



Clingendael

Netherlands Institute of International Relations

Clingendael's Vision for the Future of the Armed Forces of the Netherlands

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Clingendael Report



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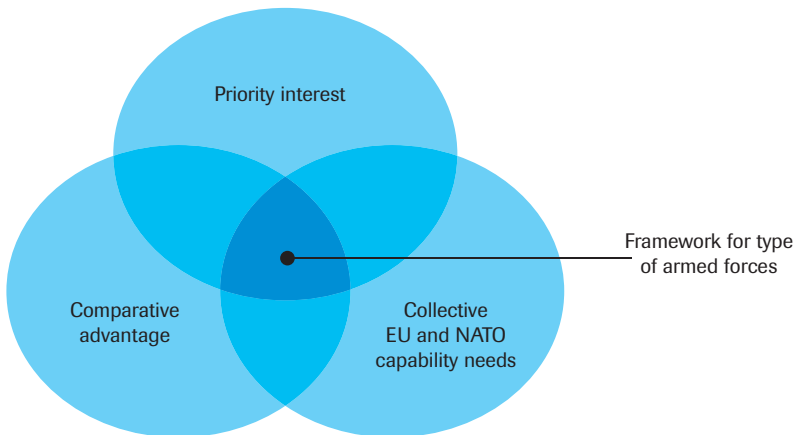
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Executive summary

The defence budget cuts combined with rising costs for replacing the F-16 require a 'vision for the future of the armed forces of the Netherlands', which the Rutte-II government will deliver in 2013. Difficult decisions lie ahead with regard to the structure of the armed forces of the Netherlands as reduced financial resources no longer suffice to cover the costs of maintaining all existing capabilities and modernising them when required. The issue is not just whether or not to replace the F-16: it is about the capabilities of all three armed services – air force, navy and army – which need to be reviewed in order to restore the balance between ambitions, financial means and the structure of the armed forces of the Netherlands.

The Clingendael Institute wants to contribute to the upcoming debate with its own vision. It is based on three factors which should determine the shape of the future armed forces of the Netherlands:

- 1 The interests and values of the Netherlands
- 2 Comparative advantages of the armed forces of the Netherlands
- 3 The capability needs of the European Union and NATO



The number of interests and values has been limited to four, considered to be the most important ones. These four interests have been 'translated' into four different types of armed forces, with each of them being structured in such a way that they can protect and serve the particular interest to the optimum.

1. Influence & air-based intervention force

The first interest is the *influence* of the Netherlands in the international community. This interest requires the Netherlands to be trustworthy and reliable, in particular in its relations with the bigger countries such as the United States, France and the United Kingdom. In terms of military capacities it implies that the Netherlands would be capable of joining these countries in initial entry phases, operating at the high end of the spectrum. In most cases such interventions start with air campaigns.

The domination of this interest would lead to an *air-based intervention force* for the Netherlands. The capacities of the Royal Netherlands (RNL) Air Force would have to be improved upon, among other things by acquiring the Joint Strike Fighter. The RNL Air Force would be capable of participating in initial entry air operations alongside bigger nations, such as the United States. As the RNL Air Force would consume large parts of the reduced defence budget, the RNL Navy would become a 'brown water navy' with limited capabilities while the RNL Army would mainly be capable of initial entry air assault operations.

2. Economy and prosperity & maritime force

The second interest is based on the importance of the Dutch *economy and prosperity*. The Netherlands depends heavily on international trade, including overseas trade to an increasing number of distant markets and suppliers. An open and well-regulated international economic environment serves this interest, which requires the Netherlands to contribute actively to countering threats such as posed by piracy and other challenges to the free flow of international trade.

The domination of this interest would lead to a *maritime force* for the Netherlands. The RNL Navy would remain a 'blue water navy' and its capacities would have to be increased to allow for operations below, at and above the water surface all over the world. The capacities of the RNL Air Force and the RNL Army would have to be reduced as a large part of the budget would have to be dedicated to such a *maritime force*.

3. Stability and security & robust stabilisation force

The third interest concerns enhanced *stability and security* in conflict areas which could have a spill-over effect on the Netherlands in terms of refugee flows, illegal migration, terrorism and international crime, and others. Fragile or failed states are often prone to conflicts. Violent regime changes can be another driving factor. Instability in the European neighbourhood

in particular (Middle East, Maghreb, Sub-Sahara Africa) can pose a direct challenge to European countries like the Netherlands. An active contribution to end and stabilise such armed conflicts would be required from the country.

The domination of this interest would lead to a *robust stabilisation* force for the Netherlands. All three armed services would contribute and the armed forces should be enabled to put enough ‘boots on the ground’. This *force* would have to be *robust* with adequate capabilities for escalation dominance in case of armed resistance in conflict zones. At the same time its capacities to operate in a 3-D environment – in which Defence, Diplomacy and Development cooperate closely – would have to be maximised.

4. Human rights and humanity & supporting peace force

The fourth interest is the promotion of *human rights and humanity* within the international community. Massive violation of human rights can be a threat to international peace and stability. This interest is also related to the growing importance of ‘human security’: the right of access to basic supplies such as water, food and a safe environment. In this sense even disasters – natural or man-made – are considered threats to ‘security’.

The domination of this interest would lead to a *supporting peace force* for the Netherlands. This force would refrain from operations at the high end of the violence spectrum. It would, however, have sizeable transport, engineering, medical and logistical capacities. It would be suitable to support disaster relief operations and also to contribute to post-conflict normalisation activities with a 3-D approach. However, in a hostile environment it would depend on the escalation dominance capabilities of the other contributors.

	Interest 1	Interest 2	Interest 3	Interest 4	Total
Air based intervention force	★ ★ ★	★	★	■	★ ★ ★ ★ ★
Maritime force	★	★ ★ ★	★	★	★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
Robust stabilisation force	★ ★	★ ★	★ ★ ★	★ ★	★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
Supporting peace force	■	★	★ ★	★ ★ ★	★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

- ★ ★ ★ = suitable
- ★ ★ = partially suitable
- ★ = limited suitable
- = not suitable

Summary matrix

Introduction

The agreement of the Rutte-II coalition of 29 October 2012 reads: 'The original intentions regarding the replacement of the F16 cannot be carried out without adjustments or a re-prioritisation of the issue vis-à-vis the total Defence budget.' The Defence Minister has been charged with 'developing a vision for the future of the armed forces, in consultation with the Minister of Foreign Affairs and based on the available budget.' The Clingendael Institute intends to contribute to the discussion by presenting its own vision for the future of the armed forces of the Netherlands.

The financial resources available for defence purposes have decreased since the Cold War. The last few years in particular, the defence budget has suffered heavy cuts. As the F-16 will be reaching the end of its service life within the foreseeable future and the government plans to decide on its replacement by the end of 2013, the Netherlands is forced to make choices regarding the operational ambitions of the armed forces. Because of the cuts in the defence budget, the replacement of the F-16 will consume a large part of the budget (investment and operations and maintenance (O & M)), which will also have an impact on the army and navy. The question what type of armed forces the Netherlands wants to have in the future has become inevitable. Prioritisation of which interests the armed forces of the future need to serve and protect is key in this process. It is no longer affordable to maintain versatile armed forces that are able to respond to all types of risks in an age of insecurity and that are suitable to conduct a wide range of operations. To maintain armed forces for these purposes, the defence budget would have to be expanded rather than cut, as Minister of Defence Hans Hillen pointed out in April 2011.¹ Readjustment of the operational ambitions of the armed forces is therefore inevitable. Choices will have to be made.

Based on the available budget, how can the armed forces safeguard the interests and values of the Netherlands? And how do we take into account that the armed forces of the Netherlands do not operate in a vacuum, and make sure that the experience and skills acquired are not lost? How do we

¹ *Defensie na de kredietcrisis: een kleinere krijgsmacht in een onrustige wereld* [*Defence after the Crisis: reduced armed forces in a restless world*]. Memo from Minister of Defence J.S.J. Hillen to the President of the House of Representatives, 8 April 2011, p. 15.

make sure that the choices made in the past regarding capabilities and the international context of the armed forces are not pushed aside?

The visions for the future of the armed forces are based on three considerations:

1. a prioritisation of Dutch interests and values;
2. comparative advantages of the Netherlands in military or civilian/military missions and capacities;
3. a determination which contribution of the Netherlands would benefit the collective capacities of the EU and NATO the most.

The overlap of these three considerations suggests a possible structure of the armed forces of the Netherlands. This method will allow us to show why and how choices can be made.

1. Prioritisation of Dutch interests and values

Interests can only be determined objectively to a certain extent. Their relative weight is determined by what is considered of value by the Netherlands. Furthermore, interests are not constant; they will change over time. Over the last few years, for instance, the relative weight of the economic interests seems to have increased compared to the weight of human rights. In order to devise a vision for the armed forces, one should mainly (though not solely) consider interests that are threatened and for which the armed forces could play a role. The responsibilities and the obligations of the Netherlands to international organisations are fixed, but may be weighed differently depending on which interest is considered to be 'dominant'. It is hard to prioritise interests, as they are mutually dependent and interrelated. For this vision for the future, four crucial interests have been selected; these underlie the choices of the accompanying types of armed forces. Eventually, a political decision needs to be made as to which interest should be given priority in Dutch policy.

2. Comparative advantages of the Netherlands

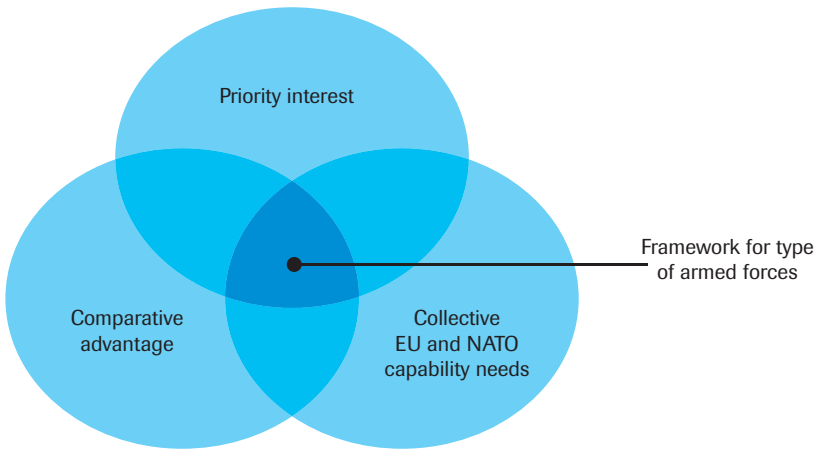
Comparative advantages concern the missions and activities in which the Netherlands have expertise: strong points, in our own eyes and those of our partners. What are our best capabilities and which equipment with added strategic value do we possess? Furthermore, which capacities are scarce (internationally speaking), yet will probably be required. Certain *niche* capacities may offer a comparative advantage in comparison to other

capacities. Whenever tough choices have to be made to trim down towards more tailored armed forces, this also requires consideration of the strategic relevance and the scarcity of capacities and equipment. This concerns, for instance, the Patriot surface-to-air missile. In addition, the Netherlands are highly experienced in the civil-military area using the 3D approach (Defence, Diplomacy & Development), which has gained international recognition. Our comparative advantages partly determine our opportunities for optimal cooperation and specialisation with other European countries. Essential national capacities that the Netherlands will have to preserve, for instance to guard its airspace or to support civilian authorities, is a separate, though related, issue.

3. Optimising our contribution to collective capacities

The EU and NATO will remain the primary international organisations for the deployment of the armed forces. They act as 'multipliers' in serving Dutch interests. This is based on trends observed in the *Clingendael Monitors* 2012/13, according to which the world order has a tendency towards becoming more multipolar rather than multilateral. As a result, the UN is becoming relatively less important to the Netherlands. The distinction between (classical) defence of national territory (article 5 NATO) and crisis management operations may not have blurred legally, but it has blurred operationally. The capacities for both functions (military means that are deployable over long distance) overlap. Any choice made for the armed forces of the future directly impacts the potential that can be deployed by the Netherlands, yet it will also have to reinforce the collective efforts of NATO and the EU.

The intersection of these three considerations should guide the selection of the Dutch interests and the armed forces that go with it. Each option focusses on one dominant 'interest'. Comparative advantages and the optimisation of the collective capacities of the EU and NATO have been incorporated in these options. It goes without saying that the available budget, as defined in the government agreement, sets the boundaries. This works both ways: no increase of the defence budget, but no further decrease either. In other words: future financial cuts would affect the models presented for the armed forces of the future.



Chapter 1 describes four of the most important interests and values that the Netherlands wishes to protect and serve. These are: (1) influence in the international community; (2) preservation of prosperity and economic development; (3) enhancing security and stability; (4) promoting human rights and humanity. The political prioritisation of each of these interests within the policy of the Netherlands can be translated into four different types of armed forces.

Chapter 2 elaborates on these four types of armed forces. Every type gives an indication which other interests the chosen type can serve to a larger or smaller degree. Additionally, it is indicated how the choices will affect international cooperation. The authors have not had the opportunity to calculate the costs of these four types of armed forces. The types therefore can contain margins that may influence the identified consequences.

Chapter 3 contains conclusions. The Clingendael approach results in a menu with four types of armed forces, each based on a dominant interest. In the end, politicians will have to decide which type of armed forces is the most suitable one for the Netherlands. The authors of the report do not intend to take the place of political decision-makers and members of parliament by voicing their preferences. However, chapter 3 will refer back to the three considerations that are leading in determining the four types of armed forces. This will show the suitability of the various types of armed forces for the protection of one or more of the interests listed.

1 Interests and values in the foreign policy of the Netherlands

The deployment of the armed forces as an instrument of the wider foreign policy serves the interests of the Netherlands. This follows directly from Article 97 of the Constitution of the Netherlands, which reads:

There shall be armed forces for the defence and protection of the interests of the Kingdom, and in order to maintain and promote the international legal order.

Which type of armed forces matches the tasks laid down in this Article? What are 'the interests of the Kingdom', which interests have priority and which interests are most threatened? Are they compatible with international obligations and can they be safeguarded under present budgetary conditions? The answers to these questions will determine the future organisation of the armed forces.

It is not easy to objectify the 'national interest'. An unequivocal definition does not exist. Moreover, the interests of a state are variable. They change over time and place in meaning, weight and nature. Most of all, they are the outcome of a set of international and domestic political developments and of the accompanying political choices. In addition, within the concept of national interest it is hard to distinguish between aim and means/instrument. The promotion of the international legal order, for instance, is important enough to be incorporated in Articles 90 and 97 of the Constitution of the Netherlands as one of the objectives of its foreign policy. However, that same international legal order is instrumental to the Dutch interest in global security and stability. This also demonstrates that it is not easy to distinguish between interests and values either. The Dutch interest is, moreover, closely tied to the relative position of the Netherlands in the international order, its geographical location, the economic, political and social order, etc. Finally, values play a role in foreign policy as well as interests; these values carry more weight as policy is inspired more emphatically by normative considerations.

Which Dutch interests and values can be distinguished? The protection of the territorial integrity of the Netherlands is considered the *primary* or *vital* national interest: a precondition for the existence of the Netherlands as a

state and for pursuing a foreign policy. Traditionally, this interest coincided with the defence of our borders or the borders of our allies (the primary task of the armed forces), but in today's reality it has become more 'boundless', more complex and more multidimensional. The National Security Strategy², for instance, discerns five vital interests: territorial security, economic, ecological and physical security, as well as social and political stability. The biggest threat to these interests is not an attack by another state on Dutch territory, but rather a diverse and diffuse range of transnational threats such as terrorism, piracy and cybercrime, climate change and pandemics: threats that may also target Dutch nationals and property outside of the borders of the Netherlands. The shift in these threats has resulted in a parallel adjustment in the main tasks of the armed forces. The emphasis has shifted from collective defence of Dutch territory and the territory its allies, to military deployment for enforcing and promoting the international legal order and stability, supporting civil authorities.

As stated before, interests are not static. They change with events (such as the end of the Cold War, '9/11', or Lehman Brothers) and developments (the shifting American strategic pivot, the emergence of the BRICS, etc.) within the international system – or even with the system itself. This most certainly applies to a relatively small country such as the Netherlands, with an open economic system and society, and which for that reason is very much dependent on, and vulnerable to, international developments.

For the Netherlands, this position of dependence means, *first of all*, that its primary interests are strongly influenced by external developments and factors. This applies to national security, whether it concerns a direct threat to our territorial integrity or more indirect threats such as terrorism, crime, massive migration flows, etc. It applies in particular to the financial and economic domain, since the Netherlands is extremely sensitive to international economic and financial developments. In this regard it is important to note that the Future Policy Survey of the Ministry of Defence and the Clingendael Strategic Monitors of 2012 and 2013³ do paint an international environment

- 2 Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, *Strategie Nationale Veiligheid [National Security Strategy]*, The Hague, 2007.
- 3 Ministry of Defence, *Verkenningen – Houvast voor de krijgsmacht 2020 [Future Policy Survey]*. The Hague, 2010; Lijn, Jair van der, and Andrea Teftedarija, *Continuïteit en onzekerheid in een veranderende wereld [Continuity and Uncertainty in a Changing World]*. The Hague: Clingendael Institute, 2012 (Clingendael Strategic Monitor); Clingendael Institute, *Een wereld in onzekerheid [A World in Uncertainty]*. The Hague: Clingendael Institute, 2013 (Clingendael Strategic Monitor).

1 Interests and values in the foreign policy of the Netherlands

that is characterised by growing uncertainty, and as a result of this a growing and diffuse risk of insecurity in many areas. At the same time international cooperation runs less smoothly than before and the impact of the West (including the Netherlands) on the global system is reduced, thereby increasing the vulnerability of the Netherlands.

Secondly, the capacity of the Netherlands to protect its own interests *by itself* is limited. Only with regard to some specific issues (e.g. export promotion) can and should the Netherlands steer its own course. However, for numerous other relevant issues, the Netherlands depends on the cooperation with and efforts of other countries in order to be able to serve its interests. This applies to the most vital interest of all: territorial security, for which the Netherlands depends on its allies, the US in particular, but to many other areas as well. It often concerns what the Dutch Scientific Council for Government Policy has termed *extended interests*: interests the Netherlands shares with other countries.⁴ However, more crucial is that these shared interests often concern vital interests that cannot be realised by the Netherlands alone, and which therefore require cooperation with partners.

This means, *thirdly*, that the Netherlands has a large interest in international cooperation (European, multilateral or in another context), preferably within the framework of multilateral institutions, agreements and procedures.⁵ Such a 'rules-based system' is, on the one hand, the *fabric* of the international (legal) order in which the Dutch interest in security, stability and prosperity is ensured, and in which the principles and values that the Netherlands holds dear are guaranteed. On the other hand, such a system offers a framework within which the Netherlands can initiate and pursue cooperation.

Based on the observations above, we can discern the following four interests of the Netherlands, which will entail different options for the armed forces of the future (see chapter 2).

First of all, to the Netherlands, being able to *influence* international decision-making regarding issues of global security and stability, and, by extension, the set-up of the international system, is very important. This interest is

4 Dutch Scientific Council for Government Policy, *Aan het buitenland gehecht. Over verankeringen en strategie van Nederlands buitenlandsbeleid [Attached to the World. On the anchoring and strategy of Dutch foreign policy]*. Amsterdam, 2010, p.60-61.

5 See also: Clingendael Institute, *Rijk achter de Dijken [Empire behind the Dykes]*. The Hague: Clingendael Institute, 2012.

directly related to the primary Dutch interest in safeguarding international security and stability; characteristics of the international system that are increasingly under pressure taking into account the diverse and diffuse pattern of threats that is characteristic for today's international system. The chances of actually exerting influence will increase as the Netherlands is seen by its partners, the big powers in particular, as a reliable ally that is prepared and willing to run military risks. This requires the willingness to participate visibly in initial entry operations with the use of force *at the highest end* of the spectrum, both in the context of NATO operations and as partner in 'coalitions of the willing' (with European partners and others). Such actions would guarantee a good standing and reputation. In addition to gaining immediate influence, it is of crucial importance to the Netherlands that the great Western powers (the United States in particular) keep showing a willingness to shoulder the responsibility for matters of international security and stability. They will not be willing to do so without a clear commitment from other countries, including the Netherlands, to share the risks and the burden. Increasing this commitment would improve the reputation and the influence of the Netherlands within the international system, particularly vis-à-vis countries such as the United States, France, the United Kingdom and Germany. It would certainly improve the political goodwill of the Netherlands.

Next to influence, the *economy and prosperity* are very important to the Netherlands.⁶ This second interest follows directly from its position as a trading nation. The Netherlands is the 17th largest economy in the world, ranks fifth on the list of exporters and is one of the world's biggest importers, and so it is heavily dependent on the international trading system and global economic developments. Its interest goes beyond import and export, and the immediate support from economic diplomacy with imaginative 'showing the flag' and nation branding. In a globalising world with ever-changing power balances, prosperity competition also involves foreign investments (the Netherlands is the 7th-largest investor in the world). In a more structural sense, the economic interest of the Netherlands is also served with international and European enforceable agreements on issues such as free trade, a 'level playing field', transparency and the protection of investments, the protection of economic activities from piracy and attacks, open sea routes, and a safe and attractive logistical position as a hub for transport, distribution and other transit facilities. Even more generally speaking, the economic interest of the Netherlands is best served with international security and stability.

6 See among others: The Hague Centre for Strategic Studies, *De Waarde van Defensie [The Value of Defence]*. The Hague: HCSS, 2012.

1 Interests and values in the foreign policy of the Netherlands

All this goes to say that the focus on the economic interest of the Netherlands touches on the issues listed under the *first* interest above. It requires armed forces that are structured in such a way that they can serve the economic interests of the Netherlands anywhere in the world, particularly the interest in undisturbed trade and safe transport.

Thirdly, the Netherlands has an interest in *sustainable stability and security* in specific countries and regions, and in preventing the consequences of conflicts from spreading to its own territory. This concerns mainly the risk of contamination from intra-state conflicts and their aftermath. It entails primarily the spill-over effects of state failure, the aftermath of violent regime changes (Libya, Syria), secession, radicalisation and extremism, criminality and terrorism, migration and refugee flows. Many of these conflicts and events occur in the European neighbourhood (in the Middle East, North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa) and thus constitute a direct challenge for the Netherlands and its European partners. Serving this interest, that once more touches on the first interest, implies that the armed forces of the Netherlands will focus on contributing actively to the stabilisation of areas suffering from conflict and violence. This would help create a safe environment for reconstruction operations (see also the fourth interest below).

Finally, the Netherlands has an interest in the promotion of *human rights and humanity*, and consequently in an international order based on (universal) values. This ensues directly from the constitutional provision stipulating that the international legal order is to be promoted. Massive violations of human rights threaten the international legal order as well as international stability and security. Nowadays, this interest has gained a wider scope by incorporating the right to live in dignity: with human security and access to global public goods (food, water, healthcare, etc.) being an integral part of this broader concept of justice and a global legal order. Seen from the conflict spectrum, this mainly concerns insidious threats such as climate change, increasing scarcity, overpopulation, pollution, etc.: threats that may result in calamities and conflicts, and that may spill over to the Netherlands. Controlling these threats is primarily an issue for the wider foreign policy of the Netherlands, and requires the willingness to invest in global public goods. The armed forces may play their part though by offering assistance and support in disaster and emergency situations, varying from emergency assistance in case of natural disasters to reconstruction and restoration of order in the aftermath of conflict situations, in order to prevent the violence from re-emerging.

2 Options for the armed forces of the Netherlands

The options for the future armed forces of the Netherlands set out below are each based on the dominance of one of the interests described in Chapter 1. Every interest is matched with a type of armed forces that would be most suitable. A matrix has been created to cross reference the interests and the four types of armed forces. Although the potential organisational set-up of the armed forces is based on the separate interests, for every type of armed forces it has been indicated to what extent the Netherlands could continue to contribute to the collective efforts of the EU and NATO by retaining certain (*niche*) capacities, based on the comparative advantages (see the Introduction).

The available defence budget as agreed in the agreement of the Rutte-II coalition government forms the basis of the options. The financial limitations make it unavoidable to set priorities for the armed forces of the Netherlands. Whatever option is selected, it will have negative consequences for certain military capacities. In other words: the armed forces will become *more specific* rather than versatile with regard to their deployment potential and capacities.

The authors have not had the opportunity to calculate the costs of the various types of armed forces into detail. As a result, the margins of the models will influence the implications that have been outlined. Of course, in practice a mix of the options discussed is a possibility.

Without claiming to be exhaustive, the possibilities for cooperation with other countries have been indicated for every type of armed forces. The budget cuts can be compensated by (more intense) international military cooperation. It has to be taken into consideration that costs precede benefits: international cooperation often costs money for new investments (e.g. for joint infrastructure or equipment). Savings will only show later on. International cooperation is focussed on clusters with strategic partners of the Netherlands in Europe, such as Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Norway and the United Kingdom. The type of armed forces selected could also have a negative impact on international cooperation, for instance when existing collaborations have to be scaled down or cancelled.

2 Options for the armed forces of the Netherlands

In addition, the needs of the European Union and NATO will influence the structure of the armed forces of the Netherlands. This may become apparent in the clusters, or when participating in projects within the framework of *Pooling & Sharing* (European Defence Agency- EDA) and *Smart Defence* (NATO). Coordination with allies and partners is required *prior* to making a choice in the matter.

The following concepts are used in the four models:

Intervention: military action with use of force, if need be at the high end of the spectrum. It concerns interventions in both 'classical' inter-state and intra-state conflicts. An intervention is intended to put an end to an armed conflict in order to help create more favourable circumstances for stabilisation and normalisation.

Stabilisation/3D: refers to giving military assistance in ending a conflict and promoting stable political, economic and social development in (former) conflict areas. Stabilisation operations may also counter refugee flows and fight international crime, drugs trafficking, terrorism, etc. Stabilisation operations are based on close cooperation in the fields of *Defence*, *Diplomacy & Development* (3D).

Normalisation: concerns the restoration of acceptable living conditions, usually after intra-state conflicts or disasters. After conflicts, normalisation operations eventually have to result in sustainable functioning state institutions without direct international involvement.

The air-based intervention force

Type of armed forces

Interest 1 is dominant. This type of armed forces must be capable of acting at the highest end of the violence spectrum together with the large nations. To this end, the armed forces of the Netherlands must be equipped with state-of-the-art capacities for participation in interventions, including in intra and interstate conflicts. This implies maximum alignment with the most probable course of action taken by the United States, and with regard to the European partners, contributions to interventions in cooperation with France and the United Kingdom in the initial stages of conflicts, particularly on the periphery of Europe and in Africa.

The American type of action in large-scale conflicts – with its emphasis on air power – implies that the Netherlands should give priority to the Royal Netherlands (RNL) Air Force. The RNL Air Force would have to be equipped with state-of-the-art equipment – fighter aircraft, unmanned aerial vehicles, precision munitions – and be fully interoperable with the United States Air Force. With its air-based intervention force, the Netherlands could make a significant contribution to NATO and to the reinforcement of the European military capacities.

The emphasis on ‘intervening’ with high-end technological capacities based on air power and the expenses that go with it, imply that the Netherlands would not be able to contribute as much to the maritime military protection of economic and trade interests. Furthermore, the Netherlands armed forces would have limited capacities to contribute to personnel-intensive stabilisation and normalisation operations.

Consequences for the armed forces: → ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●



Royal Army

- Retain air mobile brigade (in air assault capacity and with special forces)
- Cancel mechanised brigades
- Reduce engineering, medical and other 3D capacities
- Reduce capacity for national tasks on land



Royal Air Force

- Purchase JSF – minimum of three squadrons (including reserves a total of 50-55 aircraft)
- At the longer term a mix of fighter aircraft and armed and unarmed unmanned vehicles
- Purchase of MALE-UAV for reconnaissance and target acquisition
- Precision munitions
- Retain Patriot capability
- Retain air-to-air refuelling (AAR) and air transport capacities (fixed and rotary wing)

AIR-BASED INTERVENTION FORCE

- Strengthening and modernisation of the fighting capacity of the air force
- Navy is limited to a 'brown water' navy
- Army focusses on air mobile capacities
- Extension of cyber security/defence
- Reduction of stabilisation/3D capabilities



Royal Navy

- Cancel submarine service
- Retain LCF frigates
- Retain patrol ships and mine hunters
- Retain Marine Corps
- Less capacity for national tasks at sea



Royal Marechaussee

- Retain current structure and size

OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

- United States: JSF (training, modernisation, etc.) and MALE UAV
- Norway and possibly Belgium and Denmark: acquisition of JSF, training, maintenance, etc.; collocation and mutual use of aircraft
- France + United Kingdom and other partners: MALE UAV (in case of acquisition of a European system), in the future UCAV (in case of acquisition of a European system); Combined Joint Expeditionary Force (in particular with the Dutch 11th Air mobile brigade + the Marine Corps)
- Germany: deepening cooperation with regard to the Patriot missiles (e.g. combined unit, command, training, maintenance)

- Germany (and Belgium): deepening cooperation with regard to the air mobile capacities
- France, UK and other European partners: AAR and air transport
- Belgium and possibly France + UK: mine hunters
- Belgium: patrol vessels (continuation of Benesam)

NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES

Severely limited capacities for maritime operations and for long-term deployment for stabilisation/3D and normalisation operations. The *air-based intervention force* would reduce the contributions of the Netherlands armed forces to defending the other interests (2, 3 and 4) of the Netherlands.

The maritime force

Type of armed forces

Interest 2 is dominant. This type of armed forces is mainly focused on protecting routes that are of importance for trade and economy. With this type of armed forces, the emphasis is on the promotion, support and protection of the Dutch economic and trade interests. The vulnerability of these routes is mainly at sea and in coastal waters (piracy), often far from Europe. This type of armed forces would be predominantly 'maritime'. The Royal Netherlands Navy would remain a 'blue water navy' with a wide range of instruments (surface, subsurface, air) for action anywhere from the low end to the high end of the spectrum.

In selecting this option, the Netherlands would align its armed forces with the large maritime countries in Europe and beyond (the United States). Such a maritime force could also contribute to NATO actions with an emphasis on maritime operations. This type of armed forces would also be suitable for EU operations at sea (e.g. anti-piracy missions). If the Netherlands would retain its Patriot missiles (as well as the LCFs combined with the SMART-L radars), it could also supply niche capacities for NATO Missile Defence.

The high costs of a versatile and modern fleet entail that the Netherlands would not be able to contribute as much to military interventions based on air power. Furthermore, the Netherlands would have limited possibilities to contribute to personnel-intensive stabilisation and normalisation operations on land.

Consequences for the armed forces: → ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●



Royal Army

- Retain air mobile brigade (possibly without attack helicopters)
- Reduce mechanised brigades (from two to one brigade with three battalions)
- Reduce engineering, medical and other 3D capacities
- Reduce capacity for national tasks on land



Royal Air Force

- JSF purchase not necessarily required – two squadrons new fourth generation fighter aircraft will suffice (including reserves a total of 35-40 aircraft)
- No MALE-UAV
- Retain Patriot capacity
- Retain AAR capacities and air transport capacities (fixed and rotary wing)

MARITIME FORCE

- Navy retains its 'blue water' capacity and is strengthened
- Air Force and Army: reduced and equipped with specific capabilities
- Extension cyber security/defence
- Reduction stabilisation/3D capacity



Royal Marechaussee

- Retain current structure and size



Royal Navy

- Retain submarine service
- Retain LCF frigates
- Retain/extend patrol vessels (when M-frigates are replaced)
- Retain mine hunters
- Retain Marine Corps
- Purchase maritime patrol aircraft or unmanned vehicles

OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

- Depending on the successor to the F-16: European countries with the same aircraft
- Germany: deepening cooperation with regard to the Patriot missiles (e.g. combined unit, command, training, maintenance)
- Germany: combined command of submarines and joint acquisition of next generation submarines
- France, UK and other European partners: AAR and air transport
- Germany (and Belgium): deepening cooperation with regard to air mobile capacities
- Benelux countries: ground and air transport; higher education officers; collocation of fighter aircraft; cooperation heavy (NL) and light (BE) mortars; cooperation between special forces; introduction of a Benelux *Joint and Combined Helicopter Command and Quick Reaction Alert*; joint training facilities

- Belgium and possibly France + UK: mine hunters
- Germany and other European countries: maritime patrol aircraft (the same applies to unmanned aerial vehicles)

NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES

Severely limited capacities for contributing to interventions on land or in the air at the high end of the spectrum. Limited capacities for long-term deployment for stabilisation/3D and normalisation operations. The *maritime force* would reduce the contributions of the Netherlands armed forces to defend the other interests (1, 3 and 4) of the Netherlands.

The robust stabilisation force

Type of armed forces

Interest 3 is dominant. In this set-up, the armed forces would contribute to the solution of conflicts by means of the joint and coordinated deployment of civilian and military means. This would require an integrated approach from the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation (3D) and even other Ministries and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Internationally speaking, this option would require thorough coordination with other organisations and institutions for the comprehensive approach.

The armed forces would have to be able to put enough 'boots on the ground'. In addition, it would need sufficient means for escalation dominance. This entails adequate fire power, adequate protection, armoured vehicles, transport and armed helicopters, as well as fighter aircraft. The robust stabilisation force would be able to join other countries occasionally in initial entry operations, primarily on land. The Netherlands might also continue to join operations at the EU and NATO level. The Patriot capacity would be maintained (in combination with the LCFs and SMART-L radars), which would allow the Netherlands also to make a *niche* contribution to the alliance (NATO Missile Defence).

The focus of this set-up would be on 'stabilisation', with specific capacities for use of force escalation. Stabilisation operations are often characterised by a long duration. They require sustainment, particularly with regard to personnel. Investments and (high) operations & maintenance costs would encroach upon maritime capacities and high-end technological air force capacities.

Consequences for the armed forces: → ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●



Royal Army

- Retain current structure (air mobile/air assault and mechanised brigades)
- Strengthen CIMIC-battalion, engineering, medical and other 3D-capacities
- Retain capacity for national tasks on land



Royal Air Force

- JSF purchase not necessarily required—two squadrons new fourth generation fighter aircraft will suffice (including reserves a total of 35-40 aircraft)
- Purchase MALE-UAV for reconnaissance and target acquisition
- Retain Patriot capacity
- Retain AAR and air transport capacities (fixed and rotary wing)

ROBUST STABILISATION FORCE:

- Balance between the three armed forces services remains
- Extension of the cyber security/defence capacity
- Strengthened stabilisation/ 3D capacities, including Security Sector Reform (SSR) and Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR), training capacity



Royal Marechaussee

- Extension of deployment as paramilitary unit in stabilisation operations, among others for riot and crowd-control



Royal Navy

- Cancel submarine service
- Retain LCF frigates
- No replacement M-frigates
- Retain patrol vessels and minehunters
- Retain LPDs and other means for supporting land based operations
- Retain Marine Corps
- Retain capacity for national tasks at sea

OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

- Depending on the successor to the F-16: European countries with the same aircraft
- United States or France + United Kingdom and other partners (upon acquisition European system): MALE- UAV
- Germany: GER-NL Army Corps Headquarters to concentrate on deployment within the framework of the comprehensive approach (including stabilisation/3D) + joint 3D training
- Germany (and Belgium): extensive cooperation with regard to fighting capacities (army: air mobile + mechanised)
- France, UK and other European partners: AAR and air transport
- France and UK: Combined Joint Expeditionary Force (in particular with the Dutch 11th Air mobile Brigade + the Marine Corps)
- Belgium and possibly France and UK: mine hunters
- Belgium: patrol vessels (continuation of Benesam)

- Benelux countries: ground and air transport; higher education for officers; collocation of fighter aircraft; cooperation heavy (NL) and light (BE) mortars; cooperation between special forces; introduction of a Benelux *Joint Helicopter Command and Quick Reaction Alert*; joint training facilities
- Increased cooperation within the *European Gendarmerie Force* (EGF) for the Royal Marechaussee

NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES

Limited possibilities for participation in interventions at the high end of the spectrum. Contributions from the Dutch armed forces to the protection of economic and trade interests would be limited too. This set-up could restrict the potential for simultaneous participation in multiple operations once the Netherlands have made a long-term commitment to contribute substantially to a stabilisation operation. The robust stabilisation force would reduce the contributions of the Netherlands armed forces to defend interest 2 and, to a certain extent, interest 1.

The supporting peace force

Type of armed forces

Interest 4 is dominant. In this set-up, the armed forces would not require high-end technological equipment, but they would require ample personnel and transport capabilities. The supporting peace force would have to operate in areas with limited security risks and could only be deployed after other countries had intervened and were able to guarantee a certain level of security. The supporting peace force would be most suitable for assistance in natural or man-made disasters.

This type of armed forces would be fully committed to the integrated approach (3D), both at the national and the international level. The set-up might even result in joint staffs at the ministries in The Hague and joint headquarters in the field. The supporting peace force would barely be able to meet international obligations at the high end of the spectrum (within NATO; certain limitations apply for deployment at the EU level).

The focus of this supporting peace force would be on normalisation. In addition, specific contributions could be made to stabilisation operations. This force would not be able to contribute to interventions at the high end of the spectrum.

Consequences for the armed forces: → ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●



Royal Army

- Strengthening of engineering, medical and other 3D capacities
- Strengthening of the CIMIC-battalion, among others with more reserve troops
- Three light armed battalions of the airmobile brigade will be put under joint command
- Four battalions of the two mechanised brigades are transformed to four light armed battalions and are put under joint command
- Decommission mechanised howitzers and heavy armoured vehicles



Royal Air Force

- A squadron fourth generation fighter aircraft (with collocation in Benelux context; including reserves a total of 20-25 aircraft)
- Strengthening of AAR and air transport capacities (fixed and rotary wing)
- Decommission Patriot capacity

SUPPORTING PEACE FORCE

- Cancellation of all capacities for deployments at the high end of the spectrum and in the early phase of interventions
- Combining all military capacities in the areas of transport, command, reconnaissance, communication, logistics, engineering, medical care and, if necessary, protection of aid workers
- The basic unit is the 'light armed battalion', which is able to use force for purposes of self-defence
- All nine light armed battalions (7x Royal Army and 2x Marine Corps) are put under a joint command with a rationalisation of logistics, procedures and training programmes, but, if necessary, with specialised areas of deployment
- Extension of cyber security/defence
- Extension of Security Sector Reform (SSR) and Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) activities, training capacity



Royal Navy

- Focus on LPDs and other means for supporting land based operations
- Retain minehunters and patrol vessels
- Decommission frigates and submarines
- Two light armed marine battalions under joint command
- Less capacity for national tasks



Royal Marechaussee

- Larger role for marechaussee as a paramilitary unit (third force) in operations at the lower end of the spectrum (including riot and crowd-control)

OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

- Depending on the successor to the F-16: European countries with the same aircraft
- Germany: GER-NL Army Corps Headquarters to concentrate on deployment within the framework of the comprehensive approach (including stabilisation/3D) + joint 3D training
- France, UK and other European partners: AAR and air transport
- The Netherlands may seek alliance with countries with limited military capacities, such as Ireland
- Benelux countries: ground and air transport; higher education officers; collocation of fighter aircraft; cooperation heavy (NL) and light (BE) mortars; cooperation between special forces; introduction of a Benelux *Joint Helicopter Command and Quick Reaction Alert*; joint training facilities

- Increased cooperation within the *European Gendarmerie Force* (EGF) for the Royal Military Police

NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES

No participation in interventions at the higher end of the spectrum and restricted capacities for maritime operations and stabilisation operations. As a result of these restrictions and by giving up its niche capacities (Patriots and LCFs), the Netherlands would no longer make significant contributions to NATO. On the EU level, the opportunities to act at the higher end of the violence spectrum would be limited as well. The supporting peace force would substantially reduce the contributions of the Netherlands armed forces to defend interests 1, 2 and 3.

Implications for the main tasks

In addition to the relation between the various types of armed forces and the interests they protect, the relationship between the four types of armed forces and the three main tasks of the armed forces of the Netherlands can also be indicated.

The three main tasks of the armed forces of the Netherlands are:

- 1 protecting national territory and that of allies, including the territory of the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba;
- 2 promoting the international legal order and stability; and
- 3 providing support to civil authorities regarding law enforcement, disaster relief and humanitarian aid, both national and international.

Three of the four types of armed forces discussed above would contribute to all main tasks, even though these contributions would differ in quantity and quality for each type. The air-based intervention force, for instance, would contribute substantially to main tasks 1 and 2, be it mostly in the air. The same applies to the maritime force, but mainly at sea. The robust stabilisation force would contribute to main tasks 1 and 2 with specific capacities at the higher end of the spectrum. The supporting peace force would not be able to make significant contributions to main task 1, since it lacks the necessary fighting capacity.

The air-based intervention force and the maritime force could support main task 3 significantly less, while the robust stabilisation force and the supporting peace force would do better. The Royal Marechaussee might continue to contribute to the national tasks in all four types. The legislation regarding the national tasks might have to be amended if the relevant type of armed forces would lack capacity to fulfil main task 3.

3 Conclusions

The combination of available budget and the intersection of the three considerations mentioned in Chapter 1 results in a different type of armed forces for every dominant interest. Taking the dominant interests, as well as the comparative advantages of the Netherlands and the optimal collective capacities (EU and NATO) into account, the following menu can be constructed:

Dominant interest	Type of armed forces
1. Influence in the international community	air-based intervention force
2. Preserving prosperity and economic development	maritime force
3. Enhancing security and stability	robust stabilisation force
4. Promoting human rights and humanity	supporting peace force

It goes without saying that this menu of choice is a simplified version of an unruly reality. The types of armed forces that have been identified are ideal types, illustrating the fact that prioritising a certain interest results in difficult choices for a certain type of armed forces. However, it does not mean that these types of armed forces are unsuitable to serve other interests as well. The ‘air-based intervention force’, for instance, can be deployed not only at the initial entry stages of a conflict. On the contrary, the JSFs that are acquired can also be used to supply air support, for instance to a CIMIC battalion if a stabilisation operation is escalating. However, the question is to what extent armed forces set up as an ‘air-based intervention force’ have the budgetary leeway to make significant contributions to stabilisation operations. Furthermore, a cost-benefit analysis might raise questions as to the deployment of a fifth-generation fighter aircraft for air support purposes.

In order to show the suitability of the four types of armed forces for serving the four interests, we have drawn up a matrix. Stars have been allocated to each combination, from not suitable (■) to suitable (★ ★ ★). When the stars are added up – a rough criterion for versatility – the ‘robust stabilisation force’, coupled with the promotion of security and stability (interest 3), ends up with the most stars, nine in all. Within the framework of this report, this means that the robust stabilisation force is best suited to safeguard multiple interests. This type of armed forces is suitable for interest 3 (enhancement

of security and stability) and is partially suitable for interests 1 (influence in the international community), 2 (preservation of prosperity and economic development) and 4 (promotion of human rights and humanity).

	Interest 1	Interest 2	Interest 3	Interest 4	Total
Air based intervention force	★★★	★	★	■	★★★★★
Maritime force	★	★★★	★	★	★★★★★★
Robust stabilisation force	★★	★★	★★★	★★	★★★★★★★★
Supporting peace force	■	★	★★	★★★	★★★★★★

- ★★★ = suitable
- ★★ = partially suitable
- ★ = limited suitable
- = not suitable

At first sight, the ‘robust stabilisation force’ is most similar to the present armed forces of the Netherlands and it maintains the balance between the armed services. This type of armed forces does not necessarily require acquisition of the JSF; two squadrons of new fourth-generation fighters (including reserves a total of 35-40 aircraft) would suffice. The submarine service would be discontinued. In addition, this version is based on the assumption that the armed forces will have to engage in large stabilisation operations in cooperation with a number of partners for purposes of sustainability.

The ‘available budget’ is a harsh restraint. Of course, the path of least resistance would be to avoid making any choices and to maintain as many capabilities as possible (the ‘cheese slicing method’). However, the danger in maintaining a mix of the above types is that none of the interests will be protected and that the armed forces will always do ‘too little too late’. For that matter, the JSFs are only an option for the ‘air-based intervention force’ (three squadrons including reserves, 50-55 aircraft) because of the high costs involved and the displacement effect on the other armed services.

3 Conclusions

The precondition ‘within the available budget’ also entails that additional cuts in the defence budget will affect the set-up of the armed forces described above. In a situation of a further downsizing of the budget, they may no longer be realised without additional downward adjustments or the various types of armed forces may even become infeasible.

How have the comparative advantages and the optimal deployment potential for EU and NATO been weighed in designing the four types and the accompanying tasks and capabilities? In selecting the tasks and capabilities, those areas have been taken into account in which the Netherlands is experienced and skilled. Which capacities have the largest added value because of their scarcity or their political/strategic significance? In addition, the capabilities with the largest effect on the deployment potential of the EU and NATO take priority when choices have to be made.

This is the reason that the Netherlands holds on to its Patriot capacity in three out of four types of armed forces. Next to the United States and Germany, the Netherlands is the only NATO country that has Patriots at its disposal. As a result, this weapon system has become an important political strategic *niche* capacity. With Germany as an important partner for defence cooperation purposes, the Patriot offers favourable cooperation possibilities. Moreover, both the Patriots and the LCF frigates with their SMART-L radars can contribute significantly to the priorities of NATO (Missile Defence). In some form, the air mobile brigade is part of all four types of armed forces as well, with or without its air assault capacity or under joint command. In three out of four types, the air mobile brigade is an important candidate to cooperate extensively with Germany and Belgium, as well as with France and the United Kingdom.

The *air-to-air refuelling* (AAR) and air transport capacities (fixed and rotary wing) of the Netherlands are continued in all four types, because these capabilities are scarce in Europe. By continuing them, the Netherlands can contribute to the collective needs of the EU and NATO. In addition, these capacities offer good opportunities for cooperation with France, the United Kingdom and other European partners (e.g. the AAR project at the EDA level, to which the Netherlands has been appointed lead nation).

Final Remarks

The approach chosen for this report has resulted in a menu focusing on safeguarding several priority interests of the Netherlands. Such a method could result in four specific types of armed forces purely meant to serve the four interests. However, the report has weighed two more factors in drafting these types of armed forces, namely the niche factor and the partner factor: (i) for which existing capabilities, experience and skills do the armed forces of the Netherlands stand out and (ii) how can the armed forces contribute to the collective capacities of the EU and NATO? Doing so, choices for the future of the armed forces have to take the international context into account and cannot disregard the important choices made in the past (path dependence).

Clingendael's Vision for the Future of the Armed Forces of the Netherlands

The defence budget cuts and rising costs for replacing the F-16 require 'a vision for the future of the armed forces of the Netherlands', which the Rutte-II government will deliver in 2013. Difficult decisions lie ahead regarding the structure of the Dutch armed forces as reduced financial resources no longer suffice to cover the costs of maintaining and modernising existing capabilities. The issue is not just about replacing the F-16: it is about the capabilities of all three armed services, which need to be reviewed in order to restore the balance between ambitions, financial means and the structure of the armed forces of the Netherlands.

The Clingendael Institute contributes to the upcoming debate with its own vision. It is based on three factors which should determine the shape of the future Dutch armed forces. The intersection of these three factors determines the framework and it leads to a menu of four types of armed forces. It shows that in only one of these types the purchase of the JSF is per se necessary.

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