



AMBASSADE DE FRANCE EN INDE  
FRENCH EMBASSY IN INDIA

## JOINT STATEMENT

1. At the invitation of the Hon'ble Minister of Defence of India, the French Minister of Defence Mr Yves Le Drian is on an official visit to India on 25-27 July, 2013.
2. Shri A.K. Antony and Mr. Jean-Yves Le Drian held detailed and useful talks on regional and international security challenges of mutual interest. They also reviewed the status of various measures for bilateral defence cooperation and the progress in various areas pursuant to their discussions in February, 2013, during the State visit of the French President to India.
3. The Ministers noted that defence cooperation is an important pillar of the strategic partnership between both countries and that the ongoing dialogue and cooperation is mutually beneficial to both nations. The Ministers also noted that the range and depth of defence exchanges and interactions between the Ministries of Defence and the Armed Forces of both sides is being steadily enhanced in areas of mutual interest and in a spirit of mutual understanding, respect, trust and support, taking account of respective security interests.
4. The Ministers agreed that exchanges between respective defence institutions and armed forces should continue to be progressed, including in the areas of military education and training and through the conduct of military exercises.
5. In this respect, the Ministers welcomed the upcoming bilateral exercise 'Shakti' in September 2013 in France between both Armies. The Ministers noted with satisfaction that the Navies of both countries are working towards finalising the schedule for the conduct of Exercise Varuna off the coast of India and also that the next Air Force exercise 'Garuda' would be held during the first half of 2014. With regard to training exchanges, the Ministers noted with satisfaction that officers of the Indian and French Armed Forces have been attending courses in each other's institutions, including at the French War College in Paris and the National Defence College and Defence Services Staff College in India. It was agreed that such exchanges were beneficial to the building of relations between the Armed Forces of both sides and should continue.
6. The Ministers had detailed discussions regarding current and future cooperation in the areas of defence equipment and technology collaboration. They agreed that such cooperation should continue to be progressed to the mutual benefit of both countries, including in high technology areas involving joint research and development and transfer of technology.



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7. The Ministers tasked the High Committee on Defence Cooperation (HCDC), which is scheduled to meet in France in October 2013, to follow up the above points and to finalise practical measures to expand and deepen the bilateral partnership in defence.
8. The French Defence Minister also conveyed that on the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of World War I, France is planning various projects to pay tribute to Indian soldiers who were killed in France during the War. The Indian side appreciated the same.
9. The Ministers also exchanged views on issues relating to UN peace keeping operations and maritime security. The French Defence Minister also presented France's new White Paper on Defence and National Security.