendons qu'eux-mêmes stabilisent un peu leur système démocratique. Je pense que c'est une très bonne nouvelle également que, sur la gestion des flux migratoires, nous décidions de zones humanitaires en Afrique du nord pour gérer les populations déplacées ; que nous ayons décidé la réunion sans délai du Conseil des ministres européens de l'Intérieur pour poser une politique européenne de l'immigration, la décision de rencontrer les ministres

de l'Intérieur d'Afrique du Nord pour gérer ceci ensemble. Il va de soi qu'y compris sur les politiques migratoires, il faudra tenir compte du fait que ces pays devenant des démocraties, le statut de réfugié politique n'a plus la même nature. Je prends un exemple : nous avons accueilli sur notre territoire une grande partie des opposants politiques de M. BEN ALI parce qu'ils avaient un statut de réfugié politique. Aujourd'hui, la Tunisie est une démocratie, les choses ne se posent pas de la même manière. Mais pour les étudiants, il va falloir qu'on les aide à former leur jeunesse. C'est donc tout l'ensemble qui, dans les mois qui viennent, va être amené à être repensé et sans doute réorganisé.

QUESTION - Monsieur le Président, petite question : vous avez parlé d'armes chimiques ce matin, est-ce que vous avez des éléments qui attestent d'un usage probable ou possible d'armes chimiques par Monsieur KADHAFI ? Deuxième question : quand je vois ce qui se passe, il faut des faits tangibles pour vous permettre éventuellement d'intervenir ; donc, qu'est-ce qui fait que l'on puisse intervenir avant que l'irréparable ou qu'un crime particulièrement gênant sur des civils soit commis ? Et, troisième question : si M. KADHAFI gagne sur le terrain, comment on s'en sort ? Est-ce qu'on n'a pas une situation - j'allais dire à l'irakienne - à l'ancienne ?

LE PRESIDENT - Vous avez fait un lapsus amusant qui en dit long sur votre tempérament, vous parlez de troisième solution. Parfois, il m'arrive de penser que vous voudriez bien cette place et que vous me verriez bien à la vôtre. J'ai compris que c'est des questions que vous me posez, donc parfait. Sur l'opportunité de frappes défensives et ciblées, je me suis exprimé en détail, je ne peux en dire plus. Sur les cas chimiques, je n'ai pas d'informations précises. Mais chacun sait que M. KADHAFI - d'ailleurs c'était apporté à son crédit à l'époque - s'est séparé de son stock d'armes nucléaires, en tout cas de réserve et de processus à l'époque. C'était d'ailleurs apporté à son crédit, je l'avais souligné moi-même. Le fait qu'il puisse y avoir ou pas des armes chimiques, je n'ai pas d'informations précises ; mais enfin, disons que certains des acteurs se posent la question. Vous me dites : qu'est-ce qu'il se passe si M. KADHAFI l'emporte ? Justement, c'est une solution que nous n'envisageons pas

politiquement, puisque pour nous, il n'est plus un interlocuteur. Et justement, tout ce que nous faisons, c'est de nature à encourager tous ces Libyens qui veulent une démocratie et qui doivent pouvoir s'appuyer sur un soutien politique économique sans faille de l'Europe. On ne peut pas considérer que le fait que M. KADHAFI reste en place soit autre chose qu'une très mauvaise nouvelle pour l'ensemble des pays de la région qu'elle signale. Mais je vous l'ai dit de la même façon - sans comparer les situations - en Côte d'Ivoire. Depuis le début, la France se bat pour que soit reconnue l'élection, validée par les Nations Unies, du Président OUATTARA, parce que ce n'est pas que de la Côte d'Ivoire dont il s'agit, c'est de l'ensemble de l'Afrique. Pourquoi faire des élections, si, lorsque que l'on fait des élections, le président élu n'est pas le président en place ? Et là, il y a une révolution qui s'est mise en place, des gens courageusement qui disent : « nous aussi nous voulons la démocratie ». On doit agir pour les aider, ce serait une catastrophe si ce n'était pas le cas.

QUESTION - Je voulais savoir comme vous nous expliquez que, s'il y a un massacre, vous aimeriez que l'Europe puisse anticiper dès maintenant ce qu'elle est prête à faire, vous privilégiez des actions ciblées, vous l'avez dit, alors est-ce que c'est une nouvelle...

LE PRESIDENT - Enfin, vous pensez qu'il n'y a que cela qui est important. Non, non, je ne vous le reproche pas, mais...

QUESTION - Cela nous pose des questions, c'est normal. Mais je me demandais si c'était une nouvelle doctrine diplomatique de la France, c'est-à-dire si, en Jordanie, au Yémen, au Koweït, toutes les manifestations contre les pouvoirs en place tournent mal, s'il y a des répressions, est-ce que la France est amenée comme cela à proposer à chaque fois des attaques ciblées ?

LE PRESIDENT - Excusez-moi, excusez-moi. Le président MOUBARAK est parti ou a été renversé à la suite de manifestations de masse, je n'ai jamais vu l'aviation égyptienne frapper les manifestants. Il y a eu des brutalités, il y a des affrontements, mais on est resté dans le cadre de violences que je qualifierais - pardon de l'expression - de civiles. Enfin, ce n'est sans doute pas la bonne expression, je m'en excuse auprès de vous. Mais je veux dire que c'était brutal,

il y a eu de la brutalité, il y a eu des violences, il y a eu des manifestants blessés, sans doute il y a eu des morts, mais enfin, cela n'a rien à voir avec des moyens armés, militaires, aériens que l'on envoie contre des gens qui manifestent. En Tunisie, il y a eu des manifestants, il y a eu des brutalités, il y a eu des morts, mais le Président BEN ALI est parti. Justement, d'ailleurs en Égypte comme en Tunisie, parce que l'armée a refusé de faire feu sur la foule dans son immense majorité, c'est bien cela qui s'est passé. En Tunisie comme en Égypte, il y aurait pu avoir cette tentation mais l'armée a dit : « nous ne tirerons pas sur la foule ». Mais, est-ce que c'est ce qui s'est passé en Libye ? On ne peut pas dire que tout se ressemble, on ne peut pas dire que tout se vaut, on ne peut pas dire que toutes les situations sont égales. Ce n'est pas parce que c'est l'Afrique du Nord, ce n'est pas parce que ce sont des populations arabes qui veulent se libérer d'une forme de dictature, ce n'est pas du tout la même chose ? Je veux dire que les conditions de la répression, de la brutalité, ne sont du tout les mêmes. Si en Libye, le chef de l'armée libyenne ou des dirigeants de l'armée, des militaires disaient : « nous ne tirerons pas sur la foule », nous sommes dans un autre cas de figure. Jamais personne n'a envisagé de faire des actions militaires ciblées, défensives en Tunisie ou en Égypte. Cela ne s'est même pas posé. Donc ce n'est pas du tout - excusez-moi, mais je me suis sans doute mal exprimé -, mais ce n'est pas du tout un changement diplomatique que nous envisageons, c'est une adaptation à une situation tout à fait particulière que l'on n'a absolument connue nulle part. Peut être, le seul endroit où l'on a connu une mobilisation d'un État, c'était en Iran dans les conditions que l'on connaît et, encore une fois, je n'ai pas vu à ce moment là l'armée, l'aviation lancées pour ce que l'on sait. Donc, il n'y a aucun changement diplomatique, une nouvelle doctrine. Je suis opposé à une intervention militaire d'ensemble. J'ai été, je crois, l'un des premiers à dire ma réserve sur l'intervention de l'OTAN qui est une organisation militaire. Mais, entre refuser une intervention militaire et laisser des gens massacrés par des avions de chasse alors qu'ils manifestent, il y a peut-être à réfléchir sur ce que l'on fait, si les Nations Unies sont d'accord, si la Ligue arabe est d'accord, s'il y a un mandat et si ces faits sont avérés. Pardon, mais vous ne pouvez pas comparer ce qui se passe en Libye aujourd'hui et ce qui s'est passé en Tunisie. Vous pouvez le comparer politiquement si vous voulez, mais vous ne pouvez pas comparer la répression,

qui n'a rien à voir. Il y a des actes de guerre en Libye. Je ne pense pas qu'il y ait eu des actes de guerre en Égypte ou des actes de guerre en Tunisie. Il y a eu une révolution politique avec des violences, naturellement, mais là on est dans des villes bombardées, des terminaux pétroliers bombardés, cela n'a rien à voir !

QUESTION - Est-ce qu'on peut, Monsieur le Président, puisque cela va se terminer très tard, est-ce qu'on peut anticiper par une question sur la réunion qui va suivre maintenant ? Parce que ça va finir très tard après.

LE PRESIDENT - Je suis désolé pour votre nuit de sommeil, mais il n'y a pas de raison que vous dormiez plus que moi ! Écoutez, je ne veux surtout pas être désagréable avec vous, je ne veux pas mélanger des choses, parce que j'ai bien réfléchi à la situation qui nous occupe en Afrique du Nord, c'est historique. Je sais bien qu'on emploie le mot historique à tout bout de champ et cela méritait qu'on fasse un Conseil européen spécifique sur le sujet. Ce n'était pas évident, nombre de mes partenaires ne le pensaient pas. Ils pensaient qu'une réunion des ministres des Affaires étrangères suffisait. J'ai dit ce que je pensais de l'action d'Alain JUPPE, avec qui nous travaillons main dans la main, mais je ne veux pas mélanger l'importance des décisions qu'on va prendre toute à l'heure, les 17 membres de la zone euro et ce qu'on vient de décider là. Tant de fois dans le passé j'ai regretté que l'Europe n'exprime pas une voix politique, un chemin politique clair, qu'à partir du moment où elle accepte de le faire avec les hésitations, les ambiguïtés que je reconnais bien volontiers - la situation n'est pas simple -, c'est quand même une bonne nouvelle, c'est l'Europe qui est en première ligne et c'est l'Europe qui doit assumer ce choix politique. Bien sûr il faut en parler avec nos amis, nos alliés Américains, naturellement ; mais nous sommes les premiers concernés. C'est quand même extraordinairement important.

Alors, je viens parler de cette question-là parce que c'est le sujet, on en a parlé pendant six heures. Je ne veux pas parler d'autre chose, même si le gouvernement économique, le pacte de convergence et de compétitivité, c'est absolument important, mais ce soir.

QUESTION - Sur les zones humanitaires est-ce que vous pouvez nous préciser ce que vous entendez par zones humanitaires et qui va le faire ? Est-ce que vous avez demandé à quelqu'un de le faire ?

LE PRESIDENT - D'abord, on s'est mis d'accord sur le principe de zones humanitaires parce que - je le dis à nos compatriotes - si on veut que ces révolutions arabes ne provoquent pas de peur, il faut qu'avec franchise nous parlions de la question des flux migratoires. Il y a des populations déplacées. On peut considérer qu'il y a 200 000 personnes - je ne parle pas d'immigrés - 200 000 personnes déplacées entre l'Égypte, la Libye, la Tunisie. Si on ne traite pas l'accueil de ces personnes déplacées dans des conditions humaines et décentes, quelle va être la tentation de ces personnes déplacées ? Elles n'auront pas le choix : c'est de traverser la Méditerranée. Or, nous ne pouvons pas les accueillir dans ces conditions-là. Donc, il faut organiser des zones humanitaires. Dans notre esprit ces zones devraient être gérées par les Nations Unies. Alors, est-ce que c'est le HCR, l'Office des Migrations ? Je ne sais pas, mais par les Nations Unies. L'Europe devrait bien sûr participer à son financement, à son organisation, ce qui est la seule façon de gérer tranquillement la question des flux migratoires. Puis, les ministres de l'Intérieur européens et d'Afrique du nord vont se réunir pour voir ce dont ils ont besoin. Mais naturellement, la politique migratoire doit évoluer et doit être maîtrisée des deux côtés. Nous devons continuer à accueillir leurs étudiants, les hommes d'affaires, et ils doivent accepter de donner des laissez-passer consulaires pour les immigrés en situation irrégulière qui n'ont pas de papiers et qui ont vocation à retourner dans leur pays. Donc, on va essayer de le gérer ensemble. Profitons de cette crise pour poser les bases, non seulement d'une politique d'immigration européenne, mais d'une politique d'immigration concertée entre pays de départ et pays d'arrivée. Et donc, les Nations Unies me sembleraient la meilleure façon ; et avec cela on peut gérer ces flux migratoires. Sinon, on aura la multiplication de Lampedusa et personne ne peut le souhaiter, personne. Donc, il faut organiser des zones humanitaires décentes, avec des écoles pour les enfants, avec des moyens sanitaires de manière à maîtriser cela. Et pour moi, les Nations Unies sont le mieux à même de le faire. Alors il y aura d'autres questions : qui protège ces zones humanitaires ? La France peut avoir des

propositions à faire et en fera sans doute. Mais dans le cadre de ce Conseil européen, je préfère qu'on s'en tienne au principe et après, step by step, étape par étape, on construira ce projet. On ne pouvait pas tout résoudre aujourd'hui.

Merci beaucoup.

8. Hearing of Alain Juppé, Ministre d'Etat, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, before the National Assembly Foreign Affairs Committee (excerpts)
Paris, March 15, 2011
<https://franceintheus.org/spip.php?article2244>

ARAB DEMOCRACY MOVEMENTS

(...)

I now want to mention the Mediterranean's southern shore. The Jasmine Revolution in Tunisia and 25 January in Egypt paved the way for a series of unprecedented upheavals that one of my G8 counterparts had no hesitation in comparing with the fall of the Berlin Wall. We were very much criticized for not foreseeing them; but if prospective studies exist, so do retrospective studies; perhaps diplomacy belongs to the latter category.

These events have multiple causes. The first is the questioning of the legitimacy of authoritarian Arab political regimes – republics or monarchies – particularly by emerging, educated, modern middle classes who want to play a greater role in political life and are expressing their desire for freedom. In Tunisia, efforts made for years to raise education levels aroused keen political awareness among young people, who at the same time couldn't find any jobs.

The second reason relates to the erosion of power – with certain regimes having lasted several decades – and people's sense of frustration with a monopoly of wealth, with corruption and the daily bullying meted out by the security forces.

Then there are the economic and social problems, like unemployment and the rise in commodity prices, particularly food – all phenomena linked to the global economic crisis of the past two years.

Finally we should mention the amplifying role of the media : the channel Al-Jazeera and, on the Internet, social networks like Facebook, on which one of the members of the 25 January coordination group I met in Tahrir Square was also an expert.

These factors are common to all the countries in the region stretching from Morocco to Iran; they carry in them, through the protest movements they unleashed, immense hope of change for the whole region. This new “Arab

spring” mustn’t frighten us. For too long, we thought authoritarian regimes were the only bulwarks against extremism in Arab societies. In Tunisia and Egypt, the people swept that cliché aside by very maturely expressing their hope for democracy.

In Egypt, the authorities responded in a responsible way, without giving in to the temptation of violence: the army is now guiding the transition in cooperation with the representatives from Liberation Square, Tahrir Square, whom I met during my visit to Cairo on 6 March. Several problems remain, however: the electoral timetable, but also the hopes raised among the population, who are awaiting the benefits of the revolution – in other words, wage rises and social benefits. But the economic system in Egypt is grinding to a halt: the hotel occupancy rate has fallen to 10% or 15%, and several hundred thousand [Egyptian] refugees, who had been sending money, have returned from Libya or are going to do so. This situation only increases our duty to help.

In Morocco, the King delivered a brave and visionary speech, which I want to welcome: he’s the first person, to my knowledge, to put forward the idea of a constitutional monarchy, which could serve as an example. This reform should be drawn up in consultation with the political parties and civil society.

MIGRATION/UNION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN/INVESTMENT/MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS

We must take this new scenario into account in our approach to the southern Mediterranean region, not in order to teach lessons or export our standards but in order to support our partners in their democratic transition, in a spirit of trust, friendship and openness. It’s also a question of encouraging the emergence of a stable and prosperous region, by helping the countries concerned to resolve their economic and social difficulties: it’s not only our responsibility, it’s also in our interest. It’s totally illusory to want to control migration by building walls: others have tried to do so, with the result we’re aware of at the Mexican border. Even if we must show great vigilance on illegal immigration in the immediate future, the only solution in the longer term is to reduce the developmental inequalities between North and South.

It's in this spirit that we must also restructure the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM). Even if this initiative has come up against several obstacles, beginning with the deadlock in the peace process between the Israelis and Palestinians, current events show it was visionary. So we're going to relaunch it, remembering on the one hand that it relies on a balanced partnership between North and South and on the other that it consists in developing concrete projects, whether it be in solar energy, the cleaning up of the Mediterranean or the Mediterranean Office for Youth, which will make it possible to organize the flow of students.

In the immediate future, and to respond to the urgency of the situation, we can rely on the existing tools, like the Facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership (FEMIP) or the European Investment Bank (EIB), for which the European Council last week decided to raise the ceiling of its intervention mandates in the Mediterranean. To go further, France is proposing to create a real Mediterranean investment facility, relying particularly on the FEMIP.

We must also continue our efforts to support the peace process. The Palestinian people's hopes are no less legitimate than those of other peoples in the region: we must respond to them by working to establish a democratic, viable and lasting Palestinian State living in peace and security alongside the State of Israel. This aim is today agreed by everyone. The status quo is untenable. A new scenario has arisen around Israel: we must persuade our partners in the Quartet of this, in order to make progress on defining the parameters of a final status agreement. The year 2011 must be that of the recognition of a Palestinian State, in accordance with the road map we set ourselves: all the G8 partners share this feeling, even if our American friends do so with a few nuances.

LIBYA

Finally, we must be sure to adapt the broad lines of our action to the specific characteristics of each country. The urgent thing is clearly Libya, our main concern being to protect the civilian population. The issue is obviously very sensitive, insofar as the balance of power between the Tripoli regime and the opposition based in Benghazi is in the process of evolving. Without wishing to dwell on the recent past, I can't resist the urge to recall that France was the first

country, along with Britain, to say Colonel Gaddafi must be prevented from using violence to try to restore his authority. It's possible, because military planes can take off from few airports; moreover, although Libya has purchased perhaps about 400 fighter planes in the past 40 years, it's not true – as some of our partners have maintained – that they're all operational: fewer than about 20 are, and barely more helicopters. France didn't uphold the idea of a no-fly zone – difficult over such a vast territory – but rather, on the basis of a UN Security Council resolution, targeted strikes on military positions, because it's air bombardments that enabled Colonel Gaddafi to upset the power balance with the rebel movement. Some of our partners, chief among them my German counterpart, opposed any use of force. As for Russia, she was hardly enthusiastic, and the United States took a long time to define her position.

What can we do in the face of the advance of Colonel Gaddafi's troops?

I had a lot of trouble securing agreement among the participants in the G8, which, while not being a decision-making body, nevertheless brings together four members of the Security Council. A consensus was reached for the latter to adopt, as soon as possible, measures aimed at exerting sufficient pressure on Colonel Gaddafi: the idea of a no-fly zone is one of them, even though certain members are hostile to it; for our part, we consider it obsolete. The second point of agreement was the necessary involvement of the Arab countries. To enter Libya under the NATO banner would be the best way of turning Arab opinion against us. The Arab League called for a no-fly zone, but our Russian friends pointed out that this declaration was a little ambiguous and accompanied by reservations; as for the African Union, it doesn't take entirely the same line. President Sarkozy is working to organize a summit between the European Union, the African Union and the Arab League. (...)/.

9. Security Council - Libya - Statement by Mr Alain Juppé, ministre d'Etat, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs (UN Translation) 17 March 2011
<https://onu.delegfrance.org/17-March-2011-Security-Council>

Allow me first to thank you, Sir, for your warm words of welcome, which I deeply appreciated.

The world is experiencing one of the great revolutions that change the course of history. From North Africa to the Persian Gulf, the Arab people clamour to breathe the air of liberty and democracy.

From the Jasmine Revolution in Tunisia and the events of 25 January in Egypt, great hope arose and democratic transition was launched in a spirit of maturity and responsibility.

In Morocco, King Mohammed VI announced in a courageous and visionary speech the establishment of a constitutional monarchy.

This new Arab spring is good news, I am certain, for all of us. Our duty and interest require us to support these developments with confidence and availability — not to teach lessons or set examples, but to help each people to build its own future.

In Libya, alas, for a number of weeks the will of the people has been crushed by the murderous repression led by Colonel Al-Qadhafi's regime against his own people.

That is why the General Assembly, pursuant to the 25 February request of the Human Rights Council, suspended Libya from that Council. That is why the Security Council determined on 26 February that "the widespread and systematic attacks currently taking place in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya against the civilian population may amount to crimes against humanity" (resolution 1970 (2011)).

In its resolution 1970 (2011), which was adopted unanimously, the Security Council recalled the Libyan authorities' responsibility to protect the Libyan people and at the same time demanded an immediate end to the violence. It

expressed the hope that those responsible for these crimes will be brought before the International Criminal Court and referred the matter to the Prosecutor. It imposed sanctions on Colonel Al-Qadhafi, members of his family and his accomplices. Finally, it imposed an embargo on arms destined for Libya.

These measures have not been sufficient. Throughout the country, violence against the civilian population has only increased.

Given this intolerable provocation, the international community has reacted in near unanimity.

— The European Union did so at the extraordinary meeting of the European Council on 11 March.

— The Group of Eight countries did so in Paris on Tuesday.

— Regional organizations have also expressed themselves forcefully. First and foremost, the League of Arab States called on the Security Council in its 12 March resolution to establish a no-fly zone. I also wish to commend the commitment of the African Union, which has called for an end to the violence against civilians.

Despite these calls for peace, the situation in Libya today is more alarming than ever. As I speak, Colonel Al-Qadhafi's troops pursue their violent conquest of liberated cities and territories. We must not give free rein to warmongers; we must not abandon civilian populations, the victims of brutal repression, to their fate; we must not allow the rule of law and international morality to be trampled underfoot.

For this reason, France sought to contribute its utmost to the international momentum by working alongside the United Kingdom, the United States and others to prepare the draft resolution before the Council.

The draft resolution provides the Council with the means to protect the civilian populations in Libya.

— First by establishing a no-fly zone and by authorizing the members of the Arab League and those Member States that so wish to take the measures necessary to implement its provisions.

— Furthermore, it authorizes these same States to take all measures necessary, over and above the no-fly zone, to protect civilians and territories, including Benghazi, which are under the threat of attack by Colonel Al-Qadhafi's forces.

— Lastly, it strengthens the sanctions that have been adopted against the regime, including implementing the arms embargo, freezing the assets of authorities in Tripoli and prohibiting flights by Libyan airlines.

France solemnly calls on all members of the Security Council to support this initiative and to adopt the draft resolution. If it is adopted, we are prepared to act with Member States — in particular Arab States — that wish to do so.

We do not have much time left. It is a matter of days, perhaps even hours. Every hour and day that goes by means a further clampdown and repression for the freedom-loving civilian population, in particular the people of Benghazi. Every hour and day that goes by increases the burden of responsibility on our shoulders.

If we are careful not to act too late, the Security Council will have the distinction of having ensured that in Libya law prevails over force, democracy over dictatorship and freedom over oppression.

10. Paris Summit for the Support of the Libyan People – Statement by Nicolas Sarkozy, President of the Republic Paris, March 19, 2011
<https://franceintheus.org/spip.php?article2241>

Ladies and gentlemen,

Today the leaders of the League of Arab States and the European Union and representatives of the United States and Canada gathered in Paris at a meeting jointly chaired by France and the United Nations Secretary-General. Together, we decided to ensure the implementation of the United Nations Security Council resolution demanding an immediate ceasefire and a complete end to violence against civilians in Libya.

The participants met to implement all the necessary means, particularly military ones, to enforce the United Nations Security Council decisions.

That is why, in agreement with our partners, our air forces will counter any aggression by Colonel Gaddafi's aircraft against the people of Benghazi. Our aircraft are already preventing air attacks on the city. Other French aircraft stand ready to intervene against any armoured vehicles that threaten unarmed civilians.

Yesterday, France, the United Kingdom, the United States and Arab countries issued the following warning to Colonel Gaddafi and the forces he is using: if there is no immediate ceasefire and a withdrawal of the forces that have attacked civilian populations in recent weeks, our countries will use military means. This warning was reaffirmed by all participants at the summit that has just ended.

Colonel Gaddafi has completely disregarded this warning. Over the past few hours, his forces have intensified their deadly offensives.

Arab peoples have chosen to free themselves from the servitude to which they have felt bound for far too long. These revolutions have given rise to immense hope in the hearts of all those who share the values of democracy and human rights. But they are not without danger. The future of these Arab peoples

belongs to them. In the midst of the difficulties and trials of all kinds that they must face, these Arab peoples need our help and support. It is our duty.

In Libya, peaceful civilians who are demanding nothing more than the right to decide their future for themselves are in mortal danger. We have a duty to answer their anguished plea. The future of Libya belongs to the Libyans. We do not want to make decisions for them.

Their fight for freedom is theirs. If we intervene alongside Arab countries, it is not to impose a final outcome on the Libyan people but in the name of universal conscience, which cannot tolerate such crimes.

Today, we are intervening in Libya, under a mandate of the United Nations Security Council, with our partners and in particular our Arab partners. We are doing so to protect civilians from the murderous madness of a regime which, in killing its own people, has lost all legitimacy.

We are intervening to enable the Libyan people to choose their own destiny.

They cannot be deprived of their rights through violence and terror.

There is still time for Colonel Gaddafi to avoid the worst by meeting all the international community's demands, immediately and without reservations.

The door of diplomacy will be re-opened once the attacks cease.

Our determination is total.

I say this solemnly. Everyone must now shoulder their responsibilities. It is a grave decision that we have had to take. Alongside her Arab, European and North American partners, France is determined to assume her role in history./.

11. Intervention by the armed forces to implement UNSCR 1973 – Government statement in the National Assembly – Speeches by François Fillon, Prime Minister; Alain Juppé, Ministre d’Etat, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs; and Gérard Longuet, Minister for Defence and Veterans (excerpts) Paris, March 22, 2011
<https://franceintheus.org/spip.php?article2247>

LIBYA CRISIS/BACKGROUND

(...)

Early in the afternoon of Saturday 19 March, the French air force went into action over Libya. In accordance with Article 35, paragraph two of our Constitution, it is my honour to inform the National Assembly of the reasons for and the conditions of our engagement.

Since the start of this year, 2011, a wind of democracy and freedom has been blowing through the Arab world. The Tunisian people, then the Egyptian people, have expelled their leaders and abolished the authoritarian regimes in place since decolonization.

Libya entered into the same process.

We all hoped its outcome would be happy and swift; unfortunately, the Gaddafi regime decided to drown in blood the revolt that threatened it. In the space of two weeks, the Libyan people’s hopes turned into a nightmare.

Last Thursday, Benghazi – the last bastion of freedom in Libya – seemed condemned to fall into the hands of the troops loyal to Gaddafi.

The revolution seemed to be living through its final hours. Two days later, hope was reborn in Benghazi. They waved French flags and they waved the flags of another Libya, with its dreams of democracy and modernity.

What happened?

Gaddafi was banking on the international community being powerless. And it must be admitted we nearly descended into an endless cycle of appeals and warnings, whose sole consequence was offended speeches. France refused to accept this fate.

FRENCH DIPLOMACY

President Sarkozy chose to act, and along with Alain Juppé – whose determination I want to welcome – he was able to persuade the United Nations Security Council to refuse the unacceptable.

On Saturday, at France's initiative, a Summit for the Support of the Libyan People was held in Paris, to secure the swift implementation of UNSCR 1973.

Ladies and gentlemen deputies, the use of armed force in an internal conflict in an Arab country whose tribal structures still carry great weight is a grave decision. Some wonder about its chances of success. Let me say risks always exists. But wouldn't the moral and political doubt be more profound and devastating if we'd done nothing? Wouldn't we be burdened by a huge sense of guilt if – through caution and weakness – we'd stood by and witnessed the repression of an unarmed people? (...)

From the beginning of the crisis in Libya, France took the initiative of demanding sanctions against the Libyan regime, both at the United Nations and within the European Union; of involving the International Criminal Court, to which a crisis has for the first time been unanimously referred by the Security Council, for acts which may constitute crimes against humanity; of sending humanitarian aid on a large scale to Benghazi hospital and the Tunisia-Libya border; and of helping the thousands of refugees fleeing the fighting to go back to their countries of origin, by means of an airlift from Tunisia.

France fought tirelessly in all the international forums to persuade all her Western, Arab and African partners; at the United Nations Security Council, which adopted an initial resolution as early as 26 February; at the European Council of 11 March, under the impetus of Nicolas Sarkozy and David Cameron; and at the G8 foreign ministers' meeting in Paris on 14 and 15 March. (...)

Unfortunately all these urgent appeals from the international community, all these warnings, all these sanctions did not weaken the Libyan regime's cold resolve. Consequently, the use of force became the only solution. (...)

The call by the Arab League has provided us with backing from the countries of the region. We have a solid legal basis in the adoption of UNSCR 1973, in support of which President Sarkozy made a solemn appeal the day before the vote, with Alain Juppé playing a key role by travelling to New York to uphold it. It was a collective effort, and it took concrete shape in Paris on Saturday afternoon with the presence of 22 leaders of European, North American and Arab countries and international and regional organizations, who reaffirmed their determination to act on the basis of this resolution. (...)

NATURE AND GOALS OF MILITARY ACTION

It's about protecting the Libyan population while explicitly ruling out the dispatch of an occupation force on the ground. It's about establishing a no-fly zone. It's about implementing the arms embargo. And it's about fleshing out the sanctions regime already set out in UNSCR 1970.

The message from the international community is unequivocal: an immediate end to the violence, the Libyan armed forces' withdrawal from all the areas they have entered by force, their return to barracks, and full access to humanitarian assistance.

By depriving the Gaddafi regime of its military superiority, we want to offer the Libyan people a chance to regain their confidence, define a political strategy and decide their future, because, ladies and gentlemen deputies, it's not our role to replace them. (...)

On Saturday 19 March, at the end of the Paris summit, President Sarkozy decided to launch the first missions. Some 20 air force fighter planes, refuelling planes, radar surveillance and electronic warfare planes then conducted an operation over the Benghazi region, both to halt the advance of Colonel Gaddafi's forces and to start establishing a no-fly zone. (...)

France is deploying more than 20 fighter planes a day, their missions planned in consultation with our allies. Since this morning, the carrier battle group has been in operation off the Libyan coast. The Rafales, Super Etendards and navy radar planes will henceforth be deployed from the aircraft carrier Charles de Gaulle.

The no-fly zone is in place. As UNSCR 1973 envisages, the aim of our air force's action is indeed a total cessation of the violence and of all attacks and atrocities against the Libyan civilian population. And proof of it is that on Sunday, when our fighter planes failed to detect any Libyan units attacking the civilian population, they did not make use of their weapons. (...)

So we're implementing the whole of, and nothing but, UNSCR 1973. And I remind you that the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and the League of Arab States are notified in advance of actions to implement it. (...)

France hopes a new era will begin tomorrow in the Mediterranean region, free of colonialist baggage and outdated attitudes; a new era based on the notions of respect and dignity, in which the fear and rejection of others give way to the sharing of common values. (...)

At a time when France is engaged militarily, when our armed forces are bravely fulfilling their mission, I know, ladies and gentlemen deputies, that I can count on your sense of national unity.

In Benghazi the tricolore flag has been raised, and this gesture compels us to accept our duty. As I stand here I know you, the nation's representatives, are concerned to uphold a certain idea of France and liberty. Today there is neither Right nor Left, there is only the Republic, which commits itself from the heart, courageously but also with clarity and moment./.

Appendix 2: Speeches and Interviews with Francois Hollande and Jean-Marc Ayrault and Laurent Fabius

1. 21st Ambassadors' Conference – Speech by M. Francois Hollande, President of the Republic, Paris, August 27, 2013:

<https://franceintheus.org/spip.php?article4855>

SYRIA/CHEMICAL ATTACKS/RESPONSE

As I speak to you, the world is horrified at the revelation of the use of chemical weapons in Syria.

Everything leads us to believe that it was the regime that committed this despicable act, which condemns it once and for all in the eyes of the world. Indeed, using weapons that the Community of Nations banned 90 years ago in all of its international agreements is shameful.

Need I remind you that this conflict has already left more than 100,000 dead? And that it is now spreading throughout the region, with attacks in Lebanon, the flow of refugees into Jordan and Turkey, and the unleashing of deadly violence in Iraq? This civil war is now threatening world peace.

During the past year, France has acted. It led the effort to hold the Friends of Syria conference that took place in Paris in July 2012. Last September, it was the first to recognize the [Syrian] National Coalition as legitimate representative of the Syrian people. And it promptly provided humanitarian and material assistance to the opposition so that it could carry on with its fight.

Today, it is our responsibility to seek the most appropriate response to the Syrian regime's atrocities, once the major part of the United Nations investigation has been completed.

The chemical massacre in Damascus cannot remain without a response. The international community cannot fail to react to the use of chemical weapons.

France stands ready to punish those who took the appalling decision to gas innocent people.

In recent days, I have held numerous consultations with our – particularly American and European – allies, as well as our Arab partners, to consider all the options. Tomorrow I shall be holding a Defence Council meeting, and Parliament will be informed of the situation as soon as possible.

Furthermore, I have decided to increase our military support for the Syrian National Coalition, while upholding our European commitments.

Only through this firmness will we see a political solution prevail one day in Syria.

FRANCE/FOREIGN POLICY

For France to live up to its responsibility is the goal and the pride of the foreign policy I have been conducting with Laurent Fabius since my election.

It is based on three major principles:

Independence, which leads us every moment to decide, in full sovereignty, while being loyal to our alliances, to European solidarity and to our bilateral agreements. It's this freedom that makes France useful to the world and to peace.

Respect for international law.

This is the best way of ensuring borders are respected, disputes are settled and collective security prevails.

But international law must evolve with the times. It cannot be a pretext for allowing large-scale massacres to be perpetrated. This is why I recognize the principle of “the responsibility to protect” civilians, which the United Nations General Assembly voted for in 2005.

Finally, the requirement for dialogue, because France wants to be a bridge between the continents and avoid what some people have called the clash of civilizations. It wants to be a “landmark power” – i.e. a nation that speaks beyond its interests alone.

FRANCE/MILITARY CAPABILITIES

In order to be effective, these principles depend on [France] having the means to act: firstly its diplomacy, but also its military capabilities, which give it a special role further strengthened by its status as a permanent member of the Security Council.

So France must ensure that its defence tool remains reliable. The next military estimates bill, inspired by the work of the White Paper on Defence, will guarantee this. It will maintain defence budget funding for the coming five years, including in this very difficult period for our public finances. But it’s the essential condition for preserving our credibility and deciding on an intervention whenever our country deems it necessary, in the framework of international law.

MALI/DRC/CAR/AFRICAN SECURITY

This was the case in Mali on 11 January – not to usurp the Africans’ role, but to act with them...

Seven French soldiers died in Operation Serval; dozens of others were wounded. I want to pay tribute to their sacrifice and, more broadly, to our forces, who enabled Malian territory to be liberated and a presidential election to be organized; I welcome the way it went ahead. It gave strong legitimacy to its new President, Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta.

In eight months, from January to July, we thus succeeded in driving away the terrorists, making Mali secure and starting the political transition. Rarely has an operation in recent years managed to achieve its goals in so short a time.

France will now reduce its military presence, but will continue to support Mali in the challenges lying ahead of it: restoring the state, improving governance, guaranteeing security and successfully working for development, and show extreme vigilance, because violent groups – both terrorists and traffickers – are seeking to establish themselves wherever states can no longer control their territories, and wherever regional cooperation isn't working.

We can see it in the Democratic Republic of Congo, where the number of atrocities – of which women and children are the first victims – is increasing. That's why we got the United Nations to put an intervention brigade in place in the Kivus. And today Monusco in Goma has the responsibility of opposing the armed groups destabilizing the region.

Likewise, action in the Central African Republic is overdue. The country is on the brink of "Somalization". I've met the NGOs working there. They're doing an admirable job. The assessment is damning: 60,000 children are in danger of dying of malnutrition, and 1.5 million out of 5 million inhabitants have been displaced.

I call on the African Union and the Security Council to deal with this situation. France will help them do so.

But I remind you now: it's above all for the Africans to ensure their security.

That's the purpose of the Elysée summit to be held in December, eight months after the African Union decided to create a crisis response capability, and six months after the meeting on maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea, at which actions were undertaken against piracy.

Europe will be represented at the Paris summit, because we must respond together to the African countries' requests for training, support and equipment of their armed forces, because that continent has a bright future. It must be able to control its destiny by itself. France will stand alongside it, without seeking anything for itself.

TUNISIA/EGYPT/MEDITERRANEAN

France's responsibility is also to support the Arab countries in their difficult transitions.

I recalled in Tunis that no religion was incompatible with the exercise of democracy and that Islam could provide new proof of this once individual freedoms, equality between women and men, and pluralism were respected.

So France is showing solidarity with the Tunisian people to enable them to regain their voice through the swift organization of elections as indisputable as those of 2011.

That's one more reason to condemn the perpetrators of the violence targeting political activists in Tunisia, which is being used deliberately to endanger the democratic process.

In the name of these same values, we call on the Egyptian authorities to restore law and order as quickly as possible and move towards new elections with all players in society. France is willing to contribute, with others, to mediation. It makes this proposal without any intention to interfere, and with the sole concern to be effective.

I'd like to broaden my remarks by offering new prospects of cooperation to the countries in the region. I suggested to Malta at the 5+5 summit that we build together a Mediterranean of projects. We can't remain limited to the short-lived initiatives of recent years. I call for new, less ambitious but more concrete partnerships.

MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS

But I am well aware that nothing solid can be achieved until the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is resolved.

France's position is unwavering. The foundations for achieving a just and enduring solution are well known. They are based on the coexistence of two viable states that recognize each other across secure borders.

I supported Palestine's admission to the United Nations as a non-member observer state. But no vote can take the place of direct discussions.

That is why I welcome the resumption of talks, resolutely encouraged by the US administration. Make no mistake: this is one of the last opportunities to conclude a peace agreement.

It must not be squandered. Together with its European partners, France stands ready to play its full role with the Israelis and Palestinians, in consultation with its Arab partners.

That is what I will be saying in Israel and Palestine this autumn.

IRAN/NUCLEAR PROGRAMME

But another issue threatens peace in the region. It is the Iranian nuclear programme, as long as it serves a military purpose. Thus far, negotiations have failed. I want to believe that the election of President Rouhani could change the equation.

For Iran is paying the price of sanctions and isolation. And that price will grow if nothing changes.

That great country must choose transparency and full compliance with its international obligations.

I therefore await concrete, prompt, verifiable and verified gestures.

But time is running out. With Iran equipping itself with the resources for what is unacceptable, the threat is growing. And the countdown has already begun.

Hence the urgency of negotiations in the E3+3 format. They must swiftly lead to progress.

FRANCE/GLOBAL

ROLE/TRADE/COMPETITION/INVESTMENT/TOURISM

So on all the challenges, conflicts and crises, France is making its voice heard. Not for the sake of itself, its influence and interests, but for the sake of its idea of the world's equilibrium and of its own responsibility.

Its responsibility is also to fully address planetary changes.

There are now dozens of new powers. In 20 years, the emerging countries' share of global GDP has gone from 36% to 50%. The largest ones have already reached technological levels comparable to the developed countries. They have considerable currency reserves.

Huge middle classes[sic] are developing there. It's predicted that the urban population will be more than four billion strong in 10 years' time, half of it in Asia. That's an economic challenge, but it's also a considerable opportunity for our companies, academics and creative professionals.

I have confidence in France's ability to face up to this competition.

It must still take the right decisions, adapt its policies and modernize its economy. I've embarked on those reforms.

The target I've set is to return to equilibrium in our non-energy trade balance by 2017.

All the state's tools must be actively used. Our embassies and consulates, the economic services abroad, Ubifrance, Coface, the Invest in France Agency: they must all work together with a single aim – to support our companies in conquering new markets.

Export financing instruments must also be improved: it's unacceptable for major French industrial bidders to be penalized against their competitors for lack of financial support. The government is working on this.

SMEs must be one of the priorities of economic diplomacy. Whenever a major contract is won, French subcontractors, component manufacturers and suppliers must also gain access to the markets. I ask you, ladies and gentlemen ambassadors, to ensure this happens.

Concurrently, our country must attract more investors, entrepreneurs, researchers and students. Every facility will be granted, including in terms of issuing visas.

Tourism must be elevated to a great national cause, which means improving reception facilities in airports, stepping up security and increasing infrastructure and supply levels. France is already the world's leading tourist destination; its aim is to achieve the highest tourism receipts of all the European countries.

FRANCE/CULTURE/FRENCH NATIONALS ABROAD/FRANCOPHONY

It's not a question of the economy on the one hand and influence on the other. Everything plays a role in France's presence in the world:

That's the case with our academic policy. France hosts 48,000 international researchers and 300,000 foreign students: we must do more. That's the role of Campus France, whose mission is to direct a greater number of promising students to our universities and grandes écoles (1).

Our cultural network is also a lever for asserting France as a brand, promoting our creative professionals and architects, and making our way of life an aspiration for the emerging middle classes.

An active diplomacy is also a diplomacy focused on French nationals abroad. H  l  ne Conway is working on that. The number of our compatriots living outside our borders has doubled in 15 years. We have more than two million of them, and they take part in the economic, cultural and social life of their countries of residence. Pursuing part of one's professional career in another country is becoming ever more commonplace. It's a change our diplomacy must adapt to – in order both to support our fellow citizens and to make the most of their presence.

France projects itself abroad through its language. The Francophone world accounts for 15% of global wealth. That's a tremendous asset – in Africa, which will have 600 million French speakers in 2050, but also in Asia and America, where our language is being used more, and in all the forums where decisions are taken, because in order for tomorrow's world to be thought of in French, it must speak it. That's the mission I've entrusted to Yamina Benguigui.

FRANCE/CHINA/INDIA/JAPAN/BRAZIL/SOUTH AFRICA/RUSSIA

France is a universal nation. It is destined to establish genuine partnerships with major countries.

With China, I'd like the 50th anniversary of the restoration of our diplomatic relations to be the opportunity to continue our cooperation on energy, including civil nuclear energy, but also to restore our trade balance.

The Chinese Prime Minister told me politely that China does not intend to have a trade surplus with France.

I replied to him, equally courteously, that France doesn't intend to have a structural deficit with China, either. We undoubtedly have some way to go to reach a balance, but also to welcome more Chinese investors to France.

I don't want to raise new fears here, but when we have the opportunity to have capital invested in France, including in our industry, I don't want to reject it.

Just as we support the investment made abroad from France – because it's a way of gaining access to markets and competing for positions –, so we must accept that there be industrial investments by emerging countries in France. For many years there's been a very large gap between French investments abroad and foreign investments in France – even though France is one of the countries with the most inward investment by foreign countries providing their capital.

With India, the world's largest democracy, I want to broaden further our economic relations, defence cooperation and cultural exchanges.

With Japan, the state visit I paid in June was the opportunity to resume our exceptional partnership with the world's third-largest economy, which has put growth at the heart of its agenda.

With Brazil – which is going to host major international events –, France has special affinities. I'll have the opportunity to bear witness to this by going there before the end of the year.

With South Africa, the close dialogue between our two countries on the continent's security is particularly invaluable, because it enables us to end the rift between English-speaking and French-speaking Africa.

Finally, I'd like to mention Russia. We know what unites us – history, the economy, culture – but also what divides us, and that frankness enables us to move forward.

HUMAN RIGHTS

For I have a duty to express everywhere our commitment to respect for human rights.

France prides itself in defending them when they are flouted, and in recalling the demand for dignity, equality between men and women, but also for combating homophobia, which is taking on worrying proportions.

TAX AVOIDANCE/ECONOMIC IMBALANCES

France's responsibility is to help the world be better governed. What are our goals?

Firstly, to continue the fight against tax avoidance. Major progress was made at the G8 on exchanging economic information, lifting banking secrecy and combating aggressive tax optimization. I expect the G20 summit in St Petersburg next week to build on all these advances.

Secondly, reducing global imbalances. There must be greater coordination between the major economies' policies, in the governance bodies: at the IMF, the World Bank, the G8 and the G20. The growth of some can't be achieved to the detriment of others. In the same spirit, it's essential for currencies to reflect the real state of economies.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Lastly, to reach a climate agreement.

We can't recognize global warming and stand idly by.

That will be the point of the 2015 Conference, which will take place in France – because we suggested holding the conference.

In order to be successful, we have to reconcile two requirements: the aspiration for development, especially in the poorest countries, and the need to keep global warming within sustainable levels.

Our approach will therefore depend on the voluntary contributions of states, assessed on the basis of reliable and transparent criteria, and on a global agreement that will be binding on all countries, in line with the principle of “common but differentiated responsibility”.

France intends to set an example through its own energy transition and by upholding its European commitments. It has already initiated a process of persuasion.

That’s the task I have entrusted to Nicolas Hulot.

I have confidence in our ability to get past the failure of Copenhagen.

President Obama made a strong commitment to the issue of global warming, and my exchanges with the Chinese, Indian, and Brazilian leaders, as well as with the African heads of state, confirm my view that it is possible to achieve a compromise.

DEVELOPMENT FINANCING/GLOBAL FUND TO FIGHT AIDS, TUBERCULOSIS AND MALARIA

This is also true for ensuring development financing.

France is the world’s fourth-largest donor. I made the commitment to overhaul the framework of this policy, which represents over €9 billion a year. This is the purpose of the bill on our development policy, championed by Pascal Canfin.

France’s action will focus on the poorest countries and will plan to bring together all the development players, particularly local authorities, NGOs and businesses.

I have also asked for our contribution to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria to be maintained at its current level.

EUROPE/ECONOMIC PROGRESS

Ladies and gentlemen ambassadors,

It is France's responsibility to take the initiative in Europe.

Progress has been made over the past year:

The Euro Area's integrity has been safeguarded. Greece has been rescued, not without pain.

Stability and solidarity mechanisms have been introduced. The ECB played its part in this.

The fiscal compact has been ratified.

Banking union has got under way.

Growth has been put back at the heart of the agenda.

Youth employment became our shared priority. France will, incidentally, be hosting a second European conference on this topic in November.

So many advances that few imagined possible in the space of a year.

Today, Europe is emerging from recession. Everything which can boost economic activity and create jobs must be speeded up and encouraged. We won't manage this unless Europe reorders its priorities.

FUTURE OF EUROPE/FRENCH

PROPOSALS/EUROGROUP/ENERGY/DEFENCE/"DIFFERENTIATED EUROPE"

My proposals are threefold: simplify, move forward, clarify.

Simplify, with a stabilized Eurogroup presidency, the establishment of an economic government for the Euro Area, and harmonization of fiscal and social rules, particularly the minimum wage.

Move forward. This means fleshing out the European project in at least three areas: first, energy. I'm arguing for an energy community which ensures interconnecting networks, security of supply and climate protection. Secondly, digital technology. In October I would like Europe to define its own rules to protect private data and the technology it needs on its soil.

Finally, defence. I want, at the December European Council, to give impetus to a European industry, implement structural programmes and move towards Defence Europe.

Clarify. It is time to draw conclusions from the different relations member countries maintain with the European Union. I respect the choices of those who want to leave things as they are and even of those who might decide to stand on the sidelines. But I above all intend to go further with the countries which have decided to forge ahead. It's our project of mutually-supportive integration in a "differentiated Europe" where there would be distinct paces, content and even decision-making rules, whilst keeping the union of all [member states] as an area of freedom, democracy and solidarity.

GERMAN PRESIDENT'S VISIT TO FRANCE

On all these issues and thus on this initiative, France intends to act in harmony with Germany, because our two countries are indissociable. Irrespective of the government, irrespective of the majority, we are duty-bound to promote Europe's future. Next week, I shall be welcoming President Gauck to France on a state visit.

He wants to go to several symbolic places: to Paris, of course, where the bulk of the visit will take place; to Marseille, to give the city encouragement and also pay tribute to its cultural renaissance; and finally to Oradour-sur-Glane, to

convey the message – the only one that truly matters: forget nothing and be able, at the same time, to build the future together.

It will further demonstrate the strength of this friendship. This friendship has the characteristic of not overly focusing on the two countries which decided on it, but of being at the exclusive service of the European idea.

FUTURE OF EUROPE

Immediately after the German elections, I would like France and Germany to retake the initiative, as our two countries have been able to do at each stage of the European enterprise.

For all these reasons – and I'm not forgetting the appointment of the new European Parliament – the year ahead will be decisive for Europe's future.

Do I have to oversimplify almost to the point of caricature? Either Europe is able to draw up a project for itself again, or slowly but surely it will undergo a process of disintegration and declining in status, which will not just be fatal for Europe – which has been the great human adventure of the past 70 years – but will harm the whole world, because Europe is a benchmark, a framework, even an example of regional cooperation.

FRENCH DIPLOMACY

Ladies and gentlemen ambassadors,

You carry France's message. This is both a responsibility and an honour.

During my many visits, I have noted the quality of our diplomatic tool and of all those civilian and military staff contributing to it. Laurent Fabius would quite rightly like to develop it. It isn't a question of "change for change's sake", it's a question of being able to take up the world's challenges and react to its changes.

France must be active everywhere – that's your mission and ours too.

Active in finding political solutions to tensions which flare up,
Active in backing peoples' aspirations,
in supporting the poorest countries,
in promoting essential regulation,
in forging partnerships with the emerging countries,
finally, active in exercising our responsibility.

There are times when this responsibility is tough: do we commit France or not?
Do we act or not? Do we take decisions or not? Do we intervene or let things
take their course? This question has been put to the Head of State at specific
moments in our country's history. Once again, the question is back or is going
to be back in the next few days.

Do we act or not? Do we get involved or leave it to others? France has decided
to exercise its responsibility everywhere, for itself and for world stability.

Thank you./.

2. Joint Declaration of Mr Francois Hollande, President of the French Republic, and Ahmad Al-Assi Al Jarba, President of the Syrian National Coalition, on the Situation in Syria. Paris 29 August 2013

<http://discours.vie-publique.fr/notices/137001987.html>

LE PRESIDENT - « Mesdames, Messieurs. J'ai accueilli, pour la deuxième fois d'ailleurs, le président de la Coalition nationale syrienne et j'ai renouvelé le plein soutien de la France à l'opposition qui est la seule représentante à nos yeux et d'ailleurs aux yeux d'une grande partie de la communauté internationale du peuple syrien. Je l'ai reçu dans un moment particulièrement tragique avec le massacre chimique qui s'est produit le 21 août et qui appelle la réaction appropriée de la communauté internationale.

Et je lui ai dit, une nouvelle fois, que la France apporterait toute son aide, son aide politique, son soutien, comme nous le faisons depuis des mois, mais également son aide humanitaire, matérielle et que nous utiliserons également l'appui que nous avons dans les pays du Golfe pour qu'il y ait justement cette organisation.

Enfin, je suis conscient de ce que vit le peuple syrien, de ses souffrances, de ses douleurs. 100 000 morts depuis le début de ce conflit. Tout doit être fait pour une solution politique mais elle ne viendra que si, justement, la coalition est capable d'apparaître comme une alternative avec la force nécessaire, notamment de son armée.

Et nous n'y parviendrons que si la communauté internationale est capable de marquer un coup d'arrêt par rapport à cette escalade de violence dont le massacre chimique n'est qu'une illustration.

Merci.

M. Ahmad AL-ASSI AL-JARBA - « Nous venons d'avoir une réunion avec le président de la République française, qui est un grand ami du peuple syrien, pour la deuxième fois en moins d'un mois, dans des circonstances exceptionnelles et très délicates pour le peuple syrien. Ce peuple vraiment héroïque qui vient de subir un bombardement terrible, un massacre terrible par des armes chimiques, commis par ce régime criminel il y a une semaine.

Il y a plus de 1 400 martyrs suite à cette attaque, des milliers de blessés qui ont été victimes de ce crime à l'arme chimique. Nous avons parlé avec le président de la République, nous avons remercié le Président pour la position de la République française, ses positions personnelles, les positions du Gouvernement français et également la sympathie et la compassion dont a fait preuve le peuple français après ce crime contre l'humanité.

Ce crime ne doit pas rester impuni. Il faut qu'il y ait une force pour dissuader ce régime criminel, une force internationale, une force onusienne, une force organisée par les amis du peuple syrien et à leur tête, la République française.

Je voudrais également remercier nos alliés, les Etats-Unis et le Royaume-Uni.

Je voudrais m'adresser au peuple syrien pour dire à notre peuple, à nos familles qui sont sur place : ce crime ne restera pas impuni. La punition sera infligée à ce criminel, à sa machine de mort et à ceux qui ont utilisé ces armes. Nous condamnons les armes chimiques sous toutes leurs formes. Nous n'acceptons pas que ces armes soient utilisées contre notre peuple ou contre d'autres peuples. Je répète : nous condamnons l'utilisation des armes chimiques.

Je voudrais, Monsieur le Président, encore une fois vous remercier, remercier le peuple français pour cette position humaniste qui a été la sienne. Merci. »

3. Interview between President Francois Hollande and Le Monde

Le Monde 31 August 2013

https://www.lemonde.fr/international/article/2013/08/30/francois-hollande-au-monde-il-ne-s-agit-pas-de-renverser-le-dictateur-syrien_3468865_3210.html

Le président de la République, François Hollande, a répondu aux questions des journalistes du *Monde*, jeudi 29 août à l'Élysée.

La France détient-elle la preuve de l'emploi d'armes chimiques le 21 août à Damas ?

La question n'est plus de savoir si des armes chimiques ont été utilisées le 21 août dans la banlieue de Damas. C'est un fait établi. Même les autorités syriennes ne le nient plus. Non, la question, c'est de connaître les auteurs de cet acte effroyable. La France dispose d'un faisceau d'indices qui vont dans le sens de la responsabilité du régime. D'abord, plusieurs agressions chimiques avaient déjà eu lieu en Syrie. Mais celle du 21 août, par son ampleur et ses effets, marque un changement de nature. Or, il est avéré que l'opposition ne détient aucune de ces armes, alors que tous les stocks sont contrôlés par Bachar Al-Assad. Ensuite, le quartier frappé ne l'a pas été par hasard, ni par inadvertance : c'est une zone-clé pour le contrôle par le régime des voies de communication vers Damas. Enfin, tout a été fait dans les heures qui ont suivi ces exactions pour en effacer les traces par des bombardements dont on est sûr de l'origine.

Quelle serait la légalité d'une action militaire ?

Le protocole de 1925 interdit l'usage des armes chimiques. Gazer une population constitue, comme Ban Ki-moon l'a dit lui-même, un crime contre l'humanité. C'est pourquoi l'ONU est saisie. Et qu'une mission d'inspection a été envoyée sur place. Mais il est à craindre que, quelle que soit l'évidence, le Conseil de sécurité ne soit empêché de prendre la résolution nécessaire pour une action. Il est bloqué depuis deux ans sur la question syrienne.

Et s'il demeure bloqué ?

Le massacre chimique de Damas ne peut ni ne doit rester impuni. Sinon ce serait prendre le risque d'une escalade qui banaliserait l'usage de ces armes et menacerait d'autres pays. Je ne suis pas favorable à une intervention internationale qui viserait à "libérer" la Syrie ou à renverser le dictateur, mais j'estime qu'un coup d'arrêt doit être porté à un régime qui commet l'irréparable sur sa population.

Quels sont les buts de guerre ?

Je ne parlerais pas d'une guerre, mais de la sanction d'une violation monstrueuse des droits de la personne humaine. Elle aura valeur de dissuasion. Ne pas agir, ce serait laisser faire. La guerre civile en Syrie dure depuis trop longtemps. Elle a fait 100 000 morts. La France a pris très tôt des initiatives. Elle a réuni à l'été 2012 les "Amis de la Syrie" et reconnu la Coalition nationale comme seule représentante légitime du peuple syrien. Elle lui a apporté son soutien politique, puis des aides matérielles et humanitaires et, plus récemment, des moyens militaires dans le respect de nos engagements européens. Aujourd'hui, une étape dans l'horreur a été franchie. Et c'est la riposte, et non l'inertie, qui imposera une solution politique.

Quelle forme peut prendre l'intervention ?

Toutes les options sont sur la table. La France veut une action proportionnée et ferme contre le régime de Damas.

Quels pays seraient amenés à intervenir ?

Si le Conseil de sécurité est empêché d'agir, une coalition se formera. Elle devra être la plus large possible. Elle s'appuiera sur la Ligue arabe, qui a condamné le crime et a alerté la communauté internationale. Elle aura le soutien des Européens. Mais il y a peu de pays qui ont les capacités d'infliger une sanction par des moyens appropriés. La France en fait partie. Elle y est prête. Elle décidera de sa position en étroite liaison avec ses alliés.

Le premier Parlement consulté – celui du Royaume-Uni – a refusé le principe d'une opération en Syrie. Peut-on agir sans nos alliés traditionnels britanniques ?

Oui. Chaque pays est souverain pour participer ou non à une opération. Cela vaut pour le Royaume-Uni comme pour la France. J'aurai ce vendredi un échange approfondi avec Barack Obama.

En quoi ce choix diffère-t-il de ce qui a pu être reproché aux néoconservateurs américains en matière d'intervention armée ?

En Irak, l'intervention s'est faite alors même qu'aucune preuve n'avait été apportée quant à l'existence d'armes de destruction massive. En Syrie, hélas, les armes chimiques ont été utilisées. En fait, l'opération en Irak visait à renverser le régime. Rien de tel pour la riposte envisagée en Syrie. La France, depuis le début de la guerre civile, a obstinément recherché une solution politique. Ce qui a changé, depuis le 21 août, c'est le massacre chimique. C'est une ligne rouge définie il y a un an qui a été franchie indéniablement.

Libye, Mali, Syrie... La France ne prend-elle pas le risque de multiplier les recours à l'interventionnisme ?

En 2011, j'avais approuvé l'engagement de la France en Libye. Mais j'ai regretté que ses conséquences n'aient pas été maîtrisées. En janvier 2013, j'ai pris la décision d'une intervention au Mali. Je constate qu'elle a été efficace, coordonnée avec les Africains et menée dans un délai court. Elle a permis de déboucher sur des élections libres et incontestables. Pour la Syrie, je veillerai à ce que la réponse de la communauté internationale fasse cesser l'escalade de la violence. Chaque situation est différente. Pour chacune d'entre elles, la France prend ses responsabilités au nom de ses valeurs et de ses principes.

Comment gérer la relation avec la Russie au lendemain des frappes ?

La Russie refuse d'admettre que le régime ait pu commettre cette abomination, tant elle craint qu'en cas d'effondrement de Bachar Al-Assad, ce soit le chaos. Je veux donc la convaincre que le pire, c'est la situation actuelle. C'est elle qui

favorise la montée des groupes djihadistes. J'ai toujours dit au président Poutine que je ne remettais nullement en cause les liens privilégiés que son pays entretient depuis longtemps avec la Syrie. Et l'intérêt de la Russie serait de parvenir au plus tôt à une solution politique.

Êtes-vous assuré du soutien de l'opinion publique ?

Quand j'ai décidé d'envoyer nos forces armées au Mali, les Français n'étaient pas encore pleinement conscients de l'ampleur du terrorisme au Sahel. Aujourd'hui, ils sont fiers que nos armées aient libéré un pays ami. Ce que je leur dois en toutes circonstances, c'est la vérité sur les engagements de la France, leur bien-fondé, sans occulter les menaces sur notre propre sécurité. Il n'est pas question d'entraîner notre pays dans une aventure. Mais quel est le plus grand danger : punir un pays qui a utilisé l'arme chimique ou laisser faire un clan aux abois qui peut avoir la tentation de recommencer ? L'arme chimique est un danger pour l'humanité.

Excluez-vous des frappes avant que le Parlement ait pu se prononcer ?

J'exclus de prendre une décision avant de disposer de tous les éléments qui la justifieraient. J'ai convoqué le Parlement mercredi en session extraordinaire, il débattrait de la situation en Syrie. Et si j'ai engagé la France, le gouvernement l'informerait des moyens et des objectifs poursuivis conformément à l'article 35 de la Constitution.

Vous excluez une intervention avant le départ des inspecteurs de Syrie ?

Oui.

4. Déclaration du Premier ministre, M. Jean-Marc Ayrault 03 septembre 2013
<http://basedoc.diplomatie.gouv.fr/exl-doc/FranceDiplomatie/PDF/bafr2013-09-03.pdf>

Mesdames, Messieurs, J'ai tenu à l'instant une réunion destinée à informer les principaux responsables de la majorité comme de l'opposition de l'Assemblée nationale et du Sénat sur la situation en Syrie.

Cette information du Parlement est indispensable. En effet, les élus de la nation doivent pouvoir accéder aux éléments qui justifient les positions que le président de la République et le gouvernement ont adoptées ces derniers jours sur la situation en Syrie et les réactions qu'elle appelle de la France.

Cette réunion s'est déroulée dans un climat d'une particulière gravité.

Le 21 août dernier le régime de Bachar Al-Assad a commis l'irréparable en employant à grande échelle l'arme chimique contre sa propre population. Cet acte, plus personne n'en nie la réalité, ce que devraient confirmer les inspecteurs des Nations unies et les éléments que nous avons recueillis permettent d'en imputer la responsabilité au régime. Cet acte, il ne peut rester sans réponse.

L'enjeu c'est d'éviter que Bachar Al-Assad n'utilise à nouveau l'arme chimique contre son peuple. L'enjeu, c'est d'envoyer un message à tous ceux qui seraient tentés de l'imiter à l'avenir. Il y a donc un enjeu pour la sécurité collective, pour notre propre sécurité dans un contexte où les armes de destruction massive constituent déjà un défi majeur au Moyen-Orient comme dans d'autres régions du monde.

La France est donc déterminée à sanctionner l'usage de l'arme chimique par le régime de Bachar Al-Assad et de le dissuader d'y recourir à nouveau par une action ferme et proportionnée qui ne visera ni à renverser ce régime, ni à libérer la Syrie. Nous sommes en effet convaincus qu'il n'y aura en Syrie qu'une solution politique.

L'information du Parlement se poursuivra à l'occasion de la session extraordinaire que le président de la République a convoquée dès mercredi. J'ai souhaité que ce débat puisse avoir lieu dans un climat de responsabilité, de gravité, à un moment délicat où les intérêts supérieurs de la France sont en jeu. Il n'est pas question pour la France d'agir seule.

Le président de la République continue son travail de persuasion pour réunir, dans les meilleurs délais, une coalition. La France doit se rassembler autour de cet objectif, car la France défend le respect du droit international.

J'ai aussi appelé au respect des équilibres institutionnels découlant de notre Constitution. C'est au président de la République qu'il appartient de décider si un vote, que notre Constitution n'exige pas, doit avoir lieu. Mercredi il y aura un débat sans vote car en toute hypothèse, la décision ultime ne pourra être prise par le président de la République que lorsque sera constituée cette coalition, seule à même de conduire une action pour adresser ce message de fermeté: il n'est plus possible d'utiliser l'arme chimique en Syrie par le dictateur Bachar Al-Assad contre son propre peuple.

Je vous remercie./.

5. Syria/Syrian chemical programme – National executive summary of declassified intelligence¹ Paris, 3 September 2013 (Eng translation by French Defence Ministry)

https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/Syrian_Chemical_Programme.pdf

Cases of previous use of chemical agents by the Syrian regime

Chemical attack launched by the regime on Aug 21

This document has been produced through declassified intelligence mostly drawn from French-only sources. It includes a thorough technical analysis performed on open sources by our intelligence and technical services. It integrates, finally, some complementary elements received through cooperation with our closest partners.

Syria detains one of the world's most important operational chemical weapons stockpile, accumulated within the framework of a long-standing and diversified programme, which has been monitored for a long time by French and partner intelligence services. This programme is one of the main threats in terms of weapons of mass destruction proliferation. Countering the threat stemming from WMD proliferation is a key objective for our defence, as stated again in the recent French White paper on defence and national security.

In combats against the opposition, President Assad's regime has already used such weapons, including sarin, in limited attacks against the population, in particular in April 2013. The analysis of information we have now gathered leads us to consider that, on August 21, 2013, the Syrian regime has launched an attack on some suburbs of Damascus that were being held by the opposition forces, using together conventional means and a large amount of chemical agents.

1 – The Syrian chemical programme

Syria has long been equipped with a massive chemical arsenal, together with many related delivery systems. The Syrian regime acknowledged as much on

July 23, 2012 through its Foreign Affairs spokesperson, who confirmed that: "these different weapons [chemical and non-conventional] are stockpiled and secured under the supervision of the armed forces". Syria is not part to the 1993 Convention on Chemical Weapons Ban, which 189 Nations have signed and ratified.

The Syrian chemical programme started in the 1970's by the import of chemical munitions. In the 1980's, Damascus started acquiring the materials, products and knowledge necessary to set up an autonomous and massive production capacity in that field.

Nature of the Syrian chemical arsenal

With above 1000 ton of chemical agents and precursor chemicals, Damascus has one of Syria/chemical weapons the most important operational stockpile in the world, without any perspective of programmed destruction in the absence of a Syrian willingness to join the CCWB.

The Syrian arsenal is particularly massive and diversified. It includes:

- Several hundreds of tons of sulfur mustard, stockpiled in its final form,
- Several tens of tons of VX. VX is the most toxic among the known chemical warfare agents,
- Several hundreds of tons of sarin, representing the bulk of the arsenal.

Sarin and VX are neurotoxic organophosphorous compounds which are partly stocked in a binary manner, i.e. kept as two distinct chemical products, called precursor chemicals, which are mixed just before use. Such a technique and related processes reveal a high level of know-how in the chemical weapons technology by the Syrian regime.

Syrian scientists have also worked on nitrogen mustard, a first generation vesicant agent, as well as neurotoxic organophosphorus compounds with toxicity level higher than sarin.

Means of delivery

Damascus is in a position to deliver its chemical weapons through a vast range of several thousand launchers:

- Scud C missiles, with a range of 500 km, capable of delivering sulfur mustard, sarin or VX,
- Scud B missiles, capable of delivering sarin or VX at a 300 km range,
- M600 missiles, with a range between 250 and 300 km. They too can deliver the three already mentioned toxic agents.
- SS21 missiles, adapted to carry the three mentioned chemical warfare agents, at a limited range (70 km).
- Air launched bombs with a payload of sarin. Depending on the model, they can deliver between 100 and 300 litres of toxic agent,
- Artillery rockets, particularly 302 and 320 mm, aimed at delivering sulfur mustard, sarin or VX at a shorter range (50 km and under).

Some missiles are able to deliver several hundred litres of toxic agents.

Activities monitored for several years on Syrian test sites indicate that new dispersal mechanisms are being studied. Since the beginning of the conflict, our intelligence confirms the use by the regime of ammunitions carrying a lesser volume of chemical agents, adapted to a tactical use, more focused and local.

Capability to deliver chemical agents by Syrian vectors

SCUD C: VX – Sarin – Yperite – Range: 500 km

SCUD B: VX – Sarin – Range: 300 km

M600: VX – Sarin – Yperite – Range: 250-300 km

SS21: VX – Sarin – Yperite – Range: 70 km

Bomb: Sarin

Rockets: VX – Sarin – Yperite – Range: 50 km

Other tactical munitions: Sarin – Range: below 50 km.

We cannot exclude that such tests may also have been conducted with other categories of chemicals diverted from their civilian use and used at lethal doses.

2 – Chemical attacks previously lead by the Syrian regime

Cases have been documented in the recent months of the use of chemical agents by the Syrian regime in attacks against some areas controlled by the opposition, with an objective of seizing territory or inspiring terror. By doing so the regime has violated the commitments under the Geneva Protocol of 1925, which it has signed in 1968, concerning the prohibition of use at war of suffocating gas, toxic or similar weapons as well as biological weapons.

French competent services have obtained samples either biomedical (blood, urine), environmental (ground) or material (munitions debris), taken on victims or on the sites during the attacks in Saraqeb (April 29, 2013) and Jobar (mid-April 2013). Our analyses have confirmed the use of sarin.

On April 29, we know that the Syrian regime lead an attack against Saraqeb, located 30 km South-East of Idleb. An [sic] helicopter flying high over the town dropped over its western part small munitions spreading white smoke. Some twenty persons were intoxicated and taken to local hospitals, where medical agents were intoxicated by transferred contamination. The analyses have confirmed the use of sarin.

Mid-April, forty people were intoxicated and evacuated from the eastern suburbs of Damascus, in the city of Jobar. The analysis of biomedical samples

taken from victims of this attack and performed in conditions verified by our services, have also confirmed the use of sarin.

These confirmed use of sarin by Syrian forces have demonstrated that the Bachar El Assad regime is adapting its tactics and the munitions in its stockpiles to a terror use against civilian population.

These previous events and the simultaneous and massive use of chemical agents during the night of August 21, 2013 on the Eastern suburbs of Damascus confirm that the Syrian regime has deliberately crossed a step. Our intelligence services also have information, from national sources, leading to think that other such actions might again be undertaken.

3 – Massive and coordinated use of chemical agents against civilians on 21s[sic] August

Based on a methodical technical analysis of 47 original video tapes of the August 21 events, a first counting of the victims, area by area, has been carried out. Based on just this set of videos, no less than 281 death casualties have been recorded, located in the East Ghouta (Ain Tarma, Douma, Erbin, Jobar, Kfar Batna, Qas Alaa, Zamalka) and West Ghouta (Mudamiyat Sham).

Our own intelligence confirms that, in the Douma hospital, half of the victims were women and children and, in 50% of the cases, death was instantaneous. The doctors conclude that a high concentration of toxic agent was used.

Other independent assessments, produced for instance by the NGO “Doctors without borders” mention at least 355 deaths. Several technical numberings, from different sources, assess the final toll at approximately 1500 deaths. Work

carried out by our specialists, by extrapolating an impact model of a chemical attack on the population of the mentioned sites, is consistent with these figures.

Beyond the fact that the victims do not show wounds, the death symptoms (to include generalized convulsions, nausea, vomiting, miosis, foaming from the nose and mouth, dyspnea, suffocation, loss of consciousness) are clinical signs of a poisoning due to the use of chemical agents. Confirmed cases of cross-contamination of medical assistants have been reported by several sources.

The observation of many low-age children suffering violent symptoms (convulsion among others), on eight different sites, lead to the conclusion that a falsification or manipulation by the opposition is highly improbable. These observations, as well as the multiple video sources and testimonies, exclude any possible falsification by the opposition.

The massive inflow to different hospitals of contaminated people within a very short delay, the number of victims and the fact that they were coming from different distinct areas, confirmed by the analyses on the total of information we could gather, characterize the effects of an attack led with high lethality chemical agents; they confirm that a coordinated and massive attack was launched during the night of August 21, 2013.

4 – The 21 August attack can only have been ordered and lead by the regime

The combined attack lead on August 21 corresponds to a classical tactical pattern (artillery preparation, then ground offensive) and the use of chemical agents was integrated in a tactical maneuver consistent, on a military level, with the Syrian armed forces' doctrine. Reliable intelligence from several of our partners mentions specific preparations in the days just before August 21.

Conventional air and artillery bombardments took place between 3 and 4 am on the Ghouta East. In parallel, the locations of Zamalka, Kafr Batna and Ayn Tarma were reached by chemical attacks. At 6 am, a ground offensive was launched by the regime against these cities.

Several sources mention the use of artillery rockets, different from those of the best known ammunition stock (missiles and bombs). Our technical analyses confirm that the rest of rockets observed on that occasion, as for some previous and local operations, allow the use of chemical agents.

The regime then lead important air and ground strikes on the attacked areas. It made efforts to delay the arrival of inspectors over several days. These elements confirm a clear willingness to destroy any evidence a posteriori. Furthermore, the military set off fires, aiming apparently at purifying the atmosphere thanks to the air movement generated by the intense heat.

Our intelligence confirms that the regime feared a wider attack from the opposition on Damascus at that moment. Our assessment is that the regime was trying by this attack to loosen the grip and to secure sites strategic to control of the capital. For example, the area of Moadamiyé is located close to the Mezzeh military airfield, which houses the barracks of the Air Force intelligence.

Anyhow it is clear, by examining the targets of the attack, than only the regime itself could have targeted positions that were so strategic for the opposition.

Finally, we consider that the Syrian opposition does not have the capacity to lead an operation of that size with chemical agents. No group belonging to the Syrian opposition has, at this stage, the capacity to stock and use these agents, and even more in proportions comparable to what was used on the night of August, 21 in Damascus. These groups have neither the experience, nor the

know-how to implement them, particularly through vectors as those that were used during the August 21 attack. ¹Source of English translation: French Defence Ministry.

6. Syria/government declaration and debate at the National Assembly and Senate -
Speech by M. Laurent Fabius, Minister of Foreign Affairs, in the Senate
Paris, 4 September 2013

<https://uk.ambafrance.org/Laurent-Fabius-explains-reasons>

Mr President,

Ministers,

Senators,

In the early hours of 21 August, a few kilometers from the centre of Damascus, nearly 1,500 civilians, including hundreds of children, died, asphyxiated, in their sleep. Murdered by the Syrian regime, in what is, in the early part of this century, the most massive and most terrifying use of chemical weapons.

Each one of us was able to find out about these events immediately after the tragedy, through dozens of videos. Videos shot by doctors, neighbours, relatives, who were not only terrified but also aware of their duty to inform the world of the horror of what had just occurred.

Each one of us could see the appalling images of the victims' agony, the rows of children's corpses. There was not a drop of blood on those corpses, not a wound. Only the silent death by gas, whose use that night is no longer being denied by anyone.

Beyond those terrifying images, what do we know with certainty?

On Monday, the Prime Minister, the Minister of Defence, the Minister Delegate for Relations with Parliament and I met the Presidents of the National Assembly and the Senate, the relevant committee heads and the leaders of the political parties of those two bodies to provide information on this subject to our national representatives. The government is convinced that the gravity of this moment calls for transparency and republican dialogue.

We are certain of the scale of the death toll, which could reach up to 1,500 victims. This has been confirmed by independent assessments such as the one carried out by Médecins sans Frontières. By analysing the videos, which we

have had authenticated, our own personnel has concluded that all the victims were located in neighbourhoods controlled by the opposition.

All the symptoms observed are consistent with poisoning by chemical agents. We have evidence in our possession, and in our allies' possession, indicating that sarin gas was used.

We are certain that Syria has one of the largest chemical weapons stockpiles in the world: more than 1,000 tonnes of chemical warfare agents and dozens of delivery systems.

We are certain that the Syrian regime has already used chemical weapons on several occasions in recent months, on a much more limited scale, with the aim of recapturing areas held by the opposition and spreading terror there. We have recovered and analysed samples that have confirmed the use of toxic gas in Saraqib and Jobar. This information has been transmitted to the United Nations.

We are certain that this attack is part of an offensive to recapture a key area that serves as a gateway to Damascus. Preparations were already under way in previous days, including the movement of chemical agents from the regime's main storage facilities. After the attack, we are also certain that there were intense bombardments to attempt to erase the evidence.

And finally, we are certain that the opposition does not have the capability to conduct such a large-scale operation. No rebel group has the necessary quantities of chemical agents, the delivery systems or the know-how to carry out such an attack.

It is therefore certain: there was indeed a massive chemical attack on 21 August, in the Ghouta plain, for which the Syrian regime bears full responsibility.

We share this certainty with our American, British, German and Turkish partners. The Arab League itself confirmed it during its ministerial meeting on Sunday, saying the regime was responsible.

It is not the mission of the UN investigators to assign responsibility. Those investigators will only be able to confirm the use of chemical weapons.

Given these indisputable facts, what should we choose: action or resignation? Can we make do with condemning them, and with calling on the international community to wake up, so that peace negotiations that have not been forthcoming finally begin?

Ladies and gentlemen senators, President Hollande offered a clear response to these questions, one in line with France's mobilization since the beginning of the Syrian crisis. We were the first to recognize the Syrian National Coalition, to offer it our support, to respond to the humanitarian emergency, to promote a political solution. And we tirelessly pursued our contacts with our European partners, our allies, the countries of the region, Russia and China, to seek solutions to this tragedy.

Not to respond would be to allow the large-scale use of chemical weapons to go unpunished.

Not to respond would be to send Bashar al-Assad and the Syrian people a terrible message: that chemical weapons can be used again tomorrow against Damascus, against Aleppo, perhaps on an even larger scale.

Not to respond would be to endanger the peace and security of the entire region, and beyond that, our own security. For – we must ask – what would it do to the credibility of our international commitments when it comes to halting the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons? What message would we be sending other regimes, such as Iran or North Korea?

That message would unfortunately be very clear: you may go ahead; possessing these weapons gives you impunity and the divisions within the international community protect you.

Not responding, finally, would mean closing the door to a political solution to the Syrian conflict. Yes, the solution to the Syrian crisis will be political and not military. But let's face up to reality: if we don't put a stop to such acts by the regime, there will be no political solution. Why would Bashar al-Assad negotiate when he believes he can "liquidate" – that is his own word, which he repeated in writing early this week – "liquidate" his opposition, notably by using weapons that sow terror and death?

For all of these reasons, the French President has chosen to take action: legitimate, collective and considered action.

Legitimate, first of all, because the Syrian regime has violated its international obligations on a massive scale. By using chemical weapons, Bashar al-Assad has violated his obligations under the 1925 Protocol, which prohibits their use and which Syria ratified in 1968. He has flouted international humanitarian law by carrying out indiscriminate attacks, which are banned under the Geneva Conventions. He has committed a war crime. He has committed what the UN Secretary-General described as a crime against humanity.

In addition to these violations, the Syrian regime has continuously refused to cooperate with the international community. By blocking access to the International Commission of Inquiry to monitor human rights. By refusing for five months to allow chemical weapons inspectors to be present. By dismissing the various attempts to broker a ceasefire. By increasing the number of obstacles to humanitarian action in Syria.

Of course, the explicit authorization of the Security Council would be preferable. But, here again, let's be realistic. Russia and China have blocked any response to the Syrian tragedy for two and a half years now, including by exercising their veto three times. Our attempt a week ago to propose a draft resolution authorizing a strong response to the chemical attack on 21 August was also stopped dead in its tracks.

The seriousness of the threat associated with the use of chemical weapons compels us to take action.

The action we're proposing is considered and collective. President Hollande stated that it should be – I quote – “firm and proportionate.” A one-off response with meaningful but targeted objectives. There is no question of sending in ground troops. There is no question of launching military operations to overthrow the regime.

Of course, we want to see the departure of Mr Bashar al-Assad, who doesn't hesitate to directly threaten our country and who even believes he can intimidate the national representatives. Yes, we want to see his departure within the framework of a political solution. France will continue to take the lead in promoting a political solution.

Our message is clear: the use of chemical weapons is unacceptable. We want to both punish and deter, to respond to this atrocity in order to prevent it from happening again. We also want to show Bashar al-Assad that he has no other option than to negotiate.

Some tell us that a response would further complicate the situation. But, again, I appeal to your clear-sightedness. The destabilization of the countries of the region, which are dealing with the influx of more than two million refugees is a reality. Doing nothing in the face of the Syrian people's suffering plays into the hands of the extremists. Ensuring that the Syrian regime's crimes do not go unpunished is, on the contrary, a way for our democracies to support the moderate Syrian opposition.

By doing this we will be true to our values, on which France's commitment throughout the world is based. Indeed, France has a special responsibility. It's an opportunity and a duty which contribute to the greatness of our country. Let's be united in order to be true to this vocation.

France will not act alone and will combine its efforts with those of other partners, beginning with the United States of America, with which it has

always aligned itself at critical moments when the cause was just. We are also counting on the support of the Europeans and the countries of the region, notably within the Arab League. President Hollande is continuing his efforts of persuasion in order to bring together the broadest possible coalition of support. The G20 summit beginning in St Petersburg tomorrow will provide such an opportunity.

Mr President,
Ministers,
Senators,

Next year we will commemorate the centenary of the First World War, which marked the first extensive use of poisonous gases as a combat weapon. A century later, while chemical weapons have been banned under international law, we cannot accept an appalling step backwards.

In these grave circumstances, the national representatives must be informed. That's why we pledge to continue keeping you informed over the next few days of changes in the situation, while respecting the institutional balance arising from our Constitution. In any event, the final decision can be taken only by President Hollande once the coalition has been formed, which is the only way to establish the conditions for action.

Senators, in the face of barbarity, doing nothing is not an option, in any case not for France. By not responding, we allow Bashar al-Assad to continue his atrocities, encourage the proliferation and use of weapons of mass destruction, leave Syria and the entire region to fall into chaos and give in to threats. Together with its partners, France will therefore assume its responsibilities./.

7. Government statement and debate in the National Assembly and Senate – Speeches by M. Jean-Marc Ayrault, Prime Minister, and M. Jean-Yves Le Drian, Minister of Defence (excerpts) Paris, 4 September 2013
<https://uk.ambafrance.org/Defence-Minister-calls-for-end-to>

(...)

THE MINISTER – Mr President, ladies and gentlemen deputies,
I'd like to answer two major questions that have been raised during this debate.

Syria/chemical attack/evidence/Assad's responsibility

The first is the following: are we sure that the 21 August attack was chemical? Yes, it was chemical. The nature of the chemical agent used doesn't matter much – although, as the President has said, several pieces of information show us and our partners that sarin was used. All the information declassified both by our and our partners' services strongly demonstrates the use of chemical weapons during the attack, whether they be sarin, yperite, VX or other products like incapacitants for civilian use deployed at high doses, and even cocktails – that's the most plausible theory. Moreover, nobody is denying it today – not even Bashar al-Assad.

In this regard, let me add that the United Nations' Sellström mission will say nothing except this, because its mandate is to ascertain the use of chemical weapons – which everyone now acknowledges – and not to say who ordered the attack.

The second question relates to Bashar al-Assad's responsibility. He is held accountable for eight fundamental, cumulative reasons which I'm going to set out.

The first reason is that Bashar al-Assad's regime has stockpiled more than 1,000 tonnes of chemical agents and has deployed the necessary delivery systems for their use. It used them, remember, during the events in April in Saraqib and Jobar. We were able to indicate then, thanks to samples then passed on to the United Nations, that it was sarin gas.

Secondly, we have information showing that specific preparations were carried out by the regime in the days preceding 21 August. By specific preparations, I mean steps intended for a chemical intervention.

Thirdly, the reconstruction of the military sequence of events in the 21 August attack, of which the Prime Minister informed your representatives on Monday evening, shows that many shots were fired from districts controlled by the regime towards the districts in the Ghouta, which is in the hands of the opposition.

Fourthly, the operational sequence of events and the attack's complexity – which, in my opinion, isn't talked about enough – reveal a perfectly coordinated military operation in line with the tactics of the Syrian defence staff. Before the chemical attack, there was aerial and artillery preparation. In parallel with these military actions, the chemical attack was carried out from 3.00 a.m. onwards. A ground offensive was launched onto the same sites from 6.00 a.m. onwards. Then, still in the same place, there were further intense aerial and artillery bombardments. So there's a technical consistency there, a large-scale and well-coordinated military action.

Fifthly, the regime subsequently did everything to destroy evidence of its involvement in the operation, either by bombarding the sites already hit or by starting fires to eliminate the traces and cause the gases to evaporate.

Sixth, the scale of the chemical attack is such, and the targets so numerous, that only the regime had the means to engage in such an intervention.

Seventh, neither we nor our partners nor our respective services have ever had the slightest evidence of the Syrian opposition possessing – let alone using – chemical agents, especially in such quantities.

Eighth, the attack launched makes great strategic sense for the Damascus regime, because it was facing an imminent offensive by the opposition in

sensitive districts, particularly eastern and western Ghouta, where Damascus's two airports are situated.

Yes, ladies and gentlemen deputies, it was a large-scale attack which killed hundreds of civilians and was carried out by a regime pursuing its work of terror and of liquidating its people – as Bashar al-Assad said in a recent interview.

I now come to the political-military objectives of the intervention. M. Borloo referred to a tactical concept of no-fly zones and even of a humanitarian corridor. I'd like to say to him that in order to take such an initiative, we would need a huge number of aircraft, long term. This would amount to committing to a war on a long-term basis, without resolving the problem of the use of chemical weapons. It would mark the beginning of a conflict and a long-lasting war. I take the liberty of making this strictly military observation to him. I say this without any aggression, with the sole desire to clarify things for the nation's elected representatives.

Syria/Lebanon

I'd also like to tell him that we share his concern about Lebanon. Today, that country is being hit hard by the consequences of the Syrian crisis, both on the humanitarian and security fronts, as shown by the influx of refugees and the increase in security incidents inside the country and at the borders, in Tripoli and the Bekaa valley. We too are very committed to Lebanon's sovereignty. We support the policy of dissociation – the term used by President Suleiman – and call on all the political forces to abide by it.

Moreover, I'd like to remind M. Borloo that on 10 July, on France's initiative, there was a unanimous statement from the Security Council highlighting the imperative of Lebanon's dissociation and of guaranteeing its political identity. That said, we share the security concern and, as you can well imagine, we've already adopted measures to protect our nationals and the French forces in southern Lebanon.

Intervention/objectives

As regards the political-military objectives, I'd like to add this: these objectives are perfectly clear and defined.

As the President said, our response has two major strategic objectives, both linked to Bashar al-Assad's breaking of a taboo: that of using chemical weapons against his people. On the one hand, the objective is to punish the use of chemical agents by Bashar al-Assad against civilians and, on the other hand, to deter him from continuing and restore the ban on the use of weapons of mass destruction. These two objectives must allow us to define a firm, significant, targeted and proportionate response to the violation of an essential norm of international law. They are paramount in the military planning, which is governed by three principles in particular: no ground intervention, retaliatory action against Syrian capabilities and strict collateral damage limitation. The response will halt the escalation of violence the regime is engaged in and thus allow the mentality of impunity to be broken, which is today hindering the essential political solution. The aim of the response I've just described is not to overthrow the Syrian regime but to change the political dynamic by ending the mentality of impunity.

A regime convinced of being able to win militarily by using weapons of mass destruction with impunity has no reason to come and negotiate a political exit. Incidentally, in his statement to Le Figaro yesterday, Bashar al-Assad doesn't say anything different.

Ladies and gentlemen deputies, France decides for itself, because it has military and intelligence capabilities that few countries have. It has specific responsibilities in the international arena, and a certain view of how the international order is respected and of what is called effective multilateralism. It also has duties in terms of national security, which give it the responsibility to intervene. (...)/.

8. Introductory remarks by M. Laurent Fabius, Minister of Foreign Affairs, during his press conference Paris, September 10, 2013

<https://franceintheus.org/spip.php?article4879>

Since the Damascus chemical massacre on 21 August, we've constantly pursued two objectives: punishment of those responsible and deterrence, so that they can't do it again. Our considered, firm approach has allowed us to get support from a growing number of states and influence certain positions. Yesterday, the Russian Foreign Minister took a step in this direction, calling for – I quote – “the Syrian authorities not only to agree to put their chemical weapons stockpile under international control and then have it destroyed, but also to become a full member of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons”.

This position has today been supported, among others, by China.

We welcome this new position with interest, but also with caution. We don't want it to be used as a diversionary tactic. This is why, after discussing it with the President, we have decided to take the initiative.

So France will present a resolution to this effect to the United Nations Security Council, and the procedure will be begun this very day. The text will be examined and, if need be, amended by our partners and by the Security Council.

Very specifically, France will today propose to its Security Council partners a draft resolution under Chapter VII aimed at making its ideas an immediate reality. What ideas?

- ▶ Firstly, condemning the 21 August massacre committed by the Syrian regime;
- ▶ Secondly, demanding that the regime immediately shed full light on its chemical weapons programme, place it under international control and allow it to be dismantled;
- ▶ Thirdly, putting in place a full mechanism for the inspection and monitoring of its obligations, under the aegis of the international Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons;
- ▶ Fourthly, providing for extremely serious consequences in the event of Syria violating its obligations;
- ▶ Fifthly, finally, punishing the perpetrators of the 21 August chemical massacre in the international criminal justice system.

It's on the acceptance of these specific conditions that we'll judge the credibility of the intentions expressed yesterday. The Syrian people have suffered too much; we won't let ourselves be dragged into delaying tactics, so we must have rapid results. France wants to act in good faith to ensure that a firm, specific and verifiable response to the Syrian chemical threat can finally be found, with the two objectives we've had from the outset – punishment and deterrence – and still the same method: well-considered firmness. (...)/.

9. Interview between Mr Francois Hollande and TF1 on the situation in Syria, and on government policy, 15 September 2013 (Extracts)

<http://discours.vie-publique.fr/notices/137002098.html>

Personnalité, fonction : HOLLANDE François.

FRANCE. Président de la République

ti : CLAIRE CHAZAL

Bonsoir Monsieur le Président.

LE PRESIDENT

Bonsoir Claire CHAZAL.

CLAIRE CHAZAL

Merci de nous recevoir ici à l'Hôtel de Marigny, l'annexe de l'Élysée, ouvert exceptionnellement, on l'a dit, pour ces Journées du patrimoine.

Merci de nous réserver votre première intervention sur le dossier de la Syrie et votre parole sur ce point est très attendue.

Vous vous exprimerez aussi à l'issue d'une semaine très importante qui a vu la présentation du budget 2014 dans ses grandes lignes et puis aussi une semaine au cours de laquelle les Français ont reçu leur feuille d'impôt.

Vous savez que sur ce thème, il y a beaucoup de questions, d'inquiétude, voire de colère ; nous consacrerons à ce thème, la deuxième moitié de notre entretien. La Syrie tout d'abord donc. Les dernières tractations diplomatiques à Genève entre les Américains et les Russes ont débouché sur un accord portant sur le démantèlement des stocks d'armes chimiques syriens avec même la possibilité d'user de la force si Damas n'obtempère pas ; la Chine approuve. Le régime de Damas s'affiche aussi satisfait aujourd'hui. Est-ce que cet accord vous agréé ? Est-ce que vous êtes heureux de cet accord ?

LE PRESIDENT

D'abord merci d'avoir accepté cet entretien. Il est attendu par les Français car la Syrie, c'est la tragédie la plus grave du début du 21^e siècle.

120.000 morts. La moitié de la population est déplacée : deux millions de réfugiés. Et puis le 21 août, dans ce cortège d'horreur, il y a eu un massacre chimique. 1.500 civils, femmes, hommes, enfants, qui ont été tués à travers l'utilisation de gaz. Et donc la première question comme Président de la République, que j'ai eue à régler, pas simplement autour de ma conscience mais de l'idée que je me fais de la France et de ma responsabilité, c'est qu'une réaction était nécessaire, que ce drame n'avait que trop duré et qu'il prenait un tour, à travers les armes chimiques, qui ne pouvait plus être accepté parce que c'était une violation du droit international, de la plus vieille de nos conventions qui proscribit les armes chimiques. Alors nous avons donc menacé d'utiliser la force à travers des frappes ; pas simplement la France, les Etats-Unis et à un moment le Royaume-Uni.

CLAIRE CHAZAL

Vous avez même dit : il faut punir Bachar EL-ASSAD. Vous ne regrettez pas aujourd'hui ce terme, compte tenu de l'évolution de la situation ?

LE PRESIDENT

Justement, s'il n'y avait pas eu de réaction, alors qu'est-ce qui se serait passé ? Bachar EL-ASSAD aurait donc continué à gazer la population ?

Bachar EL-ASSAD niait même jusqu'à récemment, il y a quelques jours, qu'il avait des armes chimiques ; aujourd'hui, il en fait l'aveu.

Les Russes soutenaient Bachar EL-ASSAD et considéraient qu'il n'y avait rien à faire, en tout cas pas une punition. La pression que la France a exercée – pas simplement la France, les Etats-Unis – la pression qui a été donc suffisamment forte, a convaincu la Russie, POUTINE, de prendre une initiative. Tant mieux. Cette initiative a permis d'avoir un accord, là, ces derniers jours.

CLAIRE CHAZAL

Mais la France n'était pas présente à Genève. Est-ce que vous avez regretté l'absence de la France ?

LE PRESIDENT

Alors d'abord qu'est-ce qu'on doit penser de cet accord ? Je considère que c'est une étape importante. Mais ce n'est pas le point d'arrivée. Donc la France n'est pas seule, elle n'a jamais été seule. On me dit : vous êtes avec les Etats-Unis d'OBAMA. Quel crime y aurait-il d'être avec le président OBAMA sur cette question des droits essentiels de la personne humaine et de notre sécurité ?

Quand des armes chimiques sont utilisées, ce n'est pas simplement dans un pays, dans une région, ça peut être partout. Donc la France a considéré que ce qui avait été noué entre les Américains et les Russes ces derniers jours, c'est une étape importante. Qu'est-ce que je vais faire demain ? Je vais recevoir le ministre KERRY, des Affaires étrangères, qu'on appelle le Secrétaire d'Etat américain et le ministre des Affaires étrangères britanniques, avec Laurent FABIUS. Et nous allons mettre en forme la prochaine résolution du Conseil de sécurité qui va prendre l'accord et le traduire.

De quelle manière ? Un, de faire en sorte que les vérifications sur place puissent être faites...

CLAIRE CHAZAL

Vous savez que c'est très difficile...

LE PRESIDENT

C'est très difficile, donc ça mérite effectivement que nous y passions un certain nombre de temps pour être sûrs que les 50 sites soient bien identifiés.

CLAIRE CHAZAL

Beaucoup disent qu'il est presque illusoire de demander à la fois le recensement et puis la destruction de ces stocks d'armes...

LE PRESIDENT

Après il y a la destruction. Un calendrier a été fixé, sans doute est-il un peu ambitieux, mais enfin on ne va pas se plaindre...

CLAIRE CHAZAL

Certains parlent de dix ans...

LE PRESIDENT

Oui. Là, il est dit premier semestre 2014...

CLAIRE CHAZAL

C'est très très court...

LE PRESIDENT

C'est très court. Donc il faut bien intégrer la menace de sanctions si l'accord et le résultat de la résolution du Conseil de sécurité n'étaient pas traduits.

Donc nous devons faire en sorte qu'il y ait la possibilité d'une sanction s'il n'y a pas application. Mais il y a une étape importante qui maintenant doit être suivie de cette résolution devant le Conseil de sécurité, de cette possibilité de sanction en cas de manquement du côté syrien et il y a autre chose qui va se produire lundi, c'est le rapport des inspecteurs de l'ONU, afin de savoir s'il y a bien eu utilisation d'armes chimiques et cela aura quelques conséquences sur le processus.

CLAIRE CHAZAL

Alors on va revenir à ces preuves évidemment, qui sont très importantes ; quand vous dites « sanctions », qu'est-ce que ça veut dire Monsieur le Président ? Des frappes ?

LE PRESIDENT

Jusque-là, les Etats-Unis, et la France disaient que puisque le Conseil de sécurité était débloqué, nous étions prêts à envisager des frappes pour faire bouger la Syrie et faire évoluer la diplomatie russe.

Convenons que cette stratégie a porté puisque nous en sommes arrivés au point où maintenant la menace de sanctions n'est plus portée par des pays mais pourrait l'être par le Conseil de sécurité des Nations-Unies.

CLAIRE CHAZAL

... Qui pourrait dire... prononcer, le mot « frappes ciblées »...

LE PRESIDENT

Il prononcera en tout cas le mot « sanctions » puisque c'est dans ce cadre-là que les Russes et les Américains ont convenu de situer maintenant l'inspection, la destruction des armes chimiques en Syrie.

CLAIRE CHAZAL

Est-ce que ce n'est pas une façon pour Vladimir POUTINE de gagner du temps ? Est-ce qu'aujourd'hui on peut faire confiance – la question est peut-être brutale – à Vladimir POUTINE ? Au fond, les frappes sont différées...

LE PRESIDENT

On ne peut pas à la fois nous dire : « allez vers les Russes » parce que cela peut être une occasion de sortie de cette crise et en même temps « vous ne pouvez pas faire confiance aux Russes » ! La meilleure façon de nous faire confiance mutuellement, c'est de passer devant le Conseil de sécurité. Jusque-là, les Russes – pas simplement les Russes d'ailleurs, les Chinois aussi – bloquaient le Conseil de sécurité ; les Russes avaient posé trois fois leur veto depuis le début de la crise syrienne ; cette fois-ci, puisqu'ils sont partie prenante de cet accord, ils pourront être aussi juges de son application et de son exécution et donc partie prenante d'une éventuelle sanction si le Conseil de sécurité en jugeait ainsi, faute de participation des Syriens – Quand je dis des Syriens, je dis régime syrien – parce qu'il faut bien voir que Bachar EL-ASSAD n'est pas le représentant de la Syrie. Pour nous, pour la France, les représentants de la Syrie, c'est l'opposition démocratique, ce ne sont pas les djihadistes non plus parce que finalement les djihadistes, les islamiques radicaux et le régime de Bachar EL-ASSAD se donnent la main, les uns pour justifier leur maintien au pouvoir – Bachar EL-ASSAD – les autres pour justifier de leur installation en

Syrie. Il faut arrêter ce conflit. Et donc la prochaine étape après le Conseil de Sécurité qui va se mettre sur la question des armes chimiques...

CLAIRE CHAZAL

Et la France pourrait être à l'initiative et rédiger cette résolution ?

LE PRESIDENT

Oui, nous allons dès demain y travailler avec les ministres des Affaires étrangères américain et britannique, puis ensuite Laurent FABIUS se rendra en Russie pour rencontrer son homologue pour terminer ce processus et nous pourrions faire voter cette résolution avant la fin de la semaine. Est-ce que nous en aurions pour autant terminé ? Il y a toujours ces violences, il y a toujours cette guerre en Syrie. Donc la prochaine étape, cela doit être de trouver la solution politique à la crise syrienne et cela nous pourrions le faire si chacun est conscient de la gravité de la situation mais aussi de l'opportunité qui nous est donnée. Nous pourrions le faire dès l'Assemblée générale des Nations Unies à la fin du mois de septembre.

CLAIRE CHAZAL

Et vous-même, Président français, vous souhaitez le départ de Bachar EL-ASSAD ?

LE PRESIDENT

Je l'ai toujours dit, mais la meilleure des façons de l'obtenir, c'est d'avoir cet accord politique et d'être sûr que ceux qui vont être chargés de la transition soient des démocrates car il ne s'agit pas d'installer ceux que nous avons combattus au Mali ou il y a quelques mois en Lybie. Donc faisons attention de ne pas installer ceux que nous considérons comme aussi dangereux que Bachar EL-ASSAD, puisque tous les deux, Bachar EL-ASSAD et les djihadistes, sont des massacreurs.

CLAIRE CHAZAL

Il y a le problème des réfugiés aussi, Monsieur le Président. Est-ce que la France compte en accueillir, des réfugiés de Syrie, puisqu'on sait que la population fuit par milliers... par dizaines de milliers le pays.

LE PRESIDENT

J'ai cité ce drame : deux millions de réfugiés, qui créent une situation épouvantable en Jordanie, au Liban, en Turquie, autant de pays amis qui se trouvent déstabilisés – je pense notamment au Liban et à la Jordanie, parce que ce sont des pays fragiles compte tenu de l'importance des réfugiés. A partir de ce constat, oui, nous devons prendre notre part mais si j'ai voulu une solution politique, si j'ai voulu faire pression sur le régime syrien, c'est bien pour arrêter cet engrenage parce que ce serait quand même un paradoxe si on laissait faire et, en même temps, si on était amené à accueillir des réfugiés en toujours plus grand nombre ! Je m'y refuse. Moi, je veux une solution et je dois dire que les Français se sont beaucoup interrogés, je les comprends...

CLAIRE CHAZAL

Ils ont même rejeté l'idée de frappes...

LE PRESIDENT

Oui... après l'exemple irakien où la France n'était pas allée et heureusement ! Après cette guerre en Afghanistan qui a duré onze ans...

CLAIRE CHAZAL

Et tous les printemps arabes qui évidemment montrent les limites...

LE PRESIDENT

J'ai d'ailleurs moi-même retiré les forces françaises d'Afghanistan... Et puis la Libye qui n'a pas donné tous les résultats escomptés. Même si, au Mali, nous pouvons être fiers d'une opération pleinement réussie. Donc je comprends les Français qui cherchent une autre solution et qui peuvent se dire « c'est bien loin et ce n'est pas notre affaire ». Si, c'est notre affaire ! La sécurité de la France, c'est ma responsabilité. Donc c'est vrai que je veux que nous puissions – maintenant que nous avons réussi parce que nous devons être fiers de ce que nous avons fait, la pression que nous avons exercée, avec les Etats-Unis, elle a payé ! – donc à nous maintenant de chercher la solution politique à ce conflit.

CLAIRE CHAZAL

Mais vous n'avez pas été, si on reprend la genèse très rapidement bien sûr,

vous n'avez pas été surpris par les décisions et de David CAMERON et de Barack OBAMA de consulter le Parlement et au fond j'allais dire de lâcher un peu la France...

LE PRESIDENT

Chacun a ses institutions ; en France, vous savez que le président de la République a des prérogatives, cela nous rend plus prompts, plus forts...

CLAIRE CHAZAL

Vous n'avez pas pensé vous aussi à consulter le Parlement ?

LE PRESIDENT

Bien sûr, je suis soucieux de ce que peut représenter le Parlement, de ce qu'il peut aussi prononcer. Mais je n'ai pas eu à le consulter puisqu'aujourd'hui nous sommes dans une phase qui nous permet d'envisager sérieusement une issue diplomatique et politique. Mais je l'indique, pour être tout à fait clair devant vous : l'option militaire doit demeurer, sinon il n'y aura pas la contrainte. Je souhaite qu'elle soit d'ailleurs exercée par le Conseil de sécurité des Nations Unies.

CLAIRE CHAZAL

Avant de passer bien sûr au volet économique qui est très important, un mot des otages. Trois ans que quatre otages français sont retenus au Mali ; deux otages – nos confrères d'EUROPE 1 – en Syrie. Est-ce que vous avez des preuves de vie d'Edouard ELIAS et Didier FRANCOIS ?

LE PRESIDENT

Oui, nous avons des preuves. Mais ils sont retenus. Et je pense aussi à nos otages du Mali. Nous avons des preuves, mais ils sont retenus. Et les quatre otages qu'on appelle d'Arlit, le sont depuis trois ans presque jour pour jour. Je mesure ce que cela représente pour les familles, je les ai reçues plusieurs fois, je connais leur douleur, leur impatience qui devient même maintenant insupportable, et je peux leur dire, je dois leur dire que nous faisons tout pour aller les chercher mais en faisant en sorte que les contacts que nous prenons puissent aboutir. C'est trop long. Si j'avais pu le faire dès à présent, je serais

heureux de pouvoir vous le confier aujourd'hui, mais je fais en sorte que nous puissions saisir toutes les opportunités qui se présenteront aussi bien pour le Mali que pour la Syrie.

CLAIRE CHAZAL

Un tout dernier mot peut-être, Monsieur le Président, sur la Syrie : l'opération au Mali avait montré l'efficacité de l'armée française. Aujourd'hui, cette opération en Syrie a été plus chaotique ou en tout cas il y a eu des annonces, des reculs des Américains. Ce sont des moments très difficiles dans l'exercice d'un pouvoir présidentiel. Est-ce qu'au fond cet épisode syrien, vous ne le regrettez pas ou en tout cas vous ne vous êtes pas senti mal à l'aise à certains moments ?

LE PRESIDENT

D'abord je veux exprimer toute ma reconnaissance à l'armée française, admirable force qui a été capable de rendre à ce pays du Mali sa souveraineté – je vais y aller dans quelques jours et ce sera l'occasion de saluer toute l'opération, du début où j'ai pris la décision, jusqu'à la fin, l'élection présidentielle. Le nouveau Président a été installé et j'irai à sa rencontre la semaine prochaine. Saluer aussi l'armée française qui était prête à organiser les frappes, à les mettre en œuvre dès que j'en aurais pris la décision. Son rôle n'est pas de décider. Son rôle, c'est de permettre au président de la République, au nom de tous les Français, de prendre l'option qui paraît la meilleure. Nous n'avons pas pris cette option. Finalement la menace de frappe, l'efficacité des frappes, car elles auraient été tout à fait pertinentes et graduées, proportionnées et nous n'aurions pas eu à survoler le territoire syrien, c'est vous dire la qualité de notre armée ; mais le fait que cette menace ait existé a permis d'arriver à la solution politique. Donc il n'y a pas de diplomatie possible s'il n'y a pas aussi une crédibilité militaire. La France est une nation souveraine. Moi je ne dépends pas de quelque pays que ce soit. Pas pour le Mali, pas pour la Syrie, j'engage la France ou je ne l'engage pas quand je considère que ce sont nos intérêts essentiels qui sont en cause. Et là, comme nous n'avons pas engagé cette force, nous l'avons utilisée dans sa menace même, pour arriver à la

solution que les Français souhaitent, que le monde souhaitait, c'est-à-dire une solution diplomatique.

(...)

10. Speech by M. Laurent Fabius, Minister of Foreign Affairs (excerpts)
New York, September 27, 2013
<https://franceintheus.org/spip.php?article4939>

This evening, amid the Syrian tragedy, the Security Council has at last lived up to its name. (...)

The resolution we've just adopted meets the three requirements set by the French President and me at the beginning of this week, which may go down in history – whether it concerns Syria or Iran – as the international week of rapprochement.

This resolution describes the use of chemical weapons as a threat to international peace and security. The Security Council will therefore be able to take up this matter at any time. It will be the guarantor of chemical disarmament.

Moreover, the resolution states clearly that those responsible for such crimes will have to answer in court for their actions.

Finally, the resolution also provides – as agreed in Geneva by our American and Russian colleagues, who worked hard to that end – for measures to be taken under Chapter VI of the [UN] Charter in the event of the Damascus regime failing to comply with its obligations. (...)

This resolution is not a point of arrival: it's only a first step. Unfortunately we can't take at its word a regime which only recently was denying it possessed such weapons. So the UN and the OCPW [Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons] must, without delay, carry out their joint mission. The timetable set in the decision adopted in The Hague today must be honoured.

Syria's cooperation must be unconditional, and the transparency total. The Security Council, regularly informed, will be the judge of this. It will, if necessary, take measures under Chapter VII of the Charter to ensure this goal is achieved. In short, this resolution must not only be voted for, it must be implemented. France, like all of us, will be careful to ensure this. (...)

However positive this resolution may be, the repression and the humanitarian disaster in Syria are tragically continuing. Our responsibility is to act to put an end to them.

France wants to take advantage of this unity finally obtained at the Council in order, with you, to move the political process forward, which alone will enable the fighting to be stopped and peace to be restored. We must prepare the Geneva 2 meeting, in the framework defined by the Geneva 1 agreement, which provides for the transfer of executive powers to a transitional body. Along with the United Nations Secretary-General and his envoy, whom I congratulate on and thank for their work, the five permanent members of the Security Council have a special responsibility to shoulder in order to achieve this, as has been done particularly on the chemical side.

Yesterday, along with the representatives of very many states, I chaired a meeting with the Chair of the Syrian National Coalition, Mr Al-Jarba. He confirmed that he's ready to send a delegation to negotiate at Geneva 2. For their part, the Damascus regime's supporters will have to assure us of a similar commitment.

I know that the Secretary-General and his envoy will take the initiative to make swift progress to this effect, as we said at the meeting of the five permanent members of the Security Council that has just been held, with a positive result and a date for Geneva 2. France will back these efforts. (...)

We know that despite its clear usefulness, a resolution alone will not save Syria. That's why the Security Council will have to shoulder its responsibilities

in full. Over the coming weeks, we'll have to think only of the Syrian people and their agony, which must be stopped as quickly as possible. This will be the position of France, which will remain firm and consistent, providing its total support to the search for peace. Thank you./.

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