

Special Issue - August 2006: The Hezbollah War

Slogan of the Month:

War is, often, the failure of reason.

Raphael Cohen-Almagor

The Hezbollah War, Syria, UN Security Council resolution proposed by France and the United States, An International Force: Advantages and Disadvantages, Lessons learned from thirty years of agreements, arrangements and understandings in Lebanon, New Books

The Hezbollah War

Let me address some of the questions I received:

Q.: Why does it take so long?

A.: Battles in built-up areas are most difficult. The troops need to "clean" the area from house to house, room to room, shelter to shelter, bunker to bunker. It takes a lot of time as you try to minimize casualties, and conduct warfare in a careful and also sensitive way, so as not to hurt civilians. Bear in mind that the Hezbollah guerrilla fighters know the area much better than the IDF, and they maneuver in the bunkers skillfully. This is hard, painstaking fighting, with no shortcuts.

Q.: Why don't you send the Israel Air Force (IAF) to do the job?

A.: Israel did send the IAF to "soften" the area. However, it is impossible to seize and control ground without ground troops. And we have to be careful when we attack targets from the air. The Hezbollah is notorious for hiding among the civilian population who had to cooperate with them, even if they did not wish to, or else... Israel is not the USA that flattened Afghanistan and Iraq. What the Super Power can do, we cannot. See what happened after Qana (see *infra*). Israel uses its air force to pinpoint targets, and to help the ground forces. But the IAF cannot do the job alone. Moreover, the Hezbollah had built deep and well-defended bunkers that could resist and withstand bombing. They need to be conquered on the ground.

Q.: Can Israel win this war?

A.: I am afraid not. Israel can make some achievements that will be assets at the negotiation table. But we are unable to win this war. The Hezbollah has been using Lebanon for its purposes, with the consent and blessing of the Lebanese authorities that sought quiet and wanted this powerful organization, with its fathers Syria and Iran, on their side. The Hezbollah made the most of the opportunity presented to its people. It built infrastructure throughout Lebanon, and spread its bastions around the country. The Headquarters are in Beirut, and Israel has no interest, for obvious reasons, to conquer Beirut. We can assume that Israel is far from winning simply because the Hezbollah has yet to use its long-range missiles, saved for last resort, and did not exhaust its capacity of launching rockets from afar. There is little sense on its part to do this while it is able to launch 200 missiles on average, each and every day, from southern Lebanon. The Hezbollah does not wish to present more targets for the IAF unnecessarily.

This means that all that Israel can do is to control a Lebanese piece of land in southern Lebanon, killing some Hezbollah guerrilla and demolishing part of its infrastructure. Israel is unable to stop the missiles via military force. The solution needs to come via international involvement and help, at the negotiation table.

Q.: So why does the fighting continue?

A.: Because Israel wishes to better its position inside and outside Israel, and through the process lead to a hopefully long-term solution.

Q.: Is it possible to reach long-term solution only with Lebanon and the Hezbollah?

A.: No. The process needs to involve Syria and Iran. The problem is that Syria and Iran are both happy with the Hezbollah achievements and show little readiness to enter into negotiations. Iran does not even recognize Israel's right to exist. The USA and Israel have a vested interest to involve Syria in the process, and to isolate Iran. The USA and Israel should embark on talks with Syria, possibly through a third party (France, Germany), inviting Assad to take constructive steps for calming the situation. If Syria will prefer the hard-line stance and alliance with Iran, it is incumbent on the international community to employ severe sanctions against both countries. The international community should stand unified on this front, as the Lebanese no-man's-land is not solely Israel's problem. It is a global problem. The spark is in Lebanon, but the flame might expand to other places in the Middle East. The world cannot afford another North Korea. Iran's nuclear capacity, under the present regime, is dangerous to all free democracies -- little, medium and big "Satans" alike.

Of course we need to consider the possible implications of negotiations, including the possibility of failure. Failure might result in more harm than not negotiating at all. We need not ignore what the parties are saying, especially when one side says: I am not ready to negotiate. Conflict resolution is not all about misconceptions and lack of communication. It is also about listening to what parties are saying.

Q. What lessons do we learn until now?

A. 1. Israel lost its deterrence power and capacity. It needs to restore it. This requires investment and different thinking. Israel should never have allowed missiles bombarding the south of the country, from Gaza. This is intolerable. Sderot and other towns and villages in southern Israel have been suffering for long months from the Qassam missiles, and we did little to curb this violence. No sovereign country can allow missiles launching on it without proper reprisal.

The media do not report about the situation in Gaza to the extent they should. Each and every week, some fifty missiles are fired from Gaza on southern Israel. Luckily the Qassams are not very affective, and there are not many casualties on this front. However, this is a continued nightmare for the people of Sderot, who have not been leading a normal life for more than a year. This cannot continue.

2. As much as we want to become a normal country, with normal priorities (education, industry, fishing, science, tourism, etc.), we are not. Israel remains a thorn in the region that many still wish to eliminate. Hence, security is, and should remain, the first item on our agenda. Security is a serious issue that requires stern attention, and should not be sacrificed for partisan interests and political whims. Therefore, the Minister of Defense should, for the time being, be someone who knows security inside out. Otherwise, the tuition price might be costly. Presently, 1.5 million Israelis are sitting in shelters, or are refugees, away from the homes. The present writer is one of them.

3. Israel lost its complacency. We are no longer complacent regarding the power of our neighbours, and their internal affairs. Theories like "let the missiles rust in Lebanon" have evaporated. Israel needs to invest in intelligence, as we know very little about our enemies. I don't know what the Mossad did in recent years in Lebanon. Judging by this war, not very much. We know little about the Hezbollah capacities, powers, infrastructure, and political connections.

4. The missiles war requires us to refresh our thinking. Israel is a small country. We are unable to seal our borders preventing those damn missiles

from landing in our midst. We are unable to push them further, as this would require massive ground operations and conquering hostile territory. Reminder: We've been in Lebanon before, and in 2000, after 22 years of losses, we said "Enough is Enough", and ran out like mad. And see the American mess in Iraq. The solution is at the negotiation table.

5. Israel, Lebanon, and the world at large, have a vested interest in a sovereign, centralized Lebanon. At present, this poor, torn country, is subject to outside involvement and to violent militias that conduct their business without proper control.

6. There are difficult questions to be asked, from the Israeli perspective: How come that a small episode, tragic as it is, of killing four soldiers and kidnapping of two others, had developed within 48 hours to a full-fledge war? How come we have very meager reliable intelligence in Lebanon? How come we lost our credibility, to the extent that IDF's announcements are regarded with the same suspicion as the Hezbollah's? (soldiers are killed now in villages that were said to be captured and "cleaned" in the first week of the fighting) What can be done to secure the borders of Israel, militarily and diplomatically?

7. Last week, Prime Minister Olmert mumbled something about his convergence plan. It was a rather vague statement, totally unnecessary, totally inappropriate, and in bad timing. But beyond the statement I wonder whether Olmert continues to toy with the idea. Isn't it now clear that we need to strike a deal with partners, not on our own initiative? Does he wish to take the risk and subject the entire land to missiles? Giving away Judea and Samaria unilaterally, without any guarantees, might entail that the Hamas will be able to target all critical areas in Israeli society, including Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. We should have tried Gaza, but we have to learn from reality, not ignore it. The Palestinians, the Hezbollah, Syria, Iran and others want to destroy Israel. They aren't willing to settle, at this point, for anything less than the entire destruction of their Zionist enemy.

Qana

On July 30, 2006 an Israel air strike hit Qana, a village we all remember well as it tainted our bloody history. In 1996, Israeli artillery caused the death of more than one hundred civilians in Qana. Shimon Peres lost the 1996 elections to Bibi Netanyahu largely because of that attack, as many Israeli Palestinians refused to vote for him after this massacre. Now, the Israeli air force was sent to hit houses in Qana that served as shelter to katyusha launchers. The result was 28 people killed, many of them children.

Taken aback by the carnage, Israel declared an immediate 48-hour suspension of aerial strikes. Especially notable about the suspension was that it was announced by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's deputy, Adam Ereli, after Rice held intensive talks with both Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and the Israeli foreign minister, Tzipi Livni.

The American decision to break the news on what was essentially an Israeli tactical change reflected the increased concern in the Bush administration about the rising civilian death toll in Lebanon and the havoc it is wreaking with America's already shaky relations with the Arab world.

This link explains why there's no escape ruining some civilian houses in Lebanon

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QaO-3hXeIEs>

Further war photos at <http://4law.co.il/leb1b.html>

The following day, July 31, Rice said she would call for a UN resolution this week on the cease-fire and also the establishment of an international stabilisation force for Lebanon, which she said she hoped could be deployed as soon as possible after the UN resolution. "There is broad agreement that armed groups must be prohibited in areas where the international force is deployed," she said, adding an arms embargo must be enforced.

American officials upheld the Israeli stance, saying that despite the civilian death toll an immediate cease-fire would do little good unless underlying issues were first addressed, including the ultimate disarmament of Hezbollah.

The contents of the diplomatic package are basically set (see below). Under the proposal, Israel and Lebanon would agree to a cease-fire as part of a larger pact that would include installing 15,000 to 20,000 international peacekeepers throughout southern Lebanon. The Lebanese government would work to disband Hezbollah, and the United States and other countries would funnel money and send military officials to help train the Lebanese Army, so that it could work to prevent future attacks on Israel. Israel would agree to talks on whether it would withdraw from a disputed border area known as Shabaa Farms, a Hezbollah demand.

Shabbat, August 5, 2006

On August 5, 2006 the Goddess of Luck left. Until that day, Israel suffered hits of thousands of rockets that resulted with a lot of damage but relatively few casualties. On that day, the Goddess of Luck went to attend other matters. Eight Israeli civilians were killed and more than 100 injured in Katyusha barrage at the North of the country. Some 180 Katyushas were fired by

Hezbollah at Israel on that deadly day. The deaths bring the number of civilians killed by rockets in the North to 27. The Health Ministry reported yesterday that 2,387 civilians have been treated in hospital emergency rooms since the start of the fighting, most of them for shock. Altogether, Hezbollah has fired some 3000 rockets at Israel since hostilities began on July 12.

The same day, France and the United States reached agreement on a Security Council resolution to halt the war in Lebanon. The draft resolution calls for a truce, asked the current United Nations peacekeeping force to monitor the border area, and laid out a plan for a permanent cease-fire and political settlement. By calling upon Israel to cease only offensive military operations, the measure appeared to meet Israel's demands that it be allowed to leave soldiers in southern Lebanon at the outset. That is, it did not require Israel to immediately withdraw from Lebanon, which immediately raised dissent among some members of the Security Council.

One disappointment for Jerusalem would be the absence of any order to return its two captured soldiers, an original reason Israel cited for going to war. The only language addressing that is in the preamble to the resolution, which "emphasizes" the need to release unconditionally the abducted Israeli soldiers. I should also mention that Israel had previously opposed UNIFIL supervising a cease-fire. Israel has frequently charged that UNIFIL personnel turned a blind eye to Hezbollah operations in the south.

As for the Hezbollah demand for a prisoner exchange, the resolution "encourages the efforts aimed at settling the issue of the Lebanese prisoners detained in Israel."

In Beirut, the Lebanese cabinet met for more than four hours to discuss the resolution, but there was no statement afterward. Aides to key political figures and Western diplomats based there expressed doubt that Hezbollah or the government, which negotiators relied on to communicate to Hezbollah, would accept the resolution in its present form.

The accord envisaged a second resolution, to create a new international force to patrol a zone to between the "Blue Line" at the Lebanon-Israel border and the Litani River to keep it free of all military personnel and weapons, except those of the Lebanese Army and United Nations-mandated forces.

That resolution would also set established borders for Lebanon, including in the disputed Shebaa Farms area, lay out the procedure for disarming Hezbollah, order an international embargo on arms shipments into Lebanon, and empower the Lebanese military to extend its authority throughout Lebanon, particularly in areas in the south controlled by Hezbollah.

For passage, a resolution needs the support of at least 9 of the Council's 15 members and not be vetoed by any of the five permanent members: Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States.

The resolution says responsibility for monitoring the initial truce would rest with Unifil, the United Nations monitoring force. The Israeli official said Israel believed that French rapid-reaction troops would be sent into the area right away to beef up the 2,000-member Unifil, which has been long faulted for being too weak.

In other sections, the resolution expresses its "strong support" for giving full respect to the "Blue Line" border between Lebanon and Israel and called upon Unifil to enable aid workers to get assistance to the area and help the hundreds of thousands of displaced Lebanese to return home. The resolution calls upon "the international community" to extend aid to the government of Lebanon to help people return and begin the process of reconstruction.

British Prime Minister Tony Blair said, "The priority now is to get the resolution adopted as soon as possible and then to work for a permanent cease-fire and achieve the conditions in Lebanon and Israel which will prevent a recurrence."

The problem is that soon enough it became clear that Lebanon is unable to accept the deal. I presume they have too much at stake, as the Hezbollah, Syria and Iran are deeply involved in their internal affairs.

Sunday, August 6, 2006

The following day, on August 6, twelve 12 reservists were killed, and another 12 wounded, four of them seriously, by a single rocket that hit their muster point at around noon - one of about 35 fired at the Galilee panhandle. The rocket hit an open area in Kfar Giladi. Although the soldiers were instructed to enter a sheltered area, they paid the price of complacency, as Hezbollah renewed its massive rocket fire against Israel. Following the attack Hezbollah continued shelling that same area for a prolonged time, though no additional casualties were reported. Witnesses described the barrage of rockets as "enormous" and that it lasted more than fifteen minutes.

In the evening, it was Haifa's turn. The bleeding city that slowly returned to normal life after a few days of relative quiet was hit by a barrage of rockets, hitting at seven different places including old houses that could not withstand the explosion. Altogether, Hezbollah fired more than 170 rockets at Israel on August 6, including a barrage of at least 22 rockets on Haifa at about 8 P.M. that killed three people and wounded about 40.

Altogether, the Magen David Adom ambulance service said that it treated 138 wounded people on Sunday, including five with serious injuries and six with moderate wounds.

Sources in the IDF General Staff said that until the chances of a UN-sponsored cease-fire become clearer, which is expected to happen in the coming days, Israel will continue to press its offensive. If Hezbollah has not ceased its fire by this weekend, they added, the IDF will recommend an additional significant expansion of the operation, including the conquest of most of Lebanon south of the Litani River, including the area around Tyre, and a significant increase in air strikes on infrastructure targets. "It could be that at the end of the story, Lebanon will be dark for a few years," said one.

The General Staff believes that Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah has recently stepped up his attacks because he expects the international community to impose a cease-fire soon. "He thinks that we're nearing the end, and therefore, he's taking risks, such as activating long-range rocket launchers, even though he knows that the air force will destroy almost every such launcher immediately after the launch," explained one officer.

94 Israelis were killed since the start of hostilities.

Tuesday, August 8, 2006

On Friday, August 4, the IDF Northern Commander, Udi Adam said in an interview to *Yedioth Ahronoth* that the government constrained IDF activities. His laconic and blunt answer was: "Yes". "How come?" asked Nahum Barnea and Shimon Shiffer, "We thought the cabinet approved every single idea presented by the IDF" Adam answered: "the decision when to move the ground force was of the government. The ministers did not want to enter ground forces at the beginning". It was clear that the government and Adam do not see eye to eye.

On Tuesday, August 8, Chief of Staff Dan Halutz decided to appoint Israel Defense Forces Deputy Chief of Staff Moshe Kaplinsky over the head of Major General Udi Adam. Kaplinsky knows Lebanon well, as he served there in various positions in the past, until the IDF evacuation from Lebanon in 2000. Maybe it is a good step militarily. But it also reflects tensions within the army, and between the army and the government.

On that same day, five IDF soldiers were killed in combat in south Lebanon. The toll of deaths now reached more than 100 casualties, of them 67 soldiers.

Meanwhile, there does not seem to be any relaxation in Hezbollah's missile capability. The same day at least 160 Katyusha rockets fired by Hezbollah gunners in Lebanon slammed into northern Israel. A barrage of those rockets hit Kiryat Shmona that became a deserted city as its infrastructure is largely destroyed. The city will need complete reconstruction after the war. It has suffered the most since the start of hostilities. If you need a good cause to donate your money, place it in Kiryat Shmona.

Wednesday, August 9, 2006

A bloody day. Fifteen Israel Defense Forces troops were killed as fierce fighting with Hezbollah guerillas raged in the southern Lebanon villages of Ayta al-Shaab and Debel. The 15 IDF soldiers were killed in a series of firefights across the front. In the most serious incident, nine reserve paratroopers were killed and 11 wounded by anti-tank missiles fired on a house in the village of Debel. Four reservists were killed in a tank explosion, apparently caused by anti-tank missiles, in the town of Ayta al-Shaab. An infantryman was killed when he was hit by a mortar in Marjayoun.

Twenty-five soldiers were wounded in Wednesday's actions, six seriously. Two of the seriously wounded were members of the standing army; the rest of the wounded were reservists.

According to the IDF, some 40 Hezbollah fighters were killed on Wednesday. Another 20 or so Hezbollah fighters have been killed over the past two days at Bint Jbail and Tiri.

The army is still waiting for a directive to launch its larger operation that was approved Wednesday by the cabinet, and includes occupation of the area south of the Litani River.

Just read the story of one soldier, Roei Klein. He was a commander, in a battle against Hezbollah when he noticed a grenade thrown into the room. To save his soldiers, he jumped on the grenade and his body took most of the blast. I recall another soldier who did such act of heroism, Nathan Elbaz, many years ago. He received one of the army's greatest honours.

In the 29 days of fighting, from July 12 till now, 122 Israelis were killed. Thirty nine of them are civilians, killed as a result of the missiles campaign. 83 of them are soldiers, killed in Israel and in Lebanon.

3,204 missiles were fired on Israel. Of them 160 hit buildings, caused damage and cost lives. 1,187 people were injured, many of them suffered shock and anxieties. The estimated damage is more than 5 billion shekels.

Syria

- Syria, along with its ally Iran, is consistently supporting Hezbollah and the Palestinian terrorist organizations to attain a variety of strategic goals: strengthening the radical Iranian-Syrian axis in the Middle East; weakening Israel by tearing apart its social fabric and damaging its economy; strengthening Syria's influence in Lebanon; strengthening the radical Islamic forces in the Palestinian Authority; sabotaging agreements and arrangements in Lebanon and the PA which are incompatible with Syrian and Iranian interests. In addition, the Syrian leadership regards the weapon of terrorism as a tool to lever its way out of the international pressures exerted on Bashar Assad's régime and the renewed initiative of Israeli-Syrian negotiations regarding the Golan Heights.
- Part of Syrian strategy includes providing Hezbollah and Hamas with military, political and propaganda support and aiding them in the current confrontations. Syria (and Iran) can also be expected to rehabilitate the terrorist organizations' operational capabilities once the current battles have ended. The Palestinian and Lebanese terrorist organizations Israel is fighting are clearly Syrian and Iranian proxies, systematically built up over a period of years in Lebanon and the PA.

Syrian support for Hezbollah

- When Hezbollah was formed in 1982 and throughout the Lebanese War (1982-1985), Syria viewed it as an important tool in its struggle against Israel. The Syrian régime helped Hezbollah establish itself in the Bekaa Valley in Lebanon and supported it against the IDF and its opponents in Lebanon. Syria also used Hezbollah against the multinational force (which included American, French and Italian units) set up to supervise the evacuation of the Syrian army and the Palestinian terrorists after the Israeli siege of Beirut. Hezbollah proved to be a valuable tool in Syrian strategy, enabling Syria, although it was militarily inferior to Israel, to bring about the withdrawal of the IDF from Lebanon without a diplomatic agreement, to get the multinational force out of Lebanon by carrying out lethal terrorist attacks against American and French targets and to further impose the "Syrian order" on Lebanon's internal arena.
- Damascus rewarded Hezbollah for its services by making it the linchpin when it reinforced Syrian influence in Lebanon after the war. According to the Taef Accord of 1989 (which symbolized the end of the Lebanese civil war), Lebanese government sovereignty was to be enforced throughout the country and all the armed Lebanese and non-Lebanese (i.e., Palestinian) militias were to be disbanded. However, the Syrians made sure the accord was enforced selectively. They took care to disarm the Christian

and Druze militias while giving their full support to Hezbollah as the only organization with a broad military-operational infrastructure. That was the turning point in internal Lebanese politics, upsetting the balance between the various ethnic groups. It allowed Hezbollah to become a major player in the internal Lebanese arena and to expand its terrorist activities against Israel.

- There was a significant change in Syrian-Hezbollah relations after Bashar Assad took over the Syrian régime in July 2000. In essence, the organization's status was upgraded in Damascus and from a pawn it became a strategic partner and a major player with influence on Syrian policies. Close relations developed between Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah and inexperienced, uncharismatic Syrian president Bashar Assad, noteworthy in view of the distance Hafez Assad kept from Hezbollah and his suspicions of it.

- Upgrading of the relations between the two was also a function of Damascus's strategic weakness under Bashar Assad, as opposed to Hezbollah's increasing strength. The weakness of the Syrian régime became pronounced after the murder of Lebanese prime minister Rafiq Hariri in February 2005, and with the internal Lebanese and international pressures exerted on Syria, some of whose senior figures were accused of complicity in the murder (an international commission of enquiry is still examining the affair...). Removing Syrian forces from Lebanon in April 2005, after almost 30 years of occupation, marked a low point in the Syrian régime's status in general and in Lebanon in particular, and made Hezbollah even more important in Syrian eyes.

- For those reasons, **under Bashar Assad , Syria increased its support** of Hezbollah in the following ways:

- **Militarily** : Syria gives the organization military support, complementing the massive support it receives from Iran. Syrian support is currently much greater than previously and exceeds the limits imposed by Hafez Assad, as follows:

- **Syria serves as a conduit for the massive amounts of weapons the Iranians give Hezbollah.** Iranian arms-bearing planes land in Damascus and from there the weapons are transferred to Hezbollah in Lebanon . The arsenal of Iranian missiles stockpiled by Hezbollah in Lebanon could not exist without Syrian support. Therefore, Iran and Syria can be expected to replenish the arsenal when the current confrontation ends.

- **Direct weapons supplies** : During the past few years Syria has given Hezbollah 200 mm rockets with 80 kg (176 lb) warheads with a range of 70 km (almost 44 miles),² and 302 mm rockets with 100 kg (220 lb) warheads with a potential range of about 100 km (about 62 miles) . In addition, Syria has given Hezbollah advanced anti-tank rockets and missiles and quite probably anti-aircraft missiles as well. It should be noted that during the current confrontation 220 mm rockets hit Haifa (and caused most

of the damage to life and property), Nazareth and the Jezreel Valley ; Afula was hit by 302 mm rockets .

- Under Bashar Assad, Syrian-Iranian policies turned Hezbollah from an annoying terrorist organization into a strategic threat to both Israel and the stability of the entire region. The two countries furnished Hezbollah with an arsenal of some 12,000 missiles (including long-range missiles) and gave the organization the capabilities of a country, the likes of which are possessed by no other terrorist organization in the world, and thus enabled Hezbollah to acquire the ability to cause regional deterioration. Hezbollah's status has been well illustrated in the current confrontation, which has been unprecedented in scope and severity since the Lebanon War (1982-1985).

- In our assessment, Israeli policy makers should take into consideration the fact that Syria and Iran will make an effort to influence the new reality created at the end of current confrontation and to prevent, insofar as they can, Israel , the United States , the west and the Lebanese government from achieving their goals. They are liable to try to sabotage any agreement regarded as contrary to their own interests (a multinational force stationed in Lebanon , for example) using their traditional weapon of terrorism. Moreover, what should also be taken into account will be their coordinated effort to rehabilitate and replenish Hezbollah's operational capabilities, especially its rocket arsenal, to keep it as a major player in the internal Lebanese arena and facing Israel.

Syrian support for Hamas

- Syria provides sponsorship and support for Hamas. The movement's "external" leadership sits in Damascus, where, after it was expelled from Jordan in 1999, it received permission from the Syrian régime to operate from within its borders. Today, that Damascene "external leadership" is the movement's leading authority. It traditionally holds positions more inflexible and extremist than the "internal" leadership in the PA, the result of its alienation from the needs of the Palestinian people and its proximity to Iran and Syria.

- Head of Hamas's Damascus leadership are **Khaled Mashal**, chief of the organization's **political bureau** and his deputy, **Musa Abu Marzuq**, who was deported by the United States. They are aided by members of Hamas's operational headquarters, led by **'Imad al-'Alami**. Bashar Assad's régime enables them to direct Hamas policy in the PA from Syria, including terrorist-operational activity. The Damascus-based direction and support of terrorist activities are carried out in a variety of ways: There is an uninterrupted flow of political and operational instructions sent to Hamas operatives in the PA; funds are transferred in amounts reaching tens of millions of dollars a year; terrorist-operatives are trained in Syria and aid is provided to purchase weapons, which are then smuggled into the PA and the Arab states.

- In the past, primarily because of American and international pressure, from time to time the Syrian régime made its links to Hamas and the other terrorist organizations less visible. However, during the past two years the

régime has defiantly and openly strengthened its ties with Iran and the various terrorist organizations, and has not hesitated to publicly express the fact.

- The Syrian régime was openly pleased with the Hamas victory in the Palestinian Legislative Council elections in January 2006 and with the formation of the Hamas government. Since the January elections, Syria's activity has significantly increased in the Palestinian arena with the hope of exploiting the new situation to advance its own interests. That was manifested in several areas:
 - **Politically**, the Syrian régime increased its coordination and updating meetings with various levels of Hamas representatives, including frequent meetings with **Khaled Mashal** and Assad's media-covered meetings with senior members of the Palestinian government. All that was done to send the message that Damascus held a "terrorist card," while it formally denied any responsibility for the terrorist attacks carried out in Israel and the PA.
 - **With regard to terrorism**, the Syrian régime **encourages the continuation of a terrorist campaign against Israel** and supports the Syrian-based headquarters of Hamas and other terrorist organizations. It is also involved in forming Hamas terrorist policy vis-a-vis the "internal" leadership, including returning Hamas to the track of terrorist attacks, as manifested by launching rockets into Israeli territory and abducting IDF soldiers.
 - To a great extent, the Hamas leadership in Damascus dictates terrorist attack policy to the Hamas infrastructures in the PA. That enables the Syrians to assume they will be able to influence any arrangement that ends the fighting between Israel and Hamas and the release of the abducted IDF soldier. Damascus also assumes it will have in determining every aspect of the new reality created when the fighting in Lebanon ends.
- Source: Dr. Reuven Erlich**, Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center at the Center for Special Studies (C.S.S) (August 3, 2006)

Bashar al-Asad: Fool or Genius?

Barry Rubin

August 8, 2006

Is Syrian President Bashar al-Asad a fool or a genius? That cannot be determined directly. What can be said is that his policy is simultaneously brilliant and disastrous for Syria.

To understand Syria--which is in many ways typical of Middle East politics--two basic principles are needed:

1. The worse Syria behaves, the better its regime does. Syrian leaders do not accept the Western view that pragmatism, moderation, compromise, an open economy, and peace are always better. When Syria acts radical, up to a point of course, it maximizes its main asset--causing trouble--rather than its weakness in terms of bargaining position. As a dictatorship, tight control and popularity achieved through demagoguery work better.

2. Success for the regime and state means disaster for the people, society, and economy. The regime prospers by keeping Syrians believing that the battle against America and Israel, not freedom and prosperity, should be their top priority. The state's control over the economy means lower living standards but rich elite with lots of money to give to its supporters. Imprisoning or intimidating liberal critics means domestic stability but without human rights.

This brings us to Bashar's task. Since the 1980s, Syria has faced big problems. Its Soviet ally (and arms supplier) collapsed; the economy has not done well, domestic unrest has increased, Israel has widened the military gap, and Saddam Hussein was overthrown by the Americans.

Bashar's father and predecessor, Hafiz, maneuvered very well. He participated in the battle against Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, enough to win help from the rich Gulf Arabs and the United States. His participation in negotiations with Israel also helped, though he refused to make an agreement in the end. Then, Hafiz died and passed on the presidency to his inexperienced son.

Clearly, Bashar is no Hafiz. His father was a far better strategist. In contrast to Bashar, he probably would never have withdrawn from Lebanon and would have been more careful to avoid friction with the Gulf Arabs and America. He would never have let Iran turn Syria into something like a client state or treat the Hizballah leader on an equal basis.

The Asad genes are still working though. Bashar withdrew from Lebanon but kept the security and economic assets in place. Almost 20 major bombings and assassinations have shown Lebanese that Syrian interests better be attended. And by killing Rafik Hariri, the former Lebanese prime minister, Bashar got into some apparent trouble but eliminated the only man who could unite the country and stand up to Hizballah.

Today, Bashar's risk-taking seems to be paying off. On the Iraqi front, he is waging war against America at almost no cost to himself. Syria is equipping, training, and sending into battle terrorists who are killing hundreds of Iraqis and Americans without any threat of international action or even condemnation.

On the Lebanese-Israeli front, he has mounted what is basically a conventional war against Israel, again with no cost to himself. In this case, most of the arms and money are coming from Tehran, with Syria getting a free ride. Today, in Damascus, Bashar is a hero for confronting Israel at Lebanese expense. He has also piled up considerable credit with radical Islamists by being their friend and ally in Iraq.

The whole thing might blow up against Bashar some day through international pressure or a domestic Islamist upheaval based on the Sunni Arab majority who hates Bashar and his Alawite minority. For the moment, though, he is riding high. And maybe that answers the question at the beginning of this article: Someone who acts like a fool in Western terms is a genius as a Middle East leader.

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Analysis of the draft of the UN Security Council resolution proposed by France and the United States to end the hostilities between Israel and Hezbollah

1. On August 5, 2006, after intensive diplomatic efforts, the **French and American** representatives to the UN reached an agreement for a proposed draft of a Security Council resolution to end the hostilities between Israel and Hezbollah. A vote is expected to be taken during the coming days. The proposed resolution is being debated and corrections and changes are expected to be made, mainly because of **Lebanese** reservations.
2. An analysis of the proposed resolution shows that **it is different in nature from the Security Council resolutions** adopted after the previous rounds of fighting between Israel and the terrorist organizations operating in Lebanon.¹ It relates to the **fundamental issues** concerning Hezbollah and does not limit itself merely to partial security arrangements in south Lebanon.
3. The articles of the resolution **relating to south Lebanon** deal with **“a full cessation of the hostilities” as the first stage** (without an IDF withdrawal from Lebanon) and an understanding between Israel and Lebanon concerning a list of political issues (including the Sheba’a Farms). **During the second stage**, after the understandings have been reached, there will be a Security Council resolution calling for a permanent ceasefire between Israel and Lebanon and the deployment of an international force in south Lebanon (whose battle order and mandate are still unclear). “Security arrangements” have also been determined based on extending the control of the Lebanese government in south Lebanon with the assistance of an international force and the banning of the presence and armed activity of Hezbollah in south Lebanon. The Lebanese government has already announced its readiness to send 15,000 soldiers to south Lebanon, but **after** a ceasefire and IDF withdrawal.
4. In addition to the “security arrangements” which are intended to make a fundamental change in the status quo ante in south Lebanon, **there are provisions that extend beyond the south-Lebanese context for the first time in a UN Security Council resolution at the end of an armed confrontation between Israel and terrorists in Lebanon.**² Particularly striking are the provisions calling for the **disarmament of “all armed groups”** in Lebanon [with Hezbollah as the focus], the establishment of an **international embargo** on the sale or supply of arms to those groups [i.e., Hezbollah], and a call upon the Government of Lebanon to ensure arms or related materiel are not imported into Lebanon without its consent. To add validity to the proposed resolution, other relevant resolutions are mentioned, as is the Taef Accord, which ended the Lebanese civil war, and even the

Lebanese prime minister's seven-point program.

5. However, in addition to its **positive provisions**, **the draft also has weak points** as far as Israel is concerned. The most important ones are:

A. **The lack of an effective enforcement apparatus and a clearly-defined timetable** for the implementation of the provisions relating to south Lebanon, and even more so of those relating to north Lebanon: that enables Hezbollah to hinder and sabotage (and possibly even prevent) the implementation of provisions which are not to its liking and **in effect to turn the resolution into a hollow shell**. Aided, supported and encouraged by **Syria and Iran**, Hezbollah can be expected to oppose attempts to diminish its power and status in Lebanon.

B. The condition for proceeding to the second stage of the resolution, including the establishment and deployment of an international force, of an Israeli-Lebanese agreement on a series of disputed diplomatic issues, including the Sheba'a Farms: In our assessment, that will take a matter of weeks and perhaps even longer, while a real possibility exists that the necessary agreements will not be reached. That is too long a time, because it might enable Hezbollah to renew its attacks on IDF forces in Lebanon and represent the attacks as a legitimate part of the "struggle against the occupation." During that period (and perhaps after it) there will be no effective multinational force in place, and when the current confrontation ends, **UNIFIL will continue to be stationed in south Lebanon** without the capabilities to deal with continued terrorism.

C. **The draft of the resolution puts Hezbollah's demands concerning two central points (which were adopted by the Lebanese government) on the agenda**: the **first** is the redelineation of the Syrian-Lebanese border in the **Sheba'a Farms region** to prepare the ground for its "liberation" and turning over to Lebanon, even though the UN and the international community have rejected Lebanese claims concerning the area. The **second** is finding a "solution" for the Lebanese prisoners held in Israel (i.e., their release), when what must be remembered is that they were tried and found guilty of murder and involvement in terrorist activities³ and of spying for Hezbollah, and that in the past Israel refused to release them (although it should be remembered that the release of the abducted Israeli soldiers is **unconditional**).

In summation

6. The true test of the proposed Security Council resolution will be to what extent it succeeds in causing a **fundamental change** in the situation in Lebanon which led to the current confrontation, and makes it possible to enjoy the longest possible period of calm along the Israeli-Lebanese border. The draft contains **very positive proposals**, but even if it is adopted as a Security Council resolution, **implementing** it is liable to be met with **stiff resistance from Hezbollah**, and from its sponsors, **Syria and Iran**. Thus it is possible that many of the significant provisions will remain theoretical if the international community does not support them and shows itself unwilling to confront Hezbollah and its sponsors.

7. The weak point of the draft resolution is that with the lack of enforcement apparatuses and effective security arrangements in south Lebanon, **the IDF may find itself stuck in the areas it conquered**, exposed to Hezbollah attacks, limited in its responses and forced, in the final analysis, to once again withdraw unilaterally without sufficient security arrangements. Such a worst-case scenario, should it occur, will enable Hezbollah to represent the current confrontation as a "victory" which will provide the starting point for

the next round of Israel-Hezbollah confrontations. That particular scenario is liable (as far as can be seen by Israel, the United States and the West) to have **negative regional ramifications** beyond the Israeli-Lebanese context.

8. This document contains the following sections:
 - A. The main points of the draft of the UN Security Council resolution.
 - B. The position of the Lebanese government.
 - C. Appendix: The text of the draft of the resolution.

The main points of the draft of the UN Security Council resolution

1. The following are the main points of the resolution (for the full text in English see the **Appendix**):

A. **The cessation of hostilities:** The resolution calls for the “full cessation” of hostilities based on the immediate cessation by Hezbollah of all attacks and the immediate cessation by Israel of offensive military operations. Thus, it recognizes Israel’s right to **respond** to continued Hezbollah attacks.

B. **The enforcement of Lebanese government control in south Lebanon:** The resolution stresses the importance of imposing Lebanese government sovereignty over the entire country (i.e., over south Lebanon) based on Security Council Resolutions 1559 (2004)⁴ and 1608 (2006),⁵ and the relevant articles of the Taef Accord (1989).

C. **A permanent ceasefire between Israel and Lebanon (Hezbollah, a cause of the frequent incidents, is not specifically mentioned.)** The ceasefire must be based on respect for the Blue Line⁶ and the territorial sovereignty and integrity of both Israel and Lebanon.

D. **The resolution does not call for an immediate IDF withdrawal from Lebanon.**

However, it does mention, in general and without an obligatory schedule, **the elimination of foreign forces in Lebanon without the consent of its government.**

E. **UNIFIL monitoring of the resolution’s implementation:** The resolution requests UNIFIL, upon cessation of hostilities, to monitor its implementation and to ensure the safe return of displaced persons [UNIFIL was also mentioned in a context beyond south Lebanon, of assisting the Lebanon government to ensure that arms and related materiel not be imported into Lebanon without its consent, even though it is not deployed in north Lebanon and does not have the necessary capabilities].

F. **The release of the two Israeli soldiers abducted by Hezbollah:** the resolution calls for the “unconditional release” of the two soldiers whose abduction led to the current confrontation. The resolution recognizes Hezbollah’s responsibility for the confrontation and mentions the attack on Israel carried out on July 12. At the same time, it encourages promoting **a solution for the problem of the Lebanese prisoners on Israel,⁷ that is, their release.**

G. **Delineation of the international Israeli-Lebanese border and of the Sheba’a Farms region:** The resolution calls for the delineation of the international border especially in areas where it is “disputed or uncertain” **including the Sheba’a Farms area.⁸**

2. **The resolution calls for Israel and Lebanon to support “security arrangements” between the Blue Line and the Litani River, in order to prevent a resumption of**

hostilities. The “security arrangements” include:

A. **A ban on the presence of terrorists:** The establishment of an area “free of any armed personnel, assets [by implication, military assets, apparently strongholds and entrenchments] and weapons.”

B. **The enforcement of Lebanese government authority:** The Lebanese army will deploy in the area and Lebanese security forces and the Lebanese government will enforce its authority.⁹

C. **Deployment of an international force to support the Lebanese government:** The force’s mandate and battle order will be determined later in a separate resolution after the Israeli and Lebanese governments have agreed to the terms of the long-term arrangement. The limits of the deployment are not specifically defined but in that context an area between the Blue Line and the Litani are mentioned. The force will operate under the authority of the UN mandate given by Chapter VII of the UN Charter.¹⁰

D. **Providing maps of land mines:** Israel will give the UN remaining maps of land mines in Lebanon in Israel’s possession [as requested by the Lebanese government].

3. Security issues mentioned in the draft which go beyond the south Lebanon context:

A. **The disarmament of the “armed groups” in Lebanon** on the basis of the Taef Accord¹¹ and Security Council Resolutions 1559 and 1680 [the intention was to disarm Hezbollah and the Palestinian terrorist organizations]. Also mentioned is the Lebanese government decision of July 27, ratifying Fuad Siniora’s seven-point program to stress the **internal Lebanese legitimacy** of the proposed resolution.

B. **The establishment of an international embargo** on the sale or supply of arms and related equipment to Lebanon except as authorized by its government [mainly **to prevent Iran and Syria from supplying Hezbollah with weapons**]. The draft calls for the Lebanese government to ensure that arms are not brought into Lebanon without its authorization and asks UNIFIL to assist the Lebanese government when requested [although UNIFIL does not have the capability to inspect the transfer of weapons from Syria to Hezbollah].

C. **Lebanon’s economic rehabilitation:** The draft calls upon the international community to take “immediate steps to extend its financial and humanitarian aid to the Lebanese people, including through facilitating the safe return of displaced persons and, under the authority of the Government of Lebanon, reopening airports and harbors for verifiably and purely civilian purposes, and calls on it also to consider further assistance in the future to contribute to the reconstruction and development of Lebanon.”

4. Timetables:

A. The cessation of hostilities is to be **immediate**. The timetables or the resolutions other provisions are **unclear**.

B. The resolution requests the Secretary General to develop, in liaison with key international actors and the concerned parties, proposals to implement the relevant provisions of the Taif Accords, and of resolutions 1559 and 1680 and to **present them to the Security Council within 30 days**.

C. In that context, disarmament [of the terrorist organizations], the delineation of Lebanon’s international borders and the issue of the **Sheba’a Farms** are also mentioned.

D. During that period [of 30 days] the proposal calls upon all sides to **maintain the ceasefire**.

E. Although it is not specifically stated, **the period between first and second parts of the proposed resolution is liable to be longer than 30 days** if Israel and Lebanon do not reach an agreement.

The position of the Lebanese government

5. The Lebanese should, at first glance, be clearly interested in accepting and implementing the Security Council resolution because **it would significantly promote the weakening of Hezbollah and strengthen the government**. On the other hand, the resolution has the potential to **cause internal Lebanese tensions to the point where the situation might deteriorate** if an attempt is made to force Hezbollah into taking steps which do not suit it. That is what the Lebanese government is afraid of.

6. As far as Hezbollah is concerned, **the resolution is dangerous and liable to damage its status in Lebanon**. It specifically calls for the organization to be disarmed, limits its rearmament, allows for an Israeli presence (although a temporary one) in Lebanon after the ceasefire and emphasizes the idea of deploying a multinational force.

7. Therefore, both the Lebanese government and Hezbollah (through its proxy, Nabih Berri, the chairman of the Lebanese Parliament) oppose the current wording of the draft and it is expected that the Lebanese government will make a diplomatic effort to change it and promote its own proposed resolution. In concrete terms, the Lebanese reservations relate to certain central parts of the proposal, among them the demand for a full, immediate ceasefire which will include **an immediate withdrawal of Israeli forces from south Lebanon** (after which the Lebanese government will be willing to send 15,000 soldiers to south Lebanon).

Appendix

Draft of U.N. Security Council Resolution on Hostilities in Lebanon and Israel¹²

Saturday, August 5, 2006; 12:31 PM

Draft UNSC resolution / Projet de résolution du Conseil de Sécurité

The Security Council,

PP1. Recalling all its previous resolutions on Lebanon, in particular resolutions 425 (1978), 426 (1978), 520 (1982), 1559 (2004), 1655 (2006) and 1680 (2006), as well as the statements of its President on the situation in Lebanon, in particular the statements of 18 June 2000 (S/PRST/2000/21), of 19 October 2004 (S/PRST/2004/36), of 4 May 2005 (S/PRST/2005/17) of 23 January 2006 (S/PRST/2006/3) and of 30 July 2006 (S/PRST/2006/35),

PP2. Expressing its utmost concern at the continuing escalation of hostilities in Lebanon and in Israel since Hizbollah's attack on Israel on 12 July 2006, which has already caused hundreds of deaths and injuries on both sides, extensive damage to civilian infrastructure and hundreds of thousands of internally displaced persons,

PP3. Emphasizing the need for an end of violence, but at the same time emphasizing the need to address urgently the causes that have given rise to the current crisis, including by the unconditional release of the abducted Israeli soldiers,

PP4: Mindful of the sensitivity of the issue of prisoners and encouraging the efforts aimed at settling the issue of the Lebanese prisoners detained in Israel,

- OP1. Calls for a full cessation of hostilities based upon, in particular, the immediate cessation by Hizbollah of all attacks and the immediate cessation by Israel of all offensive military operations;
- OP2. Reiterates its strong support for full respect for the Blue Line;
- OP3. Also reiterates its strong support for the territorial integrity, sovereignty and political independence of Lebanon within its internationally recognized borders, as contemplated by the Israeli-Lebanese General Armistice Agreement of 23 March 1949;
- OP4. Calls on the international community to take immediate steps to extend its financial and humanitarian assistance to the Lebanese people, including through facilitating the safe return of displaced persons and, under the authority of the Government of Lebanon, reopening airports and harbours for verifiably and purely civilian purposes, and calls on it also to consider further assistance in the future to contribute to the reconstruction and development of Lebanon;
- OP5. Emphasizes the importance of the extension of the control of the Government of Lebanon over all Lebanese territory in accordance with the provisions of resolution 1559 (2004) and resolution 1680 (2006), and of the relevant provisions of the Taif Accords, for it to exercise its full sovereignty and authority;
- OP6. Calls for Israel and Lebanon to support a permanent ceasefire and a long-term solution based on the following principles and elements:
- strict respect by all parties for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Israel and Lebanon;
 - full respect for the Blue Line by both parties;
 - delineation of the international borders of Lebanon, especially in those areas where the border is disputed or uncertain, including in the Shebaa farms area;
 - security arrangements to prevent the resumption of hostilities, including the establishment between the Blue Line and the Litani river of an area free of any armed personnel, assets and weapons other than those of the Lebanese armed and security forces and of UN mandated international forces deployed in this area;
 - full implementation of the relevant provisions of the Taif Accords and of resolutions 1559 (2004) and 1680 (2006) that require the disarmament of all armed groups in Lebanon, so that, pursuant to the Lebanese cabinet decision of July 27, 2006, there will be no weapons or authority in Lebanon other than that of the Lebanese state;
 - deployment of an international force in Lebanon, consistent with paragraph 10 below;
 - establishment of an international embargo on the sale or supply of arms and related material to Lebanon except as authorized by its government;
 - elimination of foreign forces in Lebanon without the consent of its government;
 - provision to the United Nations of remaining maps of land mines in Lebanon in Israel's possession;
- OP7. Invites the Secretary General to support efforts to secure agreements in principle from the Government of Lebanon and the Government of Israel to the principles and elements for a long-term solution as set forth in paragraph 6 above;
- OP8. Requests the Secretary General to develop, in liaison with key international actors and the concerned parties, proposals to implement the relevant provisions of the Taif Accords, and of resolutions 1559 (2004) and 1680 (2006), including disarmament, and for delineation of the international borders of Lebanon, especially in those areas where the border is disputed or uncertain, including by dealing with the Shebaa farms, and to present those

proposals to the Security Council within thirty days;

OP9. Calls on all parties to cooperate during this period with the Security Council and to refrain from any action contrary to paragraph 1 above that might adversely affect the search for a long-term solution, humanitarian access to civilian populations, or the safe return of displaced persons, and requests the Secretary General to keep the Council informed in this regard;

OP10. Expresses its intention, upon confirmation to the Security Council that the Government of Lebanon and the Government of Israel have agreed in principle to the principles and elements for a long-term solution as set forth in paragraph 6 above, and subject to their approval, to authorize in a further resolution under Chapter VII of the Charter the deployment of a UN mandated international force to support the Lebanese armed forces and government in providing a secure environment and contribute to the implementation of a permanent ceasefire and a long-term solution;

OP11. Requests UNIFIL, upon cessation of hostilities, to monitor its implementation and to extend its assistance to help ensure humanitarian access to civilian populations and the safe return of displaced persons;

OP12. Calls upon the Government of Lebanon to ensure arms or related materiel are not imported into Lebanon without its consent and requests UNIFIL, conditions permitting, to assist the Government of Lebanon at its request;

OP13. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the Council within one week on the implementation of this resolution and to provide any relevant information in light of the Council's intention to adopt, consistent with paragraph 10 above, a further resolution;

OP14. Decides to remain actively seized of the matter.

1. Our Information Bulletin entitled "Agreements, arrangements and understandings concerning Lebanon to which Israel was involved during the past 30 years – background, data, lessons and conclusions," by Dr. Reuven Erlich," will shortly be posted on our Website.

2. The Taef Accord and Security Council Resolution 1559, mentioned in the draft, both of which call for the enforcing of government authority on south Lebanon and the disarming of the militias, were not adopted after crises in which Israel, Hezbollah and other terrorist organizations were involved, but only within internal Lebanese and Lebanese-Syrian contexts.

3. The most prominent of the Lebanese prisoners is Samir Kuntar, a Druze from the Lebanese mountains. A member of the pro-Iraqi terrorist organization of Abu al-'Abbas, he was sentenced to life imprisonment for his participation in a terrorist attack in Nahariya carried out from the sea in 1979. He personally shot Danny Haran to death in front of his four year-old daughter, and then bashed her brains out with his rifle butt.

4. For further information see our Information Bulletin entitled "Disarming Hezbollah and extending the sovereignty and authority of the Lebanese government to south Lebanon , in accordance with Security Council Resolution 1559 (2004) and the Taef Accord (1989)," at http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam_multimedia/English/eng_n/html/taef_e.htm.

5. Security Council Resolution 1680 is the follow-up resolution of Resolution Security Council Resolution 1559, which was adopted as an American-French initiative because of

the lack of progress made in implementing Resolution 1559 after the Syrian forces left Lebanon. It was done to increase the pressure on Syria to permit the implementation of Resolution 1559.

6. The Blue Line runs along the international Israeli-Lebanese border, delineated by a team of United Nations cartographers on the eve of the IDF withdrawal from Lebanon (April-May 2000).

7. The prisoners whose release Hezbollah demands and were sentenced to terms in Israeli jails are a Lebanese Druze brutal murderer and an Israeli Jewish spy.

8. The Sheba'a Farms area is in the Mt. Dov region on the slopes of Mt. Hermon, which the international community has recognized as part of the Golan Heights, and rejected Lebanese claims for sovereignty. Its "liberation" is demanded by Hezbollah and has been one of the fictions for continuing its attacks on Israel after the IDF withdrew from Lebanon. It should be noted that the Syrian-Lebanese border, which was never properly delineated, is not recognized as an international border.

9. In an interview with the Washington Post, Lebanese Prime Minister Fuad Siniora expressed his willingness to deploy 15,000 Lebanese soldiers in south Lebanon and to accept 2,000 soldiers belonging to a multinational force. The Lebanese government, in its August 7 meeting, authorized the deployment of the 15,000 soldiers after the ceasefire and IDF withdrawal. Two Hezbollah ministers also voted in favor.

10. Chapter VII of the UN Charter is the most severe category of UN Security Council resolutions and reserved for cases of blatant aggression, such as Saddam Hussein or the Serbs in Bosnia. Basing the operation of a force on Chapter VII means giving it legal force and the authority to impose sanctions and the use of military force. Thus as far as Israel is concerned, there may be negative implications and Israel's freedom of action in its war against terrorism in Lebanon may be hampered, a war which is expected to continue after the current confrontation.

11. The Taef Accord on 1989, which marked the end of the Lebanese civil war, stated that all the Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias were to be disarmed within six months. Syria, which at that point was extending its control of Lebanon, implemented the Accord only partially and made sure that Hezbollah would not be disarmed. The Palestinian terrorist organizations as well were not disarmed.

12. Source: http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/08/05/AR2006090500440_pf.html

Source: Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center at the Center for Special Studies (C.S.S) (August 7, 2006)

An International Force: Advantages and Disadvantages

Lt.-Gen. (ret.) Moshe Yaalon and Maj.-Gen. (res.) Yaakov Amidror

Jerusalem Issue Brief

Institute for Contemporary Affairs

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- Discussions about security arrangements in Lebanon at the end of the war have included the proposal to station an international force in that country. Yet the UN has a very bad name in terms of confronting strong forces in areas where it is stationed.
- The only logical basis for an international presence is the creation of a force whose primary mission will be assisting the Lebanese Armed Forces in disarming Hizballah (as stated in UN Security Council Resolution 1559). Such a force should be deployed close to Beirut, at the border passages with Syria, and deep in the Lebanese Bekaa Valley.
- An international force has no role in southern Lebanon along the Israeli-Lebanese border. Israel itself is deployed along its northern border to defend itself and prevent the strengthening of Hizballah, should it try to move southward.
- To complement this deployment, there should be an agreement prohibiting the building of fortifications in southern Lebanon – as in the agreement between Israel and Egypt. In addition, the UN should establish a supervisory force like UNSCOM to deal with locating and clearing out Hizballah’s arms caches and preventing the building of new ones.

Types of International Forces

In the interest of a serious national discourse about security arrangements in Lebanon at the end of the war, it is worth more thoroughly discussing the proposal to station an international force in Lebanon, an idea that Israel has opposed in the distant and recent past.

There are four known kinds of international forces:

1. A force whose purpose is to supervise signed agreements between two states – such as the multinational force (MFO) that supervises the Israeli-Egyptian agreement in the Sinai.
2. A force whose role is to report on events in the field where it is deployed, without the ability or role of enforcing a certain policy – such as the international force that is deployed as a UN force in southern Lebanon (UNIFIL).
3. A force whose mission is to maintain quiet in a region where there is a potential for clashes – that being the role of the NATO forces in Kosovo.

4. A force whose task is to fight in the name of a certain policy – such as the UN force in the Korean War in the 1950s and the NATO force in Afghanistan today.

Although it is not clear what is being considered or planned regarding an international force in Lebanon, the accumulated experience on this issue should not be ignored.

The U.S. Marines who came to Lebanon at the end of 1982 withdrew in fear a few months later after Hizballah used intensive terrorism against them. UNIFIL has been in the field since 1978 and has done more harm than good – it did not prevent Palestinian terror (prior to Israel's entry into southern Lebanon in 1982) or Hizballah attacks, while hampering the IDF's freedom of action. Among all the international forces in our area, the only one that successfully carries out its role is the multinational force in Sinai, the MFO, which is built on a broad American basis. Its success is due mainly to the fact that the two countries involved, Egypt and Israel, are determined to uphold the security arrangements.

Also in Kosovo, where a large international force is stationed, there has been relative success – because the force, just by being there, promotes the interests of the local actors who want independence or annexation to Albania, and no one has an interest in harming the functioning of the force.

In Afghanistan, however, the multinational force under NATO command is waging a real war, and quite successfully, yet has no connection to the UN or its institutions.

What Should Israel Expect from a Multinational Force?

What should Israel expect from a multinational force? Is this a force that will fight Hizballah so as to disarm it? One should not expect this. The UN has a very bad name in terms of confronting strong forces in areas where it is stationed.

Is this the force that will separate between the aims and actions of a live-and-thriving Hizballah in the north and the State of Israel in the south? Such a buffer force is a recipe for disaster; it will most likely fail in fighting Hizballah, but will also hamper the IDF's freedom of response.

It seems the only logical basis that can justify an international force, made up of real combat soldiers, is the creation of a force whose primary mission will be assisting the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF). It is the

Lebanese Armed Forces that must carry the burden of disarming Hizballah, and it is the Lebanese Armed Forces that must verify that there are no military contingents of experts of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards in Lebanon (all as stated in UN Security Council Resolution 1559). It is the Lebanese Armed Forces that must safeguard Lebanon's borders – so that Iranian or Syrian weapons will not be smuggled from Syria into Lebanon, and Hizballah will be prevented from rebuilding its fortifications close to the border with Israel.

The Lebanese Armed Forces is a sufficiently strong army and there seems to be no need to fear that the Shiites in it will defect to Hizballah. This army may, however, need assistance and backing, and that is what a strong international force can provide. Therefore, such a force should be deployed close to the capital, Beirut, at the border passages with Syria, and deep in the Lebanese Bekaa Valley. It should be prepared to assist the Lebanese Armed Forces in areas where Hizballah was strong and influential.

An International Force Has No Role in Southern Lebanon

Thus, an international force has no role in southern Lebanon along the Israeli-Lebanese border. Israel itself is deployed along its northern border to defend itself and prevent the strengthening of Hizballah, should it try to move southward. In southern Lebanon the Lebanese Armed Forces will have a supportive hinterland in the form of the IDF. It needs, however, a supportive hinterland in central and eastern Lebanon.

To complement this deployment, it may be worth importing two important ideas from other conflict zones of the world that can help ensure Lebanon's flowering as an independent state, without a threat from Hizballah either internally or externally toward Israel:

1. An agreement should prohibit the building of fortifications in southern Lebanon – as in the agreement between Israel and Egypt. This will remove the concern that the threat will return to the northern border and the stimulus to war will be renewed.
2. The UN should establish a supervisory force like UNSCOM to deal with locating and clearing out Hizballah's arms caches and preventing the building of new ones. The UN carried out this role reasonably well in Iraq and there is no reason it cannot do so in Lebanon.

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This *Jerusalem Issue Brief* is available online at:
<http://www.jcpa.org/brief/brief006.4.htm>

Summary, conclusions and lessons learned from thirty years of agreements, arrangements and understandings in Lebanon

1. This report examines the agreements, arrangements and understandings in which Israel was involved during the past 30 years and as they relate to the diplomatic efforts currently being made to end the fighting between Israel and Hezbollah.

2. Most of the agreements and arrangements examined were reached after military actions taken by Israel during its war against Lebanese-based terrorism, whether Palestinian or Shi'ite. Some relate to Israel's relations with **Syria and the Lebanese government**, whether in the context of Syrian involvement in Lebanon or a peace treaty or security agreements Israel unsuccessfully tried to reach in Lebanon.

3. **Three periods were examined**: the period before the Lebanon War, during which Israel battled Palestinian terrorism in Lebanon (1975-1981); the period of the Lebanon War itself (1982-1985) and the period of the so-called "security zone" (1985-2000). This document ends with the **lessons learned and conclusions drawn from agreements reached in the past**, which are, in our assessment, relevant to the current situation.

4. The history of terrorist attacks against Israel originating in Lebanon clearly illustrates that **Lebanon was and remains the ideal arena from which to use terrorism** – whether Shi'ite or Palestinian – **as a weapon against Israel**. The fundamental reasons for that are independent of the current crisis:
 - A. The **topography** of the area makes it ideal as a location from which to attack populated areas in Israel.

- B. There is a downtrodden, economically and socially deprived **Shi'ite population** living near Israel's northern border, with terrorist organizations working within its midst.
- C. The **Palestinian refugee camps** in south and north Lebanon are a hotbed of Palestinian terrorist organization activity.
- D. The **delicate Lebanese internal sectarian balance** and the Lebanese government's inherent weakness hamper the government and army's ability to enforce their authority in south Lebanon.
- E. More than any of the above, there is the **influence of the Middle East states' sponsorship for terrorism**. They view Lebanon as a convenient springboard for terrorist activities against Israel which will promote their own strategic interests. That was true of Nasser's Egypt in the 1950 and has been true for Syria and Iran during the past decades.

5. **At no time during the past two decades did Israel manage to achieve a lasting peace agreement or other arrangement with Lebanon.** That was chiefly because of internal factors in Lebanon and its overwhelming dependence on Syria as well as Hezbollah's close relations with Iran. Israel has had no choice but to use force, and during the past 30 years it has undertaken a wide range of military actions, beginning with targeted attacks on terrorist bases, through comprehensive operations (Litani, Accountability and Grapes of Wrath) and ending with Operation Peace for the Galilee, in which Israel remained in Lebanon for three years. Those operations yielded at best meager fruits in the form of partial, temporary and feeble agreements which did not solve the basic problem of Lebanon-based terrorism.

6. Despite their temporary nature, the agreements, arrangements and understandings reached were, for Israel, absolutely essential, because they provided a breathing space and periods of relative quiet for the populated areas of the north. They were the necessary replacement for the permanent agreements which were not forthcoming, but their life expectancies were short and they quickly dissolved. Israel learned that the hard way after Operation Litani (1978), two weeks of fighting against the Palestinian terrorist organizations (1981), and Operations Accountability (1993) and Grapes of Wrath (1996). That was also true when Israel took unilateral actions, and the IDF's withdrawal from Lebanon (1985) and from the "security zone" (2000) did not bring about a long-term cessation of terrorist activity.

7. **An analysis of 30 years of Israeli policy in Lebanon shows that all the agreements, arrangements and understandings reached had three central weaknesses which led to their erosion and eventual collapse:**

A. **The basic discrepancy between Israeli and terrorist organization worldviews:** Israel regarded the agreements and arrangements as a means of stopping terrorist attacks from Lebanon to enable the residents of the north to live normal, routine daily lives. The terrorists, on the other hand, both Palestinian and Lebanese, regarded them as a response to political and military pressures and a way of gaining time to reorganize and improve their preparedness for a renewal of terrorist activities, their only justification for existence.

B. **The absence of any binding arrangement leading to effective inspection and enforcement:** Because of the basic discrepancy between Israel and the terrorist organizations, **effective inspection and enforcement mechanisms had to be created, extremely problematic given the conditions in Lebanon :**

1) **The Lebanese government:** The partner in most of the agreements and the side that was supposed to be focal in enforcing them was **unable to do so**. That was because of the Lebanese government's (and army's) basic weakness versus internal Lebanese sources of power, versus the terrorist organizations (Hezbollah among them) and versus their sponsoring countries (primarily **Syria and Iran**). That situation exists despite the fact that in principle, the Lebanese government and the anti-Syrian coalition have a strong interest in enforcing the government sovereignty in south Lebanon and in weakening Hezbollah and the terrorist organizations.

2) **Stationing international forces:** In the absence of the Lebanese government's ability and desire to enforce its authority, attempts were made support it by stationing international forces. To this day they have been a resounding failure, whether because the United States and France were unwilling to shed the blood of their own soldiers in Lebanon (and therefore, under terrorist pressure, removed their units from the multi-national force) or whether from the beginning, UNIFIL was not given a mandate to take effective action against the terrorist organizations (as a result of the understanding that should such a mandate be given, it might involve the UN soldiers in unending clashes with the terrorist organizations).

3) **IDF activity supported in the security zone north of the international border supported by friendly Lebanese militias:** In the absence of effective Lebanese or UN enforcement apparatuses, the IDF had no choice but to remain in the area north of the Israeli-Lebanese border for long periods of time (the "security zone" after the Lebanon War and the Christian militias headed by Major Hadad before it), and from there to wage the struggle against terrorism. As a solution it was also extremely problematic, because it involved Israeli casualties and did not provide a solution for the Katyusha rockets fired into Israel from areas north of the zones occupied by the IDF.

C. **The opposition of the terrorism-sponsoring countries:** Throughout the years, those countries, with **Syria** in the forefront, proved their ability to hinder and even sabotage agreements and arrangements to which they were not a party and which were contrary to what they viewed as their interests. **On the other hand, involving Syria in the Grapes of Wrath**

agreement, did not prevent its eventual erosion, but it did prolong the period of its enforcement.

8. The longer the current confrontation has lasted, the faster the international community has moved to find a diplomatic solution to end the fighting and change the fundamental conditions which enabled the crisis to occur. The outlines for its solution are similar to those raised during the past 30 years. They center around distancing Hezbollah from the border, enforcing the authority and sovereignty of the Lebanese government, the establishment of security arrangements and the establishment of an international apparatus for effective enforcement of the agreement (with the addition of the release of the abducted soldiers as part of any solution reached).

9. With all the reservations mentioned concerning the survival of agreements and arrangements in Lebanon, **which oblige Israel to have a fairly low level of expectation regarding any agreement reached**, in our assessment it is worthwhile to learn lessons from the past likely to **improve the quality of the upcoming agreement and prolong its life expectancy**. They are:

A. The involvement of the United States: America was involved in most of the agreements and arrangements, sometimes as the only participant and sometimes not, sometimes center stage and sometimes behind the scenes. **Significant American involvement is also important this time** (despite the fact that as stated, it cannot ensure enforcement) even if the UN and other countries are involved, such as France .

B. Significant involvement of the Lebanese government: In the past, as noted, the Lebanese government could not deliver the goods. During the past few years there has been an improvement in its ability to carry out political maneuvers, first because of the IDF's withdrawal from Lebanon (2000) and second because of the eviction of the Syrian forces (2005). Sending the Lebanese army to south Lebanon (which is problematic because it is weak) will at least provide **Lebanese legitimacy for any agreement** and in our assessment should therefore be **central to its success**.

C. Stationing international forces: Although that has proved to be problematic, this time as well it will be necessary to station effective international forces to back up the weak Lebanese army. A past lesson is that those forces will need a clear mandate to enforce their authority, and an appropriate order of battle. Otherwise it will be a replay of unsuccessful UNIFIL.

D. The inclusion of Syria or at least the neutralizing of its destructive force (and indirectly that of Iran as well) : Including Syria in any agreement is likely to make it easier for the Lebanese government and the international force to function. On the other hand, including Syria (and even more so, Iran), is liable have a **political price which might be very high for the State of Israel** .

E. **Avoiding a long IDF stay in the captured areas of Lebanon** : Past experience has shown that when the IDF stays in Lebanese territory for a long period of time it is liable to be exposed to daily Hezbollah attacks in areas where there are large Shi'ite populations, parts of which are hostile to Israel, and to cost the IDF casualties. There is also the possibility that the Lebanese and international community will justify such attacks by representing the Israeli fighting as "occupation." Therefore, the arrival of the Lebanese and international apparatuses should be synchronized with the **IDF withdrawal from Lebanon, according to the most rapid schedule** possible.

F. **Economic aid to south Lebanon**: After the wide-scale destruction in Lebanon caused by the current confrontation, the country will need pan-Arab and western aid to rehabilitate the infrastructures that were damaged. Past experience has shown that such aid is channeled into Beirut and does not reach the economically deprived population in south Lebanon where Hezbollah flourishes. A radical approach to the problem of terrorism necessitates the broad economic rehabilitation of south Lebanon **channeled through the Lebanese government** and not through Hezbollah's financiers with their **Iranian** backers. In other words, the Lebanese government will have to demonstrate its economic as well as its military presence in south Lebanon.

G. **Israeli maintenance of and support for any arrangement reached**: In the past, because of its desire not to rekindle the situation, Israel tended to overlook infringements and violations of the agreements. That created a dynamic of limited violations that quickly eroded the agreements. Thus **Israel will be forced to maintain and support (through military action, if necessary) any agreement reached** even if it leads to additional incidents, political difficulties and continued coping with the problem of terrorism originating in Lebanon.

Source: Dr. Reuven Erlich, **Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center at the Center for Special Studies (C.S.S) (August 6, 2006)**

New Books

Judith Palmer Harik, *Hezbollah: The Changing Face of Terrorism* (London: I.B. Tauris Publishers, July 2005). 256 pages. PB: £8.44. ISBN: 1845110242. A first-hand account of the leading Islamist group, this book promises extensive coverage in news media. It is essential reading for all concerned with the phenomenon of political Islam. Since the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri in early 2005, Lebanese politics has been plunged into a new era. Will Syrian withdrawal send the country back into civil war? How will the seismic political shifts underway affect the stability of the region? At the centre of the turmoil stands one player that will affect the outcome more than any other: Hezbollah. Hezbollah, or the 'Party of God', is one of the most

powerful and the most misunderstood forces in Middle Eastern politics. In this new edition of her acclaimed book, Judith Harik explains what it actually believes in, what its real relationship with other regional players is, and in what direction it is heading. Hezbollah arose amidst the chaos of the Lebanese civil war to resist the Israeli invasion of 1982. Based amongst the poor Shi'ite population, it takes its inspiration from the Iranian revolution and the teachings of Ayatollah Khomeini. Today Hezbollah's military wing controls the major fault-line of the Middle East: the Lebanese-Israeli border. To the US, Hezbollah represents one of the most dangerous terrorist networks in the world. In Lebanon, it is a democratically elected party within the Lebanese parliament, backed not just by Shi'ites, but by Christians and secular Muslims. To the wider Arab world, Hezbollah is a legend: the only Arab fighting force to have defeated Israel, forcing its withdrawal from south Lebanon in 2000. Harik draws on her considerable first-hand experience of the movement to tell the story of how a clandestine, radical militia transformed itself into a seemingly moderate and mainstream player in the Lebanese political arena. She looks at key questions: why do so many non-Shiites support them? Who controls the movement - the Mullahs, or the grassroots? Harik's penetrating analysis helps us make sense of fast-moving events as the future of Lebanon - and the region - hangs in the balance.

Ahmed Qurie, *From Oslo to Jerusalem: The Palestinian Story of the Secret Negotiations* (London: I.B. Tauris Publishers, May 2006). 328 pages. HB: £15.93. ISBN: 184511132X. With the Israeli-Palestinian Peace process still unresolved, former Prime Minister Ahmed Qurie, unveils for the first time his record of the 1993 Oslo negotiations which led to this point.

Richard Youngs, *Europe and the Middle East: In the Shadow of September 11* (Lynne Rienner Publishers, September 2006). 250 pages. HB: \$55. ISBN: 1-58826-476-9 (10). The book presents a thorough analysis of the policies implemented by the European Union in the Middle East since September 11. http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1588264769/sr=1-1/qid=1154069614/ref=sr_1_1/002-0494756-3306451?ie=UTF8&s=books

Yearning for peace and tranquility, and the return of sanity, soon,

Rafi

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