PDSF 2026: Alice Rufo inaugurates the third edition of the Strategy Forum in Paris

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The third edition of the **Paris Defence and Strategy Forum (PDSF)** opened yesterday in Paris, at the prestigious setting of the **École militaire**. The event, which will conclude on March 26, is confirmed as an essential appointment for the global strategic landscape, bringing together over **5,000 participants** in person and an estimated digital audience of 25,000 users this year.

The opening was led by **Alice Rufo**, Minister Delegate at the Ministry of Armed Forces and Veterans, accompanied by the Danish ambassador to France, **Hanne Fugl Eskjær**. The choice of Denmark as the guest of honor highlights Copenhagen's profound strategic reorientation in the face of the return of war in Europe.

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The tribute to Major Frion: thinking about war in the real world

The opening of the works in the Foch amphitheater was marked by a moment of deep emotion. Alice Rufo wanted to pay tribute to **Major Arnaud Frion**, who fell for France. A gesture not only formal but aimed at reminding that strategic reflection is not an abstract exercise:

> *"Thinking about war is a necessity in the face of a harsher and more dangerous strategic environment", declared the Minister, emphasizing the importance of the role of the* ***ACADEM*** *(Académie de défense de l'École militaire) in creating a bridge between civil society, academia, and the military world.*

The 5 pillars of modern conflict

In her speech, Alice Rufo outlined a clear analysis of current global dynamics, identifying five critical trends that are redefining contemporary conflicts:

1. **Erosion of international law:** an increasingly contested and bypassed global order.
2. **Conflicts below the nuclear threshold:** the intensification of high-intensity clashes, with Ukraine as the main example, but with growing hotspots in the Middle East and Asia.
3. **New domains of confrontation:** the extension of war to previously unconventional spaces.

4. **Technological acceleration:** innovation as the primary driver of warfare transformation.
5. **Social resilience:** the ability of civil societies to withstand and adapt to conflicts.

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The French response: Sovereignty and Alliances

The Minister then outlined France's strategy to navigate this turbulent scenario, based on three complementary pillars:

- **Sovereignty and Deterrence:** Sovereignty was defined as the ability to decide independently without being constrained. At the center of this stance remains **nuclear deterrence**, albeit integrated into a coherent European vision.
- **Alliances without vassalage:** "*A vassal is not an ally*", warned Rufo, reaffirming France's commitment to NATO and the Eastern flank, while reiterating that Europe must take on greater responsibilities produced by increased industrial production and technological investments.
- **Credible partnerships:** France focuses on maximum operational reliability ("we say what we do and we do what we say"), from the Indo-Pacific to the Arctic, to constant support for Ukraine.

An indispensable cooperation

In line with the French position, Danish ambassador **Hanne Fugl Eskjær** reiterated the urgency of collective and coordinated cooperation. In a world where threats are interconnected, the

response can only be choral and lasting.

The PDSF 2026 now enters the heart of its technical panels. As Alice Rufo reminded in closing: "*Being able to think about tomorrow's war means being able to face it and prevent it*".

News link: https://www.defense.gouv.fr/actualites/alice-rufo-inaugure-troisieme-edition-du-pdsf