

Discourse and its Ramifications in the Post- JPCOA World



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Abstract

This project is concerned with the effects of the American decision to withdraw from the nuclear agreement with Iran, negotiated and signed by a variety of international actors, on relations between Europe and the United States. Primarily through an examination of speeches by European leaders, this project explores the nexus between discourse, policy, and its implications for the future of trans-Atlantic diplomacy. It is found that the implications for American withdrawal are far reaching, overwhelmingly negative, and appear to result in increasing alienation and reduced alignment between Europe and the United States.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

The topic of the Iranian nuclear program is one that has been fraught with international controversy and tension over the most recent decades. Iran first began its looking into nuclear technologies back in the 1970s, when it cooperated with the United States under the Atoms for Peace program, a program aimed at providing western aligned states with civilian nuclear technology during the Cold War (Rowberry 2001). At the time, Iran was ruled by the US-installed Shah regime and was a close partner to the United States. However, following the Iranian Revolution of 1979 relations soured considerably, and the continued efforts of Iran to develop nuclear technologies became a point of contention to the major powers in the region. Iran has insisted that its nuclear program exists for civilian purposes only, however due to the nature of the technology being “dual-use”, as in capable of serving both civilian and potentially military aims, this has not allayed the fears and mistrust of many of the powerful actors in the region. Due to the failure of previous attempts at an agreement, tensions under President Achmadinejad were particularly high, with the government of Israel threatening military strikes against Iranian nuclear facilities just as they had done against the Iraqi Osiraq reactor in 1981 (Fitzpatrick 2017, 20).

In 2015, after years of tensions, the Islamic Republic of Iran signed an agreement to limit its indigenous nuclear program. The deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan Of Action or JCPOA, and more informally as the Iran Deal, was negotiated between Iran and all five permanent members of the UN Security Council: The United States, China, Russia, France and The United Kingdom; as well as Germany. In exchange for the cancellation of a large number of sanctions, including all UN imposed sanctions and a suspension of others, Iran agreed to limit its nuclear enrichment activities and to let itself be subjected to a robust monitoring and verification program under the International Atomic Energy Agency, or IAEA.

The agreement placed a limit on the amount of uranium that Iran would be allowed to stockpile, as well as impose a limit on the level of enrichment. Enrichment levels refer to amount of the uranium-235 isotope that a given amount of uranium contains. This measure is significant because greater amounts of uranium-235 make the uranium more unstable and thereby more able to sustain a fission reaction and thereby more useful as either a fuel in a power-plant or in a nuclear weapon (BBC 2019).

The JCPOA itself was arrived at after an extensive series of negotiations, beginning with secret bilateral talks between the Obama Administration and the Iranian government in March of 2013,

only a few months before the election of noted moderate Hassan Rouhani to the office of President of Iran. These efforts led to the multilateral Joint Plan of Action, an agreement that was to impose short-term freezes on the Iranian nuclear program and the lift some sanctions while a more encompassing and arduous series of negotiations could take place. The JCPOA took 20 months to negotiate and was signed by the various foreign ministers of the involved states as well as the High Representative for the European Union Federica Mogherini in July of 2015 (Lyons 2015).

The parties to the agreement each had their own interests to look out for. Iran was after easing the sanctions regime it was under whilst still retaining some of their ability to enrich fissile material for their ostensibly civilian program. The United States was concerned for the security of itself and its allies in the region, notably Israel and Saudi Arabia. Other countries such as France and Germany had a stake in the Iranian economy and export market. France for instance has strong ties to the automotive, rail, and financial sectors in Iran and imports around 3% of all its hydrocarbons from there. Meanwhile, in 2005 Germany was the single largest importer of Iranian goods, and the German Chambers of Industry and Commerce have estimated a loss of about 10,000 jobs as a result of sanctions (Welle 2006). After the JCPOA came into effect German exports grew by around 27% between 2015 and 2016 (Welle 2018). The sanctions imposed on Iran in the early 2010s had since put a significant dampener on trade, making it far riskier for foreign companies to engage there. The hope for many actors, both state and non-state, was that the agreement would be a significant milestone that would bring Iran in from the cold and bring it back into the global community and economy.

The election of Donald Trump however, saw a shift in America's relations and approach to working with both its traditional allies and adversaries across the world. Breaking from the multilateralism of his predecessors in favour of attempting to negotiate bilateral deals, Trump, as an example, famously had to have it explained to him by Angela Merkel that a trade deal would have to be made through the EU and not directly with Germany a whole 11 times before he stopped asking (Sheth 2017). Moreover, the Trump administration has broken with the foreign policy of its predecessor in pulling out of or otherwise suspending US participation in international agreements, including withdrawing from the Paris Climate Accord in August of 2017, and the JCPOA in May of 2018.

These changes to American policy have been less than enthusiastically received in the capitals of Americas traditional allies. The general reaction reflects an uncertainty with regards to the reliability of the United States as an ally, especially considering the presidents unusual tendency to

criticise and clash with other western leaders whilst simultaneously showing a greater degree of leniency towards and praise of leaders with ostensibly authoritarian tendencies such as Rodrigo Duterte of the Philippines (Davis 2017), Kim Jong-Un of North Korea (Buncombe 2019), Vladimir Putin of Russia, and Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey (Wilks 2019). The worry in European capitals is therefore that these actions undermine the credibility of themselves and the values on which they base their soft power.

1.1. Research Question

The topic that this paper seeks to address is the effects of the move to leave the JCPOA on the relationship and alignment between the United States and its primary European allies. The research question this project will be based on is as follows:

Why does European foreign policy following American withdrawal from the JCPOA represent a negative shift in trans-Atlantic relations?

The research is worth investigating because it provides an avenue through which the relations between some of the worlds most powerful countries can be examined through the lens of a tense contemporary regional crisis. As the United States remains the pre-eminent global military power the way in which it conducts its foreign policy has wide-reaching implications. The degree to which the United States is capable of retaining its position as the worlds only remaining superpower is closely tied to both its ability to work with its allies to achieve common goals, and its ability to shape international norms and institutions. The potential for the actions of the Trump administration in general and in the case of the JCPOA withdrawal specifically to have a drastic effect on the ability of the United States to shape global politics can therefore not be ignored. Identifying and understanding the motivations and actions of state actors in this contentious diplomatic situation can therefore give us potential insights into the future dynamics of trans-Atlantic politics. The subjects of the investigation, the Western European powers, were chosen due to their relevance when it comes to shaping international norms and discourse, not to mention that their historically close alignment with American foreign policy may allow for clearer contrasts to be identified in their present disposition. The question is naturally sub-divided into two main components that must first be laid out individually before being brought together in the analysis. Firstly the problem-formulation concerns itself with foreign policy as it is stated. Secondly, in order for the problem-formulation to have any weight, it must also establish that the foreign policies of the relevant states are actually subject to influence.

The following section will elaborate on these topics and explicate the approach taken in the analysis and outline justifications for the relevant methodological choices.

Chapter 2. Methodology

2.1. Choice of Approach

In order to investigate the the effects of American cessation of participation in the JCPOA on relations with and the foreign policies of its western European allies, it is first necessary to be clear about how said investigation will proceed, how the problem is to be understood in the context of this project and the considerations involved in selection of methodological approach and theory. The research design of this project is based on two concurrent analyses, namely the discourse analysis and a policy analysis. The case is based around the US withdrawal from the JCPOA as an event, with the objective of identifying its effects on the international relations of the relevant aforementioned parties to the agreement.

First and foremost however, it is important to be explicit about the world-view upon which this project is formulated, as this informs both how the problem is understood and the choice of theory. The background conception of international politics that this project rest upon is one of socially constructed norms and structures. Interactions between actors is primarily informed by the norms and social conventions that they adhere to and contribute towards shaping and reproducing. It is from this constructivist understanding of international relations that this project, both its conception of the underlying issue, the problem-formulation and the methodological direction of the analysis is sourced. This ties directly to discourse analysis in that discourse analysis deals with constructed systems of meaning in social interaction.

The problem that this project seeks to shed light on is one of clashing social norms and the friction that results from competing normative interests. The Europeans find themselves in the position of no longer enjoying unanimity with their long-time ally across the Atlantic when it comes to foundational norms and conventions of international politics, which in turn poses a challenge to the interests that they have constructed for themselves. The task is thereby to elucidate the dynamics of this situation and show what this means broadly speaking by taking a close look at the consequences of US withdrawal from the JCPOA as a phenomenon.

Ultimately the reason discourse analysis was chosen to the exclusion of other methodologies is the way in which it allows for a detailed qualitative study. This is particularly pertinent when one considers that international relations is, through layers of abstraction, about relations between humans, both as groups of humans on a state or societal level, and on an individual level between the heads of state and governments. As such, discourse analysis is useful due to its inherent recognition of this fact, and the understanding that humans are impressionable and have their ideas moulded by the ideas and structures of meaning that they come into contact with. Discourse analysis incorporates this realisation by being about the system of values and meaning that exist around and are propagated by political leaders. This perspective means that an approach that conceives of international relations as mechanistic and deterministic would necessarily fall short of capturing the nuances of as complex a situation as the one in question. Discourse analysis by contrast works as a comprehensive and adaptable framework because it is based on how the world is seen by the actors that it is used to investigate. In relation to the research question of this project this is particularly useful.

One theoretical framework that could alternatively have been used for a topic such as this is structural realism, a framework that conceives of international relations as being to do with power relations between rational self-interested states solely dedicated to their own survival. While this paradigm is not necessarily wrong or non-descriptive, it is for the purposes of this analysis rather self-evident and would not contribute significant insight into the issue at hand. The theoretical framework adopted by this project does not discount power considerations from being relevant to state behaviour, rather it rests on the argument that it is insufficient on its own to explain the behaviour of state actors. Realism works off of the premise that states are self-interested and egoistic by nature and having one overriding interest, which depending on the specific strain of realist theory in question would mean power, security, and wealth or suchlike. Had the choice been made to go in this direction then perhaps the more obvious choice would be the approach of offensive neo-realism as championed by the likes of John Mearsheimer, which would see the situation regarding the JCPOA as an attempt by the Europeans as a move to placate a regional great power as a reaction to American regional power-balancing moves.

This kind of theoretical approach has the advantage of significantly simplifying the way in which we would conceive of inter-state politics and the nature of states themselves. It is also the primary weakness of the approach, as it brushes aside the social aspect of inter-state interaction and does away with nuances related to how international actors behave, making detailed qualitative study less viable. This is not to suggest that states do not act in a self-interested manner some or even

most of the time. Rather the contention is over whether states are self-interested by nature, meaning that all interests are a given from the get-go. Instead, this project is formulated from the understanding of the problem of being one of norms and the practical consequence of violating them in the context interrelations between major powers.

Liberalism is another theoretical approach that arguably has merit with regards to the topic of this project. Rather than focussing on power politics, which such a theoretical choice would largely be a rejection of, it would instead mean angling the analysis towards themes of international trade, democracy and institutions. As the relevant European policy in question is in many ways related to the topic of international trade and adopted through a transnational regional organisation, it is not hard to see how this approach would have appeal.

One of the main difficulties of this approach however has to do with the issue of how liberal theory focusses on democratic systems as being particularly relevant to the ways in which states engage with each other. It becomes tricky to apply to the topic at hand because of the grey zone in which several of the actors in question exist in with regards to them being democratic or not. Iran for example has elections for parliament and president, but also has a supreme leader chosen for life through a body composed of religious clerics, and candidates for elected office have to go through a controlled vetting process before being allowed on the ballot. Likewise, this would most likely require greater focus on the institutional structures and processes of the European Union itself, which is felt to be an unnecessary and unwelcome shift of focus for the project. This is especially true due to the unique nature of the EU making it hard to effectively categorise, having been referred to as an Unidentified Political Object by former President of the European Commission Jacques Delors. It is felt that the value and clarity of the analysis would be negatively impacted by these factors, and that the detailed qualitative study that this project seeks to perform would suffer as a result.

2.2. Discourse analysis

Discourse analysis is an approach to analysis that seeks to examine the way in which the act of speech serves to impart or promote a version of reality onto an audience, and how that shapes actions. It conceives of reality as being a social creation that comes about through the interaction of people and their shared conceptions of the world around them (Bryman, 529). In practice this

means that one would be able to derive from the speech of an actor information about their values, priorities, opinions and world-view. This is achieved through study of what the discourse is doing, the context in which it was delivered and the choices made in constructing it. It is assumed for the purposes of this project, given that all texts are taken from official sources, that all materials were carefully and deliberately crafted and contain no unintentional ambiguities.

Discourse analysis was chosen for a number of reasons. Most importantly because it is an analytical framework that works to demonstrate interaction between the way in which the subjects of analysis communicate and their actions. This is achieved by tying what the nature of the discourse is found to be to foreign policy and foreign policy decisions within the relevant time period. The short time-frame that this project concerns itself with is particularly useful in this regard, and is another reason why discourse analysis was deemed a fitting choice.

Another reason why this approach is attractive is based on the notion that one of the simplest and most direct routes one could take when investigating the outlook of a given political entity is to look at the material that said entity puts out expounding on the subject in question. Doing so means that the project would be working with primary source material and could compare the output over time, such as before and after a particular event. Being a primary source means that the material is free from third-party analysis, commentary, and bias, which increases the reliability of the project design. The disadvantage however, is that discourse on its own need not be reflective of actual foreign policy, and can be intentionally misleading. It would be unreasonable and unrealistic to expect powerful political actors to be entirely open about their priorities, thoughts and opinions when dealing with interrelations with other powerful actors, especially when it comes to a topic as complex and fraught with controversy as nuclear diplomacy in the Middle-East. Therefore, in order for the conclusions of this analysis to have weight, it will be paired with an empirical analysis of policy implications.

Given the overall constructivist understanding of international relations that this project rests on, discourse analysis is particularly appropriate. Discourse analysis examines social relations and interactions through the lens of constructed systems of meaning that inform and influence how actors understand themselves and the world around them. It allows the researcher to probe the way in which a given actor understands the world and their place in it, as well as their role in perpetuating their competing vision of how the world is and/or should be. In the context of the specific topic of investigation for this project, these properties are particularly desirable, as it allows

for a broader contextualisation of the actions of the relevant state actors.

2.3. Empirical Analysis

As previously mentioned, in order to establish a connection between the American decision to withdraw from the JCPOA and changes in the foreign policy of the selected European states, it is important to actually demonstrate that changes in policy were made in practice. While still intrinsically tied to the conception of international politics as being based around norms and social relations between actors, the policy analysis will attempt to empirically gauge the nature of the European response to US withdrawal from the JCPOA from a policy perspective.

In order to narrow the scope of the analysis, France and Germany, as the two largest powers in the European Union will be treated as pseudo-representative of European Union foreign policy. This is based on the assumption that European Union joint foreign policy is largely shaped by these actors. The analysis will be predicated on identifying/determining a shift in foreign policy and relations rather than give an expansive view of the overall relations of the two countries to the United States, as this would make for an excessively broad area of study. Furthermore, the policy analysis section will also concern itself with policy implemented on the European Union level, specifically with regards to the activation of the EU's blocking statute, a measure to prevent private economic actors from complying with foreign sanctions. It is important to make clear that this project is deliberately conflating the actions and statements of the European Union and the aforementioned major European Union member states for the purpose of the analysis. It is likewise granted that this element of the project design may potentially be a source of inaccuracy.

The primary purpose of this element of the the analysis is to provide a context in which the findings of the discourse analysis will be evaluated. This contextualisation is brought about through demonstrating the practical reality of the purported negative shift in trans-Atlantic relations. This involves demonstrating European disillusionment and disunity with the United States by pointing to ways in which the Europeans have acted in ways that are contrary to the interests and wishes of the United States government, or which imply European movement to a foreign policy that is less dependent or tied to the United States.

In order to do so, this part of the analysis will bring up the kinds of political decisions that Europe or European states have made within the relevant time-period. The onus is on the analysis to show a

connection between the discourse propagated in the texts and empirical policy data, thereby demonstrate the reality of a negative shift in relations, characterise and explain it. A crucial point to make is that this analysis deals primarily with the implications of the political discourse on policy. While this does involve assessing specific policies, it is important to recognise that the idea of policy implications goes further than that, and takes into account actions that may not necessarily be classified as policies themselves in the traditional sense of the word, but which are important to the conduct of diplomacy and which signal the disposition and attitude of the European leadership.

One important part of this process is to evaluate the effectiveness of the blocking statute in achieving the goal of ensuring that business links between Iran and Europe are not disrupted, through the circumvention of American sanctions. However, due to the lack of availability of sufficient quantitative data on the effects of the policy on trade given the short amount of time since its introduction, and the fact that it is difficult to adequately determine the rationale behind private actors choosing or not choosing to do business in Iran, especially given that the blocking statute explicitly allowing for the cessation of activity “on the basis of their assessment of the economic situation.” (Kerstens 2018), the analytical approach must be based on a recognition of the purpose of the policy in the overall picture. That is to say that the Blocking Statute must be analysed in the context of a wider effort to preserve the JCPOA, and thereby the effectiveness of the policy must be evaluated based on whether or not it is effective as an incentive for Iran to abide by the terms of the deal.

Therefore the analysis will look into Iranian adherence to JCPOA stipulated limits for uranium enrichment, and will solicit the official view of Tehran. The inquiry will be specifically focused on the Iranian view of European efforts to preserve the JCPOA, and the effectiveness of the blocking statute as it is currently implemented. It is assumed that as a surrogate of the Iranian government the ambassador will provide comments and answers that are reflective of the official views of Iran.

- In the view of the government of Iran, how effective have EU policies, the modified blocking statute in particular, been in allowing businesses to circumvent American sanctions on Iran?
- What impact have European efforts to bypass American sanctions following the Trump administrations decision to withdraw from the JCPOA had on Iran's position with regards to remaining in the JCPOA?
- In what ways have the effectiveness, or lack thereof, of these EU policies impacted the decision of Iran to increase uranium enrichment levels?

The responses will then be used in the analysis in the context of the Iranian public commitment to preserve the JCPOA and the decision of the Iranian government to increase uranium enrichment levels beyond the limits specified therein.

While this delimitation of area of study improves the repeatability of the analysis, it also necessarily creates a degree of uncertainty with regards to its validity. A factor that may have a negative impact on the repeatability of this study is the reliance on the responses of a representative of the Iranian government, as such responses can only capture views expressed at a given point in time. Any attempt to repeat this analysis will instead capture a different data set under conditions that will likely have changed over time. As its purpose is to help elucidate European foreign policy more generally the analysis will acknowledge and not pre-emptively exclude elements of the policy that have been approved but not yet implemented. It is assumed for the purposes of this analysis that those elements will be implemented in the near future, based on the apparent desire of European powers to preserve the JCPOA. This is also justified, again, by the fact that the modified blocking statute was adopted very recently.

Another key way in which the findings of the discourse analysis are to be empirically grounded is through looking at the actions of the governments of the European leaders in question within the specified time-frame. The idea being to identify actions more broadly that demonstrate that the discourse examined has had implications for the conduct of European foreign policy. In order to accomplish this, the analysis will lean on materials circulated through media bureaus. It is important to underline that the goal is not to establish the presence of concrete causal links, but rather to demonstrate relevant correlations between the actions of governments and their discourse. In doing so, the analysis is able to demonstrate policy implications of the actions of the American withdrawal from the JCPOA, contemporary American foreign policy more generally, and the reactions evident in European political discourse.

2.4. Application

The practical goal that the overall analysis seeks to reach is to provide a detailed study of the intersection of discourse and policy. This means that the analysis will bring together the insights gained from a careful examination of the political discourse in question, applying it to European policy and political acts in the post-JCPOA withdrawal world. From this it would then be possible to gain an understanding of the implications of the activities of the Trump administration for European

foreign policy and its relations with the United States going forward.

Discourse analysis is an interpretive endeavour in which the researcher must apply their understanding to the material in order to decode and uncover the underlying structures of meaning. In effect, this requires breaking down the selected texts and identifying statements in which the speaker references what they consider to be their values, interests and the features that they consider to be important to their self-conception or identity. As previously alluded to, the terms and references that the relevant actor makes will be specific to the actor in question. To give an example what one would identify as indicative of the nature of a political discourse, one would expect to be able to identify aspects of anti-imperialism, militarism, national solidarity, and irredentism in the national discourse of state actors such as North Korea. This would reflect the realities facing that state as seen by itself.

Sections of text are first selected that are relevant to the topic of relations between Europe and the United States, as well as the topic of the JCPOA and Iran. The selection is then broken down in order to derive its intended meaning, is contextualised, and connected to policy. The analysis will take care so as to justify interpretation and other choices throughout this process.

In the case of the European political discourse, the task of identifying the values and interests relevant to foreign policy rests on first cross-referencing portions of the text in question that with motivational factors such as multilateralism, multi-polarity, and security, the concepts of which are detailed in the theory chapter. This means that the text must first from a broad perspective, examining the terms which the creator of the material under examination uses when touching upon topics such as the foreign policy of the United States, what the foreign policy of the United States means for European foreign policy, the nature of the challenges facing Europe internationally, and how Europe is going to respond to those challenges. The broader nature of the speeches by President Macron and Chancellor Merkel make it possible to gauge in a sense how the behaviour of the United States under President Trump is received in the European political discourse. The theoretical perspective will then be applied in a similar fashion to the remarks directly pertaining to the state of relations and engagement with Iran following the US withdrawal from the JCPOA. In applying the theory to the texts it is important to both highlight passages that speak to these issues, but also to justify how they are categorised with regards to the motivating factors identified.

The purpose of this analysis is not to determine the source of a specific foreign policy decision, as Larsen puts it:

“Many specific foreign policy decisions cannot be explained by political discourse or other structural explanations. The level of abstraction is simply too high.” (Larsen 1999, 21)

Instead, it is to ascertain the existence and nature of a shift in relations between the United States and Europe as an abstract collective entity. As such, examining the meaning of statements made by European leaders on the specific case chosen allows us examine a structure of meaning and values that can tie together other “free-floating” elements that Larsen points out as being potentially causal to foreign policy, such as bureaucratic politics, perceptions of individual decision-makers or groups, psychological factors, domestic pressure groups, special features of political institutions, etc. As Larsen puts it:

By linking up free-floating elements, it enables us to interpret some middle-range theory from a more abstract point of view, as expressions of the effects of political discourse. (Larsen 1999, 21)

Achieving this means identifying the elements that make up the discourse in question, and is ultimately an exercise in dissecting the language used. This means looking at the word choices made in the sections relevant to the topic of interest and in evaluating the meaning that the speaker seeks to convey to their audience. This allows for categorising the statements and the meaning they are intended to convey on the basis of the previously outlined motivational categories. In doing so, an overall understanding of the discourse that each text is a part of and contributes to is formed. These understandings are then juxtaposed with examples of foreign policy in practice from the relevant time period involving the relevant actors so as to point out the connection between the discourse as it has developed, and the actual foreign policy decisions made.

2.5. Literature and Data Collection

As the analysis section of this paper is sub-divided into two sections, the data material is also divided for each section.

The discourse analysis will be based on official statements by the governmental leaders, Emmanuel Macron, and Angela Merkel on the topic of the JCPOA and the American withdrawal from the JCPOA. With both France and Germany having been key players and signatories to the agreement, their input is of particular interest among other European actors who may also have voiced their viewpoint on this particular topic. A further reason for choosing these actors is the

availability of primary-source material on the specific topic, and the fact that the material is easily accessible in English or French, which removes the need for potentially inaccurate third-party translation. The order that the texts are analysed in is reverse chronological. This is mostly a result of convenience in the writing process, and due to the shortness of the span of time in which all the texts were produced it is not felt that this has any bearing on the outcome of the analysis.

The first text, from the 14th of July 2019, is a joint statement by the heads of state of France, Germany and the United Kingdom (EEAS 2019). It will henceforth be referred to as “the Joint Statement”. The second text is a speech which German Chancellor Angela Merkel made on the 16th of February 2019 at the 55th Munich Security Conference (Merkel 2019). The speech touches on a number of topics to do with security policy and international relations, including the trans-Atlantic impasse over the JCPOA, as well as more general contention and frustration over contemporary American foreign policy. The final text is a speech by Emanuel Macron on the 27th of August 2018 (Macron 2018). Like the speech by the German chancellor, this speech broadly expounds on the foreign policy views of the French government, but devotes sections to the topic of Iran and relations with the United States.

The policy analysis section will rely on materials that reflect the effects of the European policy in question on the the Islamic Republic of Iran. Firstly this was to involve interview responses from an official representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The interview would be recorded and all relevant parts transcribed. However, it was not possible to arrange for a representative of the Iranian government to give an interview or to give direct answers to the questions outlined. Instead, this project was given a copy of a piece of Iranian diplomatic correspondence, sent to a relevant high-ranking official within the European Union. It was requested by the person in the Iranian embassy this project had been in contact with that this document not be disclosed or directly cited, but that the information contained could be utilised. Fortunately this document sheds significant light on the topics of interest for this portion of the overall analysis.

Other material of secondary relevance to this section of the analysis include the text of the modified blocking statute and news articles regarding the decision of Iran to raise uranium enrichment levels. The modified blocking statute being the policy that prohibits private European entities from complying with sanctions imposed by an outside state actor. Its relevance will primarily be in relation to the evaluation of European efforts to protect the JCPOA, alongside the

news reports.

2.6. Delimitation of Area of Study

This section will explain some of the limitations of this project, and justify some of the choices relevant to that. Most importantly it will justify the selection of the sources of political discourse, and give reasons for why other, arguably relevant, actors were excluded.

This analysis is limited by a number of factors, some inherent to its research design and some due to a lack of materials that would otherwise provide avenues to useful insight. Due to the nature of the topic at hand, the project is naturally limited to studying the foreign policy of the relevant actors within a relatively short window of time, from May of 2018 until October of 2019. The policies subject to study has also been highly delimited, in part to facilitate the case design, and in part due to time and resource considerations.

Perhaps the most important choice in the design of this analysis was the choice to use the expressed opinions and actions of Germany and France as a proxy for that of Europe, given that this project concerns itself with European foreign policy. It is recognised that the European Union has, to an extent, provisions for a common foreign policy. Despite this, it was decided to focus the investigation on France and Germany for two reasons. Firstly because in its current form, common European foreign policy has significant limitations, and secondly because, as two of the largest and most influential members of the EU, Germany and France are believed to have the most say in the formulation of European foreign policy.

The United Kingdom is excluded due to added complexity resulting from the ongoing Brexit situation, as well as the much touted “special relationship” between it and the United States (Neild 2018). The relationship between the United Kingdom and the European Union, has since the British invocation of Article 50 in March of 2017, officially declaring its intention to leave the regional body, been in a state wherein there is an amount of uncertainty about its future. Under such conditions, whilst the United Kingdom remains a member of the European Union for now and for some undetermined amount of time going forward, it is unreasonable to treat it similarly to the major powers that have not signalled a desire to permanently break from the European Union for the purposes of this analysis. Regardless of what the outcome of EU-UK talks may be in the future, the most important factor is that the United Kingdom had already put itself in this position before the event that this project focusses on took place. Besides this point, which would on its

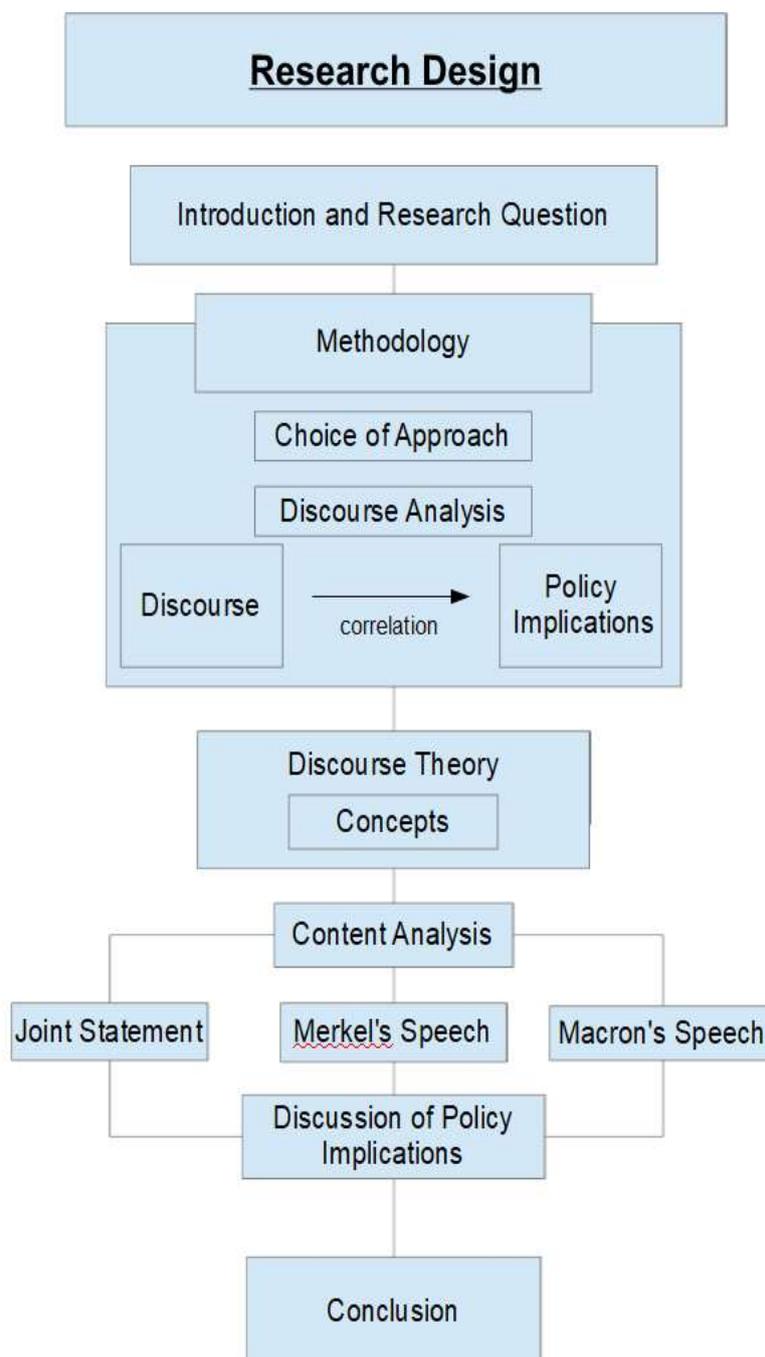
own be enough to leave the United Kingdom out of the scope of this project, there is also the topic of the so-called “special relationship” between the United Kingdom and the United States. In brief it is an unofficial term, much touted by political leaders on both sides of the Atlantic, used to describe the relationship between the two countries as having unusually close political, economic, cultural and historical ties. Regardless of whether or not said relationship manifests itself in a way that is relevant to this analysis is outside the scope of this paper, and the uncertainty about the validity of the analysis that it creates is another reason to not include the United Kingdom. Of course joint statements of which the United Kingdom were party to are not to be excluded from the analysis, the exclusion merely means that the relations of the United Kingdom with the United States is outside the scope of the analysis.

In concert with the deliberate exclusion of the United Kingdom from the analysis, other major state actors involved in the negotiation of the JCPOA are also excluded. Notably Russia and China are left out. Despite both countries being heavily involved in the negotiations and politics in the Middle-East, it was felt that their exclusion would make for a more focussed and coherent analysis. Both Russia and China have their own unique relations with the United States that set them apart from Europe. As such the dynamics of their interactions with Trumps America have been noticeably different, both from each other and from Europe. For this reason, as well as time constraints, resource constraints and concerns over the availability of relevant primary-source materials it is considered to be more appropriate for analysis in separate research papers.

Furthermore this analysis is limited to the actions, policies and public positions of state actors, as well as the EU as a supranational regional organisation of which the state actors whose foreign policy is subject to this analysis are party to. This excludes private actors, both non-profit and business. This is despite the behaviour of private actors being especially relevant to the effectiveness of European efforts to increase trade with Iran.

Finally, it is critical to recognise that another factor that can be limiting to validity and usefulness of this project is the contemporary nature of the topic under examination. Being about a diplomatic conflict in progress presents a double-edged sword, with the potential downside being that the actions of the relevant governments over the short-term could result in this analysis becoming irrelevant.

2.7. Design Overview



Chapter 3. Theory

This chapter outlines the theoretical approach that this project utilises for the analysis. This project takes an overall constructivist theoretical approach, and will primarily draw from the work of

Alexander Wendt and Henrik Larsens work on discourse. To that end, this chapter will explain the way in which this project conceives of international relations as being a form of social interaction wherein which states shape their identities and interests in an anarchic international system, and define the key theoretical concepts relevant to the analysis. Firstly it will provide the working definition of states as unitary social actors using elements of constructivist theory, and will then elaborate on how state interests and identity are connected to both foreign policy discourse and foreign policy itself. In doing so, this section will make the connection to discourse analysis and explain how it ties discourse and policy analysis together. Following this, it will provide an overview of competing theoretical approaches that could have been applied to the subject matter of this project and give reasons for why they were not selected.

3.1. Constructivism and Discourse

The decision to go with the constructivist approach was influenced by the understanding of states as being abstract entities composed of humans for the purpose of managing the power of large groups of individuals collectively. As such they would have to have many of the same characteristics that people exhibit, both as individuals and in other collective social entities and organisations. As human behaviour is seldom rigidly rational to the exclusion of other biasing influences, it makes sense to approach the interactions of state entities with the same understanding that social conventions, contexts, norms and pressures can have a significant impact upon behaviour. Constructivism specifically provides a theoretical framework that allows for a robust interrogation of these social contexts and influences on state behaviour that is more comprehensive than other theories that conceive of state behaviour as being rigidly mechanistically deterministic, while at the same time not dismissing the validity of some of the structures and interests that other theories, such as realism, identify.

Discourse analysis is an inherently constructivist methodology that seeks to allow for analysis of communication on the basis of the effects and internal construction, with a view towards deriving intent of the speaker. Another way of describing the process is one of “sceptical reading”:

“This means searching for a purpose lurking behind the ways that something is said or presented.” (Bryman 2012, 530)

In other words, what this form of analysis, in this context and more generally, seeks to interrogate is the motivating factors, or underlying framework of values, behind the speech and associated actions of an actor. In practice this means that the analysis will take particular care in selecting

and dissecting portions of text and expounding on their relationship to policy developments.

In order to accomplish this, it is important to first describe the ideas and constructs that the analysis will use. As the JCPOA was the result of multi-party talks and negotiation, and the fact that President Trump has repudiated such methods in favour of a one-on-one approach, it would seem to make sense for the analysis to investigate these concepts. As such, the analysis will investigate as motivating factors, among others, the concepts of multilateralism and security.

Discourse ties together with the overall constructivist bent of this analysis by providing a structure through which the interests, values and identities of actors are mediated, creating a framework within which policy formulation can take place in the case of political discourse. As Larsen expresses it, a discourse is a system of meaning, as general language has no meaning in itself.

“Expressed in theoretical terms close to Foucault (1989) and Norris (1982), the impact of words derives not only from the differences between them but from the social values given to them (or more correctly the values given to the different signifiers) and the rules determining the ways in which words can be connected. ... Such a system of values and rules in a given linguistic context can broadly speaking be defined as a discourse.” (Larsen 1999, 14)

The way Larsen describes discourse here gives us a way to tie the discourses of state actors to their interests and identities, and thereby to its actions. Consider the example of the effect of the American discourse surrounding reproductive rights on the policies implemented with regard to foreign aid. Since 1984, during the Reagan administration, whenever the Republican party holds the presidency the dominant political discourse turns hostile to abortion rights and the Mexico City policy; which blocks American federal funding from being made available to NGOs that provide abortion counselling, referrals, or advocate for either abortion decriminalisation or expansion of abortion rights; is put into effect. The policy has since been rescinded each time a Democratic president takes office and the nature of the dominant political discourse on the topic changes (Garrett 2017).

As this project deals with developments in the realm of international politics it is important to specify that the area of interest is political rather than popular discourse, a distinction that Larsen makes. While there generally is a great deal of overlap between these two types of discourse, what distinguishes them is the extent to which the political discourse is particular to the national political elites. As a consequence of the state focused perspective of this project, national popular

discourse is discounted as irrelevant to the analysis.

Larsen focuses on national discourses, arguing that international politics is an arena of competing discourses that do not penetrate each other so as to threaten the identities of states. The different discourses of the various international state actors are to greater or lesser extents incompatible, resulting in countries “talking past each other” (Larsen 1999, 27). As this project chooses to create an amalgamation of sorts out of the foreign policies of several European states to construct a conceptual common European foreign policy, it is also necessary to note that the same is done in terms of the discourse in question. This is justified due to the close collaboration and integration of European states in a wide array of policy areas and the idea that the EU reflects an effort to create a common identity of sorts and common value set.

The way in which this project conceives of states as unitary social actors means that discourse is treated not just as an internal framework of meaning reflected in the overt actions and words of state leaders. Rather it is a reflection of how the state seeks to shape its identity and promote its interests in the geopolitical space. Policy is thereby the concrete consequence of state identity and interests mediated through discourse. Without an appropriate discourse, policy would appear disjointed and arbitrary, which at the very least would undermine the image of the state actor, something that is in conflict with the states fundamental interest in creating collective self-esteem.

A criticism of the approach to discourse that this project takes, given its focus on states as unitary actors operating in a shared social space, is the lesser degree of focus on how discourses come about and compete internally to the state. Such an approach would involve refocussing the methodology of the project on materials produced by social actors internal to states that engage in and shape the political discourse of governments. This would include materials from think-tanks, political parties and special interest groups. The counterpoint to this is the difficulty this creates in determining the degree of clout and influence these social actors have in their given polity, adding layers of complexity whilst shifting focus from the relations between state actors. It is instead taken as a given that it is the dominant political discourse which is espoused and informs the decisions of the governmental leaders.

3.1.1. The State as a Unitary Social Actor

The unit of analysis for this project is the state. This is of course somewhat complicated by the fact

that the state-level analysis is extrapolated to a wider European context. It is therefore important to clarify the way in which this project conceives of the nature of the state and how its interests are formed. This is because while constructivism is broadly speaking a theory that describes social interaction, in order for it to be useful to this project, its scope must be narrowed and specified. By clarifying how the state itself is to be understood as a single entity it becomes possible to fold the otherwise significant social interactions of actors engaged in politics on the domestic level together. Doing so significantly simplifies what would otherwise be a overwhelmingly complex and broad area of study which would otherwise be prohibitive to actually addressing the problem-formulation itself in any meaningful or satisfying way.

This project defines the state as a unitary actor. Leaving aside numerous forms which a state can take, democratic, monarchical, totalitarian and so forth; what is relevant to this point is that there are a number of essential characteristics of a state. A common core of what is required for an organisation to be considered a state includes territory, sovereignty, an institutional-legal order, a society, and a monopoly the legitimate use of violence (Wendt 1999, 202).

Outside of those essential properties, the states themselves conceive of and construct their identities, much like other types of actors, be they individual or corporate. Wendt argues that states are “group selves”, capable of group-level cognition and memory.

“States are actors whose behaviour is motivated by a variety of interests rooted in corporate, type, role and collective identities. Since most of these identities vary culturally and historically it is impossible to say much about the content of state interests in the abstract.”(Wendt 1999, 233)

While necessary to note, for the purposes of this project the internal mechanisms by which states conceive of and construct their identities and interests will not be particularly relevant. As the area of interest of this project is the social interactions of states as singular entities, the complex domestic interactions that may shape the states themselves are discounted, much in the same way that it would prove excessively reductive to focus on the complex neurological causes of individual behaviour when studying complex social interaction between individual human beings.

But what, from an interests-standpoint, are necessary characteristics of states? Alexander Wendt identifies four general underlying interests that all states share, namely physical well-being, autonomy, economic well-being and collective self-esteem. The exact way in which these interests manifest themselves in practice varies however due to other identities that a given state has.

Physical survival refers to the survival of the state and society. The collective whole that a state represents would not necessarily be severely impacted or destroyed by the loss of individual members or portions of territory. Ukraine, for example, did not cease to exist as a result of the Russian annexation of Crimea. While neo-realists argue that self-preservation and survival are the only national interest of importance, Wendt argues otherwise, stating that:

“While there is analytical value in seeing how far such a thin model will take us, empirically a case can be made that states have at least three other objective interests.” (Wendt 1999, 235)

Autonomy refers to the ability of a state to control how it allocates the resources at its disposal, as well as determine its government or process by which its government is determined. A state may choose to give up some of its autonomy should it determine that the benefits of doing so are worth it.

Economic well-being refers to the states interest in maintaining the mode of production in its society and thereby the resources available to the state itself. While this has in recent tradition meant an interest in ensuring economic growth, this is not necessarily the case, as other modes of production, for example feudalism, are not rooted in that paradigm. As such, the interest of economic growth is an example of what an interest in certain state forms can take but it is not the only way in which this fundamental interest can be expressed (Wendt 1999, 235).

Finally, collective self-esteem refers to a groups need to feel good about itself, often in terms of a desire for respect or status, and an aversion to humiliation. A fundamental need of individuals and common reason for joining groups, it can be expressed in a variety of ways and result in a variety of behaviours. This may take the form of aggression due to the perception of being wronged or humiliated and wanting to avenge or 'right the wrong' against a perceived enemy. By contrast, recognition by an other, as well as cooperation would contribute to positive self-esteem.

These interest, while fundamental to the concept of the state, are not exhaustive. Outside of this range, state interests are shaped by their social environment, both internally and as a reflection of interactions with outside actors. They're listed and explained here so as to give an overview of the motivating interests that guide states in a general sense. The exact way in which these interests manifest themselves can also be quite varied, depending on how the state in question views and

understands the world around it, and how it views and understands itself.

3.2. Key Concepts

This section explains the concepts that this analysis will make use of in order to examine the texts and how they will be of use. Included are the concepts of multilateralism, identity, security, international institutions, and multi-polarity. A key function of these concepts is to facilitate understanding of the motivations behind the discourse, as a means to understand its policy implications.

3.2.1. Multilateralism

Multilateralism in this context refers to the idea that international conflicts and disputes are best resolved through engaging a multitude of stakeholders. It is evidenced by an affinity for dialogue as a mechanism for solving disputes and an aversion “to go it alone”, also known as unilateralism.

This concept was selected because of the prominence of multilateralism in diplomacy and international institutions in the post-war, and especially post-Cold War era. It is especially relevant to the context of this project, as the JCPOA, in being the result of negotiations between seven state actors with the involvement of transnational institutions such as the EU, is a clear example of this concept in practice.

3.2.2. Security

Security refers to the state actors desire to protect itself from outside threats. This may manifest itself in a wish to decrease the ability of outside actors to behave in a hostile manner, as well as an interest in aligning itself with other actors for protection. Another term for this concept is “hard power”, to contrast with the concept of soft power, which describes a state actors ability to induce others to want to mimic them. However, in the context of this project, security should be understood to be about the actors self-perception of their security, how secure they feel so to speak, rather than how a structural realist would understand the term. As such it is an abstract concept that amalgamates the perception of the actor in question of their own military capabilities, economic strength, relationships; and those of other actors that they would interact with.

Often associated with realist theories, this concept is a useful lens with which to analyse problem

of this project because it is an important concern for states, and because international diplomacy and norms arguably function to mediate, address and alleviate issues and conflicts related to state security concerns. Unlike realist theories, its use in this project is not exclusionary of other motivating interests that may be behind state discourse and policy. It may prove a useful concept owing to the context of the actors under investigation. It may well be a motivational factor in conflict with others for the European actors being investigated, considering the degree to which European security policy has been enmeshed with American security policy in recent history.

3.2.3. International Institutions

In the context of this project, International Institutions refers to entities and organisations of which states are the primary stakeholders. Such entities have grown significantly in both scope and number since the end of the Second World War and serve to form a framework for the conduction of international diplomacy and politics. These may have a variety of specific purposes; for example, NATO is primarily a military alliance, whereas the World Trade Organisation is primarily concerned with trade and economic policy; and scope; the United Nations has global membership, whilst other organisations such as the African Union or European Union are in many ways purposefully limited in terms of geography.

For the purposes of this project, the concept is more precisely defined as an affinity or positive disposition towards international institutions. This can be both specific to certain international institutions, or expressed as a general attitude towards the idea of international institutions playing a role in the world. Of course this definition does not discriminate between organisations in any particular way. Should the text under examination differentiate between specific institutions it will be incumbent upon the analysis to draw in other concepts in order to examine the discourse and make the case for the interpretation and its implications for foreign policy.

3.2.4. Multi-Polarity

Multi-polarity is a concept that refers to a system of international relations in which there is a diffusion of power and influence, and a perception of international relations being a matter of interaction between a multitude of state actors. This is in contrast to the related concept of unipolarity, in which a single state actor is dominant in the international space and has far greater influence on the structure of international relations than any other state actor. The period immediately following the breakup of the Soviet union can be referred to as unipolar to some extent, with the United States being considered the only superpower. Another variant is the bi-polarity that characterised the Cold War period following the Second World War until then, in which

two very powerful state actors shaped international politics.

An explicit distinction between the concepts of multi-polarity and multilateralism is to be made here. Multilateralism is a norm that emphasises the value of solving international disputes and issues through a foreign policy that is inclusive. Which is to say that a foreign policy based on it seeks to include as many relevant actors as possible. While there may be overlap, multi-polarity is more of a normative conception of international politics; an understanding that there is not merely one or two actors that define and dictate the terms of international politics and that the way states conduct themselves must reflect that in order to have an effective foreign policy.

The analysis will use the concept of multi-polarity as a lens to interrogate how the Europeans see the nature of international politics. As such it provides an avenue of investigating the way in which the discourse carries implications for future foreign policy, as it may present a change in the status quo in which the United States has enjoyed a privileged position. In practice this means identifying instances of the speakers, explicitly or implicitly putting less focus on the United States in its foreign policy and embracing an understanding of international politics that necessarily involves engaging with other powers regardless of the relations of those states with the United States and its interests regarding them.

3.2.5. Identity

As the broadest possible definition of *identity* is whatever makes something what it is, a more specific and useful definition is required. As Wendt puts it:

“...property of intentional actors that generates motivational and behavioural dispositions. This means that identity is at base a subjective or unit-level quality, rooted in an actor's self-understandings. (Wendt 1999, 224)

This understanding of identity is what makes the concept applicable to the problem at hand. Of course, what those understandings mean is dependent on the understandings of other actors in the relevant social system. For example:

John may think he is a professor, but if that belief is not shared by his students then his identity will not work in their interaction. [...] Identities are constituted by both internal and external structures. (Wendt 1999, 224)

The attribution of meaning to facets of an actor's identity affects how it interacts in the social space around it and this has particular consequences for the way in which a state actor engages in

policy discourse. Consider for example the way in which the dominant foreign policy discourse of The United Kingdom emphasises how the country is separate from the rest of Europe. While trivially true in a mere geographic sense, the relevant point is the way in which meaning is attached to this island status. The United Kingdom is not alone in being a European island state and the foreign policy discourse of other states with similar geographic attributes varies considerably (Larsen 1999, 23). Another pertinent example is that of both the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War, in which both sought to construct and promote competing identities for themselves. The United States leaning heavily into ideas of freedom and democracy, whilst the Soviet Union seeking to construct its identity around a value system of hierarchical class struggle and anti-colonialism. Both in turn sought to shape the identity of the other by deriding them as repressive, imperialist, militaristic and the like.

Self-identification seeps into both discourse and policy in how state actors at the very least have to make the nominal effort to promote the values and ideas that inform the identity they construct for themselves. Consider how overt American military intervention carry references to ideas of spreading democracy, as in the case of the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, or protecting civilians, as in the cases of Libya and the former Yugoslavia. In those examples we see how the United States tries to express its identity as both “the shining city on the hill”, a phrase popular among various American presidents to express the idea of America as a so-called beacon of hope for the rest of the world; and its identity as the only superpower. While these characterisations of the United States are by no means uncontroversial, they have for a long time informed how the United States sees itself and its role in global politics.

In this way, the theoretical concept of identity functions as a way in which discourse results in policy. The norms and values upon which the state bases its identity creates an impetus to act in certain ways. If they didn't, and the actions and policies of a state actor comes into conflict with their identity, a form of collective cognitive dissonance can form, negatively affecting the collective self-esteem of the people of the state in question, but also negatively affect the way in which the state is perceived from the outside. In both cases the identity of the state is undermined in that the state is observed to be something other than what it wishes to be perceived as. This can have a variety of practical negative implications for both the state internally as well as for its external relations with other actors. As such states tend to try to address concerns about their collective identity in some form, in either a token or meaningful fashion, when outside circumstances conspire to challenge them, creating a “put your money where your mouth is” situation. Going

back to the example of the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War, their identities compelled both to expend considerable resources backing different states, movements, militant groups around the world that espoused their ideologies, and each getting involved in drawn out military conflicts such as Vietnam, Korea and Afghanistan in the most extreme cases.

Identity is for the purposes of this project a separate consideration than the specific norms/interests that security, multilateralism, and the rest represent. At the same time it is critical to the analysis and so the way in which it is to be used and understood in the context of this analysis, as well as the justification for its use will be covered here. The concept has broader and deeper theoretical facets that are discussed in the Theory chapter, however in terms of this project, it refers to a type of social construct that is created by both the conscious efforts of the relevant political entity and the perception of said entity by outside observers. In order for norms, principles, values, or other social constructs to be tied to a state, it is necessary for the state to both espouse them, thus making them evident in the political discourse, and act on them in a practical fashion to some extent.

Herein lies the primary reason this concept is useful for this projects analysis. In seeking to explore the nature of European political discourse and explaining how this results in policy, identity serves as a means to understand the behaviour of states. Because norms and values are embedded in the collective identities of states and societies, they contextualise the way they understand both themselves, the world around them, and their place and role in it. Therefore an understanding of the ideas and values that are part of state identity is in some sense a predictor of what political goals a state will set, which other actors it will associate itself with and to what degree, and so on; which makes it a very useful tool when analysing the reasons behind the negative shift in relations between the United States and Europe.

Chapter 4: Discourse Analysis

This chapter is divided into four parts, the first three corresponding to the three primary texts that are subject to discourse analysis. The fourth part contains the policy discussion section, comprising of a detailed look at the policy and politics of the the relevant governments, and analyses the nexus of the discourse and implications for policy.

4.1. The Joint Statement

The Joint Statement is a rather short document released by the governments of France, the United Kingdom and Germany on July 14th 2019. Unlike the other texts, it maintains a very clear focus on the ongoing diplomatic situation regarding relations with Iran and the United States over the JCPOA. Because the overall topic of the statement is the American withdrawal from the JCPOA, it is fairly straightforward to tie the content of the text directly to subsequent policy.

Right from the first paragraph, the statement makes explicit mention of the shared security interests as a justifications for their continued desire to see the JCPOA upheld.

“We, the leaders of France, Germany and the United Kingdom, sharing common security interests, in particular upholding the non-proliferation regime”

As the agreement itself is based on the idea of preventing the development of nuclear weapons, which is itself a norm that has been generally prevailing in international politics since at least the the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty came into force in 1970, this should come as no surprise. The statement then ties the decision of the United States to withdraw from the JCPOA and impose sanctions to several developments in the region, namely the Iranian decision to exceed the enrichment limits of the agreement, as well as a reference to “attacks we have witnessed in the Persian Gulf and beyond” and “escalation of tensions.”. It seems clear overall that an appeal to security and an aversion to violent state confrontation or actions that might precipitate such a confrontation is intended to be projected into the interstate discourse in this statement. It would perhaps follow from there that the actions of the United States has driven a wedge between it and Europe, by negatively affecting its security.

Indeed the Joint Statement goes on to repudiate the decisions of the United States in the following quote:

“We believe the time has come to act responsibly and seek a path to stop the escalation of tensions and resume dialogue.”

It is implied here that the United States is behaving irresponsibly in escalating tensions and cutting off dialogue. This is salient from both the lens of security and multilateralism, in that it apportions blame for the crisis to the United States both in terms of its renunciation of multilateral diplomacy, and in making the already troubled region less stable and safe.

Much of the latter half of the statement is dedicated to an appeal to dialogue in the pursuit of de-escalation of tensions. The final line of the statement can best be described as a naked endorsement and commitment to the institutional norm of multilateralism as a means of pursuing international conflict resolution:

“In search of a resolution we will continue our active engagement with all interested parties, in the interest of the preservation of international peace and security.”

In doing so the leaders of the European states make clear their continued endorsement of multilateralism, in context drawing a contrast to the unilateral behaviour exhibited by the United States in recent years. In tying international peace and security to active engagement with all interested parties the Europeans essentially preclude themselves from partaking in or conferring legitimacy to future unilateral actions, diplomatic or military, on the part of the United States. This has the effect of chilling relations and increasingly isolating the United States on the world stage.

International institutions don't feature much in this text, at least not in the explicit sense. This is arguably a function of the nature of the text itself, being intended to address a very narrow topic. The only international institution explicitly mentioned is the IAEA, in the context of its work to verify Iranian adherence to the terms of the JCPOA. From its mention in this specific context we can gather that the IAEA is viewed as a tool to serve a purpose for state actors in the JCPOA:

“...while this country had implemented its commitments under the agreement - as consistently confirmed by the IAEA until last month.”

This statement gives us some insight into how international institutions are viewed in the European discourse. The activities are instrumental to the function of the JCPOA, the subject that the text itself sets out to express support for. European defence of the JCPOA is therefore also an implicit statement of support for the IAEA as a crucial tool for the conduct of effective diplomacy. This sentiment can be expanded to include the concept of international institutions, although this is more evident in the other texts, as they have a broader scope than the Joint Statement.

The theme of multi-polarity is also relegated to subtext at most in the Joint Statement. The clearest example of this is near the beginning of the text, when referencing the process of creating the JCPOA:

“Since 2003, our three countries, later joined by the United States, Russia and China, have been engaged in a long-standing and determined policy vis à vis Iran...”

Multi-polarity involves an understanding of world politics as being shaped by a number of different influential actors and shaping ones foreign policy around that fact, and this quote exemplifies this understanding. It in effect frames the JCPOA as a product of this reality, drawing attention to the fact that the agreement was brought into being not only by engaging the United States and its agenda, but those of Russia and China as well. This alludes to a European foreign policy approach that sees the necessity of bringing these state actors into the fold so to speak, rather than the alternative, which would be to ignore them in favour of treating the United States as the dominant force behind international diplomatic initiatives, as one would if one had a uni-polar conception of international politics. Another example of this is when the statement calls for signs of goodwill so as to de-escalate the situation “...*from all sides*.”, implicitly recognising that this dispute is not “us versus Iran” but a complex situation with many relevant factors and actors involved. So, while the theme of multi-polarity can be said to be present, it its a thin presence.

Likewise, the identity of the authors of appears not to feature heavily in the Joint Statement. This is, again, most likely due to the intended purpose of the Joint Statement being to express a point of view on a very specific topic in a relatively concise manner. Indeed the format of the Joint Statement seems quite limiting in this regard. Nevertheless, as we shall see the influence of the actors conception of their identity displayed more prominently in the sections that follow.

4.2. Merkel's Speech

Themes relating to international norms and values are clearly present throughout Chancellor Merkel's speech to the 55th Munich Security Conference of 2019. While taking a broader overview of what the Chancellor sees as the important geopolitical challenges as it relates to security, a series of remarks directly pertaining to the situation with Iran and the JCPOA are woven into the speech. These factors combine to present a rich opportunity to delve into the interests, norms, and values that inform the world-view and actions of Germany, and by extension Europe in a collective sense.

With regards to Iran, we see rhetoric couched in amicable and non-confrontational terms. The divide between the United States and Europe over the JCPOA, is presented as being only one of disagreement over what the more pragmatic strategy is in terms of security, with the Chancellor arguing that the current European position is based on the idea that the agreement makes it possible to exert influence on Iranian policy:

“Does it serve our common cause, our common goal of reducing the harmful and difficult influence of Iran by terminating the only agreement still in force, or would we help our cause more by keeping hold of the small anchor we have in order to perhaps be able to exert pressure in other areas? That is the tactical issue over which we do not see eye to eye. But our goals are, of course, the same.”

This is significant as it clearly shows a lack of willingness to openly break from the traditional post-war political alignment of Europe with the United States. At the same time it makes a case for multilateralism couched in practical terms, maintaining the fruits of multilateral diplomatic labour is useful because it grants Europe the ability to affect the *“difficult influence of Iran”*. In a later portion of the text, when discussing the wider possibility of a *“break[ing] up into a lot of individual puzzle pieces”*, she points out the vulnerable position that her country would face:

“For the United States of America has so much more economic clout and the dollar as a currency is so much stronger, that I can only say: obviously it holds the better hand.”

This represents a pretty strong motivator, both from a security and multilateralism standpoint, to pursue a foreign policy that seeks to prevent such a breakup of the established geopolitical order. In characterising the United States as having *“the better hand”*, Merkel recognises the precariousness of the current situation of Europe. From a security perspective, this discourse can be expected to manifest itself in a foreign policy that emphasises caution.

One particularly noteworthy segment of Chancellor Merkel's speech exemplifies the way in which she attempts to sound both conciliatory towards the United States whilst still lobbying for European security interests is when she talks about natural gas infrastructure:

“...we have made the strategic decision to continue to invest in LNG in Germany, too, in view of the predicted increase in gas consumption and LNG production particularly also in the United States of America. As we are phasing out nuclear energy as well as lignite and black coal, Germany will be a very safe market as far as natural gas is concerned, regardless of who is selling it.”

Here Merkel frames the issue of natural gas infrastructure expansion as a positive for the United States as an exporter. This is despite the ongoing diplomatic spat between Germany and the United States over the Nord Stream natural gas pipeline, the construction of which the United States has been a long-time opponent of. In fact she largely leaves the United States out of her remarks regarding the pipeline, focuses more on the objections of the Ukrainian president, and argues in favour of partnering with Russia on matters of energy. The phrase *“regardless of who is selling it”* would appear to be a rebuke of American objections that the pipeline creates issues with regard to an increase in Russian influence over the European energy sector, and a commitment to

not be beholden to American wishes. The practical policy result of this element of discourse is continued support for the pipeline project, with somewhat of a negative impact on relations between Europe and the United States over the disagreement. However, it is worth noting that the pipeline is also controversial within Europe, with Poland having spoken out against it (Gurzu 2018).

Looking at it through a lens of multi-polarity being a motivating factor, both this rhetoric and decisions regarding Nord Stream make a lot of sense. Opting not to brand Russia as a pariah and committing to engaging with them diplomatically and economically despite whatever other issues or disputes there may be with them, or at the very least not rejecting the option. Chancellor Merkel also gives strategic reasons for this engagement with Russia, in terms that betray an understanding of international politics that must be wary of the dynamics of a multi-polar world:

“Do we want to make Russia dependent on China or rely on China to import its natural gas? Is that in our European interests? No, I don’t think so, either.”

Here the Chancellor further justifies her countries continued engagement with Russia, on the basis that it would be beneficial to ensure that Russia does not become economically dependent on its relationship with China. This point makes sense in the context of a multi-polar world view, in which it is incumbent on a prominent European leader to be mindful of the broader dynamics and interaction of multiple large, powerful states, and to act accordingly. Later, the chancellor expands on this point regarding China, displaying clear signs of being part of a discourse that understands international relations as becoming less dominated by American hegemonic influence:

“When I visit China, its representatives say: for 1700 of the two thousand years A.D., we were the leading economy. Don’t get upset, all that’s going to happen is that we will return to the place where we always were. [...] now, however, we need to deal with the situation as it is and find sensible solutions so that it doesn’t descend into a struggle that weakens all sides.”

The mindfulness of the increased and increasing influence and relevance of China displayed here would suggest an attitude towards and understanding of international politics that stands in contrast to that of the current leadership of the United States. The appeal to “*sensible solutions*” so as to avoid “*struggle that weakens all sides*” implies a disposition at odds with President Trump’s seemingly bellicose rhetoric and aggressive use of tariffs.

Meanwhile the Chancellor makes pains to emphasise Germany’s commitment to the principle multilateralism in general and the global institutions that promote and function on that basis. Leaving aside some the specifics of comments that touch upon topics such as the developments in relations with Russia, the Chancellor consistently brings back her discussion of security to trans-

national institutions, most notably NATO. In referencing efforts to work towards disarmament of intermediate ballistic missiles this theme of bringing together different actors for dialogue is reinforced when she floats the idea of including China into such discussions. The closing remarks of the speech are about as explicit an endorsement of multilateralism as one can get:

“So the one big question is this: Are we going to stay with the principle of multilateralism, which was the lesson we learned from the Second World War and the National Socialism caused by Germany, even when multilateralism is not always fun, but often difficult, slow, complicated? I am firmly convinced that it is better to put ourselves in one another’s shoes, to look beyond our own interests and to see whether we can achieve win-win solutions together rather than to think we can solve everything ourselves.”

This section of text highlights an important aspect of this issue that also ties specifically to Germany's collective understanding of its identity. Multilateralism is here framed as a bulwark against the horrors of a conflict such as the Second World War, but also represents a rejection of fascism, an ideology that the modern German state has made a great deal of effort to distance itself from. In couching the topic in such terms, it's clear that while there exists a hesitancy in European politics to fully break from the United States, the foreign policy of the current American president is deeply anathema to the world-view and norms of Europe. One would therefore expect to see European leaders adopting a policy of championing proposals to increase the ability of Europe to act collectively, so as to overcome the individual country's insignificance on the world stage. We only need to look to examine the discourse of the final text, the speech by French President Macron, to find a clear example of this idea being advocated.

4.3. Macron's speech

President Macron's speech at the 2018 Ambassadors Conference is, perhaps more so than Merkel's, an endorsement of multilateral diplomacy and cooperation, and the discourse that it exemplifies is highly critical of the foreign policy direction of the United States. Not only that, but while it at times strikes a consolatory tone with regards to the United States, it also implies a foreign policy that have broad negative implications for the relations between it and Europe.

Mentioned and touted throughout the speech is multilateralism. Macron takes pains to describe the importance of this kind of diplomacy, both as a direct means of achieving favourable outcomes, but more importantly as a principle of the way in which international political questions and conflicts are resolved. This occurs, in among other contexts, when discussing the situation as pertaining to the

Iranian nuclear deal. He explicitly states that it is necessary for France and its major European allies, Germany and the United Kingdom to expend considerable diplomatic efforts to establish a new stability framework and preserve the 2015 nuclear deal. In the context of other conflicts, calls for dialogue are repeated. Examples include topics as diverse as digital security, chemical weapons, migration and the Syrian conflict, where Macron argues that relations with Turkey and Syria must be “*enhanced to a historic level*”. It is referred to both as a norm and ideal that France espouses and one that is currently under pressure in the current geopolitical climate:

“France has also been the proponent of a strong multilateralism. Yet the multilateral system inherited from the last century is being undermined by major players and authoritarian powers that increasingly exercise a power of fascination.”

This affinity with multilateralism and the crisis it is undergoing serves as the main framing of the issues facing France and by extension Europe. In grouping “*authoritarian powers*” with “*major players*” it is clear that Macron is attempting to create a differentiation between those whom he sees as undermining multilateralism. When we then consider that he assigns most of the responsibility for the crisis of multilateralism onto the actions and policies of the United States, and very little effort throughout his speech identifying or critiquing other “*authoritarian powers*”, it is clear that the intent is to associate the United States with what is a very negatively loaded term in the European political lexicon. Macron specifically calls out the policies of the United States as the major contributor to the crisis of multilateralism, citing the American withdrawal from the JCPOA as but one example. Another example that he draws attention to is the US withdrawal from the Paris Climate Accord. He goes on to be quite explicit in his criticism:

“This American position is of course undermining contemporary multilateralism because it is hampering effectiveness and may lead to the emergence of alternative, more hegemonic models incompatible with our values.”

“The partner with which Europe built the post-war multilateral order seems to be turning its back on this shared history.”

In these quotes, Macron succinctly lays out view of American foreign policy and explains the ways in which it conflicts with both the values and interests of France and by extension Europeans. The view of American foreign policy is one of American abandonment of a system of norms values and institutions, with the phrase “turning its back” being particularly significant. There is an understanding there that multilateralism is under pressure because a specific actor that previously adhered to and supported it no longer does. This framing of the issue has important policy implications.

Macron takes this conflict between the United States and Europe even further in his speech. In arguing that the geopolitical climate that the United States under Trump is creating forces Europe to act to preserve multilateralism, he also makes the case for greater European integration.

“...the question is whether the United States of America regards us as a power with strategic autonomy – that is the real question raised for Europe today. We are forced to accept that this is not the case today; we must take a clear-sighted, even ruthless look at ourselves; I do not honestly think today that China or the United States thinks Europe is a power with strategic autonomy comparable to their own. I do not believe it. And I think that if we do not manage to build this, we are in for some gloomy times ahead.”

In the context of the speech, with all the warnings of the dangers of a decline of multilateralism, this passage highlights a critical way in which the Presidency of Donald Trump has precipitated a negative shift in relations between the United States and Europe. The term “strategic autonomy” is important to note here, as it refers to the ability of an actor to independently affect world events. In context, Macron is essentially intimating that Europe is at the mercy of forces outside of its control.

It also serves to illustrate how the negative shift in relations between the United States and Europe have a clear security dimension in the political discourse. As Europe sees the United States move away from the common western line on international politics, Macron, in characterising the future in which Europe does not create a common strategic autonomy as “*gloomy*” in effect argues that the current security arrangement in Europe is unsustainable. The obvious parallel between this aspect of political discourse to foreign policy in practice is President Macrons remarks in November of 2019 on NATO, calling the organisation “brain-dead”. This characterisation of the alliance that binds most of Europe to the United States in a long-standing defensive pact is a clear challenge to the status quo, and is indicative of an increasing impulse for Europe to separate itself from the United States.

Macron also ties this gloominess to not just the security and autonomy angle, but elaborates on the causes of the issues that he takes with the current direction of the United States by evoking values that he sees as being central to European identity.

“Our security is rooted in the reaffirmation of our values, of human rights, which are the very cornerstone not only of the Council of Europe but also of the European Union”

In this quote, Macron refuses to separate the concept of security from the normative foundation of Europe. In doing so he in effect makes the argument that European security is more than a function of military power, and that without a convergence of values and principles, the United States cannot be entrusted with the security of Europe to the extent that it has until now.

In invoking human rights, it is clear to see how Macron's conception of European identity, not to mention French identity, plays into the political discourse of Europe. The aspect of European identity in play here is the idea that Europe is a haven and protector of human rights and democracy, as opposed to, as he puts it, hegemonies, theocracies and totalitarianism. The connection to foreign policy is that Macron expresses an intent to work towards ensuring that the values that European leaders have made core to European identity, and which feature in most of the rhetoric surrounding European political integration and institutions and many of their founding documents, retain their normative influence in international politics.

The schism between Europe and the United States with regards to norms such as multilateralism and humanistic foreign policy would appear, at least to some extent, to have affected the way in which the French government looks to handle its security interests. This point is made quite explicit when Macron discusses enhancing European defence cooperation and initiatives to work on an intra-European level on security issues:

“Europe can no longer entrust its security to the United States alone. It is up to us to assume our responsibilities and to guarantee European security and thereby sovereignty.”

Here Macron directly advocates for increased European integration and coordination in the defence and foreign policy spheres, and signals a growing distrust of the United States. While European countries in the EU are already implementing or preparing initiatives to increase integration as previously discussed, this passage would seem to indicate a change in traditional European political discourse that could see such efforts escalate in the near future.

This section is also profound when looking at it through the lens of international institutions and the normative power that that concept has. Macron's call for a European sovereignty is hard to interpret as anything other than an endorsement of increasing the power, responsibilities and importance of European institutions, and as favourable to the ideal of international institution-building in general. This is also evident in his statement regarding the African Union:

“...we have encourage the increasing power of the African Union. I made the case for this last July at the Nouakchott Summit in front of the African Union and I will have the opportunity to discuss it in the near future with President Trump and President Kagame, Chairperson of the African Union.”

Here President Macron demonstrates that the perspective of France is one of positivity towards international institutions playing an active role in international affairs. The quoted passage is taken from a section in which President Macron talks about security operations in the Sahel region in conjunction with countries of the region. This positive attitude towards international institutions has

obvious connection to the European affinity for multilateralism, as international institutions are arguably one way in which the norm of multilateralism can be made manifest. It also underscores again the way in which support for international institutions and multilateralism is connected to and in some ways motivated by an overall concern with protecting the security interests of France and by extension Europe.

Another way in which Macron invokes the importance of international institutions in a way that has potential implications for foreign policy is when he talks about a restructuring of the world order. He calls for a restructuring of international institutions, in order to meet the challenges of a changing world order:

“This restructuring also requires us to redesign our organisations, our consultation instruments and our coalitions.”

This suggests that European discourse has shifted in its understanding of how the wider world is ordered, and that international institutions as they have previously been organised and operated need to adapt in order to remain useful tools for the conduct of foreign policy. As this is in part a reaction to the behaviour of the Trump administration, as Macron points out at other points in his speech, it is not hard to guess that this has implications for the future of trans-Atlantic relations.

The pro-multilateral discourse and discussion of a changing world order also mirrors an understanding that European foreign policy must be in some way reshaped so as to address an increasingly multi-polar world. This is evident in parts of Macron's speech in which he addresses relations with Russia:

“We must fully take on board the consequences of the end of the Cold War. Allies today are still extremely important, but balances, and sometimes the reflexes on which they were built, need to be reviewed. And that also means that Europe should also act accordingly. This enhanced solidarity will involve a review of the European defence and security architecture. This will include initiating renewed dialogue on cyber security, chemical weapons, conventional weapons, territorial conflicts, space security and the protection of polar regions, especially with Russia.”

Herein lies a recognition of a change in the political discourse, of Europe changing to reflect a change in the dynamics of geopolitics. Conventional weapons, territorial conflicts and the polar regions are all hugely broad topics of great consequence for the foreign policy of any state or state-like political entity, and Macron makes it clear that tackling those topics will for Europe necessarily require engaging Russia in dialogue. This alone shows that the European discourse has come to

accept that the new norm of international affairs is that new centres of power have arisen and that the world is now multi-polar.

The reference to the end of the Cold War and “*Allies*” is quite pertinent to this point. The immediate post-Cold War period can best be described as unipolar. The Soviet Union had just collapsed and its successor states were in disarray, whilst countries such as China and India had not yet grown in prominence, influence, and asserted themselves. In the meantime, the United States had become the world's only superpower, and dominated the system of global politics. Macron essentially calls for a reevaluation of how Europe has understood global politics until now, and makes an obvious appeal for Europe to conceive its foreign policy with the understanding that the post-Cold War order has changed, and that the world has grown increasingly multi-polar.

Chapter 5. Policy, Politics and Implications

This section will seek to expose the nexus between the discourse as revealed in the previous section, policy adopted or implemented in the aftermath of American withdrawal from the JCPOA, and political acts of the governmental leaders of the Europeans in order to reveal and discuss the policy implications of European contemporary political discourse. This will involve seeking correlations between discourse, policies and choices in international politics by state actors, inviting comparison and juxtaposition.

Based on analysis of the three texts, contemporary European foreign policy discourse reflects a number of consistent themes. Chief among them is a reaction to the perturbations in the normative status quo that the actions of the United States have instigated. Dialogue, collective action and working with multiple state stakeholders to diplomatically resolve conflict, core principles of multilateralism, are heavily emphasised in each of the three texts. Furthermore, this norm of international politics is viewed as being increasingly challenged, and that this is a result of the current foreign policy decisions of the United States government. The decision to withdraw from international agreements, such as the JCPOA, that result from long, painstaking, multi-party negotiations in favour of unilateralism, confrontation and eschewing of established international institutions appears to be viewed with a high degree of alarm and scepticism.

The effect that this discourse has on policy is that it commits Europe to pursue a foreign policy that is divergent from that of the United States. On this point, the European states essentially commit

themselves to working with the Iranians in order to retain the JCPOA and both allay their concerns regarding non-proliferation and demonstrate that their actions match their rhetoric on multilateralism. The practical manifestation of that element of discourse is a policy to continue to engage diplomatically with the government of Iran, and to enact policies, like the modified blocking statute, which have the stated intention to ensure that Iran receives the benefits of the nuclear deal that they were promised.

However, the indirect nature in which the European states criticise the foreign policy direction of the United States is reflected in how willing or able the Europeans have been to deliver on these commitments, and ensure that Iran abides by the limits on uranium enrichment. Based on subsequent decisions of the Iranian government, one would have difficulties arguing that the Europeans fully lived up to that goal. On the 1st of July of 2019, the IAEA confirmed that Iran had exceeded stockpiling limits of 300kg of enriched uranium, and a week later that the country had begun to increase enrichment levels to 4.5%, in excess of the 3.67% cap imposed under the JCPOA. On November the 5th (BBC 2019), the head of the Iranian nuclear program announced that the country would begin enriching uranium to the level of 5% (Hafezi 2019).

The decision to no longer abide by the limits stipulated by the JCPOA is an outcome allowed for in the text of the JCPOA itself. Namely, the JCPOA contains a dispute resolution mechanism, which describes the procedure for JCPOA participants to follow in the event that they find that their partners do not live up to their responsibilities. This involves filing a complaint to be considered by an Advisory Board and Joint Commission, and specified processing periods. Importantly, the paragraph that outlines these procedures, Paragraph 36 also stipulates:

“If the issue still has not been resolved to the satisfaction of the complaining participant, and if the complaining participant deems the issue to constitute significant non-performance, then that participant could treat the unresolved issue as grounds to cease performing its commitments under this JCPOA in whole or in part...” (JCPOA)

This paragraph has been referenced directly by Iranian foreign minister Javad Zarif in justification for Iranian actions regarding increased enrichment (Sputnik News 2019). If one considers that limiting the scope of Iranian nuclear development in order to address concerns over non-proliferation is the whole point of the JCPOA, this can, to put it mildly, not be considered a sign that Europe has been successful in achieving the overall aim of the agreement.

As a specific example of the quandary that Europe finds itself in, it exemplifies both the current fragility of the multilateral world order; because the JCPOA is itself an example of that multilateralism put into practice, and because it has been rendered ineffective by the withdrawal of what was previously an actor that strongly supported the multilateral world order; and the relative impotence of the Europeans in the face of what is also a security issue, due to the JCPOA being designed to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons in an interminably unstable part of the world. Given the public commitments of the likes of Macron to protect multilateralism and the JCPOA specifically, one would expect Europe to act on its predicament if it had the capacity to do so.

And yet the Iranian government appears to be quite frustrated with its European partners, and does not seem to believe that European JCPOA commitments are being followed through on. This is reflected in the diplomatic correspondence that was provided by the Iranian embassy. Unlike official diplomatic communication intended to be made available to the public, which is often formulated to be reflective of a tone that is more formal, the confidential document that has been made available to this project reflects an obvious tone of frustration and indignation. It also conveys the notion that the Iranian government does not view its European partners as being in fulfilment of any of its obligations towards Iran.

The fact that Iran has not officially withdrawn itself from the JCPOA and continues to use it as a platform for diplomatic engagement is however in and of itself something to note. Whether this reflects confidence in the other parties to the agreement and a recognition that they are not simply being strung along, a desire to demonstrate good faith and a commitment to multilateralism, the lack of better alternatives or some combination is hard to determine. Nevertheless, what does seem to be the case is that European policy efforts to secure for Iran the benefits of the JCPOA following American withdrawal have been largely inadequate.

This speaks to a reluctance and cautious attitude amongst some of the European political elites when it comes to Europe's relationship with the United States. Despite conflicts emerging following the election of Donald Trump and his choices on foreign policy, such as the JCPOA, the Europeans have not at this time moved forcefully to break from the United States. This may be based on the notion that the presidency and policies of Donald Trump are an aberration and particular to him as president, and that relations may shift back should he be removed from office

or fail to gain re-election in 2020. In the meantime it would make sense from this perspective for the Europeans to maintain their commitment to multilateral initiatives, and their efforts to maintain the JCPOA reflects this. Both in terms of maintaining the framework of the agreement, and their failure to ensure that Iran doesn't decide to exceed enrichment limits.

The point to take away from this though, is that Iranian frustrations regarding sanctions relief and the continuing denial of the economic benefits promised under the JCPOA, and the fact that they officially remain committed to the deal is an expression of the United States and the other parties to the deal having conflicting foreign policies. The implications of this conflict as expressed both in discourse and seen in practice on relations between Europe and the United States are quite negative, as the outcome going forward can be expected to be one of greater divergence on policy and rhetoric.

Firstly because, as seen in the discourse, of Macron in particular, the onus for defending the multilateral world order is put on the remaining supporters of that value in international politics, in this case Europeans. This has the practical implication of motivating Europe to rally around institutions, conventions and deals, with continued European engagement with Iran through the JCPOA being but a prominent example. Secondly, in framing the issue, as Macron does, as being caused by American abandonment of previously held positions it forces the Europeans to in some way cross the United States. In other words, the way Macron discusses the topic necessarily paints the United States as the instigator of a "*...crisis of multilateralism itself.*", and describes a conflict that would necessitate European foreign policy that going forward is, to some degree, more antagonistic towards it, in order to protect multilateralism, and to reflect a growing sense that the world order is increasingly multi-polar.

A perfect example of this in action occurred at the G7 summit in August of 2019, where Macron had invited the foreign minister of Iran, Mohammad Zarif as a last-minute guest (Baker 2019). In doing so, Macron performed a political act that conforms to both of these implications of his discourse. In inviting Zarif to a summit at which the situation regarding Iran and the JCPOA was to be discussed rather than exclude one of the major stakeholders, he took a stand, both symbolic and otherwise, in favour of multilateral diplomacy. At the same time, this action serves as a repudiation of the Trump White House's policy of isolating and discrediting Iran, and a demonstration of European opposition to the American position in a very public way at a forum of world leaders.

There is some divergence in the discourse presented in the different texts, perhaps unsurprising given their different sources and contexts. While there is consensus on the causes of the crisis of multilateral norms, an understanding that the dynamics of international politics is growing less centred on the United States, and the issues that that brings with it, there are differences between how the discourses present in the texts propose to deal with the issue. However, it would appear that the viewpoint presented by Macron, that takes a more proactive approach to dealing with the issue of a weakening of the multilateral world order and the associated security implications, has had greater implications for foreign policy.

All three texts agree on the importance of protecting the principle of multilateralism, and this produces a number of practical policy implications. The European efforts to retain the JCPOA, while seemingly ineffective, do demonstrate a willingness to stick up for the values of multilateralism that the United States has seemingly abandoned. The idea that the shift in American foreign policy represents a fundamental change for the Europeans, as most vociferously expressed by Macron, appears to simultaneously be less universally emphasised in the texts analysed, and have greater impact on policy. These policies would appear to represent a shift away from a European alignment with the United States on the world stage, towards a greater capacity to act independently, as Macron puts it "*strategic autonomy*".

This ties together with and reinforces the point that Macron makes about "strategic autonomy" in the face of increasing challenges to the multilateral world order. As European foreign policy based on the principle of multilateralism increasingly clashes with the approach taken by Washington, it finds itself frustrated by its inability to achieve its policy goals. From there it follows that negative shift in relations between Europe and the United States can to a large extent be attributed to an increased European discourse advocating for an increased ability for Europe to act in a collective manner independent of the United States.

Macron argues for a common European strategic autonomy, allowing it to behave as an independent actor, which necessarily prescribes the formulation and enactment of policies that deepen integration among European states in areas of foreign relations and defence. Indeed, since the election of Donald Trump a number of European policies in those areas have been initiated, with a prominent example being the activation of the Permanent Structured Cooperation,

or PESCO, which is a framework that seeks to harmonise requirements and pool resources for research, acquisitions and logistics for the participating European militaries. Furthermore this quote highlights the point that advocating as President Macron has done, for deepening European integration, is in itself a policy response to the criticism in European discourse surrounding the American opposition to multilateralism.

Another way in which Europe is signalling a break of sorts from the United States are the comments made by Macron on the topic of NATO. Demonstrating a seldom seen antipathy towards the alliance, Macron described the organisation as “brain-dead” in November of 2019. While this cannot in itself be described as policy, it serves to underline the way in which Europe sees the bond between it and the United States having been damaged. As NATO is a military alliance, these comments both align with the finding of the discourse analysis, especially with regards to European security considerations, and carry serious implications for the future of European foreign policy. If Europe finds itself unable to trust that its security interests can be satisfactorily assured within the current arrangement of international institutions, agreements, and guarantees, it is likely to change its behaviour in an effort to address this state of affairs.

While Macron's comments are themselves noteworthy, it is also worth noting how Chancellor Merkel responded to them, referring to NATO as “*indispensable*”, and dismissing the French Presidents comments as not “*necessary*” (RFI 2019). This would imply that the perceived worth international institutions does not inherently stem from a normative positive predisposition towards the concept itself, but from the usefulness of the individual institution, and the extent to which it aligns with the norms and interests of state actors. NATO becoming a point of contention is reflective of a change in how its European members perceive the world as more multi-polar than previously, and this creates tensions that were less apparent when the world order was considered to be bi-polar or uni-polar. The simultaneous greater degree of integration into other international institutions such as the EU that this implies, while defending the framework of more multilateral institutions such as the African Union and the UN, is therefore consistent with this understanding of European political discourse.

The apparent differences of stated opinion between the leaders of France and Germany on this particular topic are striking though. Merkel seems more concerned about the immediate security risks of breaking with the United States than Macron, and pushes for a more restrained approach. As such she acts to rebuke Macron's critique of NATO; strikes a more conciliatory tone towards the United States, preferring to be less explicit in her criticisms. However based on policy, it would

appear that the line that Macron is championing is the one having the greatest impact. Even with the Chancellor's more cautious rhetoric, the German government seems quite willing to defy the United States.

The policy of developing the Nord Stream pipeline in the face of American opposition is perhaps the easiest example of this to point to. From both a security perspective, protecting the supply of energy; multilateralism, maintaining a productive relationship with Russia, a prominent regional player and JCPOA partner; and a multi-polar environment, in recognising that there are a multitude of other actors that must be taken into account; the policy is consistent with the European foreign policy discourse and represents a rift between the United States and Europe. Importantly, given the fact that the pipeline directly connects and is relevant to Germany, it implies that there is not a significant fracture within the Europe, despite the Chancellors less confrontational tone.

Macron by slight contrast to Merkel is more willing to levy pointed criticism at the United States. Less willing to engage in vagueness or innuendo, he identifies the policies of the United States as the cause of a breakdown in international norms, citing numerous crises and conflicts. The United States having shown itself to be willing to pursue an antagonistic foreign policy towards other big states in order to achieve its goals, in stark contrast with the Europeans, breaking with the norms of international political bargaining. He also highlights Europe's precarity from a security perspective resulting both from these crises themselves and from Europe's apparent inability to effectively act in an increasingly post-multilateral world. Besides the withdrawal from the JCPOA, the United States having in recent times been unusually willing to employ sanctions and tariffs, targeting everyone from Europe to China to Canada is emblematic of this. Macron advances a discourse that would be expected to result in a less privileged relationship between the United States and Europe than has been the case previously. In policy terms this is exemplified by the work European governments have done to maintain their positive relations with countries such as Russia and China, despite whatever outstanding issues they may otherwise have with them.

In terms of correlating these implications of the discourse to actual policy decisions, we have several good examples to draw from. The first, as has been previously discussed, is the European continuation of the Nord Stream pipeline project with Russia, despite American objection. Another good example is Huawei, the Chinese technology company. Since 2018 the company has had restrictions on its activities in the United States imposed, with security concerns being cited. The United States has since then advocated that other countries follow its lead. The European

Commission rejected imposing a ban, instead opting to leave such a decision up to the individual member states. Many of said states, including France and Germany, have thus far not introduced such a ban, and several European leaders have publicly rejected the idea (Udin 2019).

The pattern that this fits into is one where the United States is becoming increasingly isolated from the rest of the world. Its divergence from international norms and break from previous behaviours has provoked a reaction from even its hitherto most staunch allies. The current European political discourse has shifted towards advocating a greater independence and autonomy from the United States, in order to safeguard multilateral norms, ensure security, and respond to the challenges of a world with an increasing number of relevant actors shaping world politics, all while attempting to stay true to the values that Europe tends to collectively espouse. This has implications for how the Europeans will act to strengthen international institutions, such as the EU, and how it will attempt to work with other actors, that might not align with Europe on issues of identity and values, but which would allow it to act in a way that bypasses American influence. How fruitful such endeavours are likely to be is beyond the scope of this project however.

The Joint Statement is, in contrast to the other two texts, relatively concise and dry. The European unwillingness to follow the more belligerent and unilateral course in international politics that the United States has opted for can be seen here. While not overly prescriptive in terms of an overall strategy and policy agenda, it clearly lays out a normative view of how international politics ought to be carried out and commits its signatories to working in against the United States. It, by its nature represents a consensus view of the leaders party to it. The caveat that must be borne in mind is the participation of the United Kingdom in crafting this document. For the purposes of this analysis, the United Kingdom has been set aside for reasons previously outlined in the methodology, meaning that its influence on this document, to whatever extent that may be, is regarded as being external to European political discourse. Nevertheless, the discourse presented in the Joint Statement does not in any meaningful way lay out an alternative structure of understanding the international political space.

Chapter 6. Conclusion

In examining, as this project has done, the foreign policy shift of Europe through its political discourse, and pairing it with an examination of the actions of Europe through the actions of certain major European states as proxies, certain conclusions can be drawn. It would appear that

relations between the two sides of the Atlantic have become increasingly strained as of late, and our examination of the European discourse and actions in the wake of the American decision to withdraw from the JCPOA suggest that this may have wide-reaching implications going forward.

Of course, caveats have to be acknowledged. Unfortunate circumstances, specifically the failure to secure an interview with a representative of the Iranian government, combined with elements of the project design have meant that this project may not have had the robustness of empirical grounding as would have been hoped at its inception. The lack of availability of trade data on Iran of sufficient granularity and recency is regretful. Also, the interpretive nature of this style of analysis mean that it can be subject to scrutiny and critique. Broadly speaking however, it is felt that this is accounted for, and that the conclusions that this project arrives at are valid and justified. This brings us back to addressing the problem-formulation that this project is based upon:

Why does European foreign policy following American withdrawal from the JCPOA represent a negative shift in trans-Atlantic relations?

European foreign policy following American withdrawal from the JCPOA represents a negative shift in trans-Atlantic relations because, as evidenced in the discourse, the norms, values and interests of Europe have become increasingly incongruous with those that Europe see as underpinning the foreign policy of the United States. Commitment to defending the multilateral world order and humanistic values, an increased anxiety over entrusting its security to the United States and a perception of system of world politics becoming less dominated by the interests and decisions of a single entity lie at the heart of this shift.

This results in a re-evaluation of Europe's place in the world and its reliance on its relationship with the United States going forward. That Europe no longer sees the United States as a reliable partner in promoting multilateral norms and protecting the structure of the international system as it has existed until now means that Europe will find itself needing to engage to a larger extent with actors such as Russia and China, and to strengthen its own ability to act in a more cohesive manner on the world stage. This is borne out in the discourse that the speeches of the European leaders that were examined exemplified, and backed up by concrete political choices that those leaders have made. Combined these elements strongly imply that Europe is likely to pursue policy that will increasingly distance itself from the United States.

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Appendix A: The Joint Statement

We, the leaders of France, Germany and the United Kingdom, sharing common security interests, in particular upholding the non-proliferation regime, recall our continuing commitment to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPoA) that was agreed upon four years ago with Iran, on 14 July 2015.

Since 2003, our three countries, later joined by the United States, Russia and China, have been engaged in a long-standing and determined policy vis à vis Iran with the clear objective that this country, a party to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, respects its obligations in good faith and never develops or acquires a nuclear weapon.

Together, we have stated unambiguously on 8 May 2018 our regret and concern after the decision of the United States to withdraw from the JCPoA and to re-impose sanctions on Iran, while this country had implemented its commitments under the agreement - as consistently confirmed by the IAEA until last month. Since May 2018, our three countries have made their best efforts to work

with all the remaining parties to the deal to ensure that the Iranian people could continue to benefit from the legitimate economic advantages provided by the JCPoA.

Today, we are concerned by the risk that the JCPoA further unravels under the strain of sanctions imposed by the United States and following Iran's decision to no longer implement several of the central provisions of the agreement. We are extremely concerned by Iran's decision to stockpile and enrich uranium in excess of authorised limits. Moreover, our three countries are deeply troubled by the attacks we have witnessed in the Persian Gulf and beyond, and by the deterioration of the security in the region.

We believe the time has come to act responsibly and seek a path to stop the escalation of tensions and resume dialogue. The risks are such that it is necessary for all stakeholders to pause and consider the possible consequences of their actions.

Our countries have recently taken several diplomatic initiatives to contribute to de-escalation and dialogue, for which signs of goodwill are urgently needed, from all sides. While we continue to support the JCPoA, its continuation is contingent on Iran's full compliance, and we strongly urge Iran to reverse its recent decisions in this regard. We will continue to explore the avenues of dialogue foreseen under the agreement to address Iran's compliance, including through the Joint Commission of the JCPoA.

In search of a resolution we will continue our active engagement with all interested parties, in the interest of the preservation of international peace and security.

Appendix B: Merkel

Presidents,

Esteemed colleagues,

Esteemed colleagues from the parliaments,

Mr Ischinger,

Ladies and gentlemen,

And, of course, allow me also to welcome the Minister-President of the Free State of Bavaria. I believe that Munich is an excellent city to host this conference. Bavaria's strength is on display in a very special way here. We have other beautiful cities in Germany, but Munich is taking centre-stage today.

Ladies and gentlemen, we are marking the 250th anniversary of Alexander von Humboldt's birth in 2019. Alexander von Humboldt lived on the threshold of industrialisation. He was a scholar and traveller who was driven by the urge to understand and see the world as a whole, a passion that yielded a great deal of success. His motto, as his Mexican travel diary from the year 1803 reveals, was "everything is interaction".

About 200 years later, in 2000, after researching the hole in the ozone layer and its chemical interactions, Nobel laureate Paul Crutzen concluded that we were embarking upon a new geochronological age. The Ice Age and the interglacial period are over, and we have now entered the Anthropocene. In 2016, this definition was subsequently adopted by the International Geological Congress. This means that we are living in an age in which humankind's traces penetrate so deeply into the Earth that future generations will regard it as an entire age created by humans. These are traces of nuclear tests, population growth, climate change, exploitation of raw materials, and of microplastics in the oceans. And these are but a few examples of the things that we are doing today.

All of this has implications for global security and for the issues that are being discussed right here, right now. It therefore makes sense to take a look at how this conference started life in 1963 – as a conference on military science, or "Wehrkunde" in German, still dominated by the aftermath of the Second World War and National Socialism in Germany; an event with a particularly pronounced transatlantic focus. This is why I'm also delighted that so many representatives from the US are with us here today. We are meeting today at a comprehensive security conference, where we are discussing the energy supply, development cooperation and, of course, defence issues and a comprehensive approach to security. This is precisely the right response.

We must think in terms of interlinked structures, of which the military component is only one. But what we sense at the beginning of the 21st century – we are now in the second decade of the 21st century – is that the structures in which we operate are essentially those that emerged from the horrors of the Second World War and National Socialism, but that these structures are coming under incredible pressure because developments require them to undergo reform. However, I don't

think that we can simply take an axe to these structures. This is why the heading of this security conference is “The Great Puzzle”. Allow me to start with the first part of this topic. Rivalry between great powers – this alone offers us an insight into the fact that something that we regarded as a whole, as an architecture of the world, is under pressure, and is even likened to a puzzle, i.e. something that breaks up into pieces.

Thirty years ago – an anniversary that we are set to mark this year – the Berlin Wall fell, and with it the Iron Curtain disappeared. The Cold War came to an end. Back then, people asked themselves whether we still need an organisation like NATO. Today, we know that, yes, we need NATO as an anchor of stability in turbulent times. We need it as a community of shared values, because we should never forget that we established NATO not only as a military alliance, but also as a community of shared values in which human rights, democracy and the rule of law are the guiding principles of joint action.

The fact that NATO continues to be immensely attractive to this day became apparent to us in recent months during the wrangling over whether North Macedonia, as we can fortunately now all call this country, can also become a NATO member. I would simply like to thank the two principal players, Prime Minister Zoran Zaev from North Macedonia and Alexis Tsipras, the Greek Prime Minister, most sincerely for their courage. They will be presented with the Ewald von Kleist Award this evening for their efforts. In view of the many conflicts that we face today and for which we have yet to find a solution, this is a good example of how solutions can be found if we take a courageous approach. I had already given up thinking about further combinations of names in the meantime, because I thought it was a lost cause anyway. Now you have met with success. Permit me to offer you my most sincere congratulations on this achievement!

There are, however, a great number conflicts that challenge us, and this is the subject of the discussions that we are holding here. I would like to start with one issue that is a particular focus of my work, and also for many others among us, namely our relationship with Russia. Russia, in the form of the Soviet Union, was, in a manner of speaking, the antagonist during the Cold War. After the Berlin Wall fell, we certainly hoped – the NATO-Russia Founding Act came into being at that time – that we could make improvements to our coexistence. When I recall now how in 2011, on the fringes of this security conference, the instruments of ratification for the New START disarmament treaty were exchanged between Hillary Clinton and Sergey Lavrov, then today, in 2019, this feels like quite a long time ago. But back then, both Clinton and Lavrov hailed this as a milestone of the strategic partnership. I say this to illustrate what has happened in recent years and

to point out that, on the other hand, things may look completely different again in a few years from now if the different sides work with each other. I would therefore like to thank Jens Stoltenberg most sincerely for not only invoking the NATO-Russia Founding Act time and again during the most difficult times we have had in recent years, but also for seeking dialogue. Thank you very much indeed for this!

Crimea was annexed in March 2014 – in what was a clear violation of international law – and then – Petro Poroshenko is here today – came the attack on eastern Ukraine, which was followed by a painstakingly negotiated ceasefire that was fragile but kept stable by the Minsk Agreement, with which Germany and France together with Russia and Ukraine are endeavouring to resolve the conflict. However, we must admit that we are far from achieving a solution; we must continue to work on this at all costs.

For us Europeans, if I may say so, the really bad news this year was the termination of the INF Treaty. After not decades, but years of violations of the terms of the treaty by Russia, this termination was inevitable. We all supported this as Europeans. Nevertheless, this is – and I say this to our American colleagues – a most interesting constellation. The US and Russia, as the legal successor to the Soviet Union, are terminating a treaty that was essentially agreed for Europe's sake, a disarmament treaty that affects our security, and we, of course, with our elementary interests, will do everything in our power to facilitate further steps towards disarmament. Blind rearmament cannot be our response to this.

However, since a representative from China is here today, I would say that disarmament is something that concerns us all, and we would, of course, be pleased in this regard if such negotiations were held not only between the US, Europe and Russia, but also with China. I know that there are many reservations about this, and I don't want to go into details about this right now. But we would welcome this.

In response to the events in Ukraine, we said in Wales in 2014 that not only the fight against terrorism, such as in Afghanistan, but also Alliance defence were once again at the forefront of our efforts. Back then, the objective of developing the military expenditure of each country towards two percent of its respective GDP was updated once again. I never tire of pointing out that this was already a goal at the beginning of the 2000s. All those who wanted to become new members of NATO were told at the outset that if they did not take steps in the direction of two percent, then

they would not be admitted to NATO in the first place. – That was before my time as Federal Chancellor.

Germany is now facing criticism in this regard. I will address this matter later on. We have, however, increased our defence expenditure from 1.18 percent in 2014 to 1.35 percent. We aim to reach 1.5 percent by 2024. For many this is not enough, but for us it is an essential leap.

Of course, we must also ask ourselves what we're doing with this money. Let me put it this way: if we all fall into recession and have no economic growth, then defence spending will be easier. But I'm not so sure that this will stand to benefit the Alliance. This is why it is important that we have such benchmarks. However, we must also consider what tangible contribution we are making.

Germany is doing its part. We have now been in Afghanistan for 18 years and have around 1300 German servicewomen and -men stationed there. We are working with 20 partner countries in northern Afghanistan. My most sincere request is that we – this is the first and only deployment under Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty, which we have been engaged in together for a very long time – also discuss the issues of further development together. We have had to work hard to convince our people that our security is indeed being defended on the Hindu Kush. I really do not want to see us one day having to turn our backs on this and walk away as we have extremely interconnected capacities in the region.

We are a framework nation in Lithuania and have for the second time assumed the leadership of NATO's spearhead force. I don't want to list everything here. However, all of these are things that are very useful, especially as far as Alliance defence is concerned. We are therefore also prepared to do our part.

We are now playing an active role also outside NATO, for instance in Mali. For Germany, this is a giant step and one to which we are, culturally speaking, not as accustomed as our French friends. It was no coincidence that a discussion took place this morning between the President of the European Union during the rotating Presidency of the Council and the new President of the African Union, the Egyptian President Abdul Fattah Al-Sisi – congratulations on your election, which was just a few days ago.

The questions surrounding development in Africa and relations with Africa will challenge us as Europeans in a different way than, for example, the US. There will not always be NATO missions

here. I would therefore ask you not to think of our efforts to achieve a coherent European defence policy as something that is directed against NATO, but as something that makes cooperation within NATO more efficient and feasible, because we can overcome many of the inefficiencies that exist among the many member states that are in the European Union and in NATO if we also develop a common military culture and if we improve the way in which our weapons systems are organised.

Germany is set to face a mammoth task in this regard, I can tell you. We now want to develop joint weapons systems. The issue of arms exports naturally also played a role in connection with the Treaty of Aachen, which we signed with France. If we in Europe do not have a common culture of arms exports, then the development of common weapons systems is, of course, at risk. In other words, we cannot talk about a European army and a common arms policy or arms development if we are not prepared at the same time to pursue a common arms export policy. We still have many complicated discussions on this subject ahead of us in Germany. I don't think I'm telling you anything that you don't already know here.

Ladies and gentlemen, alongside relations with Russia, the fight against terrorism is a major challenge for us, also in addition to the euro crisis, of course. In 2014/2015, we conducted very intensive negotiations with Greece about remaining in the eurozone. We then had to grapple with the refugee issue on a massive scale. The refugee issue has been fuelled by the situation in Syria, a civil war that has also been beset with terrorist challenges. The security issues that we faced were therefore of a very different nature compared with the ones that we face, for example, in the context of Alliance defence. Europe was forced to ask itself whether or not we are prepared to assume responsibility in an all-consuming humanitarian drama. That so many refugees came to Europe had to do with the fact that we had not previously addressed the situation of the refugees in Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey, where three million or more had already arrived. The stability of these countries was genuinely at risk. The upshot was refugees placing their trust in smugglers and traffickers and deciding to take their fate into their own hands.

Against this backdrop, Europe then embraced on a task – not just Germany, incidentally, but also Sweden, Austria and other countries: we provided assistance in a humanitarian emergency. But I think we all agree that states' response to humanitarian emergencies cannot be for human traffickers and people smugglers to take control and for the refugees to be exposed to countless dangers, but that the right response was to create the EU-Turkey agreement.

For Germany, it was the right response to then also increase its expenditure on development assistance. During the same period – during the time when the Wales decisions to move towards two percent within NATO were adopted – we increased our development assistance expenditure to the same degree, because we are convinced that this, too, is a security issue. If we do not finally undertake sufficient payments for humanitarian assistance, for the Welthungerhilfe and for the UNHCR – and we are already one of the largest international donors – so that people's livelihoods can be improved with their help, the refugee crisis will continue. The willingness of the German people, for example, to help, was outstanding, but we nonetheless need to solve the problems on the ground. That is what we are in the process of learning. So that was a parallel challenge that I consider as important from a security policy perspective as boosting our ability to honour our commitments within the Alliance.

Developments in Libya – also with regard to Europe or in this case Italy – have given us a foretaste of an issue that is becoming increasingly relevant: What direction will developments on the African continent take? In Libya, the instability of the state has resulted in this Libya becoming the starting point as it were for many African refugee flows, although our Spanish friends faced these challenges in connection with Morocco much earlier, ten or 15 years previously. That prompted the European Union to be much more consistent and resolute in developing the Partnership for Africa.

But let's be honest: we are still in the early stages of this partnership. For if development in sub-Saharan Africa, but also in Egypt, in Morocco, in Tunisia and in Algeria does not progress in a way that gives young people opportunities and hope, that gives them prospects for a life in these countries, we will not be able to tackle the prosperity gap between Europe and Africa.

We can see that in recent years China has pursued development policy in Africa on a large scale in the form of investment. We can see that we in Europe have implemented traditional development policy to a considerable extent. I have often talked with President Xi Jinping about how we can learn from one another with regard to what each of us does well. But we have not yet drawn up a development policy agenda with which we could say that investment will ultimately create enough jobs to ensure security, peace and stability in these countries, too.

Again Germany has said the following, which in the early days of the Federal Republic of Germany was not an essential part of our historical understanding: Okay, we will support the G-5 Sahel troops, which are striving to fight terrorism. We are engaged in Mali and are working to tackle terrorism there in cooperation with the United Nations. We are on the ground in Mali working to

train the armed forces. But all that will be in vain if these countries don't have any economic prospects. And that is why we have increased our development assistance. But I want to reiterate that the methodology behind this development assistance has so far not been worked out in detail; that is something we can only do together with the African Union.

I am very pleased that the African Union now has clear strategic ideas – the Agenda 2063 and other plans – in which Africa is stating what it wants. For we need what these days is described as “ownership” in what has almost been adopted as a German word. People in Africa need to feel themselves: “These are our programmes.” If multilateral cooperation has improved in recent years, I have to say that in my view the African Union is certainly a good example of it.

So, ladies and gentlemen, those are the problems I wanted to outline for you and on which Germany is working. Now I want to turn to the question of the methodology of our cooperation. For the transatlantic alliance is, of course, in essence a defence alliance. The Foreign Ministers meet very frequently, but for many years we have discussed with France whether it is permissible also to discuss political issues. My theory is that NATO will only do justice to its responsibilities if it keeps its focus on the concept of networked security. I think that is happening to some extent. For none of these numerous conflicts can be resolved by military means alone.

Tensions, of course, run high in connection with what the answers should look like. What are the answers with regard to Ukraine? As far as the Minsk agreements are concerned, we are united. My heartfelt request is that implementation of sanctions against Russia be properly coordinated again if the situation escalates further – soldiers are now in the Kerch Strait. We won't achieve anything if everyone implements their own sanctions. The third point is that we continue to support the NATO-Russia Founding Act. Communication channels need to remain open.

Then there is a fourth point: economic cooperation. There is already a wide range of discussions taking place on this issue – take the example of Nord Stream 2. I can understand Petro Poroshenko, who is sitting here and saying: Ukraine is a transit country for Russian natural gas, and wishes to remain so. I have assured him time and again that we will give him every possible support and conduct negotiations on this issue, and we will continue to do that, the election campaign notwithstanding. A Russian gas molecule is a Russian gas molecule, whether it comes via Ukraine or via the Baltic Sea. That means that the question of how dependent we are on Russian gas cannot be resolved by asking which pipeline it flows through. There, too, I say: I am ready. Nobody wants to become totally and unilaterally dependent on Russia. But if we even

imported Russian gas during the Cold War – I was still in the GDR then and we consumed Russian gas there anyway, but the former Federal Republic then started importing large amounts of Russian gas – then I don't know why the situation today should be so much worse that we can't say that Russia remains a partner.

Let me ask you – again, it isn't easy to say this in the presence of President Poroshenko on the left from where I'm standing and the Chinese representative on the right: Do we want to make Russia dependent on China or rely on China to import its natural gas? Is that in our European interests? No, I don't think so, either. We also want to be involved in trade relations. That, too, is something we need to discuss frankly.

Although there is already very high LNG capacity in Europe – basically we have many more LNG terminals than we have LNG gas – we have made the strategic decision to continue to invest in LNG in Germany, too, in view of the predicted increase in gas consumption and LNG production particularly also in the United States of America. As we are phasing out nuclear energy as well as lignite and black coal, Germany will be a very safe market as far as natural gas is concerned, regardless of who is selling it.

Then we have the issue of Iran, which is currently a source of contention. We need to be very careful with regard to this division, which concerns me greatly. In a speech to the Knesset, I expressed my assurance that Israel's right to exist is a fundamental guiding principle of Germany. And I mean exactly what I said. I am observing the ballistic missile programme, I am observing Iran in Yemen and above all I am observing Iran in Syria. The only question that divides us, the United States and the Europeans, on this issue, is: Does it serve our common cause, our common goal of reducing the harmful and difficult influence of Iran by terminating the only agreement still in force, or would we help our cause more by keeping hold of the small anchor we have in order to perhaps be able to exert pressure in other areas? That is the tactical issue over which we do not see eye to eye. But our goals are, of course, the same.

But I'll also ask, as I am on the receiving end of criticism every day myself: Is it good for the Americans to want to pull out of Syria immediately and quickly, or is that not also a way to strengthen the opportunities for Iran and Russia to gain influence there? We need to talk about that, too. Those are issues that are on the table and that we need to discuss.

There is, of course, also the question of how economic relations between China, the United States and Europe should develop. That is a huge problem. We are observing that China is an up and coming country. When I visit China, its representatives say: for 1700 of the two thousand years A.D., we were the leading economy. Don't get upset, all that's going to happen is that we will return to the place where we always were. It's just that you haven't experienced it in the past 300 years. And we say: in the past 300 years we were the leaders, first the Europeans, then the United States, and then all of us together. Now, however, we need to deal with the situation as it is and find sensible solutions so that it doesn't descend into a struggle that weakens all sides.

In this context I want to say quite clearly that I support all efforts to promote fairness and trade. I am talking about reciprocity. We need to talk about that. We need to do so in a spirit of partnership and in view of the fact that we have so many other problems to resolve in the world that it would be helpful if we could reach an understanding. I place great hope in the negotiations that are now being conducted with the United States of America in the area of trade.

I will say quite frankly that if we are serious about the transatlantic partnership, for me as German Chancellor it is a little disturbing to say the least to read that apparently – I haven't yet seen it in writing – the US Department of Commerce has said that European cars are a threat to the national security of the United States of America. You see, we are proud of our cars, and we are entitled to be so. These vehicles are also built in the United States. The largest BMW factory is in South Carolina, not in Bavaria, in South Carolina. South Carolina in turn exports to China. If these vehicles, which are no less of a threat by being built in South Carolina than they would be by being built in Bavaria, suddenly pose a threat to US national security, then this comes as a shock to us. In that case, I can only say that I think it would be good for us to engage in proper talks. Whenever anyone has a grievance, we need to talk about it – that is how things work in the world. And then we will be able to find solutions.

Ladies and gentlemen, all these issues that are coming at us like puzzle pieces and which are too many for me to refer to here, are ultimately the expression of a fundamental question. Because we are noticing how great the pressure is on our traditional and, to us, familiar order, this raises the question of whether we are going to break up into a lot of individual puzzle pieces and think that each of us can best solve the problem single-handedly. As German Chancellor, I can only respond: if so, our chances are poor. For the United States of America has so much more economic clout and the dollar as a currency is so much stronger, that I can only say: obviously it holds the better hand. China, with more than 1.3 billion people, is so much larger. We can be as hard-working, as

impressive, as super as we like – but with a population of 80 million we won't be able to keep up if China decides that it no longer wants to maintain good relations with Germany. That's how it will be all over the world.

So the one big question is this: Are we going to stay with the principle of multilateralism, which was the lesson we learned from the Second World War and the National Socialism caused by Germany, even when multilateralism is not always fun, but often difficult, slow, complicated? I am firmly convinced that it is better to put ourselves in one another's shoes, to look beyond our own interests and to see whether we can achieve win-win solutions together rather than to think we can solve everything ourselves.

That is why, ladies and gentlemen, I was so pleased yesterday evening when I was preparing my speech and read a quotation by Lindsey Graham, who declared yesterday evening: "Multilateralism may be complicated, but it's better than staying at home alone." I think that is the right response to the motto of this conference "The Great Puzzle: Who Will Pick Up the Pieces?": Only all of us together.

Thank you very much.

Appendix C: Macron

ROLE OF AMBASSADORS

I am very pleased to be with you here today to open this Conference of Ambassadors. Pleased because this is always a unique opportunity to share a few convictions and an understanding of the world and where it is going, in which France takes action, must meet expectations, and speaks out on an everyday basis.

In a few days, you will be joining your teams in the field and will bear a very great responsibility with high demands and determination.

Your top responsibility will be to represent our country, our history, the ideals of our Republic, our mainland and overseas territories and our interests. And by representing France you represent the history, the strength and the role of our people in the concert of Nations and conduct a diplomacy there that should be reliable and innovative.

Your second responsibility, with your team and with the support of all your local partners, will be to implement an ambitious policy for our country. You can be sure that this ambition will give rise to a pace of reform in France that will not slow – quite the contrary, in fact. The Prime Minister will set out the main lines to you. Several Ministers will also discuss this point. Under the leadership of your Minister, Jean-Yves Le Drian, whom I would like to thank for his constant efforts, you will help us support these reforms abroad.

In my eyes, you are stakeholders of the strategy I have asked the government to implement for the country. Firstly, by fully involving our French communities abroad. They are an asset and a strength. Our reforms need to be explained to them and also need to be supported by them. French citizens abroad are an asset for our country. They need to play a full role in this new French outreach.

That is why I have asked for a profound reflection on French teaching abroad which, on the basis of the report I have asked the government to produce, will give rise to the announcement of reforms in the autumn. It is also why I want to fully achieve the simplifications our citizens want, in terms of online voting and administrative procedures.

Next, you contribute to France's competitiveness. You need to explain to governments and economic actors in your countries of posting the coherence and scale of our transformation agenda. Our attractiveness is improving, but we need to be far more active to support our exports. Your mobilization in support of economic diplomacy is a major aspect of this strategy. In particular, we need to focus our collective efforts on an export strategy for small and medium-sized enterprises, which is the only way to reduce our trade deficit.

But I expect even more from you. From Ouagadougou to Xi'an, from Sydney to New York, and at Sorbonne University, over the last year I have, in a number of speeches, reviewed our geographical and strategic approaches. These now need to be implemented with precision. That means choosing clear, and therefore limited, objectives, and taking fresh measures to follow them up. We still tend to overly consider that everything is a priority and not to have a sufficient culture of results. Even in diplomacy, success is not – is no doubt never – measured in one day, but rather by the ability to influence attitudes, build friendships and alliances, and win contracts. In a word, by our ability to advance the interests of France and its people and promote our vision and conception of the world.

That is what our citizens expect, and they rightly want to see the benefits of the policy we are implementing. And that requires a greater ability to anticipate. We are keeping track of the situation

in a number of countries and regions, from Venezuela to Burma and from Ukraine to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. But we need to anticipate these situations more, sometimes make bets, and propose initiatives. I call upon your spirit of proactiveness, analysis and action. Never hesitate to put forward your ideas, for that is the best way not to be subject to others.

I believe you have understood that I have high expectations of you. We are working in a context that must be apprehended coolly and clear-headedly. Coolly, because the aim is not to change our strategy whenever an external event occurs. And clear-headedly, because we must not, however, underestimate the world's crises. Yet what has happened over the last year?

FRENCH FOREIGN POLICY

France has reaffirmed its ambition, vision and project for Europe. France has proposed a protective, more sovereign, united and democratic Europe; yet at the same time, extremisms have gained ground and nationalisms have awoken. Is that a reason to give up? Certainly not. Is it a reason to say that we have made a mistake? On the contrary! We are paying the price for decades of a Europe that – and we must understand this – has sometimes been bland and weak and has perhaps not always offered enough. In reality, we have to step up our efforts. I will come back to this.

France has also been the proponent of a strong multilateralism. Yet the multilateral system inherited from the last century is being undermined by major players and authoritarian powers that increasingly exercise a power of fascination. Should we surrender? Is it for France to respond if this or that country chooses a certain direction, or if another sovereign power decides differently from what we believe in? France's responsibility is to make its voice heard and defend its position. Not to speak in the place of others. We therefore need to take new initiatives, build new alliances and engage in debate at the right level if we are to apprehend all today's challenges. The right level is, of course, that of a civilizational debate, defending our values and interests.

Speaking before you last year, I set out the four goals of our diplomatic action, in my policy for the Nation: the security of our citizens, the promotion of common goods, the influence and attractiveness of our country, and, lastly, a new European ambition.

These goals still stand, but circumstances are testing the robustness of our principles and the steadfastness of our action. Today, I would like to stress what we have done in this framework, and the Minister will address this in greater detail before you. But I also want to say how I envisage our

response to this two-fold crisis of multilateralism and Europe. For yes, today more than a year ago, we are now at a moment of truth.

TERRORISM/SAHEL/LIBY

For the safety of the French people, first and foremost.

That is of course our priority, with a focus on the fight against terrorism. To combat Islamist terrorism, we have passed new legislation for France. As announced here a year ago, we organized a conference to combat the financing of terrorism, held at the OECD in spring, and Australia has agreed to hold a second conference on the subject. I ask you to contribute to very attentive follow-up to the implementation of the Paris Agenda with all our partners. We have already achieved some initial results, such as on the tracking of transactions, which previously were opaque, with a direct impact on our country. We now need to continue this work tirelessly. But when we speak of the fight against terrorism, we must of course come back to our policy in the Sahel and in the Middle East where terrorist groups are thriving, threatening regional stability and also striking us directly, organizing attacks in our country.

In the Sahel, we have maintained our military commitment through Operation Barkhane. I would like to commend all our soldiers who have been committed in this difficult theatre of operations since 2013. Their presence, and that of MINUSMA, have helped avoid the worst in the region and enabled elections to be held this month in Mali. In recent months, we have achieved major victories in the Sahel against the terrorist presence, but this action must continue with the same intensity, supplementing the presence of Operation Barkhane with several focuses that began in July 2017.

Firstly, we have supported and boosted the creation of the G5 Sahel Joint Force. I am convinced that our military action will be even more efficient if it is better coordinated with the involvement of the five Sahel countries concerned. We have raised funds and encouraged the Force's first operations. I have made several visits to witness for myself the progress, and, together with all of the Heads of State and Government involved, we have improved our organization.

This organization is the only one which will provide stability in the long term because it fully involves the five Sahel countries concerned in their own security. We must ensure that it is rolled out and over the coming weeks and months we will have to carry out new joint operations with the G5 Force. We must also enhance cooperation with Algeria, which is exposed to the same terrorist threat, as well as Nigeria and Cameroon which are fighting Boko Haram.

Secondly, we have encourage the increasing power of the African Union. I made the case for this last July at the Nouakchott Summit in front of the African Union and I will have the opportunity to discuss it in the near future with President Trump and President Kagame, Chairperson of the African Union. We must work on creating credible African peace operations, guarantee stable and predictable financing, particularly between the United Nations, the African Union and sub-regional organizations.

Thirdly, we have also bolstered our military action by enhancing and streamlining our development action by creating the Sahel Alliance with Germany and several other international donors. These are the complementary 3Ds of Diplomacy, Development and Defence that I spoke about last year. We have started to roll out the first operations for education, agriculture, the wider economy, in several countries in the region where every gain in territory from the enemy must be accompanied by new projects giving economic, educational and life opportunities for populations which, at a point in time, could have been won over by the enemy.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the action carried out and results obtained in Mauritania, Niger and Chad. In the coming months, we must give our utmost support to ensuring stability and the recapture of certain regions in Mali and Burkina Faso.

The fourth point I would like to make is that we cannot genuinely solve the Sahel issue while Libya remains unstable. The breakdown of society in Libya since 2011 has led to the formation of organized trafficking routes for drugs, humans and weapons. The whole Sahel and Sahara region has always been a region of trade and trafficking but these routes are today paths of misery and terrorism. Until we achieve stability in Libya it will be impossible to sustainably stabilize the Sahel. It is these routes that finance and enable the terrorists.

We have taken several initiatives to respond to this situation. Firstly, by fighting this trafficking and the networks of traffickers in collaboration with the African Union and the International Organization for Migration.

Secondly, by bringing together Mr Sarraj and Mr Haftar in France in July 2017 then, for the first time, the four major Libyan leaders in May this year, surrounded by the international community, to commit to a common political process.

I firmly believe in Libyan unity and restoring Libyan sovereignty. This is an essential component in efforts to stabilize the region and therefore fight terrorists and traffickers. The coming months will be decisive in the regard as they will require our involvement to support the remarkable work of the

Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General, Ghassan Salamé, to avoid any temptation of divisions, because this country has become, deep down, the theatre for every influence and external interest. Our role for our security and the security of the region is to successfully bring the Paris Agreement as decided by the four stakeholders in May to fruition.

SYRIA

The other theatre in our fight against terrorism is, of course, Syria. The situation in Syria remains extremely serious and concerning. France is very active from a diplomatic standpoint, from New York to Geneva, and in all the capitals concerned. We have significantly increased our humanitarian assistance. A ceasefire is now essential but the sustainable solution to this conflict has to be political, that we can be sure of.

France was the first to propose bringing the positions of the Western and Arab States on the one hand and those of the three “Astana guarantors” on the other. We included Germany and Egypt in the “small group” which will hold another ministerial meeting in September with the United States, United Kingdom, Saudi Arabia and Jordan. We have enhanced our dialogue with Turkey on Syria to a historic level, despite the deep-rooted differences on the north-east region. The coordination mechanism created in St Petersburg with Russia has borne its first fruits, particularly from a humanitarian standpoint, without compromising on our principles and through non-governmental organizations present on the ground leading humanitarian operations for civilian populations.

I would therefore like to commend the remarkable and courageous work of all the NGOs on the ground.

Many things have therefore changed. I believe we have managed to rebuild an essential European pathway, but we must not make any mistakes, we are at the hour of truth on this issue. There is doubtless a key humanitarian challenge in the Idlib region as we move into the last months of the conflict. And we are at a crossroads in implementing this inclusive political solution in which we believe and which alone will enable the Eastern Christians but also the Kurds, the Yazidis and all the other ethnic and religious minorities, to have a place in tomorrow’s Syria.

Our lines on the Syrian conflict are clear: the fight against Daesh and the terrorist groups threatening Europe’s security, support for civilian populations and the promotion of an inclusive diplomatic roadmap, in collaboration with the United Nations.

I have tasked my Personal Envoy on Syria, Ambassador François Sénémaud with making progress on these objectives in collaboration with all the ministries concerned. But the current

situation is alarming, because the regime threatens to create a new humanitarian disaster in the Idlib region and has not to date shown any desire to negotiate a political transition. This means we will have to further increase pressure on the regime and its allies and I have high expectations of Russia and Turkey in this regard, given their role and the commitments they have made.

Those who would, once the war on Daesh is over, facilitate a return to the status quo are clearly identifiable. Bashar al-Assad would stay in power, the refugees in Jordan, Libya and Turkey would return home and Europe and some others would rebuild.

While I have always accepted that our number one enemy has been Daesh and that I never made the destitution of Bashar al-Assad a prerequisite for our diplomatic or humanitarian action, I think that such a scenario would nevertheless be a disastrous mistake. Who caused these millions of people to be displaced? Who massacred his own people? It is not France's responsibility to appoint the future leaders of Syria any more than it is the responsibility of any other country. But it is our responsibility and our prerogative to ensure that the Syrian people will be in a position to do so.

That is why the condition for Syria's unity and stability, and therefore for the ultimate eradication of Islamist terrorism, is building this inclusive political solution through constitutional reform and the implementation of an electoral process enabling all Syrians, including and especially those who have fled the Bashar al-Assad regime, to choose their own leader. This action and these principles are to my mind crucial to our current and future security. For what has enabled terrorist groups, whether it be al-Qaeda, Daesh or al-Nusra, to prosper?

Poverty, authoritarian regimes no longer protecting their peoples, widespread corruption, and also foreign powers not respecting these countries' sovereignty have fuelled the very discourse of Islamists, the exploitation of all the different frustrations and anti-Western speech. So let us not repeat these mistakes. Let us respect Syria's sovereignty – but truly respect it – by allowing people to express themselves and embody this sovereignty. This is reasoning behind the diplomatic and political combat we should conduct alongside the United Nations Secretary-General's Representative, Staffa de Mistura, to get the Syrians, the Small Group, participants in the Astana dialogue and the States in the region to converge around a same inclusive road map, the implementation of which alone can produce sustainable peace.

MIDDLE EAST

Of course, stability of the region will also depend on our ability to deal with Iranian issues. I have just spoken again with President Rohani about the crisis in the Gulf, the conflict in Yemen and the Israeli-Palestinian issue, which absolutely remains central and worrying.

I do not want to spend too much time on these essential points here and will have the opportunity to share my views in the coming weeks in launching tangible initiatives with you.

Still along the same main lines: our security and our world view require stability in the Middle East. This stability can only be built if there is ethnic, religious and political pluralism and if all stakeholders work together. It therefore requires both our involvement and our resolve in ensuring that everyone's dignity and human rights are respected, but also our humility because at no time can we replace the sovereignty of the States concerned. That is the reasoning behind our work with Lebanon, Jordan and Egypt in recent months. That is why people will listen to us and why we will be able to remain effective.

CHEMICAL WEAPONS

When we speak about our action with regard to French people's security in today's environment we are also pursuing our commitment to fight chemical weapons and nuclear proliferation.

We have created an international partnership against impunity with regard to chemical weapons. We drove the European solidarity efforts to support the United Kingdom after the Salisbury attack. We helped create a new mechanism in June for attributing responsibility for such attacks within the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, whose headquarters I had visited a few months earlier. These actions were necessary because we know how much the role and monitoring of this Organisation have been challenged by certain actors and how recent reforms have made it more vulnerable.

France has kept its word and adhered to its main lines. When the Syrian regime bombed its population with chemical weapons, we carried out several strikes on its facilities in the night between 13 and 14 April 2018 with our British and American allies, and we will continue to act accordingly in the event of proven use of such weapons.

NORTH KOREA/IRAN

We have fought nuclear proliferation by supporting the opening up between North Korea and the United States with a policy of vigilance and by committing, contrary to the United States' decision, to maintaining the nuclear deal with Iran.

It was France that, during this same meeting last year, proposed the path of broader negotiations with Iran concerning the four pillars that you know and that I explained to you then.

This approach is advancing today and is a compass that the new partners follow. We will do everything we can for it to help prevent a serious crisis in the months ahead. A considerable diplomatic effort will eventually be needed to establish a new stability framework. Our closely coordinated action, particularly with the United Kingdom, Germany and the European Union, is to now preserve what the 2015 nuclear deal with Iran has enabled and to consolidate it by opening fresh, even more demanding negotiations.

France will shoulder its responsibilities regarding Iran, uncompromisingly and without naivety, by maintaining close dialogue with our partners, which include the Gulf States.

EUROPEAN DEFENCE/RUSSIA

When we speak of our security, we are also speaking of Europe's security with regard to external risks.

In this regard, over the past year, we have moved forward at much faster pace than in the last 60 years. We have made unprecedented progress, including strengthening our common defence policy since summer 2017, creating a defence fund to finance tangible initiatives, concluding two strategic agreements concerning tanks and combat aircraft with Germany, and concluding with eight other Member States the European Intervention Initiative that I proposed in September 2017 to promote the idea of defence between Europeans. Europe has never progressed as quickly when it comes to defence.

Europe has realized that it has to protect itself and France has shouldered its full responsibilities in this realm, through the military defence budget signed into law on 14 July 2018 which provides an updated strategic vision of these new threats facing our country and realistic means to address them.

France and Europe have identified the new modern-day threats and realized that we need strategic and defensive autonomy to address them.

In the coming months, I plan to spearhead a project to strengthen European solidarity in security matters. We should give more substance to Article 42(7) of the Treaty on European Union, invoked by France for the first time in 2015, after the terrorist attacks. France is ready to enter into concrete discussions with European States on the nature of reciprocal solidarity and mutual defence relations under our Treaty commitments. Europe can no longer entrust its security to the United

States alone. It is up to us to assume our responsibilities and to guarantee European security and thereby sovereignty.

We must fully take on board the consequences the end of the Cold War. Allies today are still extremely important, but balances, and sometimes the reflexes on which they were built, need to be reviewed. And that also means that Europe should also act accordingly. This enhanced solidarity will involve a review of the European defence and security architecture. This will include initiating renewed dialogue on cyber security, chemical weapons, conventional weapons, territorial conflicts, space security and the protection of polar regions, especially with Russia.

I would like us to engage in broad discussions on these issues with all of our European partners, and therefore with Russia. Substantial progress towards resolving the Ukraine crisis, and compliance with the OSCE framework – I am thinking particularly of the situation of observers in the Donbass – will clearly be the prior conditions necessary for real progress with Moscow. But that should not prevent us from working between Europeans starting today. I am counting on you to do this.

We will also revisit this European architecture, reaffirming the relevance of the Council of Europe – France will chair its Committee of Ministers in 2019 – and the relevance of our democratic values. We must not give in to the forms of fascination – which we are seeing more or less throughout the European Union – for illiberal democracies or types of efficiency that involve abandoning our principles. No. Our security is rooted in the reaffirmation of our values, of human rights, which are the very cornerstone not only of the Council of Europe but also of the European Union, and in defending all those who uphold them each day, including NGOs, intellectuals, artists, activists and journalists. Here too, we will have several initiatives to adopt on the side-lines of the UN General Assembly.

US/CHINA/ MULTILATERALISM /GLOBALIZATION

The second goal I assigned for our diplomats a year ago was to promote common goods: the protection of our planet, culture, the education of our children, public health, trade and cyber space, all of which are aspects of our global heritage that must be defended. But in order to do so, we need collective rules that are accepted by all; these are essential for smooth cooperation and hence to progress in defending those common goods. But the leading threat to our common goods is the crisis of multilateralism itself.

Indeed, multilateralism is undergoing a major crisis, with an impact on all of our diplomatic efforts – primarily because of US policy. Doubts concerning NATO; the aggressive unilateral trade policy leading almost to a trade war with China, Europe and a few others; withdrawal from the Paris agreement; and denunciation of the nuclear agreement with Iran are all examples of this. The partner with which Europe built the post-war multilateral order seems to be turning its back on this shared history. France has always been the first and the most forthright country when it comes to expressing its opposition to these decisions, always working to persuade before such decisions are taken, and to maintain the crucial high-quality dialogue between our two countries. And I fully stand by this approach.

While participating actively in traditional multilateralism, China, for its part, is promoting its own world view, its own vision of a reinvented, more hegemonic multilateralism. Other powers are not really playing the game in multilateral cooperation, and for them, the collapse of this supposedly Western order will not be overly problematic.

In this context, France is sometimes criticized for continuing its dialogue, its efforts with the United States, yet it is obvious – even in the current situation – that dialogue with Washington remains essential. And I must tell you that in my view, the situation is very different from the one that is most often described. First, because the isolationist or rather the unilateralist trend that the United States is currently experiencing is not completely new – it has already existed in the distant past, if you look at Jackson, and it had already begun with the previous administration in certain theatres of operations and in certain parts of the world.

This American position is of course undermining contemporary multilateralism because it is hampering effectiveness and may lead to the emergence of alternative, more hegemonic models incompatible with our values. But in my view, it should be seen as more of a symptom than a cause, a symptom of the crisis of contemporary capitalist globalization and of the liberal Westphalian multilateral model that goes with it.

Globalization and multilateralism have had positive effects that should not be underestimated: they enabled hundreds of millions of the planet's inhabitants to escape poverty, they brought an end to an ideological conflict that divided the world, and they ushered in an unprecedented era of prosperity and freedom and a peaceful expansion of global trade, which is the reality of recent decades. But this economic, social, and political order is in a state of crisis. First, because it was unable to regulate the excesses that were inherent to it: trade imbalances that deeply affected

certain regions, which are losing out in globalization; long overlooked environmental disasters; and significant inequalities within and among our societies.

From Brexit to the current US position, it is this same uneasiness with contemporary globalization that is playing out. And the answer, to my mind, is not unilateralism, but rather a reinvention, a new conception of contemporary globalization. This capitalist globalization accelerated financial flows and led to a hyper-concentration of technologies and talents as well as profits, which fostered the emergence of actors who disrupt and undermine our collective rules. It created both big winners and big losers.

And finally, because throughout the world, peoples' deep-seated identities have re-emerged, along with their ideas of their history. That is a fact. Those who believed in the advent of a globalized world whose people were protected from the wounds of history were deeply mistaken. Throughout the world, the inner psyches of people in each of our countries have resurfaced, and we are seeing this from India to Hungary, from Greece to the United States. Look closer: these inner psyches are often exploited, sometimes inflamed, but they are a reality that says something about the return of the identity of peoples. It is probably a good thing, or at least I believe so.

It is a sign that this undifferentiated globalization was not the answer to everything, that it failed to respond to certain points, and that we must therefore rethink its rules and practices, precisely as a result of these failures and these changes. So the real question isn't whether I will take Donald Trump's arm at the next summit, but how we can collectively grasp this moment of great transformation that we are experiencing and which is facing all of our societies.

The great demographic transformation, which is shaking up Africa and Europe, and indeed, all the continents, it must be said. The great ecological and environmental transformation, more critical than ever. The great shift in inequalities and the great technological transformation. France's role is to propose a humanistic path to meet these challenges, and with Europe, specifically, to propose a new collective organization.

First and foremost, that presumes – and this is a prerequisite, if I may say so – changing our diplomatic approach to some extent. We can no longer be satisfied with monitoring political changes or statements by traditional actors without attempting to better decode the deep-seated identities, the forces that are at work and which are determining the course of events in many countries. All too often, we have taken note of things we didn't want to see, the political events over the last few months and years, without questioning our own selves, without looking hard enough at

the deep-seated identities, at the collective imaginations of the peoples I just mentioned. I think we must do more of this and reinvent our own methods.

And sometimes the things we don't want to see happen, because there is an underlying logic within peoples. We probably should have a better understanding of this intimacy in order to better anticipate the course of events. But we should also grasp what is progressive and humanistic in these world views, i. e. , the paths and means for new initiatives, and in each of these countries we should seek out allies, paths, means of building new cooperation and new alliances.

We must accept that doing this will require alliances of convenience, alliances that are tactical and concrete, depending on the issues, and based on clear principles and objectives, always respecting the national sovereignty of peoples. I have already spoken about this. It limits military interventionism, or more precisely, it means we must always act as part of a dynamic and a political project that are as close as possible to the people. But it also means that we must always work to ensure that all non-State actors contribute to this new way of regulating the world, that they respect the rules and are not somehow its clandestine passengers or hidden arbiters.

The answer, then, is not unilateralism but rather a way of reorganizing our efforts around a few strategic common goods, and by building new alliances. First and foremost, with regard to the fight against climate change, the Paris Climate Agreement must continue to be defended. Every day, the urgency of this fight is confirmed with the intensification of climate extremes and natural disasters. We are continuing to fight this battle, and we will continue to pursue concrete actions.

ENVIRONMENTAL DIPLOMACY

The One Planet Summit, which France hosted with the UN and the World Bank on 12 December last year in Paris, made it possible to adopt substantial new financial commitments. That event will be followed up by another international summit on 26 September in New York. We must continue mobilizing all the actors involved in this fight: businesses, NGOs, local governments, and major international foundations.

This fight for the planet will remain central to our foreign policy, as reflected in the attention given to this issue during my visits to the Holy See, to China and India, and in particular with the first summit of the International Solar Alliance that we organized with India. It must also translate into the negotiation and adoption of a new global pact for the environment, which I consider a priority, and which will imply the commitment of all our diplomats, as well as actively preparing for key stages in biodiversity negotiations in 2019 and 2020. And mobilization on the oceans and the poles will also require the commitment of many diplomatic posts.

Environmental diplomacy is vital when it comes to responding to this major upheaval in the world. It is vital because of the French and European commitment in this area; because it is enabling us to form new alliances, especially with China and several other powers, thereby enabling us to build a new form of international cooperation; and because at a very deep level it serves our interests in the short, medium and long term.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT/EDUCATION

The second universal good that we have again made central to our international cooperation policy is education, culture and knowledge. Indeed, France demonstrated its commitment by co-hosting with Senegal the replenishment conference of the Global Partnership for Education in Dakar a few months ago, which raised more than two billion euros for education in the world, especially for girls, and for which France increased its contribution ten-fold.

In my view, this is our universalist, humanist role, but also the most crucial contribution we could make to addressing the demographic crisis I mentioned earlier. Wherever there is an undue population surge, it is the result of a decline in education, and especially girls' education. And that is something that France must be able to talk about. I was repeatedly attacked when, a little more than a year ago, I addressed this issue in Hamburg, but African leaders themselves courageously took up the subject and stance and are addressing it.

But wherever demography spikes, with seven or eight children per women, forced marriage has resumed and girls' education has declined. And show me countries where young women all choose to have eight or nine children, show them to me, before saying that it is a form of neo-imperialism to raise this issue in Paris. No, we must help those who are speaking about this in each of their capitals.

Fighting for education is the best response to all forms of obscurantism and totalitarianism. Education, culture and intelligence are at the heart of this battle, which we must wage everywhere. It is the only sustainable response to the global demographic challenge. And we will therefore fight at length against inequalities, especially those between men and women. That is why I have made education an absolute priority, both in our country and abroad.

And I deeply believe that on this issue, France has an unprecedented role to play, first of all because of its history and tradition. A year ago, we formulated an ambitious education strategy, from the beginning of primary school through to university, that I think lends our country particular credibility in this area. But let's also take a closer look at what we are and the assets we have.

Paris is the headquarters of three international organizations that are vital in these areas: UNESCO, whose new Director-General has begun a resolute effort that we strongly support; the OECD, which has acquired unquestionable credibility in evaluating educational performances; and the International Organisation of La Francophonie, which also considers education a strong ambition and one of its priorities.

In the last few years we have launched several projects, including the ALIPH initiative to protect endangered cultural heritage and several others, further enhancing this strength. In addition to this, we have increased our role within the Global Partnership for Education which I would like to be even more active and present in Paris; we have everything we need to make France a global knowledge, intellectual and cultural ecosystem that you must promote around the world, through academic, scientific and research cooperation.

I think that it is an essential common good that we must defend, but I believe that it is also an incredible lever of influence for our country.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT/HEALTH

The third common good is health. In this respect, France will continue to fulfil its commitments by holding the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria Replenishment Conference in Lyon on 10 October 2019. But in the meantime, I would like us to resume, with determination, the important fight against counterfeit drugs that France initiated, and to intensify our involvement in the fight against the major pandemics; I am thinking in particular of the fight against Ebola in Central Africa.

DIGITAL SPACE

The fourth fundamental common good is the digital space. We must support its development, invest in promoting our strategic and economic interests as well as regulate it so that it is accessible to all and our fundamental rights are protected. This major change is exactly what the Tech for Good summit in Paris in the spring was all about; we will hold this summit every year in order to encourage debate on essential regulations in these new sectors, together with all international stakeholders, and in order also to take action and make concrete commitments. Whether with respect to taxes, privacy, social rights or ethics, we must develop responses that respect countries' sovereignty, by never allowing any economic actor, any area of human activity to escape our sovereign control or attention.

This is the reasoning behind the commitment we made, in particular with the United Kingdom, at the European as well as international level, to combat the spread of terrorist messages and terrorist content. We will continue this regulatory work at the European and international levels, specifically in order to extend best practices in this area. The Internet Governance Forum and the

Civic Tech Forum will take place at the same time on 12 November in Paris, allowing us to make progress in these areas. I want to make France a major hub of attractiveness, as well as of discussion and development of these new rules, so that we can discuss common goods and the new rules of globalization.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

It is also a matter of discussing our collective organization in the area of trade. International trade is definitely not fair; the collective organization that we have today is not the most efficient, but responding with complete unilateralism and a trade war is the least appropriate answer. The solution must involve a radical restructuring of our international world order. That's why, in May, I invited the OECD to launch a joint working group involving the United States, the EU, China and Japan.

We must clarify the existing rules, improve dispute resolution, adopt more effective regulation at the international level and incorporate our own social and environmental requirements in our trade policy. We cannot have a trade policy that would in some way be considered separate from everything else.

I therefore invite the representatives of these powers to an initial conference on this issue on the side-lines of the Armistice Day events in Paris on 11 November. I think that we will be able to build a more effective and fairer system in a few months; indeed, we cannot give in to the hegemony of one power and the division of all.

RESTRUCTURING OF WORLD ORDER

Indeed, I believe that our world order can be significantly better regulated with respect to social affairs. And I think that the 100th anniversary of the ILO in 2019 should allow us to go further and to set ourselves a new goal. Wherever globalization is criticized, it is these social aberrations that are attacked. The working classes and the middle classes, in the United Kingdom, and in the United States, as well as in our country, are criticizing the fact that they are being left behind, that this order has led to the inequalities that I just mentioned, which are no longer tenable.

We should therefore think not in terms of one group pitted against another, but develop, as we have in other areas, opportunities for international cooperation, that can help us define common standards; we should therefore think in terms of bringing together the willing, encouraging cooperation among everyone. That's why I want to make the issue of inequality a major focus of France's commitment over the coming year, notably at the G7, of which we will hold the Presidency in 2019.

Our focus is therefore the restructuring of the world order. France and Europe have a historic role to play in this. I do not think that the future of the world will be built on hegemonies, or on theocracies, or new forms of totalitarianism. But that requires a sudden jolt to our democracy. We will not win this battle by simply saying that democracies are by definition right, when we see extremes on the rise everywhere and world order falling apart. When I talk about strong multilateralism, it means considering what the key challenges are for our citizens and finding an international response to these challenges.

The peace gained at great cost in 1918 broke down during the 1930s as a result of the shortcomings in global governance and the weakening of democracies. That's why I have taken the initiative to invite several heads of state and government to Paris for the 11 November Armistice Day ceremonies; they will inaugurate the first Paris Peace Forum. This forum is aimed at strengthening our collective efforts by bringing States and international organizations, notably the UN, together with civil society: NGOs, businesses, trade unions, experts, intellectuals and religious groups. International governance must be defined in concrete terms, and every citizen can take part in this.

This restructuring requires time for reflection, and I hope we will be able to make this shared call to action a reality on 11 November in Paris. This restructuring also requires us to redesign our organizations, our consultation instruments and our coalitions.

In 2019, France will hold the G7 Presidency. I would like us to update the format and goals. We must establish stronger, constant dialogue – while remaining a coherent group with common levels of development and democratic requirements – with China on climate issues and trade, with India on digital affairs, with Africa on youth affairs. In any event, we must not recreate this theatre of shadows and divisions, which I believe has weakened us more than helped us move forward. I will therefore propose a reform to the other members, in liaison with the United States, which will hold the presidency of the G7 after us in 2020.

INDO-PACIFIC STRATEGY

All over the world, in Asia, in Latin America, in Africa, there are therefore new balances, new relations that we must rethink on the basis of the in-depth work that I asked you to carry out. In March and May I therefore proposed, in New Delhi and then in Sydney, that we work on a new Indo-Pacific strategic objective, which must not be directed against anyone, and could be a key contribution to international stability. We are an Indo-Pacific power with more than 8,000 troops in the region and more than a million citizens. We must draw the necessary conclusions and I hope

that you can present this link crossing the Indian Ocean to the Pacific Ocean, by way of Southeast Asia, in a resolute, ambitious and clear manner.

COOPERATION WITH CHINA AND JAPAN

Indeed, we must develop a new relationship with Asia. It will notably be based on our essential and fruitful dialogue with China. I said that I would go there every year and I laid the foundations for this dialogue a few months ago in Xi'an. China has established one of the most important geopolitical concepts of the last few decades with its new silk roads. We cannot act as if the initiative did not exist. We should not give in to any kind of guilty or short-term fascination: it is a vision of globalization that has its virtues in terms of stabilizing certain regions, but it is a hegemonic system. I therefore want France to be able to provide a balanced approach that will safeguard our interests and our vision of the world in this constructive, demanding and confident dialogue with China.

Our relationship with Japan is also key; Japan will hold the G70 Presidency at the same time that we will hold that of the G7 and it was our most recent guest of honour, alongside Singapore, at the Bastille Day celebrations. The current cultural season in France reflects the strength of our ties. Relations with India, the largest democracy in the world, and with Australia, within the framework of the Indo-Pacific strategy are key. But it is with Africa in particular that we must rebuild these contemporary coalitions I just referred to and therefore our capacity to influence the course of the world.

AFRICA

What Ethiopia, Liberia and Sierra Leone have taught us is that there is nothing inevitable about African instability, whether with respect to internal conflicts or conflicts between neighbours. Africa does not just serve as an interlocutor to discuss the crises affecting it, it is first and foremost our ally in helping to strike overall balance in tomorrow's world. This is why I am asking you all to take part in this dialogue: relations with Africa, and this is an important message that I want to convey to you, do not just concern our ambassadors in Africa. When I talk about Africa, I am talking about the entire continent with all of its diversity and wealth, as I explained in my speech in Ouagadougou, when I invited talents from our two continents, including young Europeans and Africans, to engage in dialogue on their common future.

Africa is important to France not only because it is our closest neighbour but also because it is part of our identity through our common history and through diasporas that I have planned to meet this autumn. We believe it is necessary to better involve these diasporas while renewing our relationship with Africa. I am also counting on the contribution of the Presidential Council for Africa, which I would like to commend for its commitment alongside me.

Without Africa, we will never win the battle that I mentioned regarding common goods, we will never manage to build these new cooperation projects and alliances for the international order we wish to see. We will never win the battle for diversity or against climate change without African countries' active participation. Next spring, I will visit Nairobi and the UNEP headquarters to build on the momentum of the One Planet Summit on the ground in Africa.

Africa is also a continent where the future of Francophonie will play out, and to a large extent, the future of our language and our cultural influence. That is why I have lent France's support to the candidacy backed by the African Union for the post of Secretary-General of the International Organisation of La Francophonie ahead of the Yerevan Summit of 12 October 2018.

We launched the African Cultural Season in Lagos last July, which will be organized in France in 2020 and which will enable Africa for the first time to tell its own story in France in all our cultural venues. N'Goné Fall will be the General Commissioner of this cultural season. This autumn I will also receive the report by Bénédicte Savoy and Felwine Sarr on the temporary or definitive return of African cultural heritage to Africa. What we are building in doing so, step by step, and I cannot go into detail about all the points of this policy, is a change in the way our countries see one another. As a result, France will be able to see Africa differently but Africa will also be able to express itself differently, to tell its own history, its own present differently to the world and to build a new intellectual connection between France and Africa.

I believe this to be an essential part of our diplomacy because it is one of the keys to addressing the instability in several African regions and one of the keys to striking a balance in our relationship on every level. Africa is, of course, our Mediterranean neighbour. We pay close attention to the special relationships we have with Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia which I have already visited. I will also have the opportunity to visit Cairo on the coming months when Egypt takes over the Chairmanship of the African Union. I announced at the beginning of the year in Tunisia that a Two Shores Summit would be held, based on the current 5+5 Dialogue but in an even more inclusive format with significant contribution from civil society. Ten years after the Union for the Mediterranean, we must define a different Mediterranean policy by learning from all of our successes and shortcomings and involving civil society to recreate a more inclusive Mediterranean policy. This is doubtless one of the conditions for reconsolidating the Maghreb region. This policy is key for tackling issues around young people, mobility, energy, academic exchanges and we will, in the coming months, prepare this Summit which will be held in Marseille in early summer 2019.

FRANCE'S GLOBAL ATTRACTIVENESS/FRANCOPHONIE

Our third objective, ladies and gentlemen, is to enhance France's influence in this context. I mentioned at the beginning of my speech the importance of economic diplomacy. Our country has, of course, attracted more investment, tourism and talent this year but we still have many challenges ahead. France has also made progress in sports winning the bid for the 2024 Olympic Games and the French football team's victory at the World Cup. This victory and the way in which our players and citizens celebrated it only increase the expectations of France.

Your efforts have played an active role in this increase in France's attractiveness in all fields. They were supported by unprecedented events that we organized at the beginning of this year in Versailles, Paris and elsewhere, and the investment in the Choose France summit on new technologies with Vivatech or on Artificial Intelligence with the presentation of French strategy in front of numerous international specialists at the end of the winter. I expect you to be involved in following up these events which we will repeat every year and which require several concrete steps.

Important announcements were made on these occasions by several large foreign companies, showing that it is possible to get them to work in France by developing a demanding dialogue on the most complex aspects: security, tax and the digital economy. And I also wanted to continue this with France hosting the 2023 WorldSkills and I want all of our embassies to get involved in supporting our candidacy as this also helps essential economic outreach.

At the same time, it is essential more than ever to promote our culture and language. This is something I have said several times. We have left behind a defensive vision of language to finally promote a robust, pro-active policy for the promotion of French and multilingualism, which gives all the necessary importance to regional languages, which fully recognizes the role of authors from Africa and around the world in French-language literary creation.

In light of this, I would like to thank my personal representative for Francophonie, Leïla Slimani, for her work in this field. Our cooperation efforts on the ground have been telling us for several years that we needed a paradigm shift. This is also why I have decided to maintain our cultural cooperation budget at the same level in 2019 for the second consecutive year.

We have already brought about a 50% increase in the number of hours of French offered to refugees, increased the number of bilingual schools abroad with the France Education label by

20%, brought together all operators concerned in a consortium responsible for training teachers in francophone Africa. I would also like to welcome the creation of a Francophone Chair at the Collège de France. We have made considerable progress. This is also promoted by the hard work of the journalists at France Médias Monde and I intend to follow this up and ask you to double down on your work in this field in cooperation with the International Organisation of La Francophonie and in collaboration with operators including TV5 Monde and the Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie.

All these influence activities will only be possible and effective alongside the economic diplomacy I spoke about earlier if we give new momentum to our development assistance policy and turn it into a genuine solidarity investment policy. France's partnership and international solidarity policy is part of the drive to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. To reach these goals, I have decided that our new policy will benefit from increased resources, after a long period of shrinkage of 0.55% of GNI by 2022. Already, to guarantee this growth, the 2019 budget will include a billion euros of additional commitment authorizations.

But, as I told you one year ago, financial means alone do not suffice. A new method is needed, both in France and in our partner countries. New governance has been established with the creation of a National Council for Development. On Friday, the Prime Minister received the report he asked National Assembly Deputy Hervé Berville to draft and I would like to thank Mr Berville for his work and the broad consultation he conducted. As he proposed, a new partnership dimension will be created to better involve civil society, young people, companies and diasporas.

This means working more closely with people in the field. In this connection, I support the proposal to step up the means directly available to our embassies to encourage local initiatives. With regard to gender equality and support for innovation, you need to be the leading actors and the leading communicators of the political will that I have expressed. I also support the idea of a new framework and planning bill to enshrine our assistance budget trajectory and renew the framework of our international cooperation policy.

An ambitious evaluation policy will be implemented to track the results of this assistance transparently and there will be extensive restructuring around the Agence Française du Développement (AFD). I also ask that you pay special attention around the world to ensuring that there is great coherence and synergy between our national priorities and European cooperation and development projects. I believe that this is a guarantee of coherence and effectiveness for all of us.

EU COOPERATION

I would like to end with the fourth point developed last year, which is clearly even more relevant today: our European priority. Throughout my speech I have reiterated the importance of Europe, be it in terms of our security, our ability to overhaul the international order or promoting our own interests. Attempts to do so alone are most often much less effective, if not bound to fail. Acting with a strong, coherent European voice, will, to my mind, guarantee our success. Since our last meeting a year ago, we have proposed, we have taken forward and we have built alliances. During my speech at Sorbonne University last September, I set out a comprehensive, ambitious vision for a more sovereign, more united, more democratic Europe. On this path, we have obtained the first results regarding defence – I talked about them earlier – regarding posted workers, regarding social and tax convergence and regarding trade policy. In the coming months, we will continue work on migration and digital technology.

On this basis and given the political context our leading partner, Germany, has had to face, we conducted work over several months that enabled us to reach a historic milestone for France and Germany in Meseberg last June and to produce a strategic document that, regarding all of these points, including the budget and the eurozone, sets out a common agenda until 2021. It will help us to develop this vision in a coherent manner of this sovereign, united and inclusive Europe that we should have.

Culture and education, health and food, and digital technology and innovation are all areas in which we have made progress and proposed common initiatives. We have thus adopted an ambitious method, which is to speak to everyone, once again in Europe. In one year, I have visited more than half of the countries in the European Union. I have of course spoken with all of the Heads of State and Government bilaterally. I wished to mark my first summer with a tour of Central and Eastern Europe and I will be in Denmark tomorrow where there has not been a state visit for 36 years and then in Finland.

We have sometimes forgotten some countries of Europe with the excuse that we see them at every European Council meeting. But we also have to convince, also to understand the deep-rooted dynamic of many European peoples, and to build a strong bilateral relationship that serves our European policy. Europe is not made in Brussels, Paris or Berlin: it is built in the relentless dissemination of our ideas and our projects without hegemony.

I am telling you today solemnly and with humility: this European combat has only just begun. It will be long and difficult. It will be central to France's action throughout my term of office and particularly in the coming year, because we are experiencing a European crisis.

Throughout Europe, there are doubts. Brexit is symptom of this. The increase in extremism has almost become the rule and France the exception. The divisions between North and South in economic terms and between East and West regarding migration issues too often divide our European Union and we are currently experiencing a political crisis about migration that we must address.

So faced with this, how do we respond? By giving up none of the ambition expressed a year ago. None. On the contrary, by bringing greater clarity and a few perspectives I want to share with you here, to conclude my remarks. Firstly, what Europe are we talking about? When we talk to Africa, when we talk about ourselves, when we talk about all these major challenges, the perimeter, the outline of this Europe must not be subject to a form of intellectual laziness. The European Union is not set in stone and changes to its perimeter are not the end of the world or necessarily a process we should passively endure. There is quite obviously Brexit, first of all, but I draw everyone's attention to this: is there not something absurd in a European Union which is today going to devote a huge amount of energy to discussing Brexit and, at the same time, talks of starting accession negotiations with Albania or any other Western Balkans country? All these countries are linked in some way to our history and our strategy, but can we, in this group of informed, clear-sighted people, be satisfied with the way things are going? Do we think this is the best way of responding to our challenges? Do we think things are going as they should when it comes to Europe's perimeter and the kind of Europe we want? Definitely not.

BREXIT

So as far as Brexit is concerned, I would like the agreement to be reached by the end of the year, setting out the framework of our future relations. Yet, I repeat, Brexit is a sovereign choice which must be respected, but it is a choice which cannot be made at the expense of the European Union's integrity. It is what the British people have chosen for themselves, not for others, and France would like to maintain a strong, special relationship with London, but not at the cost of the European Union breaking up. And for integrity to be defended by the capital city which champions it, in its own country, is one thing, but we have to defend the integrity of our values, of our foundations and of the European Union. And so we shall have a rigorous, essential dialogue about this, but in any event we shall have to think about the European Union's post-Brexit relationship with London – that is essential. And thinking about it will involve, precisely, defining at the very least what kind of strategic partnership to build.

RUSSIA/TURKEY/EUROPEAN SECURITY AND DEFENCE

I want the same requirement at our borders; I already mentioned Russia earlier, and the framework of a European security and defence architecture; but we cannot build Europe on a long-term basis without thinking about our relationship to Russia and Turkey. Thinking about it uncompromisingly and without being naïve. Do we think today – again, clear-sightedly and sincerely – that we can continue negotiating Turkey's accession to the European Union when the plan reaffirmed daily by the Turkish President – for a little over a year I have had an unprecedented number of contacts with him – is a pan-Islamic plan regularly presented as anti-European, whose routine measures rather contradict our principles? Definitely not. And here too we must end hypocrisy and create, I believe, a more effective, more coherent solution for ourselves. So we have to build a partnership that is not accession to the European Union but a strategic partnership with Russia and with Turkey, because they are two powers which are important for our collective security, because they must be anchored to Europe, because the history of those peoples has been built with Europe and together we must build our future. And so on all these fronts we need a relationship that we have to reinvent, rigorously, but without giving in to the kind of tentative bureaucratic steps we are used to on these issues.

The Cold War is behind us and President Erdoğan's Turkey isn't the same as President Kemal's. These are two facts, and we must take on board all their consequences.

EU STRATEGIC AUTONOMY

We also have to accept, support the fact that this Europe will be a Europe of several circles, because it already is and so we have to accept there is a broad Europe, perhaps broader than the European Union, the Council of Europe forming, moreover, this broader base, founded on our principles, which are at times undermined even within the EU. But there's room therefore for a broad Europe, room for a common market and, at the heart of this, room for enhanced cooperation and greater integration. And this involves being somewhat bold and agreeing to revisit taboo subjects on both sides, the taboo of financial transfers on one side of the Rhine, and treaty change on the other. And on this point, the vision France is promoting today, which we shall be promoting in the framework of future meetings, requires a revision of the treaties, such as the reform of the European Union and the eurozone. I am calling for this and I would like us to be able to carry it out on the basis of the Citizens' Consultations under way, on the basis of the results of the upcoming European elections and of intergovernmental work which will be necessary in the coming semesters. Because we need to rethink how we are organized collectively, we need a more effective, smaller Commission and we need to rethink Europe's central strategic objectives.

Finally, we will be, and are being today, collectively tested because this Europe – as I have said several times and I have just been talking about its perimeter, its scope – has to confront all the present-day challenges I've been talking to you about just now. And we have only one credible European response: that of our strategic autonomy. The question isn't whether we manage to persuade the United States of America – a great people, and a great country; the question is whether the United States of America regards us as a power with strategic autonomy – that is the real question raised for Europe today. We are forced to accept that this is not the case today; we must take a clear-sighted, even ruthless look at ourselves; I do not honestly think today that China or the United States thinks Europe is a power with strategic autonomy comparable to their own. I do not believe it.

And I think that if we do not manage to build this, we are in for some gloomy times ahead. And so how do we build this genuine European sovereignty? Well, by responding to the challenges I have just been talking about, by making Europe the model of this far-reaching, humanist reform of globalization. That is our challenge and it is precisely the matter under debate for the European people ahead of the forthcoming elections.

There's a clear choice on one side: Europe is not effective, it no longer addresses the challenges of globalization. This is not totally false. It does not have strategic autonomy, so we must break it up.

Now the most sophisticated people will tell you: we are in favour of breaking it up except when it provides us with something, because Italy is against the Europe that does not show solidarity on migration, but it is in favour of the Europe of structural funds, when I listen to some ministers; the Italian Prime Minister is also well aware of this, he takes a much more structured approach. The Hungary of Viktor Orbán has never been against the Europe of structural funds, of the Common Agricultural Policy, but it is against Europe when it wants to make great speeches about Christianity. And so there is a clear path of European opportunism, but of openly-expressed nationalism: let's break up this bureaucratic structure, it no longer provides us with anything, let's pretend to forget what it gives us and let's take a clear line.

MIGRATION

On the other side, we must take an approach – also clear – geared to a desire for European sovereignty: in what respect and how can Europe alone respond to many of our challenges? And I believe this is the case, and I believe it is especially the case with regard to the political crisis gripping Europe today. I speak of a political crisis because the migration issues we talked about all through the summer are, above all, a political crisis. In 2015, Europe had to endure a genuine migration crisis, when millions of Afghans and Syrians arrived due to conflicts. A little more than a

year ago Europe had to endure a genuine migration crisis coming from Libya, but the flows have been reduced ten-fold in recent weeks; it is not a migration crisis, it is a political crisis, that of the very ability to tackle this challenge.

On this issue, we must look at things head-on: why are we having this European and in particular Italian political crisis? Because there has been no European solidarity. Why did we have a political crisis in Greece in the past? Because there was no European solidarity. This is why I have always linked European solidarity with a genuine policy of sovereignty, and so we created politically what is happening in Italy through our lack of solidarity. Does this excuse xenophobic discourse and easy answers? I do not think so, and I also believe that those same xenophobes provide no solution to the ills they complain of. Because it is all very well their going to seek solidarity from those they want to separate from: it does not often work, and furthermore, all those who put forward nationalist or unilateral discourse very much agree about criticizing Europe but rarely agree about finding common solutions, including for themselves. The ideas we are told about provide no solutions – none.

And so on this issue, I believe that France, with constructive partners and the European Commission, must establish, help establish a long-term mechanism that respects humanitarian principles and effective law ensuring solidarity, which means we must not and cannot abandon the right of asylum as we conceived it. Every day I hear speeches saying “don’t take people in, don’t accept them, goodwill is weakness”. France, and I welcome this, is one of the countries which, during this summer’s political crisis, has taken in the most refugees: 250. I ask you to remember the proportion of these figures, because on the basis of the five missions of the French Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons (OFPRA) we organized, we identified these people as eligible for asylum. But what fundamentally responsible, clear-sighted political leader can explain to us that we should abandon respect for the right of asylum in France and Europe? This right of asylum is in our constitution – ours, the French – and it is in all our European legislation. The key is simply to accept this differentiation. There are people who are eligible for asylum whom we must welcome unconditionally, in a well-organized way, together with the other shore of the Mediterranean and the rest of Africa. And then there is a migration policy to build at European level with Africa in order to prevent, reduce and control migration flows linked to economic migration and organize much more effective return of the latter migrants.

This is the very purpose of the law which will be promulgated in a few days’ time and which we brought in for France; it is the very purpose of the action we are promoting in Europe and of the

partnership we want to build with all African States, as we began to do in Abidjan at the end of last year, in the dialogue between the European Union and the African Union in Paris a year ago to the day, with the African Union and many countries of origin and transit, and with many of our partners. This is the right response to the migration crisis.

So it is a stringent European policy which respects our values but which, because we will have found common rules for border protection and internal solidarity, will ultimately be effective. France has a migration challenge: last year we were the country that receive practically the most applications, the second country for asylum applications, a little over 100,000, but none arrived by so-called primary routes. It is because of Europe's inability to handle the migration issue that we have had so many asylum applications. And so I ask all those who make speeches on this issue to look at the reality of the facts. If we have more effective organization at European level, then we have part of a response to our own challenges and sometimes our own fears.

We must build it sustainably, stringently, with all the partners concerned. But more broadly, as you have understood, on each of these issues I shall argue for Europe being the power which, as I have just said, on migration, will build the solutions in which we believe in the globalized world. An economic and trading power through a stronger eurozone, the defence of our strategic and commercial interests, financial independence through mechanisms we must propose, and this is the request we made to the Commission, to consolidate Europe's financial autonomy and finally end the extraterritorial nature of some financial and monetary decisions.

ECONOMY/TRADE

An economic and trading power that will build tax and social convergence within itself. I want a Europe that is a digital power and an artificial intelligence power, through the initiatives we have begun to take, with a fund for disruptive innovation, a genuine digital single market and the fair taxation of digital players. A Europe that is an ecological, food and health power, enabling us to guarantee throughout Europe the same rights of access to healthy food and a healthier environment.

We are promoting this vision; it is impossible to pursue it alone among other European players which do not follow it. It is at European level that we must pursue it and that we shall fight, to the end, the battle to end glyphosate – which France began, I remind you, and without France glyphosate would have been granted a further 15 years throughout Europe – but also for a single carbon price, for genuine energy sovereignty and for a genuine renewables strategy.

I believe in this vision of a Europe where, at our time of choices, there is an opportunity for progressive humanism; in Europe, I believe there is an opportunity for a pathway enabling us to clearly show our citizens that, on many issues that worry them, Europe is not simply part of the

answer but central to our strategic autonomy, central to the response we can provide to our peoples and vis-à-vis our partners.

We must write and tell the history of the Europe we want, demonstrate its concrete results, in order to persuade our fellow citizens that the path of cooperation in Europe and the world is the only one that can lead to relations of mutual trust in France's interest.

Ladies and gentlemen ambassadors, I have set out to you our priorities for the coming year, based on those four pillars I defined last year. You will be implementing them under the leadership of the Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs, Jean-Yves Le Drian, whom I thank again for the tireless work he is doing in Paris and around the world, effectively supported by Nathalie Loiseau and Jean-Baptiste Lemoyne and all the staff of the Quai d'Orsay, at the service of our country. I would like to express to them here, express to you all my gratitude for your dedication, skills, intelligence, commitment and courage.

On each of the challenges I have just described, the battle has not been won, and France sometimes appears to be a lone voice – at any rate, that is what some people complain about or seek to scoff at. I do not think it is a lone voice, I think it is listened out for, I think it is sought after and I think it is true to our history; I think it must also break with habits or reflexes and search everywhere for this stringency required of us.

Forty years ago almost to the day, Solzhenitsyn delivered a very great speech at Harvard which people subsequently called "The decline of courage", and he was already saying more or less everything I have just described, about the fragility of the Western world, which he had nevertheless discovered and which was perceived as the land of promise. And what we must underline today is this decline of courage.

And so in order to face up to this, our role everywhere – and this is what I expect of you – is to be a mediating power, a diplomatic, military, cultural, educational, national and European power, and always to be a mediator; a mediator, meaning that France never stops making itself heard, but that it always seeks to build alliances on this basis; that it is not a compromising power, not a middling power, that it is a mediating power, one which seeks to build this very international order which alone – I very strongly believe – will enable us to make our globalization a little more human and humanist.

I know I can rely on you, because your daily commitment to our country is the DNA of your profession and your source of pride.

Thank you.