

# La lettre de l'Observatoire

des transferts d'armements • n°23 • 3/2000

## THE FIGURE FOR THE QUARTER

**10,761**  
**million francs**

According to the most recent edition of the yearbook of the Institute of Stockholm, Sipri, France is third among weapons sellers in 1999, with 10,761 million francs in sales, behind the United States (66,056 million francs) and Russia (19,769 million francs). Germany and the United Kingdom come in fourth and fifth respectively.

Among the acquirers, Taiwan is at the head in 1999, with 10,792 million francs in weapons purchases, then China with 10,673 million francs. In third place is South Korea (7876 million francs), then come in order Saudi Arabia, Israel, Turkey, and Japan.

The Far East is in the midst of an arms race—in which India and Pakistan are joined—which augurs ill for a peaceful future in that part of the world.

**Bruno Barrillot**

## Recess is over?

**W**ith an increase of 2%\* in world military expenditures, 1999 has just confirmed the reversal of a tendency. The decrease in military expenditures will have only lasted a short time: from 1998 to 1996, eight too short years.

The reversal of the tendency is not due, as one might think, to the delirium of some future dictator devoting all the riches of his country to over-arming but instead has its origin in the increase in the budgets of the main western countries, the United States at the head, which alone represents 36% of world military expenditures; France 7%, Russia and China 3% each . . . and who says increase in military expenditures also says increase in the arms trade . . .

Knowing that the nations that have contributed to this return to the raising of military expenditures are also those who are responsible for most of the arms trade on the planet and who are permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, it is difficult not to see a connection between this return of the arms race to the failure -- beyond the ompahs and other lyrical outbursts—of the recent Millenium Summit which brought together 160 heads of state at the seat of the United Nations in New York. In agreement on the constant failure of the organization in peace keeping operations, member countries were content to formulate pious vows and no concrete proposal was adopted...

**Patrice Bouveret**

*\*According to Sipri's Report 2000*

# Privatization and Opacity

*The French policy of Military Cooperation has been undergoing reorganization for several years. The annual parliamentary reports speak of reorientation in the direction of aid to the consolidation of the rule of law in the countries supported by France in the framework of the terms of defense and military cooperation agreements. What is the reality?*

**W**ithin this framework, for around ten years, funds have been released to help African countries principally to establish effective police services. We find also a redistribution of credits for military cooperation activities, mainly oriented formerly to the nations "in the field" of francophone Africa redirected, in greater number, to the eastern European countries liberated from Soviet supervision. From an organizational point of view, the ministry of foreign affairs has absorbed the ministry of cooperation, putting an end to a curious situation in French public military aid according to which each of these two ministries had its "good works." On the other hand, this regrouping has brought about the suppression of the seat for Cooperation in the Interministerial Commission for the Study of the Exportation of Military Equipment (CIEEMG). Good or bad news? Time will tell. We should remember that it was gifts or cessions of weapons in the name of cooperation that have been the object of transactions on the margins of the regulations, in particular on the occasion of the Rwandan tragedy. Once these major lines of French policy have been evoked, it is necessary to note that opacity remains the rule.

## **Military cooperation agreements still secret**

**T**he legal framework on which French military cooperation rests is a set of defense and military cooperation agreements concluded for the most part in the sixties, at the time of decolonization. Of the ninety in-force agreements presented in the

recent report of François Lamy<sup>1</sup>, only thirty-nine have been published in the *Journal officiel* or in the *Recueil général des traités de la France*, the others remaining secret. Following revelations of the role of France in the Rwandan tragedy, allegations of French support of regimes unfavorable to human rights in Togo or in the Congo-Brazzaville, some members of parliament demanded the publication of all the military cooperation agreements concluded by France. Assurances were given to them, but at this time, we are still waiting for the realization of that promise. The announced transparency probably comes into conflict with political "realism." Questioned on this subject, the socialist reporter of the military cooperation budget, Bernard Cazeneuve, doubted that this publication is possible without the previous agreement of the partner nations, which probably have good reason to conserve secrecy. Moreover, he asked, how could France conclude more or less confidential defense and security arrangements with other nations if these nations know that they will be made public?

The majority of the agreements on which France relied to justify its external interventions in African countries are probably outdated. Nothing therefore prevents their being published, if it is not the exposure of the tight connections maintained by France with dictatorial regimes that it committed itself to protect. However, France preserves some so-called "pre-positioned" military bases in Djibouti, N'Djamena (Chad), and at Saint-Louis in Senegal chiefly. The military means that these French troops

in Africa dispose of lets us assume that they are not preparing only for humanitarian actions. The juridical status for these bases and the agreements concluded with the neighboring nations (covered by possible French military protection) remain to be elucidated.

## **Privatization of French military aid**

French military aid to foreign countries is mainly given by putting at the disposal of partner nations, French military personnel who will serve in the headquarters of the local armed forces or as technical advisors to these armies. During the past ten years, the number of these French military expatriates, organized in the framework of the Military Cooperation and Defense Mission, has continued to shrink. The main reason for this change is not only budgetary: on the one hand France wants to officially cut short everything that appears to be a sequel to the colonial system and on the other hand, it is turning its efforts towards the countries of Eastern Europe which, entering into the Atlantic Alliance system, may well become, with means far beyond those of the African countries, potential clients for its weapons industry.

This reduction in the staffs of the Military Cooperation and Defense Mission does not signify that France is depriving itself of a right to examine the defense systems of countries that were formerly under the military cooperation region. In fact, a private group, in which the French nation owns 49.9% of the stock, the International Defense Council, offers, according to deputy Jean-Claude Sandrier, "a reduction of the

## On Your Marks

To combat illicit transfers and use of light arms, the United Nations is preparing an important conference in 2001 on labeling, and France has declared itself ready to make proposals. It is certain that this project comes from good intentions: finally, thanks to the indelible marking of light arms, it will be possible to trace the illicit traffic back to the seller and producer!

On the other hand, if we look at the concrete aspects of the project, we are forced to note that the international agreement—if indeed it comes one day—will include such technical requirements imposed by the arms industry (some of which appear to be almost grotesque when it comes to marking powders) that nations will certainly not be able to put it into force for several decades.

To reduce the accumulation and the distribution of light arms—500 million at present scattered through the world—is it necessary to concentrate the international community's action on the portion of the trade that is illicit? The nations of the entire world should look closely at the problem of light arms, in terms of what chiefly concerns them:

- controlling production: of the 207 enterprises manufacturing light arms, 183 are located in the developed nations, according to Ilhan Berkhol ;
- establishing a moratorium on exports;
- destroying the stocks freed by the decreases in the size of the military;
- creating an international register of light arms.

Defense chiefs claim that light arms do not constitute a major preoccupation because of the small impact of this market (less than a billion francs in annual turnover). We doubt that this point of view is shared by the industrialists concerned, but if such were the official state of mind, it would be a major argument for regulating the problem of light arms. To the greatest benefit of all victims of conflicts.

**Bruno Barrillot**

*action of the armed forces, in domains where they do not want to or are not able to intervene.*"<sup>2</sup> Composed of detached soldiers and veterans, this company brings together about 700 people (but the size of its staff can increase as a function of the market), thus representing one and a half times the staff of the Direction of military cooperation and defense which numbers only 450 employees. The personnel belonging to the International Defense Council fill approximately the same roles as the military in the official Military Cooperation and Defense Mission: training of the armed forces, training in the use of weapons, advice to chiefs of staff and governments. To these are even added some "more humanitarian" tasks, such as mine removal operations financed by international credits. The International Defense Council is considered to be one of the most important cogs in the French armament export machinery, since it brings together the principal publicity offices for French weaponry. We are seeing a certain form of privatization of military cooperation, with the French state preserving a double control of the International Defense Council, both through its majority participation in the capital and also through its personnel, military or formerly military, over which the state can easily exert its authority.

### Military and law enforcement cooperation

The new directions in military cooperation for the promotion of the rule of law are still in an opaque domain. All the credits to aid the nations, chiefly African, to put in place a modern law enforcement system do not come out of the same lines in the budget. Parliamentary reports note this type of military aid in the framework of the military cooperation budget. But certain other projects are financed on the civilian cooperation budget—the Fund for assistance and cooperation. On the other hand, the French Ministry of the Interior also is involved in international relations and has at its disposal credits for assistance to foreign police and an office for the promotion of police equipment: Sofremi.

Coordination is needed among the various services, notably in sales and grants of materiel for security and police. In the case of "military" materiel, these sales and grants must be authorized after examination by the CIEEMG, according to the arms sales procedure. In the case of so-called "police" materiel, however, the same regulations do not apply: the transfers are not controlled by arms legislation.

### The retreat of transparency

Despite official assurances, the vaunted transparency seems to be decreasing along with information on the actual activities of the Military Cooperation and Defense Mission. Thus, since January 2000, the official publication of military cooperation, *Freres d'armes* (Brothers under Arms) has ceased to be distributed to a public outside of the armed forces.

Furthermore, the parliamentary budget reports, which, at the beginning of the 1990's, provided some details on the military materiel "granted" by France in the framework of "materiel aid" has, for some years, been omitting any mention of the weapons really transferred.

This lack of information on the reality of military cooperation can only cause some anxiety: the french report about the Rwanda genocide mentioned in detail all of the small calibre weapons and their ammunition delivered by the Military Cooperation Mission to the Rwandan armed forces, often in violation of French regulations in force. The parliamentarians even say that the case of Rwanda is not exceptional.

The reform of military cooperation requires increased transparency.

**Bruno Barrillot**

1- AN n° 2237 du 8 mars 2000, p. 113 à 118

2 - AN n° 2334 du 25 avril 2000, p. 153

## **Gun Running The Global Black Market in Small Arms**

*Edited by Laura Lumpe,  
International Peace Research  
Institute, Oslo, Sweden  
Zed Books, PRIO 2000,  
243 pages.*

No matter where a war zone is found, whether in Africa, Sri Lanka, Chechnya or Afghanistan, the majority of the victims are not killed by high technology military equipment or by heavy weapons, but by light or small caliber weapons. These weapons are not expensive and are easy to acquire; they have been scattered by the millions in numerous nations in recent years.

The crime rate involving this type of weapon has also been one of the highest during the last decade, as the experience of South Africa and Kenya testifies. The majority of the transfers of light weapons are illegal. Many governments like Canada, Mexico, and the United States are at present under pressure to conclude a global treaty on illicit traffic in light arms.

This book examines in particular the very important question of the illicit market in these weapons: who is implicated? who conducts the transactions? who are the various actors in the trafficking; what is the impact of the traffic? how can the problem be dealt with?

The role of governments as well as the development and the expansion of the number of countries with a light weapons production industry are also analyzed.

This fascinating book presents the dark reflection of the results of the proliferation of light and small caliber weapons, which contribute to international insecurity and instability. At the same time it presents an overview of the structure of the business of light arms and describes the international community's various efforts to contain the impact of these weapons.

**Belkacem Elomari**

### **India**

September 4, 2000, India announced to the French aeronautical constructor Dassault its intention to buy Mirage 2000-H combat planes. The order is for ten planes, of which the first examples of that improved version of the pursuit plane will be delivered in thirty-four months, according to the spokesperson of the defense ministry. The terms of the accord, which are secret, were decided upon in July during the visit to France of an Indian delegation led by the defense secretary T. R. Passard. The total cost of the contract is 340 million dollars (2.4 billion francs). The new acquisition is an addition to the forty Mirage that India had already acquired from France. This contract is regarded in official Indian quarters as a success at a time when the tensions between India and Pakistan in regard to Kashmir are at their worst.

### **Brazil**

Not only will the Var and Toulon be deprived of their "museum aircraft carrier," about which they dreamed, with the intention of converting the Clémenceau; but also China will be disillusioned, since at one moment it had expressed an interest in that ship. . . The French minister of defense informed elected officials of the Var September 5 that the Clémenceau is to be an integral part of the contract with the Brazilian navy, which has just acquired the Foch aircraft carrier: the Clémenceau is to serve as a "quarry" for spare parts for the Foch.

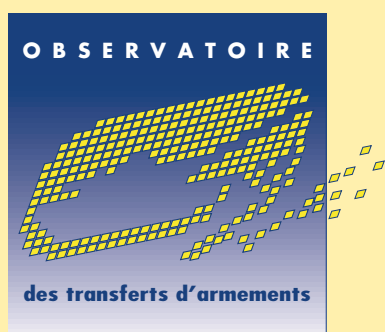
### **Greece**

In August 2000, Greece ordered from the company Dassault Aviation fifteen Mirage 2000-5 Mark2 and the modernization of ten Mirage 2000. In the space of two weeks, Greece has just ordered for 62 million euros, 27 Exocet type MM40 missiles for its navy as well as, in the framework of the Mirage contract, 200 air-air Mica missiles, and 56 Scalp missiles from Matra British Aerospace for a sum of 1.67 billion euros. This last order of combat planes by Greece is moreover accompanied by important compensations: six free aircraft, subcontracting work for Greek enterprises, and transfers of technology. Since September 2000, Aérospatiale Matra Missiles, subsidiary of the European group EADS, has confirmed the sale to Greece of 27 antiship Exocet MM40 bloc 2 missiles of the latest generation. With these missiles, three firing installations will be delivered for a total announced sum of 61.4 million euros, or about 403 million francs.

### **Singapore**

The company Aérospatiale Matra Missiles confirms that it has been retained to furnish missiles to an Asian country the name of which has not been given, but which, according to informed sources, is believed to be Singapore. This missile contract estimated to amount to almost 5 billion francs is part of an overall agreement for six frigates of the Lafayette type sold by DCN International in March 2000 (see La Lettre de l'Observatoire no. 21).

**Belkacem Elomari**



**The 1999-2000 report of the  
Observatory of Arms Transfers  
has been published**

*French arms sales in the light  
of human rights.  
Analysis of the French  
governmental report*

220 pages. 106 F postage paid (16.16 Euros)