

**March 29, 1971**  
**National Security Decision Memorandum 103,**  
**'Military Cooperation with France'**

**Citation:**

"National Security Decision Memorandum 103, 'Military Cooperation with France'", March 29, 1971, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Nixon Presidential Library, National Security Council Institutional Files (NSCIF), box 222, NSDM 103 [2 of 2]. Obtained and contributed by William Burr and included in NPIHP Research Update #2.  
<https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/112247>

**Summary:**

Outlines President Nixon's decisions regarding France's request for military aid with their nuclear program. The restrictions on exporting advanced computers will be loosened, allowing France to import more powerful models. Limited technical assistance for their ballistic missile program will be offered, but only in areas that won't jeopardize US security or "provide France with a distinct new capability."

**Original Language:**

English

**Contents:**

Original Scan

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

March 29, 1971

National Security Decision Memorandum 103

TO: The Secretary of State  
The Secretary of Defense

SUBJECT: Military Cooperation with France

The President has considered the questions studied in NSSM 100 and discussed by the Senior Review Group concerning certain areas of possible military cooperation with the French Government. He has made the following decisions:

Advanced Computer Export Restrictions

1. The Secretary of State is directed to inform the French Government in reply to the request of Foreign Minister Schumann, that we cannot rescind entirely our restrictions on the export of advanced computers for use in French nuclear weapons laboratories. However, we will redefine "advanced computers" so that in practice some of the models currently falling under the restrictions on end-use will become available without any restrictions. Pending such a redefinition, which will be completed expeditiously, current restrictions will continue in force.

2. The Under Secretaries Committee is directed to prepare by April 7, 1971 for the President's approval a recommended new definition of advanced computers. In practice the new definition should permit, without special letter of assurance, the export to or assembly in France of all computers whose strength is rated below that of the IBM 370/165. For the export to France of the latter computer, as well as more powerful machines, a special letter of assurance will continue to be required. This new definition will meet the special circumstances of France, and it is not intended to apply to export controls in general.

Missile Assistance

3. The Secretary of Defense is directed to continue discussions concerning assistance to the French ballistic missile program. We will provide assistance but limited to those items which the Secretary of Defense,

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

Authority EO 12958  
By AR NARA Date 2/4/09

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

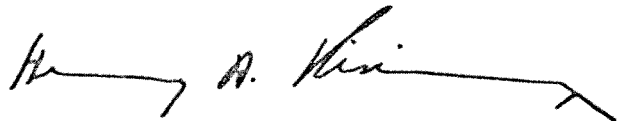
-2-

in coordination with the Secretary of State, determines will not jeopardize the security of our own weapons programs or provide France with a distinct new capability in such areas as guidance systems, missile accuracies, or re-entry vehicle hardening.

4. The French Government should be informed that there will be definite limits to our technical assistance.

5. Should issues arise that are not covered by this memorandum, the Secretary of Defense will submit them with his recommendations to the President for decision.

6. The Secretary of Defense will submit to the President periodic reports on the status of missile assistance to France.



Henry A. Kissinger

cc: Director of Central Intelligence  
Director, Arms Control and Disarmament Agency  
Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE