



**MINISTÈRE
DES ARMÉES**

*Liberté
Égalité
Fraternité*

PRESS KIT

FRANCE TAKES COMMAND OF TASK FORCE 50





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INTRODUCTION

On Wednesday March 31st 2021, France takes command of Task Force 50 (TF 50), one of the components of American naval forces deployed in the Persian Gulf zone. This responsibility demonstrates American trust in France.

France has been working closely with the United States for years in the fight against terrorism, in the Sahel and in the Levant.

Focussed today on the Syrian and Iraqi theaters within the framework of the INHERENT RESOLVE operation, TF 50 has always been at the forefront of American strategy in the conflicts that have flared up in the regions in recent years.

The CLEMENCEAU 21 mission of the Carrier Strike Group contributes to the fight against Jihadist groups in Iraq and in Syria (mainly ISIL / Daesch). The Carrier Strike Group effort aims to eliminate the terrorist threat that hangs over the Persian Gulf and European countries.

In this zone where regional stability and European security are at stake, our military presence enables France to maintain an autonomous situational evaluation and awareness capability.

This is the role of the Carrier Strike Group deployed in the CLEMENCEAU 21 mission and the military personnel deployed with the French forces in the United Arab Emirates (FFEAU), and those deployed in the AGENOR and CHAMMAL operations.

As a stabilizing power, capable of force projection to defend its national interests anywhere in the world, and by involving its European partners, France contributes through this commitment to appeasing the situation in a vital, unstable and complex region.



CHANGE OF COMMAND TASK FORCE 50

The TF 50 command takeover by the Carrier Strike Group is part of the Joint INHERENT RESOLVE operation

By taking over the command of TF 50 for the second time, France, together with her allies, is providing decisive military support in Iraq and Syria, in the fight against terrorism.

TF 50 is one of the components of American naval forces deployed in the Persian Gulf region composed of one or several aircraft carriers depending on the circumstances.

Traditionally held by an American admiral, the TF 50 command comes under the orders of USNAVCENT, the American regional naval command.

By taking command during its deployment in the Persian Gulf, the Carrier Strike Group will carry out all the prerogatives normally held by an American warship.

This renewed cooperation between the United States and France clearly demonstrates the high level of interoperability between American and French Carrier Strike Groups, capable of operating jointly or relaying each other, but also capable of agregating and integrating our partners naval and air capabilities.

Given that French warships are regularly attached to TF 50 (FDA *Forbin*, FAA *Jean Bart* and FREMM *Auvergne* in 2017), this is only the second time that the Charles de Gaulle aircraft carrier has been designated as the flagship of this American Task Force, the first time was during the ARROMANCHES II operation in 2015/2016.

This integration to the TF 50 and the cooperation with the allied countries in the Gulf reinforces the contribution of the French armed forces deployed in the CHAMMAL operation in the fight against Islamist terrorism.

Similarly, for many years, France has deployed French frigates on a permanent basis in this area of strategic interest, in order to maintain independent situational awareness and be part of security and control of the air-maritime environment.



MISSION CLEMENCEAU 21

From February to June 2021, France deploys its Carrier Strike Group (CSG) as Task Force 473, around the Charles de Gaulle aircraft carrier and its Air-Wing.

During this period, this naval force will be deployed in the Eastern Mediterranean, in the Persian Gulf and in the Indian Ocean (Arabian Sea). The CSG will thus have twice taken part in the INHERENT RESOLVE operation in the Persian Gulf and in the Eastern Mediterranean.

This long-term deployment builds on the unique capabilities offered by the aircraft carrier and its escort, to gain enhanced knowledge of the operational area and contribute to the stabilisation of strategic zones (Euro-Mediterranean, Persian Gulf, Red Sea and Indian Ocean).

The Carrier Group will ensure an operational presence, both reactive and adaptable, able to respond to regional security issues and to ensure the continuity of the fight against Jihadist terrorism in the Middle East, complementing the French forces currently deployed in this theater of operations.

These deployed forces now have optimized capabilities thanks to the integration of Allied European and NATO assets, implementing a common commitment to counter security threats.

Interoperability between allied nations is also enhanced in this way.

Representing a robust prevention and response capability, the Carrier Group will also contribute to bi-lateral cooperation with the majority of partner countries along its route, both in the Mediterranean and in the Indian Ocean.



1. DEPLOYMENT IN AREAS OF STRATEGIC INTEREST

With the CLEMENCEAU 21 Mission, the French Navy deploys to the Mediterranean, the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean, (Arabian Sea).

Deployed to zones of strategic interest, the Carrier Group provides around the clock graduated action capability, ranging from a simple deterrent presence to long-range strikes, in line with the decisions made by political and military authorities.

Combining surveillance, protection and intervention assets, France endeavours to maintain its autonomous situational assessment capability and to reduce destabilizing and risk factors, thus contributing to the preservation of freedom of navigation and maintaining geopolitical stability.

The Mediteranean sea

The Mediterranean sea occupies a strategic location : 25% of the world's maritime traffic crosses it.

Projecting the Carrier Strike Group in this area of tension makes it possible to deploy a naval aviation force for surveillance, autonomous situational assessment and intervention, ready to act depending on operational requirements and in-line with the Armed Forces Commander's directives.

Since 2011, the French Navy has ensured a permanent French naval presence in the Eastern Mediterranean and thus participâtes in monitoring the situation in the Levant.

Persian Gulf

Securing the Persian Gulf, which constitutes a strategic area because it is surrounded by maritime traffic flow routes vital to world economy (Ormuz, Bab-el-Mandeb, Suez). The security of this area is the subject of constant attention by France and her allies, illustrated notably by the AGENOR operation to protect European interests in the Hormuz Straits.

The presence of the Carrier Strike Group and the regular deployment of naval assets within this area of tension helps to maintain security and freedom of action for our operations.

At the same time, the fight against terrorism is a major issue in this zone in order to protect Europe, France and her allies.

It is within this zone that the Commander of TF 473 will take over command of the TF 50.

Indian Ocean

The Indian Ocean is the Gateway for 25 % of world trade and 75 % of EU exports.

France is the only European country to have a permanent military presence in the Indian Ocean.

French Navy ships contribute to the stabilization and protection of our national interests. This deployment will strengthen our connections with our strategic partners in the area by developing strong working relationships and promoting knowledge sharing.



2. STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS



"These multilateral initiatives are complementary to the bilateral relations we maintain with our partners, notably with our German, British and American partners, in particular concerning operational and capacity aspects, exemplified notably by the French-German Defence Commissions, the Lancaster House Treaties or the Common fight against Jihadist terrorism."

Excerpt from the French Military Planning Law (LPM 2019 -2025)

This deployment will strengthen exchanges essential to operational efficiency with our strategic partners.

The deployment of TF 473 underlines the interest that France has in these regions and in the cooperation with partner naval forces.

3. THE FIGHT AGAINST ISLAMIST TERRORISM

The French Navy plays a major part in the fight against terrorism, notably with the deployment of its ships in the Eastern Mediterranean and in the Indian Ocean.

French Navy ships are permanently deployed in these zones for surveillance and intelligence gathering missions.

THE CLEMENCEAU 21 operational deployment marks France's determination to accomplish the military defeat of Daesch, in coordination with our allies.

During the mission, the Carrier Strike Group will be an integral part of the CHAMMAL operation.

Launched on September 19 2014, it represents the French participation in the INHERENT RESOLVE operation.

At the request of the Iraqi government and in coordination with the allies of France in the region, Operation CHAMMAL supports the actions of local forces engaged on the ground against Daesch and aims to destroy the military capabilities of the terrorist group.

Between 2015 and 2021, the Carrier Strike Group was deployed several times, as part of a coalition, in the fight against Daesch in the Middle East.

This support, illustrated notably by the ARROMANCHES I, II and III, CLEMENCEAU and FOCH missions, will be renewed this year with the Command rôle of TF 50.

CARRIER STRIKE GROUP



The French Carrier Strike Group, Task Force 473 is a vector of political, military and diplomatic power, It is truly a strategic asset which can deliver graduated response to the requirements of the political authorities.

It produces multiple effects :

- Reversibility and strategic mobility (the aircraft carrier is capable of covering 1,000 kilometers per day with the freedom of navigation guaranteed by the very nature of the maritime element ;
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- Power projection providing France with first-entry capability with high reactivity, including high-intensity combat operations, thanks to the Rafale Naval fighter-bomber combat aircraft and Naval cruise missiles (MdCN). A navalised Rafale aircraft can be catapulted every 30 seconds from the aircraft carrier.
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The Carrier Strike Group has a command capability from the sea, as close as possible to major theaters of operations. Its operational endurance capabilities make the Carrier Strike Group a powerful diplomatic and military asset. It also provides our nuclear deterrent by means of its nuclear aviation force (FANu) that it deploys.

This powerful naval aviation force, thanks to its many and modern sensors, provides autonomous situational assessment and guarantees, within the three dimensions (above, on and under the sea) a commitment to the fight against the threats that weigh against our interests.

It brings together allied resources, particularly European ones. As such ; the Belgian frigate *Léopold 1st*, the Greek Spetsai-class frigate *Kanaris*, the American destroyer USS *Donald Cook*, all take part in the CLEMENCEAU 21 mission.

The Carrier Strike Group is a real cooperation multiplier with regional partners.

This international dimension of the Carrier Strike Group demonstrates the interoperability and high level of cooperation and trust between allies.

LE MINISTÈRE DES ARMÉES

COMMITTED TO THE DEFENCE OF FRANCE AND ITS PEOPLE

More than 30,000 military personnel providing security on a daily basis for our fellow citizens in France and abroad, of which 13,000 are deployed nationally and around 6,000 are deployed on overseas operations.

FOCUSSED ON THE FUTURE

5,5 billion Euros in Research and Development, of which 821 million Euros per year are dedicated to preliminary studies and research, a figure that will reach 1 billion Euros as of 2022.

MAJOR ECONOMIC PLAYER

37,5 billion Euros in the 2020 budget, that's the second highest state budget after National Education.
12,6 billion Euros for the Armed Forces.
1,84 % of GDP in 2018, with the objective to reach 2 % of GDP in 2025. 25,000 small and medium-size companies supply the Armed Forces.

MAJOR RECRUITER

27,000 recruitments per year, that's 4,000 civilians.
268,300 men and women – 205,800 military personnel and 62,500 civilians.
21 % of whom are women.
41,000 operational reservists under contract.

STATE CULTURAL STAKEHOLDER

21 museums- 160 registered monuments – 3 million visitors per year.
3 million photos and 21,000 film archives covering 4 centuries of history.

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