

The Military Support for Ukraine - A Necessary Coherence Around Three Dimensions: Discourse, Material Donations, and Industrial Production

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Western opposition to Russia's invasion of Ukraine has undeniably had consequences for interstate diplomatic, military and economic dynamics. Among them is the development of various discussions among allies regarding the military support to be provided to the Ukrainian resistance. Faced with this new geopolitical component, some governments struggle to position themselves vis-à-vis Russia. While some states stand out with strong advocacy of the Ukrainian cause, others reveal their political reservations due to the [fear of being perceived as a "co-belligerent"](#) and, by extension, as contributing to a supposed ["escalation"](#) with Moscow. States willing to support Ukraine's victory also sometimes find themselves confronted with their material limitations to enable them to achieve their goals.

Canada strongly supported the Ukrainian cause as it immediately [condemned the Russian invasion](#). The government has also stated that it wants to see Ukraine's complete territorial integrity restored. While maintaining a strong position in its rhetoric, Ottawa falls short in terms of material donations. The same holds true for the increase in industrial production, not to mention its [lack of will](#) to meet NATO's target of spending [2%](#) of GDP on defence. Between January 24, 2022, and July 31, 2023, [Ottawa ranked only twelfth in terms of contributions of heavy weapons to Ukraine](#), lagging behind France and the United Kingdom - with a commitment of \$0.3 billion. It ranked [fourteenth](#) when accounting for the share of its national stockpiles of heavy weapons provided to Ukraine (contributing 6% of its military stockpile delivered to Kyiv).

With similar political discourse, comparing Canada's military engagement with its European allies, such as France and the United Kingdom, raises questions about [the assertion that](#) "Canada is one of Ukraine's most generous partners." While it is true that Canada ranks as the [fifth-largest donor country](#) in terms of aid, this support has been predominantly in the form of loans rather than the provision of lethal equipment, which is precisely what [the President of Ukraine asks](#) to pursue his military objective. President Zelensky's recent visit to the Canadian Parliament was undoubtedly an opportunity for Justin Trudeau to demonstrate his commitment to rectifying the situation. On that occasion, the Prime Minister of Canada [announced the dispatch of an additional 50 armoured vehicles](#) to Ukraine and the donation of C\$650 million for military aid. The rebalancing of

Canadian support should also serve as a reminder that such criticism, formulated in Ottawa, can be addressed toward other governments and states within the transatlantic community.

This note aims to underscore the level of commitment from two of Canada's closest allies, namely the United Kingdom and France. These two countries have distinguished themselves on several occasions since the beginning of the invasion.

- Since February 2022, France has displayed an evolving discourse with an increasingly pronounced trend in favour of unequivocal support for Ukraine's victory. While initial hesitations were primarily driven by the fear of "offending" Moscow, they came at a substantial reputational and political cost. To rectify this situation and bolster its diplomatic standing, Paris became the first country in 2023 to provide Kyiv with tanks of Western origin. Another notable development was the announcement of the training of Ukrainian pilots, which marked the removal of an additional barrier. Furthermore, to meet its military commitments and prepare for the future, the French government called for the intensification of its industrial production to maintain adequate stock levels.
- For its part, the United Kingdom quickly emerged as a reliable partner of Ukraine. The political speeches delivered by its successive representatives have demonstrated unwavering consistency, and its military investments have followed the same trajectory. London thus appears to be one of the European "leaders," particularly for having shown responsiveness in the first days of the conflict. Its material donations aligned with Ukrainian needs on the ground, as evidenced by the frequency and quality of its deliveries, even if it strained its existing stockpiles. However, the United Kingdom failed to anticipate the issue of its stocks by not increasing its orders and industrial production. Somewhat belatedly but surely, London sought to rectify the situation by drawing inspiration from its European ally. The recent update of the Defence Command Paper finally acknowledges the imperative of addressing the replenishing of its military stockpiles.

The Need to Recalibrate French Political Discourse to Correct its Initial

Regarding France, the analysis of the shifts in political discourse over the past nineteen months provides an overall view of the evolution of the French position. Successive statements from the French executive clearly indicated a growing commitment to supporting Ukraine. By focusing only on public statements, France has displayed – over time and in "stages" – an increasing desire for a clear victory for Ukraine. Three distinct levels can be identified in this evolution: the first level (February 2022) represents "minimal support," which distinguishes clearly between the aggressor and the attacked while providing assistance to Ukraine without a clearly defined objective. At the second "level" (May 2022), Paris adopts a somewhat confused dialectic, refusing Russia's victory without explicitly encouraging Ukraine's victory. The third (February 2023) is characterized by greater coherence of France supporting both Russia's defeat and Ukraine's victory. After reaching a final "level" (May 2023), the French President no longer portrays Russia as merely an aggressor of Ukraine but as a global threat to European peace and security.

However, a more segmented analysis of this evolution shows that France's positioning was marked by an omnipresent ambiguity at each level crossed, although this tendency tended to disappear after that. This ambiguity was manifested through a series of diplomatically problematic missteps that interfered with the

French support. These missteps were frequently fuelled by the French President's public statements, notably when he raised concerns about the danger of "humiliating" or "crushing" Russia.

'Minimal' French Support Granted to Ukraine During the First Two Months of the Conflict in Ukraine

In the wake of the Russian invasion, the French President initially limited himself to giving "minimal" support to his Ukrainian counterpart. This initial "level" was reflected in his [speech on February 24, 2022](#), during which he immediately established that "France stands with Ukraine." On this occasion, he clearly distinguished between the aggressor and the attacked, emphasizing the need for military and political assistance to Ukraine. However, in their immediate public declarations, French political authorities did not wish to use the terms "victory" or "defeat" about either of the belligerents.

France Does Not Support Either Ukraine's or Russia's Victory, But It Wants to Avoid "Humiliation"

Over two months later, during his [speech to the European Parliament](#), Emmanuel Macron took his stance further by asserting that Russia should not emerge victorious. He also pledged that France would actively work to safeguard Ukraine's territorial integrity without taking responsibility for delimiting and defining the said borders. Then, he also qualified his remarks by inviting people to "never give in to the temptation of humiliation or the spirit of revenge." In doing so, Emmanuel Macron did not hesitate to draw a parallel with the Treaty of Versailles in 1919, suggesting that it had "[obstructed the paths to peace](#)" ([a fallacious historical analogy](#) that [historians have since deconstructed](#)).

This reference to the concept of humiliation was reiterated in an [interview with La Dépêche du Midi](#) a month later: "Russia must not be humiliated so that, once the fighting ceases, we can explore diplomatic avenues to find a way out." Primarily, Paris was concerned about avoiding the "[risk of co-belligerence](#)" - or at least that of "escalation" - even though [the former is defined neither in law nor practice](#). Second, the term "humiliation," as mentioned by the President, aligns with a [Russian propaganda and strategic narrative](#) of subjectively defining what "humiliates" them to influence Western actions. The narrative that sought to reconcile the preservation of Ukrainian integrity with avoiding the humiliation of Russia (however subjective it may be) was quickly criticized by Kyiv, sparking a [wave of discontent and bewilderment](#) within the Ukrainian government.

France Now Wants Russia to be Defeated and Ukraine to Win but Rejects the Idea of "Crushing" Russia's

Almost a year after the onset of the conflict, France progressed to its third "level" by clearly expressing its support for the "[victory](#)" of Ukraine. The French President explicitly articulated this stance on February 9, 2023, in the presence of his Ukrainian counterpart: "We stand firmly by Ukraine with the determination to support it in achieving victory and the restoration of its legitimate rights," and added, "Russia cannot, and must not, prevail." Similar to the previous level, this speech was once again qualified

by the refusal to speak of a “crushing” of Russia during an [interview held on February 18, 2023](#) (“[Crushing Russia] has never been the position of France and it will never be our position” according to E. Macron). In this third “level,” the desire for a clear victory for Ukraine was combined with a refusal to crush Moscow.

France Now Identifies Russia as a “Common Enemy” and Abandons Russia’s Strategic Narrative of “Humiliation”

France hardened its position by crossing a final “level.” The [GLOBSEC Summit in Bratislava](#) (May 21, 2023) served as a platform for Emmanuel Macron to acknowledge that his approach (in terms of positioning during the conflict) had “lacked coherence,” both at the national and European levels. During this speech, there was a radical reformulation of France’s strategic positioning. Departing from his prior role as a “mediator” and his earlier discourse aimed at avoiding offence to Moscow (using terms like “humiliation” or “crushing”), Emmanuel Macron changed his tone by describing “fifteen years of Russian attempts to overturn the whole European security architecture, to reshape it in its own terms. “Russia then was no longer viewed merely as the aggressor of Ukraine, but as a threat to the entire European security architecture. In the same vein, France has openly sought to convince Iran – one of Moscow’s key allies – to [withdraw its support](#) for Russia and even attempted to [garner support for Ukraine from countries from the Global South](#).

The Evolution of the Choice of Arms Deliveries is Also Representative of the Evolution of the French Discourse

France also expressed its stance in the military dimension of its support for Ukraine, i.e. through the evolution of its choice of arms deliveries. The evolution of French military commitments has generally followed the same logic as that of its political discourse since military donations have gradually intensified in “stages.” However, crossing these “thresholds” in arms deliveries has often appeared insufficient and disconnected from Ukrainian needs to repel the Russian army.

From a global point of view, the French state is a relatively “weak link” regarding its military commitments to Ukraine. According to [the Ukraine Support Tracker](#), France is ranked fifteenth in terms of the amount of bilateral military aid to Ukraine (from January 24, 2022 to July 31, 2023). For comparison, the level of French involvement over this period was twelve times less than that of its British ally and three times less than that of Canada. However, France has dedicated to Ukraine between 10 and 12% of its stocks of heavy weapons. Positioned 9th in this ranking, France commits its stocks slightly less than the United Kingdom (between 12% and 24%)¹, but much more than Canada (about 5-6%)².

¹ These two figures here reflect the difference between the promises made and the deliveries made to date.

² *Ibid.*

The Minimum French “Support” Expressed by a Two-Month Waiting Period Before the First Military Deliveries to Ukraine

Data from the [Ukraine Support Tracker](#) shows an initial two-month waiting period before the first French military deliveries of heavy weapons to Ukraine (February - April 2022). At the end of April 2022, France decided to take 12 CAESAR guns from its equipment in use, where other countries have drawn on their stocks of old or reserve equipment. This period separating the beginning of the Russian invasion from the first French military deliveries parallels France’s transition from its “minimal support” to its second “level,” as previously identified. It should be noted that, before that, France had officially stated that it supported [a so-called “defensive” logic](#) to justify better its reluctance to deliver, among other things, “heavy” tanks and [fighter jets](#) (a distinction that is, however, purely subjective, attributing a strictly “defensive” or “offensive” function to a weapon that does not reflect legal and military realities).

France Quickly Faced Criticism Over Insufficient Military Deliveries to Ukraine

In the spring of 2022, following [President Zelensky’s requests](#), many debates took place among Ukraine’s allies about the [possibility of supplying it with “heavy” tanks](#). On the French side, the authorization to deliver 30 CEASARs between April and January 2023 seemed insufficient, given the French objectives of helping Ukraine push back Russia and regain its territorial integrity. As heavy weapons such as tanks can [make a difference in high-intensity wars](#), Ukrainian forces have widely publicized and appreciated their granting by other allies. However, given the French refusal [to supply Ukraine with Leclerc tanks](#) until now and their [sporadic delivery of heavy weapons](#), some specialists consider that the French strategic choices of the time remained insufficient and disappointing. They argued that the [delivery of Leclerc tanks](#) would have made it possible to rectify the situation by strengthening French diplomatic capital. The desired outcome of the war, as envisioned by France, appeared to be significantly disconnected from the efforts needed to achieve it. President [Emmanuel Macron later justified](#) the low level of French donations by emphasizing the importance of prioritizing the quality of weapons supplied over the quantity: it is necessary to “give priority to deliveries that are useful to carry out these operations and resist, rather than commitments that will arrive very late or very far.”

To Support Ukraine’s “Victory,” France Symbolically Delivered the First Western-Designed Tanks

In January 2023, however, French military aid shifted into high gear with the announcement of the shipment of [fourteen AMX-10 RC light tanks](#), which were gradually delivered until March 2023. At the same time, France reached its third “level” in its discourse, namely by openly supporting the “victory of Ukraine” and the “defeat” of Russia. By conceding the AMX-10 RC to Ukraine, France has sent a strong signal to the transatlantic community. Although there is now a [debate in Europe](#) questioning the AMX-10 RC’s “tank” designation, these donations represented the first Western-designed tanks supplied to Ukraine, [all previous ones having been Russian-designed](#). With this delivery, France wanted [to erase its image as a weak link in support for Ukraine](#). To enhance its credibility as an ally of Ukraine, France

could readily accommodate this reduction in the inventory of its army since the loss of capacity affected only 5% of its fleet of AMX-10 RC ([out of a stock of about 200 units still in service at the beginning of 2023](#)) and that the latter gradually [began to be replaced by the Jaguar Armored Reconnaissance and Combat Vehicles](#) since 2020. More recently, in May 2023, France reached a significant milestone [by announcing that it would train Ukrainian pilots](#). Similarly, this commitment has completed a further step forward in French support.

The Example of the “Nexter” is Part of a New Logic of Intensification of French Industrial Production

Given the increase in its military donations to Ukraine, France had to anticipate the issue of its stocks. As it happens, the designer and manufacturer of the CAESAR howitzer Nexter has recorded a [meteoric increase of almost 200% in its production](#), from an average production of two units per month before the conflict to six units per month in January 2023. This is mainly due to the French need to increase the level of CAESAR stockpiles due to its gradual deliveries of [30 CAESAR howitzers to Ukraine](#) between April 2021 and January 2023.

It should be noted that in July 2022, France had only [58 of these units out of the 77 required](#), following the format defined in the report annexed to the Military Programming Law (LPM) 2019-25. In addition, this same [law provides for the financing of orders](#) for such weapons to reduce the fleet of CAESARs in the army to its initial number, which allowed Mr. Sébastien Lecornu to place [an order](#) estimated at 85 million euros [for 18 CAESARs in July 2022](#). This initiative addressed the question of their replacement when we know that France has taken its donations from its own Army endowment and that, in addition to the Ukrainian crisis, a number of these [parts have been deployed in Djibouti, Côte d’Ivoire or the United Arab Emirates](#). To ensure this commitment, the Minister of the Armed Forces, Mr. Lecornu, announced in March 2023 that the production times of the CAESARs had been [reduced by 60% by Nexter](#), from 44 months to 18 months, to respect [the desire of the French executive to accelerate](#) the industrial rate.

During a bilateral meeting with international security expert Pierre Haroche, he said France has learned two main lessons from more than a year of conflict in Ukraine. First, the military means needed to achieve the goals set for itself – namely Ukraine’s “victory” and Russia’s “defeat” – bring high-intensity warfare back to the forefront. Secondly, high-intensity warfare requires an emphasis on the issue of stockpiles and ammunition masses. As Pierre Haroche says, it seems that, in its armaments policy, France is gradually tending to integrate these two lessons into the way it applies its armaments policy. As a result, France needs to rebalance its expeditionary capabilities and its high-intensity capabilities without abandoning the asymmetric expeditionary scenario. Nexter’s example would, therefore, illustrate France’s transition to an intensification of its production flows, consisting of encouraging manufacturers to produce more and faster.

British Coherence to Condemn Russian Aggression and Encourage Ukraine's Victory

On the British side, the analysis of the political discourse of the last nineteen months shows a significant coherence. The current approach of the government led by Rishi Sunak is in line with that of his predecessors, Boris Johnson and Liz Truss, as they together demonstrate the UK's willingness to give unwavering support to Ukraine.

In his few immediate public statements, former Prime Minister Boris Johnson immediately adopted a much more clear-cut discourse than his French counterpart at the same time. In [a televised appearance](#) to the British population on February 24 2022, Boris Johnson already mentioned the possibility of including a military dimension to the British response to the invasion of Ukraine. The goal was already clearly announced: Vladimir Putin's risky venture was bound to fail. To this end, Mr Johnson assured that the United Kingdom would work with Ukraine to restore its sovereignty and independence (suggesting the desire to return to the borders before the Russian invasion of February 2022). On the same day, Boris Johnson described the Russian leader in [the British Parliament](#) as “a blood-stained aggressor who believes in imperial conquest”. He said that “Putin was always determined to attack his neighbour. “The language adopted by the Prime Minister at the time seems, in comparison, far removed from the French fears of the beginning, namely those of giving in to the temptation of “humiliation” or even “crushing”.

On [March 3, 2022](#), Ms Truss, then Foreign Secretary, stated that the United Kingdom would ensure that Vladimir Putin loses the war (“We will together ensure that Putin loses”). The UK's dual military objective was clearly presented from the outset: firstly, that of defeating Vladimir Putin on Ukrainian soil, in particular with the help of the deployment of British defensive weapons to enable them to stop Russian tanks; secondly, that of containing Russian aggression by strengthening NATO's presence on the eastern flank; as well as by European security *via* the UK-led expeditionary force. This type of speech has been repeated consistently by the next Prime Minister, Mr. Rishi Sunak, such as at the 2023 [Munich Security Conference](#) or before [the British Parliament](#) in February 2023.

The UK – A “Leader” In Supporting Ukraine, As Evidenced by Its Military Aid

In line with its political discourse, London has also shown almost exemplary military support over the overall period of the conflict. The macro analysis [of the data collected so far](#) highlights the strong British reactivity and the importance of its material concessions to Ukraine.

On the one hand, the UK has been among the most responsive countries in the aftermath of the invasion of Ukraine. Notably, it was one [of the first countries to engage in the provision of military support](#) and to undertake the training of Ukrainian fighter pilots and sailors. This responsiveness is far from surprising since it is part of a particular political continuity. A few months before the Russian invasion and in the face of the growing threat from Moscow, London had already announced the opening of negotiations for a [British-Polish-Ukrainian trilateral pact](#).

On the other hand, the amount of military equipment supplied to Kyiv makes the UK one of its most important military allies. [Data from the Ukraine Support Tracker](#) is used to compile a ranking of the

largest providers of military support to Ukraine from January 24, 2022 to July 31, 2023, The United Kingdom is in third place in the world – and second in Europe – with nearly €6.58 billion invested. The British political will, put into perspective with its [military budget, which is one of the largest in Europe](#) (\$68.5 billion in 2022), explains the top ranking that the United Kingdom has. The British government has taken the Ukrainian crisis so seriously that the average annual military support granted to Ukraine is currently [higher than that granted to the USSR during the Second World War \(1941-1945\)](#) : around 6 billion euros for Ukraine in 2022 compared to the 3.5 billion on average per year during the Second World War (taking into account inflation).

Where the British government stands out relatively less is precisely in its level of commitment of heavy weapons to Ukraine ([5th position](#)). At the European level, London has lost a few places on this criterion, being overtaken by Poland ([2nd position](#)) and the Netherlands ([3rd position](#)). And for good reason: the invasion of Ukraine has had the direct consequence [of blowing up the defence budgets of Poland](#) and the [Netherlands](#). The increase in Poland's budget is logically explained by its geographical position vis-à-vis Ukraine and Russia, which sees this invasion as a direct threat to their own sovereignty. In the second case, the Netherlands has chosen to send a strong signal to NATO allies and European partners with this increase. The move will also enable them to reach the NATO standard of 2% of GDP in 2024 and 2025, given that Amsterdam has previously been [criticized for neglecting its armed forces](#). Ultimately, the increase in the military budgets of these states makes it possible to ensure a greater quantity of deliveries of heavy weapons to the Ukrainian forces. For its part, London had already reached the 2% recommended by NATO before the war, and [proceeded with a budget extension](#) in March 2023, probably to continue its efforts in terms of military engagement.

Finally, the share of its own stocks committed to Ukraine ([6th position](#)) during the same period is also lower. Overall, the UK lags behind its Scandinavian and Baltic neighbours ([Norway and Denmark](#)), which face a more direct geographical threat. The Czech Republic and the Netherlands are in 1st and 3rd place respectively. The United Kingdom remains an important player in that it is selling a significant part of its own stocks to Ukraine. It conceded about 15% of its [FV103 Spartan armored troop vehicles](#) in April 2022 alone, 53% of its 155mm/152mm howitzers, and 17% of its [M270 multiple rocket launchers](#) in the first year of the conflict. In addition, it has provided [several air defence systems](#) while training [Ukrainian forces](#) in the use of these systems, including *Starstreak*, designed to shoot down low-flying aircraft at close range.

In a sense, the reading of the British posture can be twofold. The UK is falling short of the efforts of other European states, which are more directly threatened by Russia. However, it largely maintains its status as a European “leader” by making a constant effort in its military support.

Following the French Model, the British Government Redefined Its Choice of Military Donations as the Conflict Evolved

As mentioned earlier, as soon as the Russian invasion was launched, the British government immediately delivered weapons to Ukraine. Between February 2022 and July 2023, the United Kingdom distinguished itself by the [regular delivery of military and/or heavy weapons of all kinds to Kyiv](#) : mine countermeasures ships, armoured vehicles, [possible Storm Shadow cruise missiles](#) and various types of howitzers. However, like its Western allies, the British government was initially hesitant

to give in to President Zelensky's demands for "heavy" tanks. As the Ukrainian crisis worsens, the British government, like France, has taken it to the next level by conceding its first tanks to Ukraine.

The announcement in January 2023 of the French delivery of AMX-10RC light tanks to Ukraine has visibly opened a breach. In the same month, the United Kingdom belatedly decided to part with fourteen of its Challenger-2 tanks. This decision was a turning point: the Challenger-2 was the first Western "heavy" tank (after the AMX-10 RC, whose qualification as such is debated) to have set foot on Ukrainian soil.

However, the Challenger-2s are not proving to be so advantageous for the Ukrainian Armed Forces since they require a whole maintenance chain to be engaged for limited availability. In addition, its gun is not compatible with NATO ammunition. As a reminder, the United Kingdom already wanted to [renovate or replace its Challenger-2 tanks still in service in 2015](#) under the [Life Extension Program \[LEP\]](#) due to their obsolescence, lack of performance and incompatibility with 120mm ammunition to NATO standards.

The Absence of British Military Investments Combined with the Context of the Ukrainian Crisis Has Made it Necessary to Rebalance Its Stocks

The example of the Challenger-2 shows an observation: unlike France, London has failed to invest in advance in replenishing its military stocks. The United Kingdom initially failed to calculate its available quantity of heavy weapons. While this did not initially seem to pose a major problem (its donations to Ukraine were initially mainly limited to withdrawals from its reserve stocks), it subsequently had to divest itself of part of its direct stocks to supply Kyiv with its Challenger-2s. In addition, the context of the Ukrainian crisis has, above all, highlighted the poor quality of the tanks available to the United Kingdom at the time: in 2021, before the start of the Ukrainian crisis, British MPs had already expressed their [concern about the obsolescence](#) of its heavy artillery:

"As a result, were the British Army to have to fight a peer adversary - a euphemism for Russia - in Eastern Europe in the next few years, whilst our soldiers would undoubtedly remain amongst the finest in the world, they would, disgracefully, be forced to go into battle in a combination of obsolescent or even obsolete armoured vehicles, most of them at least 30 years old or more, with poor mechanical reliability, very heavily outgunned by more modern missile and artillery systems and chronically lacking in adequate air defence."

Following the announcement of the delivery of 14 Challenger-2s in January 2023, some British parliamentarians claimed that such a drain [would deprive the British Army of 25-30% of its "operational assets"](#), since of the 227 units the United Kingdom had at the time of its announcement, [148 units had been set aside](#) the previous year to be upgraded to the "Challenger 3" standard. This implies that London currently has only 42 examples "actually" available, i.e. in working order. Compared to France, which has delivered only 5% of its AMX-10 RC light tanks until March 2023; the United Kingdom seems to [have committed between 25% and 30% of its inventory of Challenger-2s](#) - admittedly partly obsolete - which does not prevent this drain from representing a significant loss of capacity in the immediate future, especially since the [total operational capability of the modernized tanks](#) is planned for 2030.

This parliamentary debate highlights the issue of the availability and sustainability of British military stockpiles, in a geopolitical context of high demand. In the case of the “Challenger 3”, the British Army welcomed the [acceleration of their design](#) in February 2023. While it is highly likely that the UK will be able to pronounce the full operational capability of these tanks by 2030, Defence Secretary Ben Wallace has had to resign himself to taking greater measures to ensure that the number of orders increases. This is without taking into account the recent publication of the updated Defence Command Paper by the Ministry of Defence in July 2023, planning – among other things – to [strengthen the British operational reserve](#). To this end, the British army has planned [to reallocate £2.5 billion](#) to increase its ammunition stockpiles. The strategy paper also highlights the future increase in the supply of weapons until 2030 to enhance the productivity of the British Army. However, the (late) responsiveness of the United Kingdom seems weaker than that of France, as shown by the rapid multiplication of orders placed by the French Minister of Defence with the manufacturer Nexter. Finally, the earlier announcement (May 2023) of the [development of a new shell](#) – jointly with Germany – [shows that](#) the United Kingdom is taking the issue of replenishing its stocks more and more seriously. In short, London is drawing its own lessons from the war in Ukraine while drawing inspiration from the methods of its European ally France.

Considerations and Recommendations for Canada

Compared to its two closest European allies, Ottawa initially adopted only a “[reactive and minimalist posture](#)” by publicly declaring its support. [As the first Western country to recognize Ukraine’s independence](#), Ottawa has chosen a political discourse stronger than that of France and just as ambitious as that of the United Kingdom. However, Canada is lagging behind when it comes to giving Ukraine the means to win. More than a year and a half after the start of the conflict, it appears in tenth position in the ranking of donors of heavy weapons to Ukraine and eighth in the global ranking of bilateral military commitments. Despite this, international and political pressure has forced Ottawa to deliver [a certain amount of heavy artillery to Ukraine](#), the inventory of which can be viewed on the official website of the Canadian Department of Defence. These include eight Leopard 2 main battle tanks, 44 AIM-9 missiles, four M777 howitzer systems and 208 armoured vehicles. Canada has also remained silent on the issue of renewing its military equipment to replace these donations to Ukraine, as no announcement has been made so far. Finally, the [country has been criticized](#) (notably by the Pentagon) for the lack of a real increase in its military budget capable of devoting at least 2% of its GDP to defence, as required by the [2% rule](#). Despite his 2014 commitment to meet this goal, [Prime Minister Justin Trudeau acknowledged](#) in April 2023 – as a form of disavowal – that Canada would never meet the spending targets mentioned above.

[President Zelensky’s visit to Ottawa](#) on September 22, 2023, provided an opportunity for the political authorities to signal a stronger willingness to increase their military contribution to the war effort of the Ukrainian forces. However, to straighten out more Shooting, Canada will have to shoot more lessons from the positioning of its close European allies so as not to tarnish its credibility. In particular, Mr. Trudeau is expected to send a strong signal by stepping up his deliveries of heavy weapons. Ottawa should also learn from its two allies across the Atlantic when managing its stockpiles. For example, the increase in the pace of British and French production will eventually allow them to “do their part” while thinking about the future of their stocks and anticipating their readjustment. To cope with its “[capacity issues](#),” it is clear that Canada, in turn, must consider replacing its own military stockpiles. However, despite the Ukraine conflict stalemate, Canada has not yet placed any orders to replace its donations from its reserves.

In these respects, such initiatives could also significantly strengthen Canada’s diplomatic capital and allow it to [avoid the deprivation of its influence on the international scene](#). Canada has already been criticized for several years for not “doing its part” because of its [25th place in terms of military budget](#) (out of 29 NATO member countries), logically sending Ottawa back to the bench of isolated countries within the alliance, [below the 2% of GDP required](#).