

ISRAEL'S CRITICAL REQUIREMENTS FOR DEFENSIBLE BORDERS THE FOUNDATION FOR A SECURE PEACE



Central Tel Aviv as Seen from the West Bank Village of Deir Ballut

Introduction by
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Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs

המרכז הירושלמי לענייני ציבור ומדינה (ע"ר)

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Cover Photo: Alexander Lysyi – Central Tel Aviv as seen from the West Bank village of Deir Ballut

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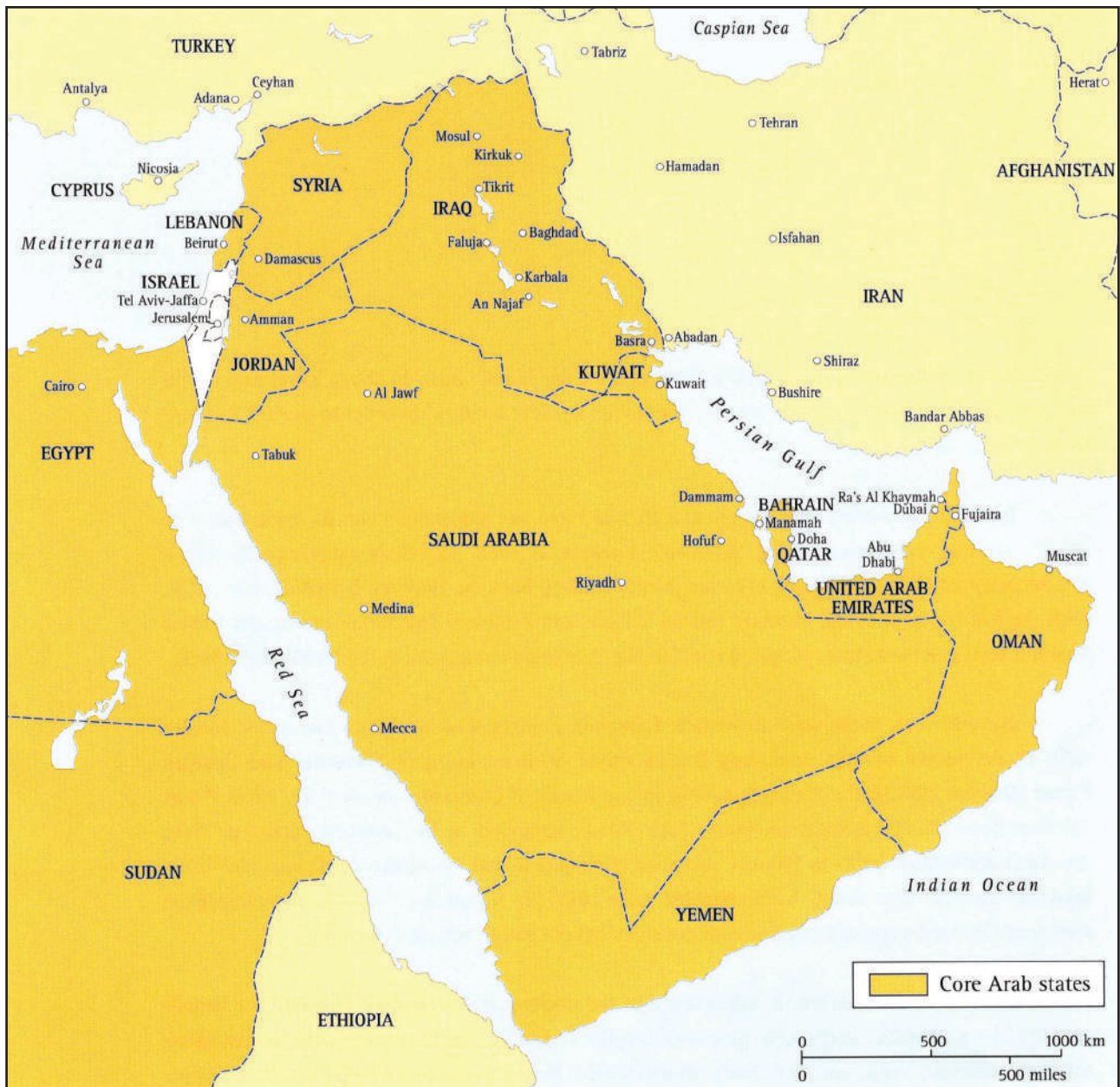
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Map 1 – Israel and the Middle East



Introduction: Restoring a Security-First Peace Policy

Lt.-Gen. (ret.) Moshe Yaalon

Israel's vital security requirements and a conditional endorsement of a Palestinian state were laid out by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in his first major policy speech at Bar-Ilan University, just two months after he took office in April 2009. Though at first glance it may appear as though Netanyahu articulated a major shift in Israel's policy, the ideas he endorsed represent a restoration of Israel's traditional security-based approach to achieving a lasting peace. This policy has been based on the government's understanding of the strategic environment in the Middle East and the nature of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. That is, since the beginning of the conflict, even before the founding of the state and all the way through the Oslo Accords, the readiness of the Zionist leadership to reach an historic compromise has failed to convince the Palestinians to forgo their commitment to "armed struggle" and other forms of opposition to the right of the Jewish people to live peacefully in a nation-state of their own in their historic home, the Land of Israel.

This background supports this urgently needed policy study, *Israel's Critical Requirements for Defensible Borders: The Foundation for a Secure Peace*. Israel's security requirements in any agreement with the Palestinians are presented here by some of Israel's best military minds, who have experienced first-hand the dangers the Jewish state faces on all fronts, particularly in Gaza and Judea and Samaria (the West Bank), and from groups and regimes sponsored by Iran.

Throughout my military career, that included the Oslo "peace process" in the 1990s, I dealt with Palestinian and radical Islamic terror as an IDF officer in a variety of posts. I served as head of Military Intelligence, Deputy Chief of Staff, and then as Chief of Staff of the IDF during operations against the Palestinian Authority's paramilitary forces, Fatah militias,

and Hamas forces in Gaza and Judea and Samaria from 2000 to 2005. The hard reality of these experiences taught me the importance of confronting security threats, ensuring the appropriate security protection systems, and not succumbing to wishful thinking about Israel's enemies.

Today, the relative calm on Israel's borders and in Judea and Samaria should not be misinterpreted. Notwithstanding security improvements by the Palestinian National Security Forces trained by Lt.-Gen. Keith Dayton under the U.S.-backed security reform program, the IDF has been working around the clock to uproot the terror infrastructure in many Palestinian areas, while Iranian-backed Hamas has rebuilt its military capabilities in Gaza, as has Iran's Hizbullah proxy throughout Lebanon. It is with these considerations in mind that Israel must approach the establishment of a prospective Palestinian state.

This study is a corrective to the widely-held view that peace requires Israel to withdraw to the perilous 1949 armistice lines. These lines would invite war by denying the Jewish state strategic depth and topographical protection.

This study is a corrective to the widely-held view in many international quarters and even in limited circles in Israel about the “need” and even the “inevitability” that peace requires Israel to withdraw to the perilous 1949 armistice lines (erroneously called the 1967 “borders”). These borders would not achieve peace – they would weaken Israel and invite war by denying the Jewish state strategic depth and topographical protection against Palestinian rocket and other attacks. The 1949 armistice lines enabled Israel's enemies to deploy and operate in dangerously close proximity to Israel's main population centers to such an extent that they constituted an existential threat to Israel.

Brief Historical Context

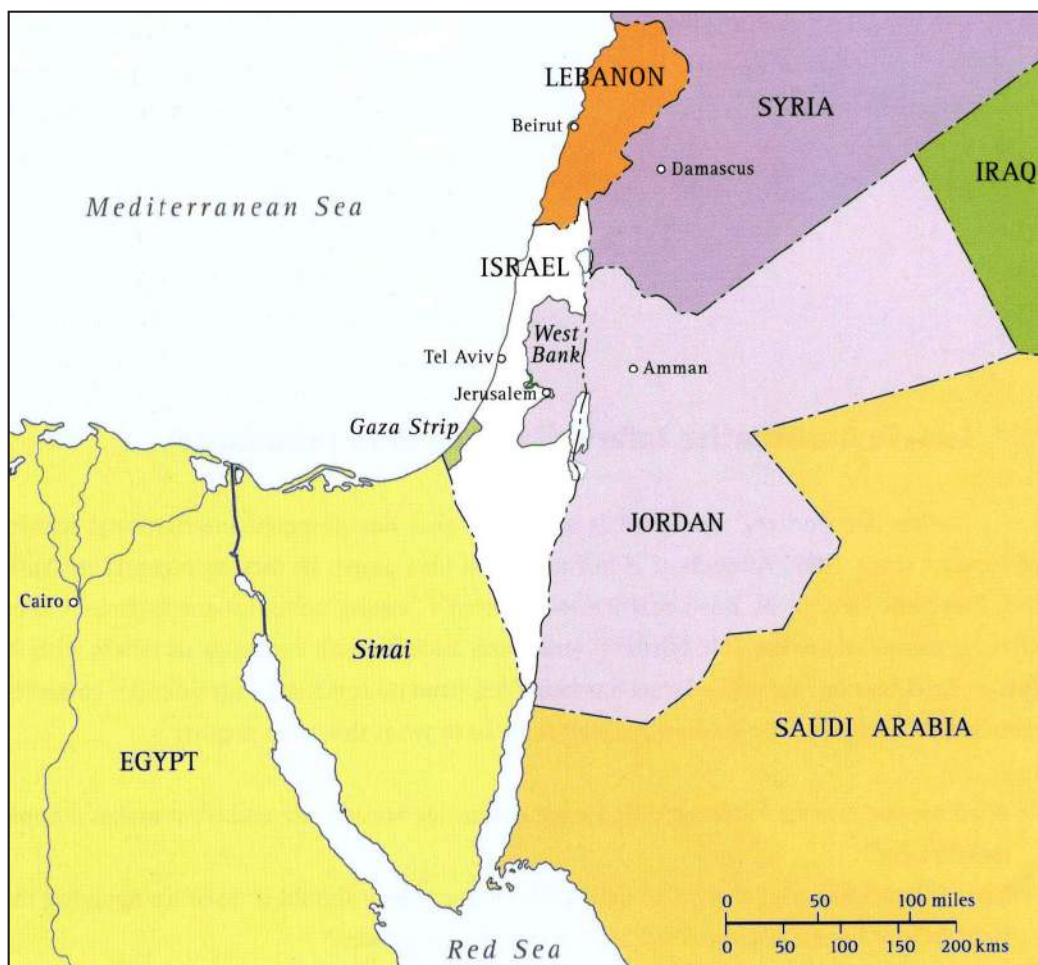
Israeli policy immediately following the Six-Day War in 1967, and up to the Oslo Accords in 1993, centered on finding a formula that would enable Israel to avoid ruling over the Palestinians, without returning to the unstable pre-war '67 lines. It was on this basis that Israel did not annex Judea, Samaria and Gaza, yet at the same time did not speak of a Palestinian state within those territories. In fact, nothing that Israel did or said in those years – including at the 1978 Camp David Accords between Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin and Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, which called for “autonomy for the Palestinian people,” and later, in 1993, when Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin entered into the Oslo Accords – constituted intent or consent to establish a Palestinian state within the pre-war '67 lines. Those Israeli leaders understood that these lines were indefensible.

What Rabin envisioned for Judea and Samaria was something along the lines of the “Allon Plan,” originally drafted by Yigal Allon, Rabin's former commander in the pre-state Palmach, and former foreign minister under Rabin. Drafted shortly after the Six-Day War,

the Allon Plan called for Israel to retain sovereignty in some of the territories it came to control in Judea and Samaria, but not to settle in areas with large Arab populations. The plan delineated a security border extending from the Jordan Valley up the steep eastern slopes of the Judea-Samaria mountain ridge and retained sovereignty over Jerusalem as Israel's united capital. The Allon Plan served as the security reference point for Israeli governments from 1967 until far into the 1990s.

Rabin was very clear on the need to provide Palestinian autonomy, yet maintain defensible borders for Israel. In his speech before the Knesset on October 5, 1995, on the ratification of the Israel-Palestinian Interim Agreement – a month before he was assassinated – he stated: “We would like this to be an entity which is less than a state, and which will independently run the lives of the Palestinians under its authority. The borders of the State of Israel, during the permanent solution, will be beyond the lines which existed before the Six-Day War. We will not return to the 4 June 1967 line.” In the same speech Rabin emphasized that “The security border of the State of Israel will be located in the Jordan Valley, in the broadest meaning of that term.”¹ He added that Jerusalem would remain Israel's united capital.

Map 2 – Israel within the 1949 Armistice Lines (pre-67 lines)



The erosion of the concept of defensible borders began in 2000 when Prime Minister Ehud Barak went to the Camp David summit with PA Chairman Yasser Arafat and U.S. President Bill Clinton to negotiate an end to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Sensing that the Israeli public was ripe for substantial concessions in exchange for a peace agreement, Barak decided to put the Palestinians to the test. He did this by abandoning defensible borders and waiting to see whether Arafat would accept Israel's unprecedented peace offer, and if not, "expose his true colors." The result was the latter.

However, in doing so, Israel paid a heavy price – one that it continues to pay today. Barak inaugurated a new land-for-peace paradigm that was not rooted in UN Security Council Resolution 242 of 1967, which had governed all Arab-Israeli peace initiatives since the Six-Day War. Instead, from that point on, Israel was expected to live within the curtailed borders that Barak had proposed. Even more far-reaching, the Palestinian leadership succeeded in establishing in the minds of Western policymakers the idea that the "1967 lines" – that is, the 1949 armistice lines – should be the new frame of reference for all future negotiations, as opposed to the notion of "secure and recognized boundaries" which had been unanimously approved by the UN Security Council after the Six-Day War. In the aftermath of Arafat's rejection of Ehud Barak's peace offer, the Palestinian suicide bombing war that followed, Ariel Sharon's withdrawal from the Gaza Strip, the Second Lebanon War, the failed Annapolis talks, and the 2008-9 war in Gaza, the Netanyahu government is readopting the notion that safeguarding Israel's vital security requirements is the only path to a viable and durable peace with our Palestinian neighbors. This includes defensible borders, a demilitarized Palestinian entity, control of a unified airspace with Judea and Samaria, electromagnetic communications frequency security, and other guarantees. This marks a shift away from the previously held misperception that territorial withdrawals would make room for a peace deal, and that such a deal would bring security. Prime Minister Netanyahu is articulating a broad Israeli consensus that has been forged in the trauma of recent events for a security-first approach as the only avenue to real peace.

The return to a security-first approach is firmly rooted in Israel's longstanding commitment to defend itself by itself. Israel has never asked any foreign power to endanger its troops in its defense.

Perhaps the most important element of a viable security framework is the requirement that the Palestinians at all levels of society inculcate in their people a culture of peace that forswears indoctrination and incitement to violence and terror, and accepts the Jewish people's 3,300-year connection to the Land of Israel and its right to live in Israel – the Jewish nation-state – in peace and security.

The return to a security-first approach is firmly rooted in Israel's longstanding commitment to defend itself without reliance on foreign forces. Israel has never asked any foreign power to endanger its troops in its defense. Israel's insistence on defensible borders, which was a

central guarantee of the exchange of letters between President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Ariel Sharon in 2004, will ensure that Israel will be able to defend itself in the future.

The Implosion of the Land for Peace Formula and its Consequences

The idea of “land for peace” began a rapid deterioration during the Oslo years, in the mid-1990s, when the territory that was placed under Palestinian control was used to create terrorist cadres for attacks against Israel – a phenomenon which culminated in the outbreak of the suicide-bombing war commonly known as the Second (or Al-Aksa) Intifada. “Land for peace” was dealt another blow when Israel withdrew from Gaza in 2005 and was repaid with a Hamas takeover of the territory and a dramatic escalation of rocket attacks on Israeli cities.

The lessons learned in both cases is that the Palestinians have adhered to their historical narrative of armed struggle that denies Israel’s right to exist as a Jewish nation-state, regardless of signed agreements or unilateral Israeli withdrawals. In short, the Palestinians have interpreted Israeli territorial withdrawals as signs of weakness and retreat that have energized their struggle to force additional Israeli territorial concessions.

Rejecting the failed, concession-based formulas of previous governments is not the only about-face in Israeli strategy that the Netanyahu government has undertaken. Another element involves the expectations of Palestinian society. Until now, the Palestinians have only been asked for a “top-down” peace process, throughout which their leaders have held meetings, shaken hands, attended peace conferences, and even signed agreements with Israeli leaders. But none of this was supported from the “bottom-up.”

When a peace process does not sprout from the grassroots of a society, it is both pointless and useless. Indeed, until three-year-old children in Ramallah stop being taught to idolize “martyrs” who blow themselves up for *jihad* against Israelis and Jews, ideas which are also broadcast on Palestinian television, radio and the Internet, there will only be a “peace process” in the imaginations of the self-deluded.

Had Israel’s experience with the Palestinians been different – had Oslo led to peace instead of suicide bombers; had disengagement led to a flourishing society within Gaza rather than a launching site for Hamas rockets and a destination for Iranian weapons – the Israeli government’s considerations on how to reach a compromise on the borders of a Palestinian state would be different. As the situation stands today, Israel’s security depends on its retaining defensible borders. This means maintaining control over key areas of Judea and Samaria and certainly over an undivided Jerusalem. Any division of Israel’s capital city will invite sniper attacks, and mortar and rocket fire on the country’s capital from the surrounding high ground. In the event that the Palestinians obtain full sovereignty in Judea and Samaria, those areas – as Gaza before them – may be quickly taken over by Hamas and become staging grounds for attacks on Israel. This would pose

a particularly serious threat due to the topography of the territory, which includes high ground from which even relatively primitive rockets – and even mortars – could easily strike Ben-Gurion International Airport.

Defensible Borders in the Age of Rocket Terror

The debate over defensible borders is primarily a debate about Judea and Samaria and the calamities that would befall Israel should this territory be captured by radical Fatah factions or, like Gaza, by Hamas. Maintaining defensible borders is primarily a strategy for ensuring that such events never take place – and that if they do, Israel can respond swiftly to the threat. There are several specific threats that defensible borders can help prevent. The first is that of rockets. Today, Hamas possesses rockets with a range of more than 75 kilometers. If launched from the Judea-Samaria mountain ridge, these rockets could strike the center of Israel where more than 70 percent of the population resides. This is also why it is crucial for Israel to control the strategically vital Jordan Valley. If it does not do so, the situation along the Jordan border may become similar to that of the Gaza-Egyptian border, where weapons, terrorists and other forms of support were easily smuggled to Hamas until the Egyptian army crackdown on the smuggling tunnels in 2013-14.

The second major threat that defensible borders helps reduce are possible attempts by radical Islamic elements to destabilize Jordan or exploit its territory as a launching pad for terror attacks and military operations against Israel via Palestinian territory. Israel's peace treaty with the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is a cornerstone of Israel's security, making Jordan's security of great importance to Israel.

For the sake of Israeli and Jordanian security – and indeed for the protection of moderate factions inside the Palestinian Authority – it is vital that the Jordan border retain an Israeli security presence.

If the IDF were withdrawn to the 1949 lines, the conquest of Judea and Samaria would become easier and therefore assume even greater strategic value to Hamas and its Iranian patron, which would surely pour new resources into accomplishing this task. Much of this effort would concentrate on creating terror networks and hospitable conditions for arms smuggling on the Jordanian side of the border. Israel and the Hashemite Kingdom would thus both be threatened by the attempt to develop a “Hamastan” in Judea and Samaria.

Israel is prepared to negotiate the parameters of demilitarized Palestinian statehood with the Palestinian Authority. But Israel must take into account the reality that a Palestinian state could end up being ruled by hostile forces, such as one of the militant factions of Fatah or its Hamas adversaries. The threat is not just theoretical, particularly in view of the ongoing incitement and indoctrination to terror that takes place under the Palestinian Authority.

For the sake of Israeli and Jordanian security – and indeed for the protection of moderate factions inside the Palestinian Authority – it is vital that the Jordan border retain an Israeli security presence.

Strategic Vulnerabilities

Israel's situation prior to 1967 made it a "sitting duck" for enemy attack. Today, with all the new weaponry and technological developments available to its enemies – and with Hamas located approximately 70 km. from Tel Aviv – for Israel to revert to having a 14-km. waistline (the distance from Tulkarem to Netanya) would make it not only more vulnerable and inviting of attack, but virtually indefensible. Israel must be able to prevent hostile military forces and terror groups emanating from within and via a prospective Palestinian state from attacking Israel's narrow waistline, especially during a crisis that draws a large proportion of the IDF away from Israeli territory, such as into Lebanon or Syria.

It must be emphasized that there are many unknowns when it comes to the future security of the Middle East and the stability of the regimes bordering Israel. This will become an especially grave concern should Iran achieve a nuclear weapons capability. Such a dramatic shift in the regional balance of power could destabilize Sunni regimes or compel them to cut deals with their new masters in Tehran that would compel them to join Iran in support of terror organizations. The terror groups themselves will be emboldened by their new nuclear patron and will speak about having acquired a protective nuclear umbrella for their attacks. Meanwhile, Hizbullah and Hamas are acquiring weapons with increasing range and lethality.

These terror groups are already penetrating land and sea barriers that had previously prevented states like Iran and Syria from transferring sophisticated weaponry. Israel must have robust borders in order to meet these possible challenges, including the threat of non-conventional attack, which cannot be ruled out. Israel is not alone in confronting these dangers, either currently or historically. The United States risked nuclear war to prevent the Soviet Union from deploying nuclear missiles 90 miles from its southern shore.

Israel's retaining control over its borders will make it more difficult for terror groups to use the territory of Israel's neighbors as a staging area for attacks. This will not only enhance Israel's security, but also the stability of neighboring governments and even distant Sunni regimes in the region. It is in the interest of all these actors for Israel to maintain defensible borders.

Demilitarization

This brings us to an additional necessary condition for the establishment of a Palestinian state: that it be demilitarized.

Israel's past experience with peacemaking has been marked by failure and double-dealing. When Yasser Arafat first passed through the Rafah crossing into the Gaza Strip in May 1994 as part of the "Gaza and Jericho First" agreement with Israel, he violated the Oslo Accords from the first moment of his return by hiding prohibited weapons and a terrorist in his vehicle. From that moment to this day, the PA has established a track record of failure and bad faith that should make Israel reluctant to accept its promises at face value. The decline in Palestinian violence is not a generous response to Israeli gestures. Rather, greater calm has been accomplished largely because of the construction of the security barrier, ongoing IDF operations in Judea and Samaria that keep terrorists on the run, the rivalry between Fatah and Hamas, and a growing realization that Palestinian terror doesn't pay.

A militarized Palestinian state would actually be a standing invitation for terrorist groups to meddle and attack: on top of the hope of taking control of the territory would be the prospect of seizing valuable stockpiles of weapons that could be used against Israel. Moreover, in a militarized state, there would be few reliable safeguards preventing the transfer or shared use of weapons between legitimate Palestinian security forces and terror groups and militias, which today and in the past have had many shared members.

It is thus unsafe and unwise to place our hopes in the belief that future Israeli peace overtures and concessions will meet with different results – at least not until Palestinian society reforms itself from within and embraces peaceful coexistence. Since this has not yet happened, Israel must insist on preventing the prospective Palestinian state from acquiring any arms or maintaining forces other than those necessary for internal Palestinian security and preventing terror attacks on Israel.

But even a demilitarized Palestinian entity does not mean that Israel can afford to fully relinquish security control. In fact, as Prime Minister Netanyahu has said publicly on a number of occasions, there will have to be a permanent IDF presence controlling the border crossings, particularly on the eastern side of any future Palestinian state, as well as the right of the IDF to enter the Palestinian entity when warranted.²

Territorial Withdrawals Encourage Israel's Enemies

As for further evacuations of Jewish communities, similar to those of Gush Katif in Gaza and northern Samaria in 2005, this, too, has to be considered in a broader context – even beyond immediate security concerns relating to the Palestinians. The fact is that the mere discussion of removing Israeli settlements encourages *ihadists* across the globe. Their stated aim, after all, is not to establish a Palestinian state but to "wipe Israel off the map." Radical Islamist groups, even those whose ability to harm Israel is small, nevertheless

envision the destruction of the Jewish state in stages: first Gaza, then Judea and Samaria, and after that, Tel Aviv. This is not mere semantics, but rather a strategic objective. We have learned from bitter experience that territorial withdrawals do not alleviate grievances; they indicate weakness and convince Israel's enemies that victory is possible.

With this in mind, Israel's counter-strategy must be based on strength. Instead of projecting that it is a country in a constant state of retreat, Israel must present itself as a country that stands up for itself and knows how to retaliate, so that its enemies will think twice before attacking.

The Danger of International Forces

In this policy study, Maj.-Gen. (res.) Yaakov Amidror, former head of IDF intelligence assessment, addresses the proposed deployment of an international force as part of a peace agreement involving an Israeli withdrawal from further territories. Here, too, Israel's experience has been calamitous. This is not due to ill will on the part of such forces, but rather to the impossibility of their task of preventing and combating hostile activities along Israel's borders.

There are many reasons why international peacekeeping forces have such a prominent track record of inefficacy. UNIFIL, to take but one example, operates under a Chapter 6 UN mandate, which means that it cannot take an independent stance against Hizbullah; it must receive permission from the Lebanese government, in which Hizbullah is heavily represented. International peacekeepers tend not to be militarily equipped or organized to deal with the threats they face. Their bureaucratic incentives orient them toward cautious, risk-averse behavior – the exact opposite of the motives that drive a nation-state's military forces. These incentives also encourage the downplaying of threats and problems and an overestimation of the effectiveness of the peacekeeping forces. This is fine for the peacekeepers, but it endangers those whose lives hang in the balance of the peacekeepers' competence.

Peacekeepers are not strong or capable enough to prevent terrorist groups, which intentionally conceal their activities, from arming and organizing themselves – but they are enough of a presence to become a dangerous obstruction on the battlefield when war breaks out. This has been a great detriment to the IDF's ability to carry out crucial missions, since it has encountered friction with UNIFIL soldiers, rather than focusing solely on engaging the enemy. So as not to antagonize the terrorist groups they fear, even when UN forces have intercepted weapons smugglers or uncovered terrorist cells, the most they have done is detain them temporarily, then release them and return their weapons. There was even a case of EU monitors stationed at the Rafah crossing in Gaza who fled the area as soon as the security situation there began to deteriorate even before Hamas' violent takeover in June 2007.

It is for these reasons that Israel cannot and should not agree to the presence of foreign troops on its soil or the soil of a prospective demilitarized Palestinian state.

Israel cannot and should not agree to the presence of foreign troops on its soil or the soil of a prospective demilitarized Palestinian state.

Another change in Israeli strategy that the Netanyahu government considers critical is combating the incessant delegitimization of Israel that has become a major feature of the strategy to weaken and destroy the Jewish state. The notoriously biased, misleading, and vicious UN-sanctioned Goldstone Report on the Gaza War in 2008-9 proves the dangers that Israel and other liberal democracies face when forced to combat terror, particularly in heavily populated areas such as Gaza, where terrorist forces can operate easily from among civilians.

Israel's National and Historical Rights

The final element that characterizes Israel's current policy is the emphasis it places on the national and historic rights of the Jewish people to the Land of Israel. Without this component, arguments over security and borders have no context. One of the central challenges Israel has to confront is its successful "asymmetrical" battle in the international court of public opinion. This battlefield is characterized by the presence of a massive propaganda machine that attempts to convince the world of Israel's illegitimacy and that advocates its diplomatic and economic isolation.

Israel, for its part, has been so preoccupied with peace, on the one hand, and security, on the other, that it has failed to remind itself and the world of the reason for its establishment in the first place – a reason other than the Holocaust. That Israel has been the Jewish homeland since time immemorial is not only clear from the yearning of Jews throughout history, expressed in the phrase repeated during Passover and as the last words said on Yom Kippur, "Next year in Jerusalem," it is also substantiated by the ongoing archaeological discoveries proving the existence of Jewish national life in Israel going back more than three thousand years. It is further substantiated by the fact that there has always been a Jewish presence in Israel – sometimes smaller, sometimes larger, dwindling in the past because of persecution and expulsion – but always there. These facts are ignored or denied by the delegitimizers. Now is the time to put these axioms of Jewish rights and history at the forefront of the debate and use them as an integral part of Israel's security strategy.

Notes

1. [http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/contending with Palestinian aggression isMFAArchive/1990_1999/1995/10/PM+Rabin+in+Knesset](http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/contending%20with%20Palestinian%20aggression%20isMFAArchive/1990_1999/1995/10/PM+Rabin+in+Knesset)
2. "Netanyahu Demands Israeli Presence in West Bank," AP, *Jerusalem Post*, January 20, 2010.



Libyan *jihadist* with SA-7 shoulder-fired, anti-aircraft missile. These missiles from the Libyan arsenal proliferated across the Middle East and reached the Gaza Strip.

Regional Overview: How Defensible Borders Remain Vital for Israel

Ambassador Dore Gold

Israel's long-standing diplomatic goal of obtaining defensible borders in any future peace settlement has become even more compelling in recent years. Historically, since the 1967 Six-Day War, Israeli governments have repeatedly insisted that the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) would not withdraw to the pre-war lines with the West Bank, from which Israel was attacked. In any case, these were formally only armistice lines from 1949, designating where the armies stopped in Israel's War of Independence, so that any new international political boundary, it was felt, still needed to be negotiated.

Moreover, according to the carefully drafted language of UN Security Council Resolution 242, which was adopted five months after the Six-Day War, Israel was not expected to fully pull out from all the territories it captured. Basing themselves on Israel's legal rights, the architects of Israeli national security doctrine, from Yigal Allon and Moshe Dayan to Yitzhak Rabin and Ariel Sharon, insisted that Israel needed defensible borders in the West Bank to protect itself against the plethora of threats it faced in the Middle East.

Pulling back to the 1967 lines would strip Israel of the territorial defenses that have provided for its security for over forty years and leave it only nine miles wide at one point on the map, leaving the Jewish state in a far more precarious position. This applied particularly to the loss of its formidable eastern barrier in the Jordan Valley, which to this day is viewed by Israel's security establishment as the front line for its defense in the east.

This traditional Israeli position has acquired new salience against the background of three important recent developments. First, there was Israel's disengagement from the Gaza Strip in 2005. It left in its wake an enormous military buildup on the part of Hamas and other Islamist groups, which benefited from their ability to fully exploit the Sinai-Gaza boundary area through which they smuggled far larger quantities of rockets and other weaponry. As a result, these groups could significantly escalate the rate of rocket fire, as

well as its range, against Israeli population centers. Clearly, this has raised the question of how to avert the same process from repeating itself in the West Bank, in the event of any further Israeli withdrawals.

Second, what was initially called the Arab Spring – and later labeled the Islamist Winter – has erased much of the certainty that once existed about the stability of the Arab regimes that were part of Israel's strategic environment. The Arab-Israeli peace process had been predicated upon Israel assuming risks by its withdrawal from territories it captured in the 1967 Six-Day War, while being able to rely on neighboring regimes to assume responsibility for security in any area that Israel vacated.

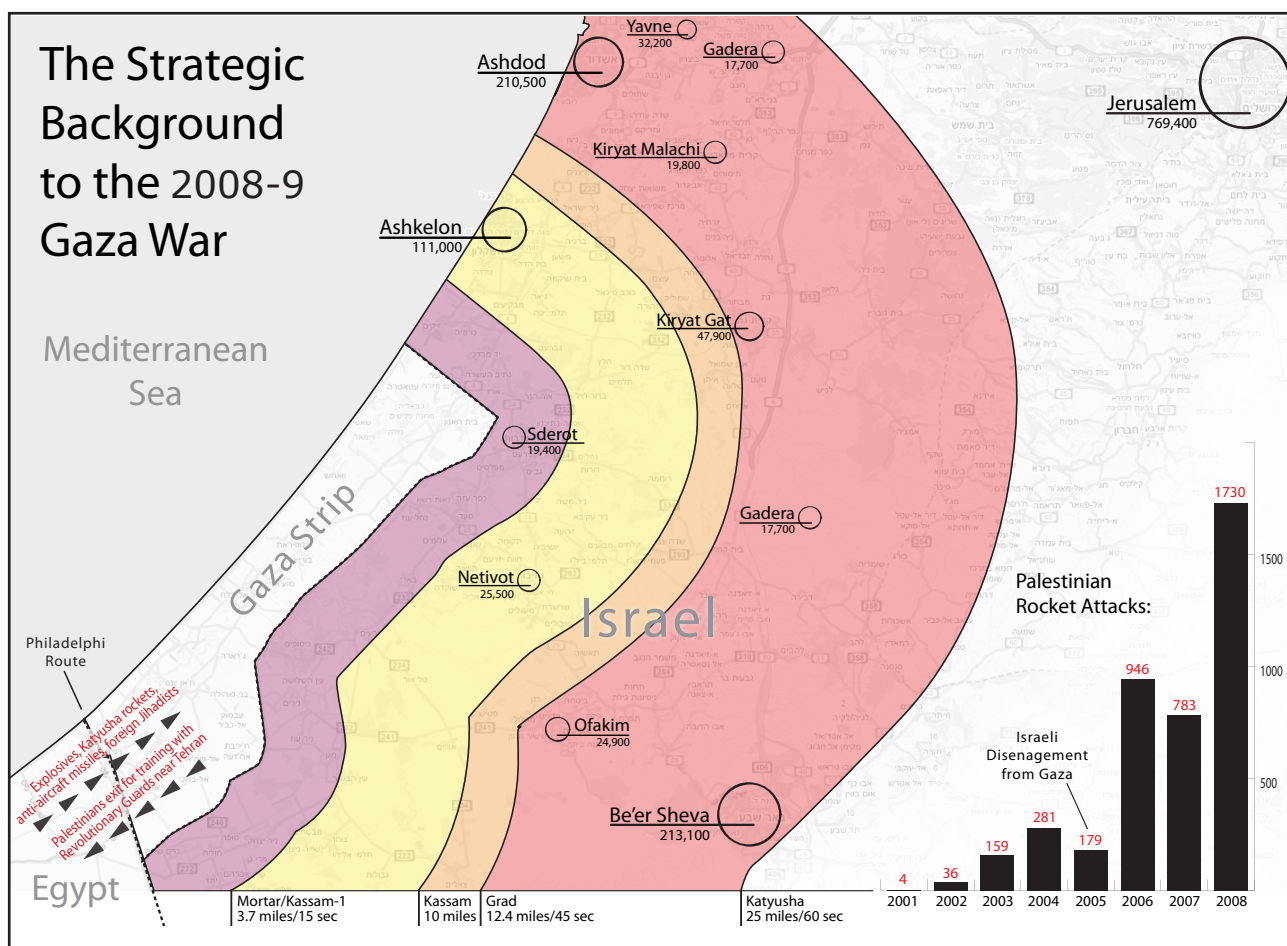
Now it is no longer clear to what extent the new regimes emerging in the Middle East will either have the will or the capacity to play this role in the future. Indeed, vast tracts of land in Libya, Syria, and Iraq appeared to be beyond the reach of their central governments, creating a vacuum that al-Qaeda affiliates were prepared to fill.

Third, despite the growth of these Israeli concerns, the U.S. and its European allies have increasingly made known their view that another effort to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict should be attempted, in which the territorial dimension be addressed up front. As a result, this has placed pressure on Israel to accept the notion of a withdrawal based on the 1967 lines. Israel has had to counter this with a position that would allow for a peace settlement that would be defensible – allowing Israel to defend itself by itself – but at the same time provide some diplomatic flexibility that could bring the parties closer to an agreement. Under these circumstances, the concept of defensible borders has become more important than ever.

The Impact of Gaza Disengagement

Israel's decision to unilaterally withdraw from the Gaza Strip in September 2005 resulted in far-reaching military developments that have come to serve as a warning of what could happen in the West Bank if appropriate security arrangements and defensible borders are not in place. There are those who argued that the Gaza pullout could not serve as an example for a withdrawal from the West Bank, since the Gaza withdrawal was strictly unilateral, while any future withdrawal from West Bank territory would be the result of an agreement in which Palestinian security responsibilities would be spelled out.

But that distinction ignores the fact that Israel coordinated its Gaza withdrawal with the Palestinian Authority. The PA president, Mahmoud Abbas, actually dispatched a close military aide, Gen. Nasser Yusuf, to oversee the Israeli withdrawal in order to assure that it would not be interrupted by Palestinian rocket fire.



Israeli planners might have expected that the rate of Palestinian rocket fire from the Gaza Strip would diminish after Israel's withdrawal. After all, by pulling out its civilian settlement presence as well as its army positions, Israel was removing one of the principal grievances raised by Palestinian spokesmen.

There had been a steady escalation of Palestinian rocket attacks on Israeli targets since 2001, when four short-range Kassam rockets were fired on Israel. This number increased to 179 attacks in 2005 – the year of the Gaza disengagement. But in 2006, in the aftermath of Israel's withdrawal, the number of rocket attacks did not go down, as might have been expected, but actually went up dramatically: there were 946 rockets launched at Israel, amounting to a more than *500 percent increase in the rate of rocket fire* (see chart above).¹

Another dimension of the post-Gaza withdrawal environment that stood out was the qualitative improvement of Palestinian rockets, especially with respect to their range. Prior to 2005, Palestinian organizations were using a domestically-produced rocket, the Kassam, that had a range of only seven kilometers. But in the aftermath of the Israeli withdrawal, the Palestinians began attacking a much wider belt around Gaza, striking the city of Ashkelon for the first time on March 28, 2006. During November 14-21, 2012, Palestinians fired 1,506 rockets at Israel, nearly reaching Tel Aviv and Jerusalem.

Newly imported rockets were entering the arsenals of Hamas and other organizations including the 120 mm Grad rocket, supplied by Iran, which came in different versions that had ranges of between 20 and 40 kilometers. Eventually, the Iranians exported the Fajr-5 rocket (range 75 kilometers or 46.8 miles) to the Gaza Strip.

Other significant weapons systems were easily smuggled into the Gaza Strip after the Gaza disengagement. Russian armor-piercing missiles like the “Konkurs” also entered the Hamas arsenal. In 2011, Hamas fired a Russian-manufactured “Kornet,” an advanced laser-guided, anti-tank missile, at a yellow Israeli school bus in southern Israel, killing a 16-year-old boy.

Finally, shoulder-fired anti-aircraft missiles like the SA-7 “Strella” were also smuggled into the Gaza Strip, which now had to be taken into account by Israeli pilots flying within Israeli airspace adjacent to Gaza. A new wave of shoulder-fired missiles came into Gaza through the smuggling tunnels in 2011 from Libya, after the overthrow of Muammar Gaddafi. In the meantime, many Hamas operatives also exited the Gaza Strip through the tunnel system, reaching Egypt and then flying to Syria and on to Iran for advanced military training.

The key to understanding these developments in the weaponry deployed by Hamas and other organizations is to look at what happened on the outer perimeter of the Gaza Strip along its border with Egyptian Sinai. The original Gaza-Jericho Agreement between Israel and the PLO that was signed in 1994 as the first implementation agreement under the Oslo Accords created a very narrow strip along the border area that continued to be under Israeli military control. It was formally designated on the maps as the “Military Installation Area,” but was codenamed by the IDF as the “Philadelphi Route.”

When Palestinian organizations began to dig smuggling tunnels underneath the Philadelphi Route, the IDF waged a difficult counter-insurgency campaign along this strip of land in order to identify the location of the tunnels and eliminate them. Palestinians and Egyptians with no other livelihood also had a strong economic incentive to support the tunnel industry, beyond the ideological motivation of the organizations that used the smuggled arms to wage war on Israel.

After the Gaza disengagement in 2005, Israel was no longer able to send in forces to try to close down the tunnels, so their number mushroomed. Hundreds of smuggling tunnels were opened and the amount of weaponry reaching Gaza increased accordingly. As a result, Israel was forced to conduct military campaigns like Operation Cast Lead (December 27, 2008-January 18, 2009) and Operation Pillar of Defense (November 14-21, 2012) to suppress Hamas rocket fire, while Hamas maintained an external line of supply for new weaponry through the tunnels along Gaza’s outer perimeter. In this period, Hamas also developed a domestic production capability for longer-range rockets as well.

In contrast, when Israel conducted Operation Defensive Shield (March 29-May 3, 2002) in the West Bank to halt a wave of suicide bombing attacks on its cities, it was able to seal off the territory from any external reinforcement, leading to a far more decisive result than in the case of Gaza. Shoulder-fired anti-aircraft missiles may have entered the Gaza Strip, but no such weaponry reached the West Bank, where the strategic consequences of their arrival would be enormous, given the proximity of Ben-Gurion International Airport to the pre-1967 line.

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Jordan has acted responsibly to prevent smuggling into Israel or the West Bank from its territory. But it, too, faces a growing smuggling challenge which it has openly admitted. In December 2013, the commander of the Jordanian Border Guard, Brig.-Gen. Hussein Zayoud, disclosed that smuggling over the Syrian-Jordanian border had more than tripled during 2013.² At some point, when the situation within Syria stabilizes, this smuggling industry could be re-directed westward and involve itself in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Thus, Israeli concerns with the Egyptian scenario replicating itself along the Jordan-West Bank border are no exaggeration.

The lesson for Israel in planning West Bank security was clear. The equivalent of the Philadelphi Route in the West Bank was the Jordan Valley. Beyond the utility of the Jordan Valley as a strategic barrier in the event that Israel was drawn into conventional warfare, the area has acquired new importance in Israel's public debate, since no one wanted to replicate the errors of the Gaza disengagement on a much greater scale in the West Bank. Continuing to seal the West Bank from external reinforcement remained critical, and Israel could only trust its own forces – rather than international troops – to carry out that task.

An additional major lesson from the Gaza disengagement had to do with how costly it would be for Israel to try to correct any errors from any failures emanating from a poorly executed withdrawal. In 1993, in presenting the Oslo Accords to his Labor Party faction in the Knesset, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin remarked that if it all goes wrong, "there is always the IDF." An underlying assumption from the unilateral Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon in 2000 was that, after having pulled out, Israel would have far more international legitimacy if it was required to use force in the future. Undoubtedly, a similar calculus existed with the Gaza disengagement five years later.

But when this thesis was tested, it turned out to be terribly wrong. Thus, even though Israeli civilian population centers had been repeatedly struck by escalating rocket attacks by Hamas, the moment Israel used its armed forces and re-invaded large parts of the Gaza Strip during Operation Cast Lead, it faced severe international condemnation, including a well-publicized investigation of its military actions by the UN Human Right Council, the results of which came to be known as the Goldstone Report.

As a result, while Israel possessed the military power to re-invade territory from which it withdrew, if severe threats to its security reappeared, the price of doing so made reliance on this option largely prohibitive. What made more sense was to make sure Israel had defensible borders, through which it could prevent any territory it evacuated from turning into a base for attacking the people of Israel.

The Arab Spring and the Fragmentation of the Arab State System

One underlying assumption of the Arab-Israeli peace process since 1967 was that if Israel withdrew from any territory it captured in the Six-Day War, there would be a responsible Arab government on the other side to assure the security of the vacated area out of its own self-interest. Even in the separate case of southern Lebanon, which saw IDF ground action in 1978 for the first time, UN Resolution 425, which Israel came to support, specifically called for the restoration of the authority of the Lebanese government as part of any future Israeli withdrawal.

However, the Arab Spring beginning in 2011 presented new factors in the Arab world that will have to become part of Israel's calculus in the future if it contemplates withdrawal from any part of the West Bank. First, the central governments of many Arab states have been badly weakened, if not entirely replaced. That meant that they were in no position to exert control over large parts of their sovereign territory.

For example, in Libya, the central government in Tripoli lost control over the western part of the Libyan state, known as Cyrenaica. In Egypt, the Sinai Peninsula increasingly appeared to be beyond the control of the Egyptian government in Cairo. In Syria, by 2013 there were large portions of the Syrian state that were no longer governed by the Assad regime from Damascus as a result of the armed rebellion against it. This fragmentation was fueled by sectarianism, like the region-wide struggle between Sunni and Shiite Muslims, as well as tribalism in other cases.

Notably, Jordan remained an island of stability amidst this regional turmoil. Perhaps its internal situation had been strengthened by what was transpiring around it; after all, who in Jordan would want to import the bloodbath in Syria or Egypt into the kingdom, after its population had witnessed on their television screens the scale of the disaster that was occurring among their neighbors.

What did this region-wide trend mean for Israel? There were those who greeted the disintegration of these Arab nation-states as a security windfall for Israel. True, with the collapse of the Arab states, it would become extremely difficult for them to maintain the kinds of large force structures that were so prevalent for much of the Cold War. Israel originally conceived of defensible borders as a strategy that would allow its relatively small standing army to withstand and contain quantitatively superior Arab armies until the IDF completed its reserve mobilization and reached full strength. That scenario did not appear to be relevant in a Middle East enmeshed in internal revolts, leading some to suggest that Israel was facing a more benign strategic environment. Yet that sort of conclusion was mistaken.

Long-term planning cannot be based on a snapshot of reality in a given year, but has to take into account different possible ways the military balance in the Middle East can evolve over time.

Israel will be operating in the years ahead with a large degree of uncertainty. As a result, long-term planning cannot be based on a snapshot of reality in a given year, but has to take into account different possible ways the military balance in the Middle East can evolve over time. Unquestionably, some of the Arab states will inevitably rearm after they become more stable. Iraq has already begun the long road to rebuild its ground forces with the acquisition of U.S. M1A1 Abrams tanks, as well as older Soviet military hardware like the T-72 main battle tank with which the Iraqis are more familiar. Armor remains a significant component of overall military power for many Middle Eastern states.

Certainly external powers will have a strong interest in making arms sales, not only to help sustain their defense industries, but also to retain influence in the Middle East. For the Middle Eastern states themselves, rebuilding their ground forces will be a prerequisite for acquiring the capability to hold together multi-ethnic states with rebellious provinces. In short, the eventual recovery of Arab armies must be taken into account and the security dilemmas that Israel faced in the past can easily return.

Moreover, in the near term, the conventional military threat was being superseded by a new global *jihadist* challenge. Across the Middle East, the vacuum within the Arab states was being filled by *jihadist* movements that do not recognize the international borders of the Middle East state system. In Egyptian Sinai, these include organizations like Ansar Beit al-Maqdis, which made war against Israel one of their main goals and took credit for Grad rocket attacks on Eilat from Egyptian Sinai. In early 2014, Ansar Beit al-Maqdis took credit for bombing attacks on Egyptian security headquarters in the Nile Delta and in the heart of Cairo. While the group appeared to be an al-Qaeda affiliate, Egypt's Interior Ministry charged that they sought the support of Hamas in the Gaza Strip.

The Syrian organization Jabhat al-Nusra was another al-Qaeda affiliate whose power grew with the rebellion against the Assad regime. It published a book outlining its plan of action, stressing that “Syria is the key to change in the Levant, including in occupied Palestine.” Another Syrian *jihadi* group, the Islamic State of Iraq and ash-Sham (the Levant) or ISIS, operated in both the Sunni-populated areas of Syria as well as Iraq, where they seized cities like Ramadi and Fallujah in 2014.

The revival of al-Qaeda in Iraq was indicative of the fact that the *jihadist* organizations demonstrated a robust ability to recover, even if they were defeated at a certain point. After all, Iraqi al-Qaeda appeared to have been destroyed as a result of the surge of U.S. forces there in 2007. Across the Middle East, the *jihadist* threat followed a pattern of ebb and flow along with its battlefield fortunes.

In July 2013, the head of IDF military intelligence, Maj.-Gen. Aviv Kochavi, warned that in the “immediate future” the dangers to Israel were increasing. He focused on the al-Qaeda presence in Syria:

Syria is the most disturbing example, drawing thousands of global *jihad* activists and radical Islamists from the region and beyond. They are establishing themselves in Syria, not only to oust Assad, but to promote their vision of a Sharia state. In plain sight, on our doorstep, a global *jihad* stronghold of great magnitude is being established. This reality could potentially affect not only Syria and the border with Israel but Lebanon, Jordan, Sinai and the entire region as well.³

The head of IDF operations, Maj.-Gen. Yoav Har-Even, noted in early 2014 that the *jihadi* presence in Syria was becoming more consolidated and they had a broader mission: “The moment they finish dealing with Assad, we’re next in line. They are not coming only to fight in Syria.”⁴ He added: “They are already in the southern Golan Heights, in the area of Dar’a, and this deeply disturbs us, the Americans and the Jordanians.” It was notable that at this time, al-Qaeda was also seeking to gain a foothold in the West Bank. Clearly, the stability of all of Israel’s neighbors could be put at risk if this phenomenon were to grow.

The rise of these international terrorist organizations along Israel’s borders is becoming much more militarily significant than in the past. Prior to the 1990s, the threat of terrorist organizations was usually seen in Israel as tactical, while the threat of conventional armies was perceived as strategic. Yet these distinctions no longer make sense. International terrorist organizations are proving to be far more militarily potent than in the past with the introduction of more advanced military technologies. Already in 1983, a militant Shiite cell in Lebanon used a truck bomb against the barracks of the U.S. Marines in Beirut, in what was called the largest non-nuclear explosion since the Second World War. By 2006, the Shiite militia Hizbullah had acquired from Iran more long-range rockets than most states possess.

The robust capabilities of *jihadi* forces in combating conventional armies were also demonstrated by al-Qaeda's offshoots in the Middle East. Al-Qaeda in Iraq extensively used improvised explosive devices (IEDs) against coalition forces in Iraq; in 2007, the *Washington Post* reported that 63 percent of U.S. combat deaths had been caused by IEDs.⁵ Islamist insurgents in Syria succeeded in defeating entire units of the Syrian army and effectively used anti-tank weapons against Syrian armor.

The robust capabilities of jihadist forces in combating conventional armies were demonstrated by al-Qaeda's offshoots in the Middle East. Islamist insurgents in Syria succeeded in defeating entire units of the Syrian army and effectively used anti-tank weapons against Syrian armor.



Jihadists demonstrate capability to subdue Syrian conventional units. Pictured here is a captured Syrian T-72V-AT tank (with reactive armor) flying the Jabhat al-Nusra flag.

It was well known that al-Qaeda's leadership in Afghanistan back in 2001 was actively seeking out Pakistani atomic scientists, which meant that the organization and its affiliates were thinking about posing a far greater terror threat in the future than the world had previously witnessed. The stakes involved in thwarting terrorist smuggling efforts are growing, as are the costs of failing to do so.⁶

Another consideration that must be taken into account with the revival of al-Qaeda affiliates to Israel's east is the implications of their presence for any peacekeeping forces that the West is considering to deploy in support of an Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement. Presumably, a NATO force in the Jordan Valley would be more acceptable to the Palestinian Authority president, Mahmoud Abbas, than a continuing Israeli presence.⁷

But from the Islamists' perspective a Western force is no less troubling. Indeed, from its inception, al-Qaeda established the goal of evicting the West from the Arabian Peninsula and the Middle East more generally. A revived al-Qaeda would undoubtedly seek to attack any peacekeeping force that would be a lightning rod for the *jihadists* in surrounding countries. Therefore, a robust al-Qaeda presence in Syria or Iraq not only poses a threat

to Israel, but also (and even to a greater degree) to a Western force conceived to be an integral part of any security arrangements to which the parties might be asked to agree.

Finally, Iran was becoming a new and uncertain factor along Israel's eastern front, largely due to its role in Iraq, which behaves increasingly like an Iranian satellite state. Despite Washington's repeated requests that Iraq not persist with this behavior, Baghdad permitted Iranian aircraft to use its air space in order to ship reinforcements to President Bashar al-Assad's embattled regime in Damascus. The Iraqi regime also supplied Iraqi Shiite militia forces to fight alongside those of Lebanese Hizbullah in Syria against the rebel Sunni forces fighting Assad.

The weakness of the Arab state system has allowed Iran to intervene in a host of internal conflicts, from Yemen to Bahrain, Iraq, and Syria. For over a decade, Iranian weapons deliveries bound for Lebanon or the Gaza Strip have been repeatedly thwarted by the Israeli Navy, in ships like the *Karine A* (January 3, 2002), the *Francop* (November 4, 2009), or the *Klos C* (March 5, 2014). Iranian smugglers, backed by the Qods Force of Iran's Revolutionary Guards, have been active in shipping weapons to aid the pro-Shiite insurgency in Yemen as well.

In December 2013, Bahrain intercepted yet another Iranian weapons ship bringing explosives and weapons to Shiite insurgents. Unfortunately, much of the international community has become accustomed to the deployment of Iranian forces in various combat zones, like Syria. Assuming that Iran invests in upgrading its armed forces, Israel might very well witness the regular deployment of Iranian units in parts of Iraq or Syria in the future, thereby reviving, in part, Israel's eastern front.

This would allow Iran to project its military power towards Jordan, Israel's immediate neighbor to the east. Iran has made multiple efforts to build a bridgehead to the Hashemite Kingdom. Since 2012, Iran has sought to reach an agreement with Jordan allowing it to vastly expand Shiite tourism to shrines that are regarded as sacred to Iranian religious pilgrims, particularly near al-Karak in southern Jordan. Today, there is also a substantial Iraqi Shiite refugee population in Jordan. Though not known for religious extremism, this population nevertheless may be targeted by Iranian propaganda. Finally, radical Palestinian organizations like Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad, which have been allied with Tehran, might be used to build up centers of influence for Iran in the Jordanian state. Israel's policy of regarding any foreign invasion of Jordan as a "red line" that would trigger its own intervention has provided a certain degree of security for Jordan in the past and has effectively deterred expansionist powers. Were Israel to concede the Jordan Valley and withdraw its forces, then its ability to play this role in regional stability would be much more constrained precisely at a time at which Iranian activism is expected to increase.⁸

The Revival of Israeli-Palestinian Negotiations and the Question of the 1967 Lines

Just as the signs of growing regional chaos began to spread across the Middle East in what was initially called the Arab Spring, the Western powers undertook another initiative to re-launch Israeli-Palestinian negotiations. Israel had agreed to a ten-month settlement freeze in 2009-10, which was intended to set the stage for the Palestinian side to agree to new negotiations, but that effort had not worked. Mahmoud Abbas, the Palestinian Authority president, began to speak about going to the UN to gain admission for a Palestinian state or to upgrade the PLO observer mission.

In this environment, Britain's foreign secretary, William Hague, stated in a March 2011 address at Chatham House that the UK, France, and Germany were pressing the U.S. and the Middle East Quartet (the U.S., Russia, the EU, and the UN Secretariat) to set out clear principles for negotiations that would presumably draw the Palestinians back to the table and avert their turning to the UN. The territorial component of this European proposal called for a solution based "on the 1967 borders with equivalent land swaps."

It was Britain that helped draft UN Security Council Resolution 242 in the aftermath of the Six-Day War. In fact, the British ambassador to the UN in 1967, Lord Caradon, admitted on PBS: "We did not say there should be a withdrawal to the '67 line....We all knew – the boundaries of '67 were not drawn as permanent frontiers."

There was a certain irony in Hague's proposal. It was Britain that helped draft UN Security Council Resolution 242 in the aftermath of the Six-Day War, when Israel captured the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. According to its famous territorial clause, Israel was not expected to fully withdraw from all the territory that it captured, but rather was entitled to new, secure boundaries instead.

In fact, the British ambassador to the UN in 1967, Lord Caradon, admitted on *PBS*: "We did not say there should be a withdrawal to the '67 line....We all knew – the boundaries of '67 were not drawn as permanent frontiers." Resolution 242 became the basis for all Arab-Israeli agreements with Egypt, Jordan, and even the PLO. It was also the basis of the invitation issued by the U.S. and the Soviet Union to the participants in the 1991 Madrid Peace Conference.

Israel has multiple difficulties with proposals for making the 1967 lines – even with the caveat of land swaps – the basis for negotiations. The very idea of using the 1967 lines as a basis prejudged the outcome of any future negotiations. It used the Palestinian goal of the outcome of negotiations as the price Israel needed to pay for entering the negotiating room.

Land swaps were not even mentioned in the original terms of reference for the peace process, like Resolution 242. They later became an innovation introduced in academic channels between Israel and the Palestinians. Finally, the size of the land swap that Mahmoud Abbas was actually willing to consider involved only 1.9 percent of the West Bank, according to a 2011 interview, which meant that the land swap idea did not vary considerably from the 1967 lines.⁹

At first, Israelis were surprised when President Obama appeared to be adopting a similar position on the 1967 lines. On May 19, 2011, Obama delivered an address on the Arab Spring at the State Department at the end of which he stated: “The borders of Israel and Palestine should be based on the 1967 lines with mutually agreed land swaps, so that secure and recognized borders are established for both states.” This language appeared to be at variance with the content of the April 14, 2004, letter of assurances that Israel received from the previous Bush administration – with the backing of Congress – which stated: “It is unrealistic to expect that the outcome of final status negotiations will be a full and complete return to the armistice lines of 1949.”

Two days later, on May 21, 2011, President Obama clarified in greater detail what his new position meant: “It means that the parties themselves – Israelis and Palestinians – will negotiate a border that is different than the one that existed on June 4, 1967.” Obama added that the parties would have to take into account changes that had occurred since 1967, “including the new demographic realities on the ground.” This addition was interpreted in Israel to mean that Obama believed that new borders would have to take into account the existence of settlement blocs in the West Bank, where there was a significant concentration of Israelis that could not be ignored. President Obama’s formulation created more flexibility than the British position articulated by Foreign Secretary Hague.

Obama was less explicit when it came to how security considerations would influence the designation of new borders. Significantly, Obama established the principle: “Every state has the right to self-defense, and Israel must be able to defend itself – by itself – against any threat.” Whether he envisioned that this principle was linked to borders was unclear. The same was true for another point he explained: “Provisions must also be robust enough to prevent a resurgence of terrorism, to stop the infiltration of weapons, and to provide effective border security.” This goal could either be accomplished by border modifications or by extra-territorial security arrangements.

During his address to a joint meeting of the U.S. Congress in May 2011, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu reiterated that Israel could not withdraw to the 1967 lines: “Israel will not return to the indefensible lines of 1967.” He laid out Israeli security needs beyond those lines, stressing the importance of the Jordan Valley, in particular: “It is vital that Israel maintain a long-term military presence along the Jordan River.” He also included in the strategic map he was outlining “places of critical strategic and national importance.” Immediately following his address, Netanyahu was interviewed on Fox News by Sean

Hannity and further amplified his position, explaining that Israel had been only nine miles wide in 1967. He added that there was “agreement between Israel and the U.S. that Israel must have defensible borders.”

Negotiating Defensible Borders

Since 1967, the traditional view in Israel on how it should negotiate its final boundaries has been based on the idea that where Israel has vital security interests in the West Bank, it should seek sovereignty over those areas in order to safeguard them. Yigal Allon, who was known as one of Israel’s greatest military minds, commanded the Palmach strike force of the Haganah during Israel’s War of Independence when he served as a mentor to one of his senior officers, Yitzhak Rabin. During the 1967 Six-Day War, Allon was Israel’s deputy prime minister and in its aftermath he proposed a plan for “territorial compromise” in the West Bank based on Israel retaining 700 square miles (out of 2,100 square miles).

This involved the largely arid eastern zone in the Jordan Valley that would not add any substantial Palestinian population to Israel. By revising the pre-war boundaries this way, Allon concluded that Israel would obtain “defensible borders” at the end of the day. He unveiled the Allon Plan in *Foreign Affairs* in 1976, in his capacity as Prime Minister Rabin’s foreign minister.¹⁰ Allon explained that any part of the West Bank from which Israel withdrew would have to be demilitarized. The only way to guarantee demilitarization was for Israel to extend its sovereignty to the Jordan Valley.

An alternative way of implementing defensible borders is to insist that an Israeli military presence be maintained in those specific areas in which Israel has vital interests, even if they are not under formal Israeli sovereignty. In a forthcoming concession to the Palestinian side, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has only demanded Israeli forces along the Jordan River, rather than stating up front that the area on which they are to be deployed must be annexed by Israel.

Presumably, the security arrangements model would be easier for the Palestinian side to accept in negotiations as opposed to outright Israeli annexation of the area. However, Mahmoud Abbas and the Palestinian leadership were vocally resistant to this model as well, preferring international forces over any Israeli military presence. At the end of the day, Israel will have to seek arrangements for the Jordan Valley that best protect its vital security interests.

Regardless of the question of sovereignty, in the Jordan Valley, Israel must obtain exclusive security control over a specified area, which will allow it to operate effectively against the threats that are likely to emerge in that area. Israel has always based its security in the Jordan Valley on preserving a right of reinforcement in the event that a new scale of threat emerges to the east. This requires that Israel hold on to deployment areas which it may

need in the event that those scenarios occur. In an address to the Knesset in October 1995, just before he was assassinated, Rabin stressed that the security border of Israel should be in the Jordan Valley, “in the widest sense of that term.”

One of the main questions posed to Israel, if it is only seeking a military presence but not Israeli sovereignty, is: How long will it need this military presence in the Jordan Valley – three years, ten years, or forty years? The answer to this question is not a function of time but rather of performance. First, there is the question of the Palestinian security forces and whether they will fulfill their commitments as outlined in any agreement.

Second, West Bank security is not only a function of what the Palestinians do, but also what is happening in the surrounding states: Syria, Jordan, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia. Will these states continue to be afflicted with *jihadi* movements seeking to join their counterparts on the West Bank, or not? Will revived military forces in these areas remain focused elsewhere, or will they coalesce to challenge Israel?

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Jordan is a special factor in Israeli considerations. Any negotiation over the sensitive Jordan Valley requires close consultation with the Jordanian leadership. In the past, there was a concern in Amman with Palestinian irredentism, which could lead to Palestinian claims to Jordan itself from a West Bank Palestinian state. Moreover, the Sinai precedent must be uppermost in the minds of Jordanian planners. When it became clear that the outer perimeter of the Gaza Strip was completely open through the Philadelphi Route, hosts of *jihadi* movements relocated to Egyptian Sinai, creating a direct security threat to Egypt itself. Some of the most lethal al-Qaeda affiliates in Sinai relied on Gaza connections.

Ironically, Israeli vulnerability undermined the internal security of Israel’s largest Arab neighbor. That is a process that Israel cannot allow again in the Jordanian case. For that reason, Israel’s continuing control of the Jordan Valley is not only important for its security, but for regional security more broadly.

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A commercial jetliner (circled) taking off from Ben-Gurion International Airport near Tel Aviv as seen from an adjacent Palestinian village in the West Bank. A SA-7 shoulder-fired missile or a Kassam rocket launched from this vantage point would stop all commercial aviation into and out of Israel.

Defensible Borders to Ensure Israel's Future

Maj. Gen. (res.) Uzi Dayan

Israel Has a Natural and Internationally Recognized Right to Defensible Borders

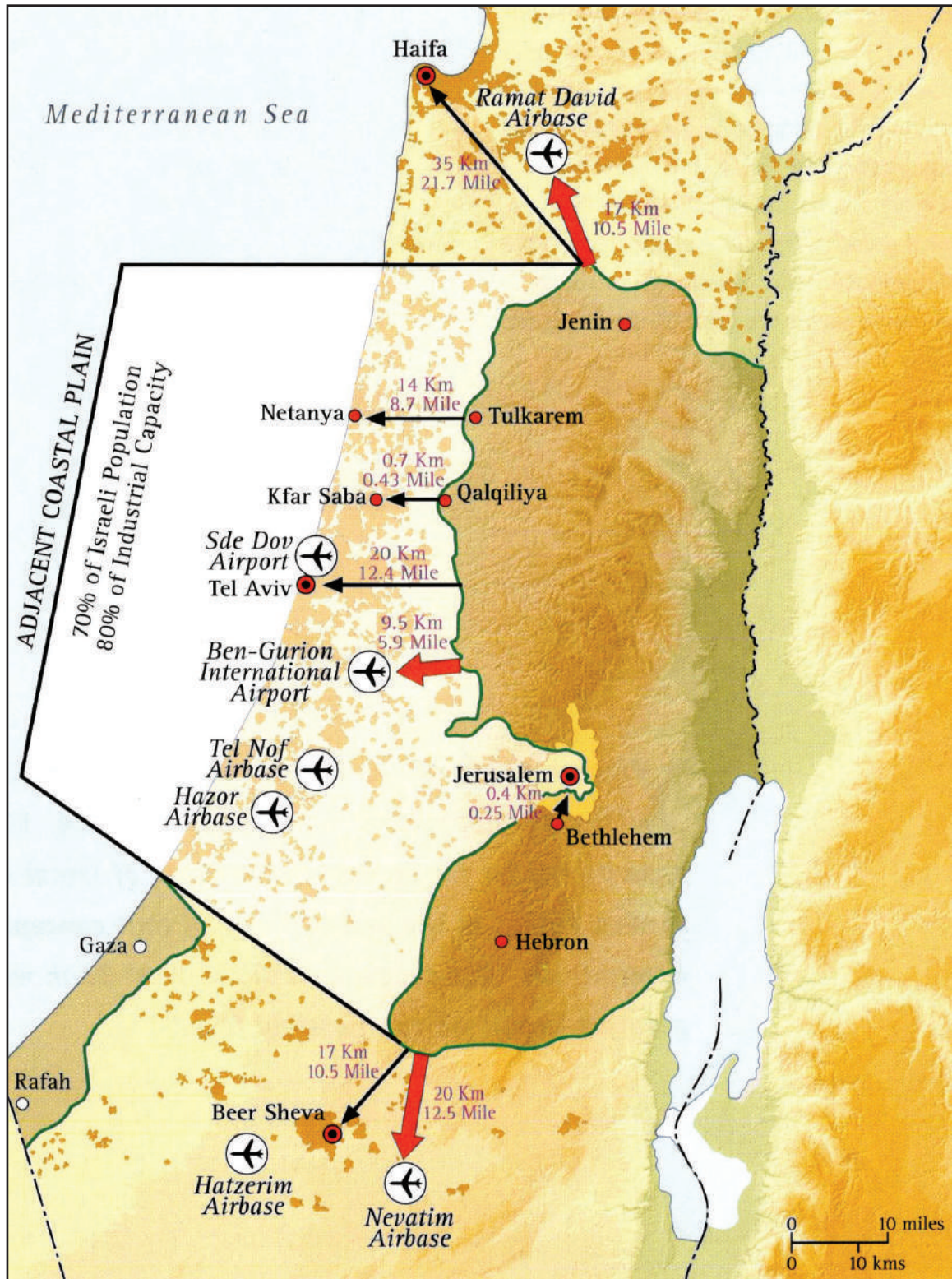
Israel's fundamental right to defensible borders is grounded in the strategic and legal circumstances that emerged immediately after the Six-Day War, in which Israel captured the West Bank of the Jordan, Sinai, and the Golan Heights. The "Green Line" that was established in the 1949 Armistice Agreements was defined as a military border between the Israeli and Jordanian armies, not as a permanent political border. That situation provided the background for United Nations Security Council Resolution 242 of November 1967, which did not call on the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) to withdraw completely to the armistice line, instead affirming that Israel required "secure and recognized boundaries" that were not identical to the indefensible prewar lines.

Today it is often forgotten how vulnerable Israel was in the past. Before 1967 Israel's "narrow waist" – that is, the distance between the coastal cities of its central region and the West Bank under Jordanian occupation – was only about 8 miles (12 km.), not enough for minimal defensive depth in case of an invasion. Israel is a country about the size of New Jersey with a territory of only 16,100 square miles (25,900 sq. km.). Israel's small size alone is not the basis for its claim to defensible borders, but rather the fact that it has been a repeated victim of aggression caused the international community to recognize that right in the aftermath of the Six-Day War.

Israel's vulnerability is made all the more acute by the fact that 70 percent of the country's population, 80 percent of its industrial capacity, and crucial infrastructure targets (Ben-Gurion Airport, the Trans-Israel Highway [Route 6], the National Water Carrier, and high-voltage electrical power lines) are squeezed into that narrow coastal strip between the Mediterranean Sea and the West Bank. Moreover, the adjacent hills of the West Bank

topographically dominate the low-lying and exposed coastal plain, affording an attacker clear advantages in terms of observation, fire, and defensive capability against an Israeli counterattack.

Map 3 – Israel’s Strategic Vulnerability from the West Bank



Thus the 1949 armistice lines were indefensible, leading the architects of Israel's national security doctrine, from Yigal Allon to Moshe Dayan to Yitzhak Rabin, to adamantly oppose a return to those lines, which they believed would invite aggression and endanger Israel's future instead of paving a path to peace.



Yigal Allon



Moshe Dayan



Yitzhak Rabin

These Israeli leaders sought new borders that would enable Israel to defend itself. According to a broad consensus that emerged in the national security establishment, these would constitute “defensible borders” and Israel would have to insist on them in any future negotiations. In 2004, the United States gave Israel a letter of guarantees that recognized Israel's right to “defensible borders.” The document was signed by President George W. Bush and supported by a bipartisan majority of both houses of Congress.

Since that time the need for defensible borders has only grown. To the Middle East's already existing record of aggression toward Israel and chronic instability, recent years have added the following developments:

- The “Arab Spring,” which is already marked by unprecedented civil strife and bloodshed, has so far produced millions of refugees and displaced persons, and has imported global *jihadist* terror to the region, threatening regimes and intensifying the region's fundamental uncertainty.
- Iran, which keeps marching resolutely toward nuclear weapons, is aggressively meddling in numerous conflicts and is continuing to create threats along Israel's perimeter.
- The terror organizations' involvement in national power struggles (Hizbullah in Syria and Lebanon, Hamas in Sinai), their growing rocket arsenals, the entry into the region of global *jihadist* terror, and the use Iran makes of terror have become a strategic threat that can cause warfare to erupt in the region.

- The renewed effort to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian dispute has brought the subject of borders to the negotiating table as one of the core issues of the conflict.

For borders to be defensible, they must provide an answer to four cardinal threats: a conventional attack, rocket and missile fire, terror, and a nonconventional attack.

A conventional attack – Unlike the armed forces of the Arab states that surround Israel, the IDF is composed mainly of reserve units that need about forty-eight hours to fully mobilize and reach the battlefield. Defensible borders are what gives the regular army the optimal topographical conditions for withstanding an offensive by numerically superior ground forces until the reserve mobilization is completed. After that mobilization, defensible borders must also give Israel the necessary operative depth to conduct a defensive battle. If Israel were to lack this defensive depth, its deterrent power would also decline and the temptation to subject it to a surprise attack, one that could rapidly defeat the IDF before the reserves could arrive, would increase.

Those were the main considerations favoring defensible borders vis-à-vis the Arab war coalitions that formed in 1948, 1967, and 1973, which also included Iraqi contingents. After the First Gulf War in 1991 and the Israeli-Jordanian peace treaty in 1994, this danger abated. Today, after years of upheaval in the Arab world, uncertainty continues to prevail in the Middle East and the danger has returned in full force. There is no way to know what the future holds for Iraq and Jordan, or what alliances and alignments will emerge in the Arab world over the coming years. Current trends in Iraq and Jordan, along with the civil war in Syria that threatens to spread to its neighbors, require Israel, in planning its security policy, to take perilous scenarios into account as Middle Eastern history has already demonstrated.

Even in the era of rockets and missiles, it is military offensives by ground forces – not aerial strikes and rocket attacks – that ultimately decide the course of wars. As long as ground forces remain the critical element, factors that affect a ground war – such as territorial depth, topography, and the size and nature of forces – will remain essential to Israel's national security.

It is important to emphasize that when it comes to Israel's security policy, the ability to provide security in case of a massive conventional attack remains the cardinal criterion. Even in the era of rockets and missiles, it is military offensives by ground forces – not aerial strikes and rocket attacks – that ultimately decide the course of wars. As long as ground forces remain the critical element, factors that affect a ground war – such as territorial depth, topography, and the size and nature of forces – will remain essential to Israel's national security.

**Map 4 – Gaza “Hamastan” in the West Bank:
Threats to Israeli Population Centers**



Rockets and missiles – If terrorist forces were to fire rockets and mortars from the West Bank as they are now doing from Gaza, the entire Israeli home front would be exposed to this threat. The West Bank overlooks Israel’s main cities from a distance of a few miles, and rockets, mortars, and anti-aircraft missiles must be kept out of this territory. This is not a theoretical concern or “worst-case” scenario, but a very tangible threat. For example, near Mombassa, Kenya, in 2002, al-Qaeda terrorists fired an SA-7 shoulder-launched, anti-aircraft missile at an Israeli civilian plane. Hamas is now making a determined effort to smuggle anti-aircraft missiles into Gaza.

Short-range rockets are a special challenge for Israel, making the little territory that Israel possesses a vital and irreplaceable defensive barrier. Ironically, longer-range rockets and missiles, including those with more powerful warheads, pose less of a problem than short-range rockets. Whereas longer-range rockets require launchers that can be identified and attacked (even if it is after the launch), short-range rockets are very hard to stop and there is nothing to hit once they are launched, especially if they are fired from the midst of a civilian population and are numerous because of their low cost. For Israel to prevent the deployment of such rockets in places that are close to vital and vulnerable strategic sites, it has to be present on the ground in those places. Even the interception of longer-range missiles and rockets requires the stationing of warning, detection, and interception systems at locations that give them enough time to function.

Terror – Since its establishment, Israel has had to fight terror backed by states throughout the region, and today this threat is more relevant than ever. It is Israel's military presence on the eastern perimeter of the West Bank, in the Jordan Valley and the Judean Desert, that has prevented arms smuggling and the infiltration of hostile forces. It is this presence that has kept global *jihadists* from turning the West Bank into a battlefield like those they have created in Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, and Syria. One of the main preconditions for a terror-fighting strategy is to isolate the area of conflict and thwart the influx of hostile forces with their weapons and equipment. As Israel has learned from direct experience in Lebanon and Gaza, the inability to prevent such an influx turns an area into a source of rocket and mortar fire along with other attacks, leading to instability, diplomatic difficulties, and even wars.

The nonconventional threat – Defensible borders remain relevant even at a time of growing concern about nonconventional weapons, and especially nuclear weapons, in the Middle East. Israel is a country so small that it needs to disperse its population, armed forces, and defensive assets (enabling warning and interception) as widely as possible. Otherwise the enemy will try to gain a decisive military advantage by carrying out a first strike without fear of an Israeli counterattack. The greater Israel's geographic vulnerability, the greater the threat to it, both from a conventional attack by Middle Eastern military forces and from nonconventional terror.

The Jordan Valley

In the southern theater (because of the demilitarization of Sinai) and in the northern theater (because Israel has resisted handing over the Golan Heights), Israel has defensible borders.

In the eastern theater there is no substitute for the Jordan Valley; its location and unique topographical features make it the only feasible eastern border for the State of Israel.

Some key facts about the Jordan Valley:

- Israel's width from the Mediterranean Sea to the Jordan River is only 40 miles (64 km.) on average. This provides minimal strategic depth, and taking the risk of further reducing this strategic depth is out of the question.
- The Jordan Valley is only 4.2 to 9 miles (6.8-14.5 km.) wide. The Jordan River lies 1,300 feet (396 m.) below sea level, but it is adjacent to the steep eastern slope of the West Bank's mountain spine – which, at its highest point (Baal Hatzor), stands 3,609 feet (1,011 m.) above sea level. Hence, the Jordan Valley constitutes a physical barrier with a height of 3,000 to 4,600 feet (914-1,402 m.).
- The Jordan Valley is an arid area with a small and sparse Palestinian population.
- For an attacking army to advance westward from the Jordan Valley, it must make its way through only five mountain passages that can be relatively easily defended, even by the limited regular-army force of the IDF.

In light of the Jordan Valley's strategic importance for Israel's security, the IDF has continued – even since the successful peace treaty with Jordan – to carry out routine security measures there with the help of an active security fence, while also deploying brigade-level forces there that can readily be reinforced by the reserves, along with the necessary equipment, in case a ground threat should materialize from the east. The Israeli force in the Jordan Valley is also a tripwire, since an attack on it would trigger a reserve call-up; and in all negotiations with the Palestinians, Israel has also insisted on the right to transport additional forces to the valley via strategic roads.

Why Can't Israel Rely on Early-Warning Capabilities Instead of Having a Physical Presence?

The question keeps coming up from time to time: why can't Israel rely on advanced technological means to warn of an impending attack, so that it could mobilize the reserves in time to contain any potential ground offensive and thus make a forward deployment in the Jordan Valley unnecessary?

The answer is that in 1973 the IDF maintained insufficient forces on the Egyptian and Syrian fronts because it was confident that, in any event, it would get sufficient prior intelligence warning in order to reinforce these fronts in a timely manner. In retrospect, after Egypt and Syria had succeeded in carrying out surprise attacks, this emerged as a critical error.

The Second Lebanon War in 2006 highlighted an additional failure stemming from excessive reliance on advanced technology. Many commanders preferred to remain at the rear of the battlefield, where they thought they could adequately observe the fighting

Map 5 – Israel's Defense Line: The Jordan Rift Valley with the Steep Eastern Slopes of the West Bank Mountain Ridge



on plasma screens and direct their forces via advanced teleprocessing systems. Such commanders in fact suffered a total failure of command and control over their battlefield troops.

The painful lesson of the Yom Kippur War and the Second Lebanon War is that Israel must not relinquish the Jordan Valley and rely instead on advanced technological systems. The history of warfare indeed shows that technological advantages are eventually eroded and even neutralized and can hardly be relied upon as permanent; over the last century, offense and defense were in constant competition. Israel's advantage in airpower in 1967 was altered by 1973 with the introduction of advanced Soviet air-defense systems.

Looking to the future, there are Western analysts who predict that the electromagnetic spectrum will become one of the main targets of future weapons, stripping away the advantages in surveillance that military commanders have recently enjoyed by using drones and even satellites. Iran began investing in cyber-warfare several years ago and its Hizbullah proxy has reportedly begun to do so as well. Should cyber-warfare capabilities indeed proliferate in the decades ahead, then Israeli commanders relying on their plasma screens in their rear command centers, in order to wage a military campaign, will have to contend with the prospect that their picture of the battlefield will go blank as their electronic sensors become blinded.¹

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Finally, if the forces in place are insufficient to protect the state, then the burden of decision-making during a military crisis will fall entirely on the political echelon to mobilize reserves or even consider a pre-emptive strike. In 1973, Israel's political leadership was reluctant to take either step, due to international political considerations. In short, there is no substitute for a deployed and active force in the territory that Israel controls.

Are Israel's Territorial Considerations Still Relevant in the Missile Age?

Moreover, relying on a timely, rapid reserve call-up to reinforce Israel's eastern front will become more and more dangerous. As already noted, historically, Israel's neighbors have had the advantage of larger regular armies, with only a secondary role for their reserves. This feature of the Arab-Israeli military balance is likely to return once the Arab states achieve a modicum of internal stability in the future. Under such conditions, Israel's adversaries will have an interest in retarding an Israeli reserve call-up for as long as possible, thereby retaining their quantitative superiority in the balance of forces for a longer period of time.

Such a slowdown can be achieved by firing missiles at assembly points and equipment-distribution centers. Neighboring hostile entities, then, can be expected to use their large arsenals of ballistic missiles and rockets for just that purpose – to prevent the arrival of sufficient reinforcements to all of Israel's fronts, including the Jordan Valley. Those who assert that the essentials of land warfare, like terrain and strategic depth, are no longer relevant in the age of ballistic missiles are simply wrong. Indeed, the incorporation of

ballistic missiles into the battle plans of Israel's adversaries only magnifies the importance of defensible borders, which will allow Israel's standing army to contain an attack for much longer periods of time.

Why Can't Israel Give Up Optimal Defensive Territory and Rely Instead on its Air Power to Stop any Attacking Army?

In any future battlefield the Israel air force initially will be given tasks of greater importance than providing air support for the deployment of ground forces. It will first have to achieve air superiority by destroying enemy anti-aircraft systems and neutralizing ballistic-missile fire at Israeli cities. Hence, the entry of ballistic missiles and rockets into the arena of warfare has only increased the importance of territory and strategic depth for Israel. With the reserve forces' arrival likely to be delayed by rocket fire, the small regular army will need more time to hold off a ground offensive. Moreover, the regular army may well have to operate for a considerable time without massive air support as the air force is busy striking missile and rocket launchers.

For these reasons there is no substitute for the Jordan Valley as an Israeli defensive buffer. As Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, discussing future peace treaties, affirmed in his last speech to the Knesset in October 1995: "The security border of the State of Israel will be located in the Jordan Valley, in the broadest meaning of that term."

The Jordan Valley's critical importance for Israel's security also emerges clearly from the Israeli experience in Gaza. In implementing the Oslo accords in Gaza in 1994, Israel created a security strip between southern Gaza and Egyptian territory. This narrow strip, no more than 330 feet (or about 100 m.) wide (!) at some crucial points, was known as the Philadelphi Route. Palestinian groups in Gaza made the most of its narrow size by digging tunnels under it to the Egyptian side of the town of Rafah, located in Sinai, and using these passageways to bring rockets and other weapons into Gaza.

Israel fought the tunnels with partial success until 2005, when it withdrew completely from Gaza – including from the Philadelphi Route. After that, arms smuggling grew rapidly and Gaza became a zone for firing rockets of increasing range and destructive capability at Israeli population centers. Hamas and other terror groups ramped up their smuggling activities, bringing in weapons from Iran, Yemen, and Sudan. Hamas operatives were able to leave Gaza and travel to Iran, where they were trained by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps before returning to help build the Palestinian forces. In many regards the Jordan Valley is the Philadelphi Route of the West Bank, forming Israel's security belt. The only way to ensure that any future Palestinian state is demilitarized, as Israel demands, and will not become another Iranian stronghold, is to maintain full Israeli control of the Jordan Valley.



Hamas built tunnels to smuggle weapons under the Philadelphi Route from Egypt to the Gaza Strip. In recent years it has also dug attack tunnels from Gaza into Israel.

Can't Powerful Israel Rely on its Deterrent Capability?

Deterrence is an important component of the balance of forces between states and also of fighting terror. Basically, deterrence entails presenting a threat that leads opponents to avoid aggressive actions by persuading them that such actions will be more harmful than advantageous to them.

States having military power can be deterred from direct attacks and, specifically, from territorial invasions. It would be very difficult, however, to deter a third state, with which Israel did not share a border, from transferring its forces into a Palestinian state if it was invited in.

Over the years, efforts to deter terror organizations have only partly succeeded. Effectively deterring a terror group requires confronting it with a threat that is existential. A punitive operation that lacks the element of an existential threat causes escalation instead of deterrence. Deterrence does not work against terror organizations that control no territory or population, and have no organizational mechanism or logistical infrastructure that can be hit. The proliferation of such groups, along with the growing power of rocket terror, increasingly means that these groups can only be deterred by preventing them from succeeding (known as deterrence by denial).

Therefore, exercising effective deterrence against a military invasion or terror on Israel's eastern front mandates Israeli military control of the Jordan Valley.

Israeli control of the Jordan Valley also has important implications for Jordan's security. If the IDF evacuates the valley, preventing smuggling will mainly become the Jordanian army's responsibility. As soon as Israel withdraws, however, a plethora of regional terror groups that want to infiltrate the West Bank, thereby bolstering Hamas and joining its war on Israel, will exploit the new situation by seeking a springboard in Jordan. The Jordan Valley's attractiveness as an infiltration route will probably also spark the emergence of terror groups within the Kingdom of Jordan itself. That will undoubtedly add to Jordan's security burden and possibly produce greater risks, as occurred in the late 1960s and led King Hussein in 1970 to finally crush the PLO's extensive terror network, which threatened a civil war and the kingdom's collapse.

Israeli control of the Jordan Valley also has important implications for Jordan's security. If the IDF evacuates the valley, a plethora of regional terror groups that want to infiltrate the West Bank, thereby bolstering Hamas and joining its war on Israel, will exploit the new situation by seeking a springboard in Jordan.

What about Alternative Security Arrangements Involving Foreign Forces?

Another idea sometimes raised is that of "alternative security arrangements," meaning a combination of a limited Israeli presence in the Jordan Valley with warning stations in sovereign Palestinian territory and the deployment of foreign (international, UN, or NATO) forces in the area.

Israel must not agree to such "solutions." Israel's national security doctrine is firmly based on self-reliance, and for good reasons beyond the vital importance of its ethos of self-defense.

Israel's security concerns in the Jordan Valley cannot possibly be met if the territory is transferred to the Palestinians and if any sort of foreign forces are stationed there. International observers can only ensure that arrangements are implemented if all sides want to uphold them. No state will accept having its soldiers endanger their lives in place of Israeli soldiers. Indeed, Israel's experience with international forces or monitors under such conditions is hardly encouraging. In Lebanon, UNIFIL has not met Israel's expectations since the 2006 Second Lebanon War with regard to preventing the rearming of Hizbullah. Similarly, European Union observers at the Rafah Crossing in Gaza abandoned their posts in 2006 when they were threatened by rioters, and UN forces on the Golan Heights have similarly fled the dangers of Syria's civil war.

The Israeli deployment in the Jordan Valley enables the continuous information-gathering that can provide rapid warning when necessary, the maintenance of a regular defensive

force that operates in the territory and knows it well, defensive depth to ensure that sudden attacks can be contained, control of that defensive depth and the ability to fortify and barricade it at very short notice, and control over assembly areas for reinforcements and the axes for transporting them. Any Israeli deployment that does not meet all these requirements will be insufficient and will fail the test in the hour of need.

Conclusion

Israel has a natural right and a historically proven and internationally recognized need for defensible borders that enable it to defend itself with its own forces.

An analysis of the four main threats (conventional attacks, rocket and missile fire, terror, and nonconventional attacks), and a consideration of how they can be dealt with, demonstrates that neither the 1967 lines nor the security-fence line can serve as a defensible border for Israel, and that only full Israeli sovereignty over all of the Jordan Valley as a security zone running along the Jordan River, serving as a border, can give Israel security.

Israel must make a transition from a policy of “security based on political agreements and diplomatic guarantees” to one of “agreements based on the provision of security by Israeli forces positioned in defensible zones.”

In negotiations with the Palestinian Authority, Israel must insist on sovereignty over all areas having vital security importance, even as part of a settlement that includes a territorial compromise, and must not seek extraterritorial solutions that will prove inadequate.

Such defensible borders will not only enable Israel to provide its residents with the security they need, but also will ensure that a future peace treaty is sustainable.

Note

1. Thomas Ricks, “The Future of War,” *Foreign Policy*, April 18, 2014. See also Statement of Frank J. Cilluffo, Associate Vice President and Director, Homeland Security Policy Institute, George Washington University, Joint Hearing before the Subcommittee on Cybersecurity, Infrastructure Protection, and Security Technologies of the Committee on Homeland Security, U.S. House of Representatives, April 26, 2012.



UN peacekeeping forces from the Philippines after their abduction and release by Syrian rebels. The troops belonged to the UN Disengagement Force (UNDOF) that was stationed on the Syrian side of the Golan Heights.

The Risks of Foreign Peacekeeping Forces in the West Bank

Maj.-Gen. (res.) Yaakov Amidror

Israel's Experience with International Peacekeepers

During the 1967 Six-Day War, I was a soldier serving in Battalion 202 of the Paratroopers Brigade of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF). We entered the Gaza Strip from south of Gaza City and on the first day of fighting, in the early afternoon, we were told not to open fire on a group that was due to arrive in an orderly fashion along the railway line. After about an hour a group of Indian soldiers with large Sikh turbans on their heads approached. They marched between the railway lines in neat groups of four, rifles slung across their shoulders with the barrels pointing downward, a clear sign that they did not intend to use them. This was UNEF, the United Nations Emergency Force, which had retreated from the area just before hostilities broke out.

UNEF had been installed at the end of the 1956 Sinai Campaign as a buffer force between Egypt and Israel after the Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai Peninsula and the Gaza Strip. However, at the moment of truth, just when the force was most needed to avert war, it evacuated in response to the request of the president of Egypt, Gamal Abdel Nasser, to UN Secretary-General U Thant. The UNEF withdrawal from Sinai was one of the main developments that precipitated the outbreak of the Six-Day War. The history of UNEF's betrayal of Israel, no matter how it might have been legally justified by the UN, served as a formative event in shaping how Israelis look today at proposals for them to rely on international forces for their security.

UNIFIL in Lebanon

Later, as an intelligence officer in the IDF Northern Command, along the front with Lebanon and Syria, I noticed that UNIFIL, the UN Interim Force in Lebanon, was

completely ineffective. UNIFIL was established in 1978 in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 425 in the aftermath of Operation Litani, an Israeli ground incursion into Lebanon in response to repeated terrorist attacks into northern Israel by the PLO. UNIFIL's mandate was to confirm Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon, restore international peace and security, and help restore the authority of the Lebanese government in the area.

But southern Lebanon quickly reverted to being a terrorist stronghold from which hostile forces fired upon Israel. UNIFIL did not prevent this from happening. What UNIFIL did do was interfere with IDF operations. The UNIFIL deployment did not prevent the deterioration of the situation and the outbreak of the 1982 Lebanon War. Even after the war, the same problems with UNIFIL remained, when the threat to Israel by the PLO was replaced by the Iranian-backed Hizbullah. In the years that followed, the IDF acted correctly. It would enter Lebanon when necessary as a regular army, with a flag and a uniform. It coordinated its entry in advance in an effort to avoid injuring UN personnel.

UNIFIL in southern Lebanon is more prone to intervene against Israeli self-defense operations than against acts of aggression by Hizbullah.

Hizbullah, by contrast, was an armed force of irregulars that attacked from, and disappeared into, the civilian population of Lebanon. They informed no one when they were going in or pulling out of an area. The UN never caught any Hizbullah terrorists and took no action against them – even after Hizbullah opened fire. When Hizbullah moved its artillery positions to within 50 meters of a UN position and then fired on Israeli targets, UNIFIL did nothing. But if Israel employed counter-fire against the very same Hizbullah artillery, then the UN Division for Peacekeeping Operations would issue a formal diplomatic complaint. As a result, the UN was more prone to intervene against Israeli self-defense operations than against acts of aggression by Hizbullah.

UNIFIL has been a constant reminder to the Israeli public of the fecklessness of international forces in preventing an Islamist insurgent force like Hizbullah from carrying out terrorist warfare against Israel. Following Israel's unilateral withdrawal from southern Lebanon in May 2000, Hizbullah undertook a massive weapons buildup, accumulating some 20,000 rockets, more than 4,000 of which it launched at Israeli towns and cities in the 2006 Second Lebanon War. Moreover, in a major Hizbullah operation in October 2000, its forces crossed into Israeli territory from an area of Lebanon supposedly controlled by the UN and abducted three Israeli soldiers, while killing others. All this transpired under the nose of a UNIFIL position, from which the incident could easily be observed. No UNIFIL roadblocks were set up to intercept the Hizbullah vehicles carrying the Israeli captives.

Since the 2006 war, and despite the introduction of more than 10,000 additional UNIFIL troops into southern Lebanon under the auspices of UN Security Council Resolution 1701, Hizbullah has rearmed at a torrid pace. The group has accumulated more than 60,000 rockets despite the fact that UNIFIL was supposed to have upgraded its peacekeeping

mandate. True, the increased UN and Lebanese Army presence in southern Lebanon has made Hizbullah activity more difficult south of the Litani River and has forced the group to move the bulk of its operations north of that line. However, Hizbullah continues to operate openly, in contravention to UN Resolutions 425 and 1701, and has never adhered to UNIFIL requirements.

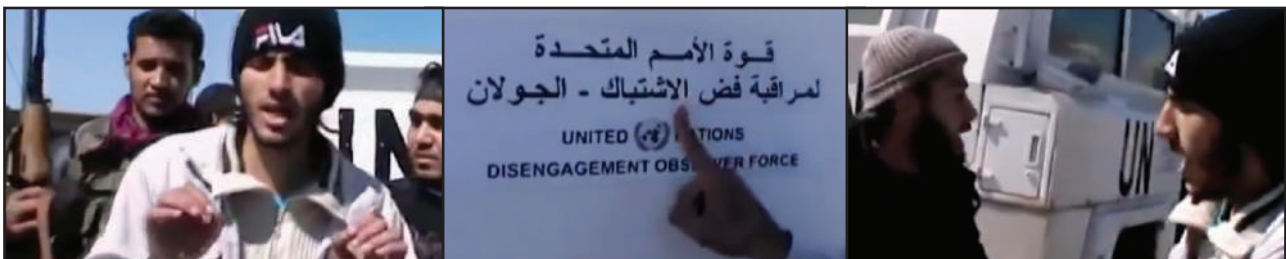
In fact, in July and October 2009, large weapons caches exploded in UN-controlled territory and the UN had known nothing of the existence of either cache. There are tens of such arms caches scattered across southern Lebanon and hundreds of Hizbullah operatives training there. Have any been arrested? No. In short, the presence of UN forces in Lebanon has not been a helpful factor, even when the Lebanese government has wanted the UN to curb Hizbullah.

More recently, in a case involving Syria, Israel witnessed what can happen to international peacekeeping missions when they are targeted by *jihadist* organizations. In 2013, international peacekeeping forces belonging to the UN Disengagement and Observer Force (UNDOF) came under attack by Syrian rebels. Troops from the Filipino contingent were taken hostage and only later release. As a result, a number of states that contributed their soldiers to UNDOF decided to withdraw, including Austria.

International Forces and Palestinians

What will happen if UN forces are sent to a sovereign Palestinian state whose government *does not want* an international force to neutralize or disrupt the activities of organizations like Hizbullah or Hamas. If international forces are deployed in order to ensure that the Palestinians fulfill the security clauses in their agreement with Israel, yet the Palestinian government retains strong reservations about certain security restrictions – like demilitarization – which it believes to be an infringement on Palestinian sovereignty, then that government will show little interest in the continued presence of these international forces.

In Gaza, European monitors had been stationed along the Egyptian border in accordance with the 2005 Rafah border crossing agreement brokered by U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. But the Europeans fled their positions when internecine fighting



A Syrian rebel group calling itself the Martyrs of Yarmouk Brigade abducted UN peacekeepers on the Syrian Golan Heights belonging to UNDOF (United Nations Disengagement Force).

between Hamas and Fatah heated up after the Hamas victory in the 2006 Palestinian legislative elections. The monitors also fell victim to kidnappings by local Palestinians, which contributed to their decision to quit their post.

At the Jericho prison in PA-controlled territory in the West Bank, in 2006 British and U.S. prison guards proved unable to enforce prison sentences on Palestinian terrorists, as agreed under international understandings. In the end, the IDF was compelled to act, entering the prison to take Palestinian terrorist prisoners to Israeli prisons, including Ahmed Saadat, leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, who was responsible for the murder of Israeli cabinet minister Rehavam Ze'evi in 2001.

The presence of international forces is supposed to provide the Israeli public with a solution to the security problems resulting from a territorial withdrawal. However, from Israel's experience, the only successful security forces that can be relied upon are its own. Therefore, the presence of a UN force, as it has been in the past, will merely create an obstacle to Israel's ability to defend itself. This is why Israel must retain the exclusive right to act against armed terror groups – thereby ruling out the option of an international force.

Israel Seeks to Defend Itself By Itself

Israel's need to "defend itself by itself" is not a new idea. It is based on Israel's national ethos since its War of Independence. It is also rooted in Israel's internationally-sanctioned right to "secure and recognized boundaries" or "defensible borders" that was enshrined in UN Security Council Resolution 242 that followed the 1967 war and has governed all Arab-Israeli diplomacy ever since. President George W. Bush used this language in the presidential guarantee he provided to former Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon as a *quid pro quo* for withdrawing from Gaza in 2005, stating, "The United States reiterates its steadfast commitment to Israel's security, including secure, defensible borders, and to preserve and strengthen Israel's capability to deter and defend itself, by itself, against any threat or possible combination of threats."

Generally, international forces can only work when *both* parties exhibit the required political will to observe bilateral agreements. In such cases, an international force can assist in supervising treaty implementation, as in the case of the Egypt-Israel Treaty of Peace in the Sinai Peninsula. Since August 3, 1981, when the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) was agreed to and funded by Israel, Egypt, and the United States, the security clauses of the peace treaty have been upheld by both parties. It is important to note that both Egyptians and Israelis have maintained a bilateral interest in upholding its terms. But even in this scenario, should either party ever choose to breach the agreement, the MFO would be unable to prevent it.

The Track Record of NATO/Western Peacekeepers

Because of the poor track record of UN forces, sometimes the suggestion is made to send NATO forces instead, with the assumption that they are more robust and will be better able to handle the mission. Whereas UN forces can come from many non-Western states, from Fiji to Nigeria, whose soldiers may be poorly trained and under-equipped, a NATO force is presumably more reliable. While for the most part UN forces serve as peacekeeping troops – observing that the terms of an agreement are upheld – a NATO deployment may include more ambitious goals of peace enforcement: imposing on warring parties a cessation of hostilities to which they have not agreed. But even NATO has many limitations that must be noted.

For example, in the case of Bosnia, NATO forces were deployed to uphold the 1995 Dayton Agreement and were effective once Yugoslavia surrendered unconditionally. However, the Israeli-Palestinian case does not include any form of Palestinian or Hamas surrender, nor is surrender a status sought by either the Palestinians or Israel. Subsequently, the Yugoslav army retreated from Kosovo to Yugoslavia, creating a physical reality in which there was no longer contact between the warring factions. Such conditions have yet to be achieved in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and are not likely to be achieved in the foreseeable future.

In earlier phases of the Bosnian War, there was a largely Western military presence that had been deployed under a UN mandate, known as the UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR). NATO was already involved at this early stage, supporting UNPROFOR. Even though it was a well-equipped Western army, UNPROFOR failed to stop horrible massacres in that conflict. Most notably, the Dutch UN contingent abandoned the Muslims of Srebrenica as they were attacked by the Bosnian Serb Army, leading to the mass murder of over 8,000 civilians in 1995. NATO was only to intervene if it had UN approval; there was a “dual-key” mechanism which required the agreement of both organizations to activate NATO’s power.

Whether an international force is deployed under a NATO or a UN mandate, all peacekeeping forces will seek to maintain a good working relationship with the militias and terrorist groups that engage in violence.

Regardless of whether an international force is deployed under a NATO or a UN mandate, as long as the forces are deployed into the midst of hostilities, they will face the same fundamental problem that all such peacekeeping forces face: their need to maintain a good working relationship even with the militias and terrorist groups that engage in violence and aggression against them. In Bosnia, UNPROFOR did not want to alienate the Bosnian Serb Army, which was known at times to threaten UN troops and take them as hostages. In Lebanon, UNIFIL did not want to anger Hizbullah, for similar reasons. For peacekeeping forces in particular, assuming a posture of strict neutrality between the side that seeks to undermine peace and security and the side that they are supposed to defend emanates,

above all, from considerations of survival. This need for neutrality is one of the major factors guaranteeing that peacekeeping forces will be ineffective and unreliable when they are most needed.

Their need for neutrality, and the danger that peacekeepers face when they try to do their jobs, is not just a theoretical concept. The force that was dispatched to Lebanon in August 1982 was closer to a fully-armed NATO force than to a UN Observer Mission. It was made up of units from Britain, France, Italy, and the U.S. In October 1983, both the French paratrooper barracks and the U.S. Marine headquarters were attacked by Shiite suicide bombers, on orders from Tehran, causing the deaths of nearly three hundred servicemen. Within a year, both forces withdrew from Lebanon, demonstrating not just the dangers that peacekeepers face, but the reality that they will quickly leave the theater when attacked. This fact gives the peacekeeping forces an additional bureaucratic incentive to ingratiate themselves to the terrorist or insurgent side of a conflict, because a confrontation with such forces will lead to the failure of the peacekeeping mission. This fact of life for peacekeepers has been borne out again and again by UNIFIL, whose officials have repeatedly denied and downplayed, despite abundant and obvious evidence to the contrary, that Hizbullah was violating Resolution 1701.

There are those who believe that providing a Western force like NATO, with UN backing, can help offset the risks derived from Western deployments in the Middle East. In the past, a UN Security Council mandate was supposed to provide a peacekeeping force with added legitimacy, which would offer some protection to peacekeeping forces. But when the threat to international forces comes from militant Islamist groups, a UN mandate does not necessarily make the force any more acceptable. In August 2003, Al-Qaeda directly attacked the Baghdad headquarters of the UN Special Representative in Iraq, Sergio Vieira de Mello, killing him and 16 others with a truck bomb. How is the UN supposed to retaliate or punish a terrorist group?

When facing increasing fatalities, international forces often lose the original political support they had from the states that contributed them for any peacekeeping mission. In the Iraq War, the U.S.-led coalition lost national contingents from countries concerned with their security. After Madrid was attacked by Al-Qaeda, Spain elected a new government that withdrew all Spanish troops from Iraq. The continued deployment of Dutch troops in Afghanistan, under NATO, became politically controversial in the Netherlands during 2010, leading to their withdrawal.

Whether they engage in peacekeeping or peace enforcement, there is always the question of what are the precise rules of engagement of international forces, including a NATO force. For example, are international forces only permitted to open fire in self-defense when they come under attack? Or alternatively, can international forces use their firepower to prevent an act of aggression? As UN peacekeepers, the Belgian forces in Rwanda in 1994 were denied permission to take action against the Hutu militia that initiated the genocide against the Tutsi tribe.

Even in a robust NATO deployment in Afghanistan, which is not a peacekeeping mission, European states have insisted on “caveats” for the employment of their forces, restricting their use for only the safest missions. There were national caveats banning nighttime operations and restricting the geographic deployment of forces to specific areas which were known to be more secure. Some caveats required consultations between commanders in the field and national capitals in Europe before tactical decisions could be taken. Most importantly, there were national caveats that excluded the use of certain forces that were part of the NATO alliance in counterterrorism operations.¹ General John Craddock, the former Supreme Allied Commander of NATO, admitted in 2009 that NATO forces were burdened with 83 national caveats, which were reduced to about 70.²

NATO remains a cumbersome organization, especially when it comes to decision-making and processing urgent operational requirements from commanders. In counter-terrorism operations, it is precisely the ability to act quickly and decisively that keeps the peace and prevents attacks. Given the track record of NATO in Afghanistan, it is difficult to imagine the efficacy of similar forces in the West Bank.

NATO remains a cumbersome organization. Given its track record in Afghanistan, it is difficult to imagine the efficacy of similar forces in the West Bank.

International Forces Constrain Israeli Self-Defense

Israel needs to be prepared for the possibility that even after agreements are signed and a demilitarized Palestinian state is established, groups such as Hamas and Islamic Jihad, or even U.S.-trained PA security forces themselves, may act in contravention of the agreements. Israel should take into account that in such situations international forces would likely not take action. In fact, the rocket assault against Israel by Hamas following Israel’s withdrawal from Gaza suggests that a similar scenario could unfold in the West Bank, placing Israel’s coastal plain under rocket attack.



Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser with UN Secretary General U Thant, May 24, 1967, two weeks before the outbreak of the Six-Day War. Thant agreed to Nasser’s request to withdraw UN Emergency Forces that had been stationed in Sinai as a buffer since the 1956 war. Nasser replaced the UNEF with Egyptian military divisions ready to attack Israel, precipitating the outbreak of hostilities.

In such a scenario, as long as a UN force is present on Palestinian territory, the IDF's operational freedom of action will be limited. The Israeli army cannot open fire against the enemy as it deems appropriate without first verifying the location of the UN personnel. Israel faces the risk of being placed in a bind in which nobody will be able to act against terrorists: the international forces will simultaneously fail to prevent terrorist attacks on Israel but succeed in preventing Israel from defending itself.

Prime Minister Rabin said in his last speech to the Knesset in September 1995 that the IDF must control the Jordan Valley "in the broadest meaning of that term."³ Israel must isolate the territory along the Jordan River to prevent the smuggling of arms, personnel, and know-how. Inside the territory there must be a Palestinian police force to deal with internal problems whose principal power is limited to machine guns that are unable to penetrate IDF armored vehicles. It must be agreed in advance that in the event of an act of terror or a revolving-door policy of arresting and then freeing terrorists, as in the past, the IDF will be able to enter the area in order to detain suspects and prevent further attacks.

Who Will Guarantee Demilitarization?

The prospective establishment of a Palestinian state poses substantial security challenges for Israel. Even with a fully and verifiably demilitarized Palestinian sovereign entity, without security control over the West Bank, Israel will be confronted with enormous uncertainties over how to assure its future security.

Will a future Palestinian sovereign entity become a state with a strong commitment to the rule of law? Without the assistance of the IDF, which has assumed the bulk of the responsibility for combating terrorism, will PA security forces be able to establish full control and completely dismantle terror groups such as Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and Fatah's Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades?

During the implementation of the Oslo Agreements, Yasser Arafat created a separate military force outside of the Palestinian Authority, known as the Tanzim, which was under the control of Fatah and was not constrained by bilateral agreements. It was employed during a period of escalation against Israel, like the Second Intifada. What is to prevent such paramilitary groups from arising again? What will the Middle East look like in the coming years in view of Iranian-backed regional subversion and Al-Qaeda activity that is moving closer to Israel's borders?

Meanwhile, Palestinian control of an independent territory might reenergize Palestinian confidence to attempt to deal a fatal blow by launching major strategic attacks against Israel. Such a scenario could become more likely in view of the short distance – a mere 8 to 12 miles – between the Mediterranean Sea and the Palestinian state. In practical terms, this means that any sustained Palestinian rocket assault or combined military offensive

from the West Bank, if successful in its initial stage, will pose a serious threat to Israel's interior. Israel will live under a far greater threat and will be forced to prepare ways to neutralize an initial Palestinian offensive.

Israel will also need to develop defense plans without the critical topographical advantage of controlling the West Bank mountain ridge. From the dominant terrain facing west, any Palestinian with a Kassam rocket would be able to hit Israel's main airport and major cities that lie along the coastal plain – the country's "strategic center of gravity," as it is known in combat doctrine. This new reality will make it difficult to defend Israel – either against mobile forces or against rocket or other weapons fire – creating a new and constant preoccupation for Israeli military planners: figuring out how Israel, under such conditions, is to provide for its own defense.

There will be no way to neutralize this untenable situation entirely, but the danger can be greatly reduced by creating a situation that will prevent the Palestinian side from thinking in terms of building up its conventional military and clandestine terror capabilities in the West Bank. It will also mean that any security arrangements in the West Bank must preclude the reinforcement of the Palestinians by Arab or Iranian forces from the east. In short, this means *preventing the rise of any conventional military or terrorist threat in the entire territory between the "green line" and the Jordan Valley*.

Given these concerns, the following security conditions must be guaranteed:

1. No foreign army will enter the territory of a Palestinian authority or state.
2. No military organization of any kind will be established in the territory in question, whether or not it belongs to the state.
3. No weapons of any kind may be smuggled into the territory, whether from the east or from another direction.

If any of these scenarios take place, the IDF needs to be in a position to intervene and eliminate the threat.

These three conditions are derived from the Israeli requirement that any Palestinian entity be fully demilitarized. But it would be a serious mistake to believe that Israeli requirements for verifying complete Palestinian demilitarization could be guaranteed by international forces operating in the West Bank. International forces have never been successful anywhere in the world in a situation where one of the parties was ready to ignore the fulfillment of its responsibilities. There is no reason to expect that this case would be any different.

Conclusions

In the end, states are only willing to put their soldiers at risk in accordance with the extent to which their vital interests are threatened. If their interests are unaffected, they

will inevitably withdraw their forces from conflict zones when they are endangered. This principle applies to situations that involve a UN umbrella, a NATO mission, or independent troop deployments in a foreign state. When terror begins, and any state will have to make the calculation of whether to allow its forces to remain in a danger zone, it is likely to decide to evacuate its forces if the price is too high, involving sacrificing the lives of many soldiers. This logic has applied in all of the historic examples reviewed above. The only state which will be ready to pay any price to prevent attacks on its population in such situations is Israel. That is why, professionally and logically, Israel should be responsible for this mission, or, in the words of President Obama, “Israel should defend itself by itself.”

In the end, states are only willing to put their soldiers at risk in accordance with the extent to which their vital interests are threatened. If their interests are unaffected, they will inevitably withdraw their forces from conflict zones when they are endangered. This principle applies to situations that involve a UN umbrella, a NATO mission, or independent troop deployments.

In the Middle East, as elsewhere in the world, international forces have been notoriously unreliable, especially when they have been challenged by one of the parties, as in the case of Nasser’s Egypt in 1967 or Hizbullah today. The killing of peacekeepers is one of the most effective means in the terrorist arsenal to weaken and even break the political will of states that contribute forces to peacekeeping operations. In any event, international forces have historically shown a reluctance to militarily confront those challenging them, and even in the case of NATO, they are likely to operate under highly restrictive rules of engagement and confused chains of command that will limit their value in the scenarios that Israel will likely face.

Therefore, the requirement articulated by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu that any Palestinian state must be demilitarized must necessarily preclude the presence of any armed third party or international forces on prospective Palestinian territory.

Israel has taken great pride in the fact that it has never asked Western soldiers – including American troops – to risk their lives in its defense.

Above all, even if NATO solves its problems with national caveats and rules of engagement that limit the effectiveness of its troops, and the efficacy of UN peacekeeping forces vastly improves, there is still a fundamental principle in Israeli military doctrine of self-reliance which remains unchanged. Israel has taken great pride in the fact that it has never asked Western soldiers – including American troops – to risk their lives in its defense.



UN Secretary General Kofi Annan with Hizbullah leader Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah in Lebanon, June 20, 2000. The meeting enhanced the political legitimacy of Hizbullah, an international terrorist organization.

Israel's requirement of self-reliance is particularly important in view of possible and even probable threat scenarios following the signing of an agreement with the PA. Today, and for the foreseeable future, no PA force has the strength to dismantle Palestinian factions such as Hamas and Islamic Jihad. And should Israel come under conventional attack in the future from the east, it would clearly fall on Israel to block the attack in the Jordan Valley.

It is thus important to understand the limited utility of international forces in a future Israeli-Palestinian peace settlement. As one analyst of peacekeeping operations has warned: "Peacekeeping is a very useful tool of international politics, but an inherently limited tool. It can and must take on violent local challenges to peace implementation, but only at the margins of a peace process. Should the core of that process lose cohesion, a multinational operation will itself have insufficient cohesion – and likely insufficient military strength – to make the center hold."⁴ This inherent weakness of international forces makes Israel's doctrine of self-reliance all the more relevant, even after peace agreements are signed.

Notes

1. James Sperling and Mark Webber, "NATO: From Kosovo to Kabul," *International Affairs* 85:3 (2009):509.
2. Arnaud De Borchgrave, "Caveats' Neuter NATO Allies," *Washington Times*, July 15, 2009.
3. http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/MFAArchive/1990_1999/1995/10/PM+Rabin+in+Knesset+Ratification+of+Interim+Agree.htm.
4. William J. Durch, with Madeline England, *The Purpose of Peace Operations* (New York: Center on International Cooperation, New York University, 2009), p. 8.



Israel's security needs must take into account efforts to erode its legitimacy by dispatching ships under the guise of humanitarian action, like the 2010 Gaza flotilla.

A Long-Term Perspective on Israel's Security Needs

Brig.-Gen. (res.) Yossi Kuperwasser

In analyzing the threats for which Israel must prepare when it assesses its security needs in case a Palestinian state is established, we cannot take the easy, small-scale approach of considering only the threats of the moment. If, despite all the difficulties and obstacles, an agreement is reached with the Palestinians on a solution to the conflict – which appears doubtful at present – it must be ensured that it is a long-term solution with security arrangements that address a wide variety of possible threats over time, not only the kinds of threats we currently confront. Because, along with the security situation, the political situation is likely to change as well, the security arrangements must be of a kind that provides answers from a wider perspective; that is, they must take into account possible political transformations, not only changes in the nature of the military threats.

One of the main threats Israel faces today – the attempt to erode its legitimacy and thereby prevent it from defending itself – is not a military threat. When formulating our security requirements, we must make certain they afford us effective tools in this struggle as well.

Indeed, one of the main threats Israel faces today – the attempt to erode its legitimacy and thereby prevent it from defending itself – is not a military threat. When a convoy of ships approaches, supposedly with the aim of reaching the Gaza Strip, the real purpose of the organizers is not to fire cannons at Israel or otherwise use physical force. Nor is it to conquer the port of Ashdod or sink the Israeli ships that come toward them. Instead, under a guise of humanitarian activity, they seek to undermine Israel's legitimacy as part of a very complex, elaborate, sophisticated campaign that is being waged by a worldwide coalition. When the terror organizations fire rockets while using human shields, they are

not trying to impair Israel's military capabilities but to force it to respond in such a way

that they and the rest of this coalition will be able to indict Israel for defending itself.

Thus, when formulating our security requirements, we must make certain they afford us effective tools in this struggle as well. We must be aware of the severity of this challenge and of our current inadequacy in addressing it, and ensure that the security arrangements minimize the potential for infringing upon Israel's freedom while enabling it to maintain its legitimacy.

Israel must also insist on security arrangements that impede the emergence of threats in the first place. If such threats nevertheless emerge, the arrangements must enable an optimal response – though, if properly crafted in accordance with Israeli demands, such arrangements are meant to reduce the potential for threats to develop. A very simple illustration is the security fence. Because, in the first place, it deters terrorists from even trying to surmount it and thereby enter Israel, it is not subject to tests of its effectiveness as a physical obstacle; terrorists simply do not approach it and do not put it to such a test. Thus, the threat that this tool, the fence, is intended to address simply does not materialize. In such a situation, however, it will be claimed that Israel can do away with such instruments since they are not needed. But they must be maintained, since it is their removal that will allow the threats to emerge.

For example, some time ago, when we contemplated the threats likely to emanate from a Palestinian entity once it was established, only few realized that our continued presence along the Philadelphi Route between Gaza and Egypt would be so vital after the 2005 disengagement. It was the lack of an Israeli presence there that enabled the entry into Gaza of rockets and missiles that could reach Tel Aviv. As long as there is a significant probability that certain threats will materialize, we must be capable of counteracting them.

That is all the more true today as the U.S. ability to underwrite security arrangements declines, and Israel cannot count on the United States to prevent problematic developments. The Middle Eastern strategic situation is marked by instability as moderates and radicals clash, with the radicals tending to get the upper hand in recent years. Although, at present, there are relatively moderate elements in Israel's immediate vicinity, we cannot be sure that situation will continue. Iran is gaining strength, boosting its influence in areas near our borders while arming and training the radical actors. Hizbullah now has more weapons than most of the world's countries. Hamas is building up its capabilities in Gaza, and the Syrians are hardly passive. Our preparations, then, must take account of this instability.

The Threats Israel Must Prepare to Confront Fall into Five Categories:

First in line are the kinds of military threats that exist today, for which Israel clearly must be prepared. At the forefront of these threats is the ability to mount terror attacks by land, air, and sea, or to fire rockets over the border at targets within Israeli territory. These are

the chief threats. In the future, under an agreement, some parts of Israel may be difficult to defend. Since any such agreement will take account of the reality that has developed in the West Bank since 1967, it will include strips of Israeli land surrounded by Palestinian territory, and protecting these will pose a considerable challenge. Security arrangements intended to address such threats cannot possibly rely solely on Palestinian or international actors.

The second kind comprises possible military threats. Although they do not exist at present, they could materialize in the future. Terror attacks or other hostilities could be mounted by regular armies, terror groups, or terror operatives from outside the Palestinian state who would try to attack Israel by passing through or over the Palestinian state. Although the chances of this are low at the moment, in the future, given the abovementioned considerations, they may well increase.

Third, we must prepare for paramilitary threats. These are not direct military threats but could, for example, involve disrupting the electromagnetic domain so as to attack Israel. The relevance of that kind of threat is growing and we must be prepared for it; the electromagnetic domain is vital to our security and daily life. If we cannot keep it under sufficient control, while taking account of the needs of our neighbors, we are likely to have difficulty when using force in time of need.

The fourth kind encompasses threats in the political sphere. These include the ongoing campaign to isolate Israel, portray it as a criminal entity, and perhaps even an eventual Palestinian attempt to subvert the loyalties of the Israeli Arabs, thereby further eroding Israel's international legitimacy and identity. Thus, ensuring that no military and terrorist capability develops within civilian areas, where Israeli countermeasures would be characterized as attacks on civilians, and ensuring that the Palestinians view an agreement as ending all claims and ending the conflict, are not just statements for a framework. They are vital components of the security arrangements that will maintain the agreement's stability, and hence must be regarded as security requirements in their own right.

The most fundamental component of the security arrangements is the building of a culture of peace, centering on recognition by the PLO and the Palestinian Authority of Israel's right to exist in peace as the free and democratic nation-state of the Jewish people. This is not only to be achieved through requisite changes in the Palestinian security establishment but also in the Palestinian education system.

The last category is that of strategic threats. First and foremost among these is the ongoing effort to erode the recognition of Israel's right to exist in secure and recognized borders as the free and democratic nation-state of the Jewish people. In the face of this continuing campaign, we must ensure that the stability that can be achieved through effective security

arrangements will counteract the stratagems of those seeking to subvert Israel in this way. That is why the most fundamental component of the security arrangements is the building of a culture of peace, centering on recognition by the PLO and the Palestinian Authority of Israel's right to exist in peace as the free and democratic nation-state of the Jewish people, while making clear that any use of violence and terror against Israel, and particularly against Israeli civilians, is not only against the Palestinian interest but immoral as well.

This is not only to be achieved through requisite changes in the Palestinian security establishment and its treatment of terror, in the Palestinian education system, and in the messages that the political, religious, and cultural elites convey. In addition, monitoring mechanisms must be created to ensure that such changes in Palestinian practice have occurred, in light of the foreseeable opposition of extremist elements.

Because building a culture of peace and making the necessary changes in the security establishment and in how it deals with terror are ongoing processes, it is clear that a bottom-up approach is needed to cultivate a reality of peace. Such an approach must be emphasized in the talks and in the agreements to be reached between the leaderships (i.e., the top-down direction) on the various issues in dispute. Implementing such agreements will take time and can only be done gradually.

The Palestinians may well look askance at any sort of security arrangements because they will regard them as compromising their sovereignty. Hence, in the course of the negotiations, we have to assess the extent to which peace is likely to contribute to security. We do not think peace has nothing to contribute to security. But, given the realities, as long as the Palestinians are unwilling to recognize our right to exist in the Land of Israel as the nation-state of the Jewish people, security must form the basis of any settlement. If that situation should change with time, and we all pray that it will, then we will be able to adjust the security arrangements to the new reality. But as long as peace is not based on recognition of the right of the State of Israel to exist in security as the nation-state of the Jewish people, we have no choice but to insist on the centrality of security requirements.

PA Education Ministry: Fight the Jews and Kill Them

مقاتلة اليهود والانتصار عليهم: فقد بشر الرسول ﷺ بنهاية ظلم اليهود على هذه الأرض
القديمة، وإزالة فسادهم واحتلالهم لها؛ عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه أن النبي ﷺ قال: «لا تقوم
الساعة حتى يقاتل المسلمون اليهود، فيقتلهم المسلمون، حتى يختبئ اليهودي من وراء الحجر
أو الشجر، فيقول الحجر أو الشجر: يا مسلم، يا عبد الله، هذا يهودي خلفي فتعال فاقطله إلا
الغرقاد، فإنه من شجر اليهود»^(١).

“The fight against the Jews and the victory over them: The Messenger of Allah has already announced the end of the Jews’ oppression of this land and the removal of their corruption and conquest of it.

“...[God’s Messenger said] The Hour of Resurrection will not come until the Muslims fight the Jews. The Muslims will kill them, and when a Jew would hide behind a rock or a tree, the rock or the tree would say: ‘O Muslim, O worshipper of God! There is a Jew behind me; come and kill him,’ except the salt bush (Gharqad), which is the Jews’ tree.”

PA Education Ministry, Islamic Studies, *Foundations of Belief* textbook, Grade 11, 2011, p. 94 (Source: Israel Ministry of Strategic Affairs)

Rather than promote a culture of peace, an official textbook of the Palestinian Authority (PA) from 2011 inculcates students in Grade 11 to kill Jews. The Arabic text shown above comes from the original text. It is noteworthy that the anti-Semitic motifs that are featured in this text from the PA Ministry of Education also appear in the Hamas Charter.



Missile launch from Gaza

Key Principles of a Demilitarized Palestinian State

Maj.-Gen. (res.) Aharon Ze'evi Farkash

Israel Has Sought Palestinian Demilitarization Since Oslo

The State of Israel's requirement that a prospective Palestinian state be demilitarized has been in effect since the 1993 Declaration of Principles (DOP), which served as the basis for the Oslo process and the establishment of the Palestinian Authority (PA). However, the term "demilitarization," as it is commonly understood (i.e., a limitation on war materials), is too narrowly defined and does not sufficiently cover the full range of Israel's security needs. The broader concept includes preventing the development of symmetrical and asymmetrical military threats against Israel – including conventional warfare, terrorism and guerilla warfare – from and via the territory of the PA and a prospective Palestinian state. Demilitarization, then, is a means to safeguarding Israel's security, not an end in itself.

Since 1936 – even before the founding of the state – and until the present time, Israel has pursued the path of territorial compromise. It has done so, despite great inherent security risks, in the hope of achieving peace, stability, and prosperity for its citizens and good relations with its neighbors.¹

Despite numerous failed peace initiatives, military operations, and terror assaults by neighboring Arab countries, and in more recent years by the Palestinian Authority, Israel has again extended its hand in peace and compromise, with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's recognition of a prospective demilitarized Palestinian state. However, the Israeli public will not countenance living alongside a Palestinian entity that houses a terrorist infrastructure or hostile military forces.

Israel's Strategic Vulnerability

Israel's long-time insistence on the demilitarization of any independent Palestinian entity stems from strategic security threats that could easily arise both within a future Palestinian state and from a number of hostile regional actors. Since its founding in 1948, Israel has suffered from several regional asymmetries in relation to its neighbors that restrict its capacity for self-defense. Israel's population of 8 million lives in an area of less than 10,000 square miles including the disputed West Bank, while surrounded by Arab countries with a population of three hundred million and territories 650 times larger than Israel. Israel's main objective over the years has been to defend itself against hostile forces, while its Arab and Palestinian neighbors have maintained aggressive and hostile intentions, notwithstanding historic peace agreements with Egypt and Jordan.

Israel also lacks territorial contiguity with "friendly" neighboring states that could provide transportation arteries to help protect the country's vital defense and national security interests.

All of these fundamental asymmetries have led Israel's military planners to develop a security concept that includes deterrence, early warning, and decisive force.² Yet the country still has to contend with an intractable disadvantage – its severe lack of strategic depth. Israel, including the West Bank, is approximately 40 miles wide.

This lack of strategic depth has exposed Israel to potentially untenable situations in which the Israel Defense Forces is forced to defend the country from within major cities, such as Safed, Nahariya and Kiryat Shmona in the north, or Ashkelon and Ashdod in the south. Such scenarios became concrete following Israel's unilateral withdrawals from Southern Lebanon in 2000 and Gaza in 2005, which exposed its northern and southern population centers to thousands of short- and medium-range rockets, fired by Iranian proxies Hizbullah in Lebanon and Hamas in Gaza. Both now possess rockets capable of reaching Tel Aviv.³

In the event of a peace agreement with the PA, Israel may have to forfeit the minimal depth that is currently provided by the West Bank.

Security Challenges Ahead

Israel is likely to face two main scenarios in the wake of the establishment of a Palestinian state, and in light of prevailing trends in the Middle East:

In the first scenario, the Palestinian state-in-formation would be a failed one, that serves as a convenient base for the development of terrorist infrastructures, as transpired in Gaza following Israel's 2005 unilateral withdrawal.⁴

Such a situation would pose an ongoing challenge for Israel, which would likely face repeated assaults by terror squads attempting to penetrate its border, or by high-trajectory

rockets launched into its heartland, as occurred following Israel's withdrawal from the territory. Hamas rocket attacks on Israeli towns and cities increased by more than 500 percent between 2005 and 2006.⁵ In all likelihood, then, a withdrawal from the West Bank would lead to repeated armed confrontations, making it extremely difficult for Israelis to go about their daily lives, and severely hindering the implementation of peace agreements.

Israel is likely to face two main scenarios in the wake of the establishment of a Palestinian state: Either it becomes a base for terrorist attacks or a conduit for threats from further east.

In the second scenario, involving the entire region, the threat to Israel would develop to the east of the Palestinian state, and Palestinian territory would be used as a base from which to attack Israel. Islamic radicalism would provide the context for this type of threat. The Iranian regime is on the verge of acquiring nuclear capabilities and already possesses ballistic missile capabilities that currently threaten Israel, its Arab neighbors, Russia and parts of Europe. The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps that controls Iran's most sensitive weapons systems, including its nuclear program, provides a strategic umbrella for the radical groups it mobilizes as proxies across the Middle East, from radical Shiite militias in Iraq and Hizbullah in Lebanon to Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad in Gaza and the West Bank.⁶

Iran will continue to exploit its growing nuclear capacity – and image as a soon-to-be nuclear power – to achieve its ambitions for regional hegemony. The Iranian regime will also continue its concerted efforts to exert control in Iraq through the Shiite majority there following the withdrawal of U.S. troops. The consolidation of a radical, Iran-led, Shiite axis that includes Iraq, Syria, and Hizbullah in Lebanon, in addition to ongoing Al-Qaeda and Hamas activity, could result in a destabilized Jordan.⁷

This combination of hostile forces could pose a conventional military threat emanating from Israel's eastern front. This threat could materialize in the form of aerial attacks, surface-to-surface missile strikes, the deployment of military and/or paramilitary forces, and/or the use of proxies – all via the Palestinian state. (This would almost certainly transpire if the Palestinian state were co-opted by Hamas, together with other local Iranian-backed terror groups.) In such cases, Israel would be forced to contend with incessant attacks, and would have great difficulty creating a secure environment for its citizens.

Lessons Learned from Failed Agreements with the PA

Israel's ability to anticipate future threats is largely rooted in lessons learned from past experience. Indeed, since 1993, when the Israeli government and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) signed the Oslo Declaration of Principles that launched the peace process, much has been learned from subsequent events on the ground. These can be summarized as follows:

- Since the time when the Oslo Accord and its 1995 interim agreement were supposed to be implemented, the PLO failed to prevent terrorists from manufacturing and smuggling arms into the Palestinian territories. Moreover, the PLO, Fatah, and PA Chairman Yasser Arafat also financed, directed, and equipped some dozen competing security organizations, providing nearly 60,000 “security forces”⁸ with weapons – through local manufacturing and smuggling – that were prohibited in those agreements. In fact, on July 1, 1994, on the very day that he entered Gaza from Egypt for the first time in 27 years, Arafat not only smuggled in such weapons, but hid terror operatives among his entourage.
- Though the Oslo agreements stipulated that the Palestinians would only operate internal security forces such as police, with no military characteristics whatsoever, Arafat and his Fatah commanders gave their national security apparatus all the trappings of an army (i.e., organizational structure, operational functions, unit names, ranks, etc.), expanding it well beyond what had been agreed upon. Hamas, too, after taking control of Gaza, established openly military frameworks, with regional brigades that were armed like military forces and functioned as part of the movement’s military wing.⁹

Only Israel’s freedom of military operation in the West Bank has thus far prevented terrorists there from manufacturing rockets and launching them at Jerusalem and Tel Aviv.

- Since 2005, Hamas’ continual use of terror against Israel has been combined with more advanced military capabilities such as standard Grad rockets, anti-tank and anti-aircraft missiles, and other weapons, all of which undermine the strategic balance. Stopping and preventing this is an essential principle of demilitarization that will require implementation and enforcement.
- The terrorist onslaught against innocent Israeli citizens waged by the PA beginning in the fall of 2000 (the Second Intifada) underscored Israel’s demand – and the PLO’s failure to comply with signed agreements – to prevent military and terrorist capabilities from developing in Palestinian-controlled areas.
- Throughout the years since the signing of the Oslo Accords, terrorist organizations and PLO security forces have smuggled arms and military manufacturing expertise from Iran through Egypt into Gaza via the Philadelphi Corridor, and even from Gaza into the West Bank (at times even doing this through the use of Palestinians crossing into Israel to receive medical treatment). Only Israeli control of – and careful inspections at – the border crossings have prevented even more of such arms and expertise from flowing into the West Bank from Gaza.¹⁰

Israel's freedom of military operation in the West Bank, which enables the IDF to reach every place where prohibited arms are manufactured or hidden, has thus far prevented terrorists there from being able to manufacture rockets and launch them at Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. It has also enabled the IDF to intercept suicide bombers before they are able to carry out their deadly missions.

Confronting Terrorist and Military Threats

A threat exists when hostile intentions join with aggressive capabilities. Israel has learned from many years of confronting military campaigns and terrorism that it is virtually impossible to alter hostile intentions. In fact, a major problem Israel faces in dealing with a non-state actor such as the Palestinian Authority is that, unlike with state actors such as Egypt or Jordan, classic principles of deterrence and punishment are far less effective as there is no unified government that asserts control over people, weapons, and terrorist groups. This is illustrated by the split between Fatah in the West Bank and Hamas in Gaza. Therefore, aggressive capabilities must be neutralized. This is why Israel has maintained its uncompromising policy of disarming the terrorist infrastructures within and along its borders. Its relative success in dismantling terror infrastructure relies on high-quality, precise military intelligence and full freedom of operation, which includes the ability to enter Palestinian city-centers and villages to locate and destroy bomb-producing laboratories, lathes for the manufacture of rockets and other weapons, arms and ammunition caches. Such is the way Israel deals with what are defined as “asymmetrical” threats from terrorist groups.

Regarding “symmetrical” threats, which involve conventional military forces, Israel must take into account past events in the region, including the Syrian and Iraqi armies' attempts to take control of Jordan and use it as a base from which to attack Israel, without the consent of the Hashemite Kingdom. The PLO also attempted an overthrow of Jordan's King Hussein. More recently, relentless efforts by the Iranian regime to create a radical Shiite axis involving Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon under a developing nuclear umbrella, and to unite radical proxy forces under the command of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps – while seeking to use Palestinian territory for access to Israel's home front – are liable to pose a concrete military threat to Israel from the east.

Thus, any agreement between Israel and the Palestinians must guarantee that a Palestinian state will not allow the development of a terrorist entity – with symmetrical and asymmetrical military capabilities – that could attack Israel at will. An agreement must also prohibit any terrorist activity or deployment of foreign military forces for the purpose of attacking Israel. It must also include the strict demand that the Palestinians not develop significant military capabilities under the auspices – or in the territory – of a third party, nor sign military or strategic pacts with Israel's enemies or with those entities that do not recognize Israel's existence.¹¹

Understandings and Disagreements in Israeli-Palestinian Negotiations to Date

Over the years, understandings have been reached regarding the purpose of the reformed Palestinian security forces as envisioned by PA leader Mahmoud Abbas, who has repeatedly insisted on “one authority, one law, and one weapon.”¹² These forces are tasked with internal policing responsibilities, such as: establishing law and order; preventing terrorism and violence; dismantling terror infrastructures; disarming armed groups; and securing borders to prevent the smuggling of weapons and infiltration of terrorists.

However, despite (or perhaps because of) the security challenge Palestinian forces have posed to Israel in the past – and could easily pose in the future – the heads of the PLO and the PA have so far refused to agree to a definition of demilitarization that would characterize a Palestinian state. In fact, the PA leadership in Ramallah has sought a definition that would defeat the whole principle of demilitarization.¹³ In discussions on the matter, PA representatives have said they would agree to “limited arms” – for example, not acquiring combat planes or tanks (known in military terms as heavy weaponry). But they claim the right to possess high-trajectory weapons (mortars), anti-tank missiles (RPGs), and armored vehicles equipped with machine guns.

They have explained that they need these weapons in order to be the dominant security force in their territory, with the ability to protect the central government. They have also pointed to their right as a sovereign state to maintain a military force, at least for self-defense, for securing borders from external threats, and for dismantling armed militias which pose an internal threat.

Palestinian demands for symmetry in security capabilities can only be addressed in the context of an overall agreement on symmetrical trust-building between the sides. This must include symmetry of state recognition – a Palestinian state and a Jewish state, educating for peace, maintaining a unified and responsible government, and ensuring peaceful state intentions.

At the Camp David summit in 2000, initiated by President Clinton to determine the parameters of a final-status agreement between Israel and the Palestinians, the U.S. president tried to soften the term “demilitarization” by using a new word not recognized in international law – “non-militarization” – but the Palestinian side did not agree to this either.

In other words, based on past experience, the gap between the two sides appears to be difficult to bridge with regard to defining to what extent a Palestinian state should be limited in its military capabilities. Other key security-related issues on which there remains disagreement include:

- Special security arrangements for Israel in the Jordan Valley (up to and including the Allon Road) to prevent arms smuggling and terrorist infiltration (of the kind that occurred in the Philadelphi Corridor along the Egypt-Gaza border), and guarantees to enable an Israeli operational response to a military threat from the east, so that any force that crosses the Jordan River and enters the Palestinian state will be stopped before it reaches Israel's central mountain ridge and its capital, Jerusalem.
- The continued strengthening of the existing relationship between Jordan and Israel in line with their 1994 treaty of peace and its security appendix, and its continued requirement that Jordan work to prevent all terrorist threats from the eastern side of the border and to ensure naval security in both the Red Sea and the Dead Sea.
- A unified airspace, controlled by Israel, to prevent aerial terrorism and aerial military attacks on Israel.
- Control of the sea off the coast of Gaza, including the Gaza port, when built, to prevent weapons smuggling into Gaza and attacks from the sea against Israel, in cooperation with Egypt as defined in the security appendix of the 1979 treaty of peace with Israel.¹⁴

Israel's definition of demilitarization is that no security threat develop either within or by way of Palestinian territory.

The Principles of Israel's Position on Demilitarization

Israel views the term "demilitarization" as encompassing a wider definition than is normally accepted or spelled out in international law, since the common term does not take into account the changing nature of military conflicts and threats. According to Israel's definition, demilitarization is a means to an end: that no security threat – whether symmetrical, asymmetrical, military, terrorist or one that poses any other disruption to daily life in Israel – develop or come to fruition either within or by way of Palestinian territory.¹⁵ But the context of demilitarization here is also unique, as it does not involve two countries with regular armies, but rather a Palestinian state-in-the-making with a history of constant terrorism against Israel.¹⁶ Therefore, Israel must insist on the prohibition of strategic balance-breaking weaponry under Palestinian control, and must demand broad limitations on the security capabilities of the prospective Palestinian state, including the formation of a regular army with planes, tanks, and other conventional heavy armor and weaponry.¹⁷

The Military Dimension

For Israel, demilitarization means that no Palestinian army or military capabilities which could constitute a threat will be established. The following precautions are required to ensure demilitarization:

- The maintaining of Palestinian police and internal security frameworks – such as the U.S.-sponsored “Dayton forces”¹⁸ – not military ones or those with obvious military characteristics.
- Only permitting Palestinian possession of weapons whose purpose is for internal security and policing alone.
- An absence of military alliances or cooperation between Palestinian security forces and foreign armies. This includes no foreign military or other armed group in the territory of the Palestinian state.
- A commitment that no military forces of the Palestinian state will be kept outside of the state, as such forces have the potential to operate against Israel during emergencies and other unforeseen situations.
- An absence of military infrastructures – such as defense industries – and prevention of the manufacturing of dual-use components supposedly not intended for military purposes.
- Effective control, supervision, and inspection of the security perimeter along the borders and international border crossings, to prevent the smuggling of prohibited arms and dual-use materials.
- An effective apparatus for supervision and verification, which relies on international observers whose role it is to ensure that the Palestinian side lives up to its demilitarization commitments.

The Terrorism Dimension

No threats from or via the Palestinian state can be allowed to develop or materialize, and it is the duty of the Palestinian state to prevent terrorist activities, as well as incitement and indoctrination of its society to terrorism, and the creation of terrorist infrastructures inside its borders. The following security requirements would guarantee the absence of these types of threats:

- Engagement on the part of the Palestinian police and other security forces in “ground-up” (rather than “top-down”) activity. This includes safeguarding law and order, preventing terrorism, dismantling terrorist infrastructures and armed militias, and preventing arms smuggling and terrorist infiltration.¹⁹
- Prevention of armed or ideological interference in the proper workings of the Palestinian state by radical extremists and opponents of peace, particularly

with regard to the abetting of extremists, terrorist organizations, and armed groups, as well as attempts to disrupt the Palestinian government's activities, structure, and ability to govern.

- Prevention of incitement to terrorism and the building of a “culture of peace.” This will entail forming joint structures for preventing incitement; neutralizing all channels of support for terrorist organizations (such as the transfer of funds to and activities conducted by extremist associations disguised as organizations established to help the needy); and eliminating school curricula that encourage violence, martyrdom, and suicide. This will also require a commitment on the part of the Palestinian state to prevent the delivery of hostile sermons in mosques and other religious and cultural institutions.
- Cooperation between Israel and Palestinian security forces in military intelligence-gathering and operations, to obstruct terrorism and prevent the establishment of terrorist infrastructures inside the Palestinian state.
- The establishment of a supervision-and-verification apparatus tasked with monitoring and ensuring that the Palestinian side lives up to its commitment to prevent terrorism and the formation of terrorist infrastructures. International monitors can be incorporated into this effort to assist the Palestinian security forces to acquire the necessary internal security capabilities, even to the extent of training Palestinian security forces in operations in the field.

The Implementation of Demilitarization

Achieving the strategic objective of preventing the development of threats to Israel from a Palestinian state will require a multi-stage process:

The First Stage – Demilitarization and security arrangements which limit the ability of the Palestinian state to form an army and limit the weapons of the Palestinian security forces. In the initial stage, demilitarization takes on a broader definition, to include the prevention of terrorism and a ban on terrorist infrastructures in the Palestinian state. These security arrangements must not hamper Israel's ability to react in self-defense to potential threats posed by and emanating from the Palestinian state.

The Second Stage – Implementation arrangements that rely on the involvement of international monitors, preferably led by the U.S., who will oversee and ensure that all clauses of the security agreements are met. Simultaneously, assistance will be provided to the Palestinian security forces in executing tasks related to internal security, terror prevention, and dismantling of terror infrastructures. The use of monitors should in no way detract from Israel's preserving of its own self-defense capabilities by means of the IDF.

The Third Stage – Guaranteeing leverage for implementing the agreements. The purpose of international and inter-Arab guarantees, apparatuses, and means of leverage is to ensure that the cost of the Palestinians' not living up to their commitments in the agreements is higher than what they would gain by violating them.

Over the course of time, the level and intensity of the security arrangements' intrusion on the Palestinians can be reduced, according to their security performance. There is room for phasing in the implementation arrangements and, hence, lowering the profile of Israel's security activity by reducing IDF presence in the territory of the Palestinian state.

The Obligations of a Palestinian State

At the outset, responsibility will be placed on the Palestinian state for preventing the emergence and materialization of threats against Israel, in the following framework:

- Limitations will be placed on arms and their use by the Palestinian police and security forces.
- The order of forces and structure of units will be for the purpose of policing and internal security, not to correspond to military forces with military missions.
- "Ground-up" security force-building should expand on the "Dayton forces" concept of U.S.- and Western-trained internal security forces,²⁰ but must prove more capable of actively fighting and preventing terrorism, terror infrastructures, and terror-supporting activity, without the current assistance of the IDF that has been responsible for the vast majority of anti-terror operations in the West Bank.²¹
- A "culture of peace" must be created by enforcing the prohibition of incitement, such as educating school children to armed struggle and suicide missions against Israel, and the preaching of armed struggle against Israel in mosques and other venues in the Palestinian state.
- The Palestinian state will be prohibited from forging military alliances, cooperation, and joint exercises with foreign military forces, and from building military units outside its borders.

A Unified Airspace Controlled by Israel

Israel must control a unified airspace in order to prevent hostile military action and terrorist aerial activity from the skies over a Palestinian state, or through it, aimed at the Jewish state. Limited time and space resources render it impossible to divide the airspace, the width of which is a mere 40 miles between the Jordan River to the east and the Mediterranean Sea to the west. This unified airspace requires consolidated control, with greater responsibility on Israel due to its higher vulnerability to potential military

and terror threats, and its need to identify and intercept unidentified and hostile planes before they enter Israeli skies. Within this framework, an apparatus will be established for cooperation in civil aviation.

Special Security Arrangements in the Jordan Valley

Special security arrangements are required in the Jordan Valley in order to block terrorism, and prevent prohibited arms smuggling and terrorist infiltrations via the crossings and the entire length of the eastern border.

In the face of a possible military threat from the east, Israel must have the capability to stop foreign armies from crossing the Jordan River into the Palestinian state, and prevent a hostile foreign military takeover of the area or the eastern slopes of the central mountain ridge.

In a situation whereby the prospective Palestinian state is in such close proximity to Israel, it will be necessary to guarantee effective supervision over the international crossings to prevent the seepage of weaponry and materials into the Jordan Valley and on to the Palestinian state.

Additional Israeli Security Requirements

- Protection from attack from the high ground overlooking aviation at Ben-Gurion International Airport via Israeli control of strategically vulnerable areas, in order to prevent the interception of planes during takeoff and landing by anti-aircraft missiles fired from Palestinian territory.
- Supervision of the seas by the Israeli navy and cooperation with international regional frameworks to detain suspicious boats, prevent hostile activity and terrorism by sea, and block the smuggling of weaponry and prohibited materials into the Palestinian state.
- Electromagnetic coordination for the prevention of mutual disruptions and jamming of Israeli military and civil communications.²²
- It is preferable that Israel's strategic sites and early-warning stations be located inside Israel. However, if Israeli intelligence capabilities would be harmed by doing so, these stations should be located in the West Bank to provide sufficient time to respond to military and terrorist threats from the east.
- Special understandings and arrangements which enable the emergency deployment of IDF troops against military and irregular forces infiltrating into the Palestinian state, in violation of the agreements.

In the second stage, structures will be required that reflect the lessons learned over the years, when the Palestinians did not adhere to previous bilateral agreements. There will be a need for the involvement of a third party for the inspection and verification of Palestinian implementation of security obligations, and for Israeli deterrence (through public exposure and taking action) against Palestinian violations of the security arrangements. The structures for implementation should include:

- Supervision and verification of demilitarization, based on international observers under American or other auspices, to be agreed upon by the parties.
- Proper supervision and inspection by the IDF and other third-party monitors, not outside security forces, at the international border crossings to prevent the smuggling of prohibited weapons and dual-purpose materials, infiltrations of terrorists, and the transfer of funds and other forms of aid to terrorist groups in the Palestinian state.
- Supervision of the external envelope along the borders of the Palestinian state to prevent the smuggling of prohibited arms and materials, infiltrations of terrorists, and the crossing or infiltration of military and irregular forces hostile to Israel into the Palestinian state.

In the third stage, international guarantees and means of leverage will be instated to spur the Palestinian side to meet its obligations in the agreement, and to provide Israel with guarantees in the event that the Palestinian side violates the security arrangements.

Limitations on Arms

Israel and the Palestinians will need to formulate an agreed-upon list of permitted capabilities and arms with which the Palestinian security forces will be equipped and which will be suited to their tasks. Based on Israel's experience with the Military Addendum to the Peace Treaty with Egypt, and the Separation of Forces Agreement between Israel and Syria on the Golan Heights, Israel knows that it is crucial to specify the capabilities and arms that are permitted – not just those that are prohibited – because it is impossible to anticipate all future military technologies. In the event that the sides agree on detailing only those that are prohibited, a joint structure should be created to examine the list and update it according to shifting needs and capabilities.

The principle of demilitarization is most crucial for maintaining security and peace, and for building confidence between the PA and Israel. There are various methods for enforcing it, some of which can be based on demilitarization agreements with Syria and Egypt.²³ Apparatuses to enforce it must be developed to combat activities not readily visible, such as all underground activity, particularly the building of tunnels from the Sinai to Gaza and within the West Bank.

An understanding must be developed on how, in the age of “standoff weaponry,” such a small area as the West Bank and Gaza can be demilitarized. In the absence of an army, without tanks and armored vehicles, violations that the Palestinian side commits will not be visible. This means that the demilitarization apparatuses and enforcement methods for the PA have to be different from those that are in place with Jordan and Egypt. It also means that it is especially important to initiate substantive talks with the PA on the principle of building security, police, and regime-protection forces in place of military ones.

Contrary to the common Palestinian claim that a peace agreement will bring security, Israel has learned that a stable peace can only be based on safeguarding Israel’s vital security requirements first. Any agreement will require minimizing the elements that could encourage hostile forces to challenge Israel with greater intensity.

Israel’s chief security aim in relation to the Palestinians is to prevent the development of symmetrical or asymmetrical military threats, and to prevent terrorism and guerilla warfare against it from within and by way of a Palestinian state. Addressing the possibility of such threats in the framework of a bilateral agreement involves Israel’s taking controlled security risks.

Notes

*The author expresses his deep appreciation to Brig.-Gen. Udi Dekel, former head of the Israel Defense Forces Strategic Planning Division, in the preparation of this article.

1. The Palestinian national movement rejected Israeli peace offers in 1936, in 1947 with the UN partition plan, in 1967 immediately following the Six-Day War with the “three no’s” at Khartoum (no peace with Israel, no recognition, no negotiations), and Palestinian statehood offers in 2000 at Camp David and in 2008 as part of the Annapolis peace process.
2. A. Deterrence — Creating a capability and projecting it to the adversary/foe that Israel is a country with developed military capabilities that can hit its enemies hard and deprive them of any diplomatic achievements by military means. The bombing of the Osirak reactor in Iraq is an example of deterrence. The attack on the reactor in Syria — attributed by foreign sources to Israel — is another example of building a deterrent capability. This is the reason why Iran fears an Israeli attack. If deterrent power is weakened, it is extremely vital to know about the enemy and his capabilities and intentions. B. Early warning — For that reason, a vital need still exists to build a strong intelligence system. This is the reason why Israeli intelligence is such an important component in the state’s security concept. It also allows maintaining a small regular army that permits the state to stick to a normal routine. C. Decisive force — In the event that deterrence fails and no warning is provided or warning is given about new enemy capabilities and intentions, then decisive force is required that transfers the fighting to the enemy’s territory. For this very reason, Israel has a powerful air force, strong artillery, and a minimal regular force that can hold on until the reserve forces are mobilized. Then the entire army can be used to develop forward depth and distance the front from the rear.
3. These threats have underscored the requirement that Israel’s security doctrine focus on developing replacements for “strategic depth,” including the following:

- (1) Forward depth – Transferring the fighting to the enemy's territory and moving combat away from Israel's strategic rear.
- (2) Depth in the air and in space facilitated by Israel's technological superiority in areas such as communications, intelligence, and "stand-off" weaponry (anti-rocket and missile technology).
- (3) Maritime depth – The navy is a strategic arm of extremely high importance for obtaining depth. Naval superiority is required to preserve the freedom of the sea to and from Israel.
- (4) Technological depth – This capability is obtained due to the intellectual capital of the State of Israel – the special capabilities of Israeli scientists and the relevant industries to develop responses in areas pertaining to precise strategic intelligence.

Israel has also developed special capabilities in avionics, installed on advanced aircraft purchased in the United States, and "navionics" on navy craft, as well as advanced systems on Israel's Merkava tank.

While all these capabilities are very important, they are not sufficient to carry out an asymmetric war and a war on terror. Therefore, on the basis of combat requirements, particularly against suicide terror since 2000, Israel has developed world-class capabilities based on the fusion of the most advanced sensors and sources (in combination with human intelligence and investigations) that create an "intelligence bath" to locate objectives and targets in real time. These capabilities have produced impressive results in a very short time frame. The bottom line is that Israel has managed to contend in an impressive fashion with terror, to damage its capabilities and restore normal life in the country. The preservation and development of these capabilities are a condition to building a deterrent force for the war on terror and for asymmetric war as well. But it is clear that Israel is able to implement these capabilities most efficiently in tandem with an IDF presence on the ground. Witness the difference in the level of threat to Israel from Gaza and Lebanon as opposed to the West Bank where the IDF is currently present.

4. See Maj.-Gen. Yoav Galant, "The Strategic Challenge of Gaza," *Jerusalem Issue Brief*, vol. 6, no. 28, Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs/Institute for Contemporary Affairs, April 17, 2007. Former head of Israel's Southern Command Maj.-Gen. Yoav Galant assessed the aftermath of the IDF withdrawal from Gaza, saying, "Disengagement from Gaza caused the terror organizations to turn to new terror methods such as Kassam rockets, tunnels, and crossing over from Gaza to Sinai and then into Israel's Negev, as happened in January 2007 with a Palestinian suicide bomber in Eilat. Egypt's Sinai Desert is three times larger than all of Israel and global terror organizations and Palestinian terror organizations are able to carry out attacks from its territory. Cooperation among Hamas, Iran, Hizbullah, and other global terror organizations creates a knowledge base and enhances motivation, which is helping Hamas. In Gaza, there is high motivation to hit Israel, and there are many people with military and operational experience, who are in contact with Iran, and receive backing and know-how, ammunition, and explosives." "All of the various factions in Gaza are acquiring more terror infrastructure....Attacks along the security fence continue. They try to bypass the fence by digging tunnels. No one can detect a tunnel twenty meters under the ground. They are also trying to infiltrate into Israel through the fence, without success."
5. During 2005, Israel absorbed 179 rocket strikes. Gaza disengagement was implemented in August 2005. The number of rocket strikes in 2006 shot up to 946 – a five-fold increase. See Dore Gold, "Israel's War to Halt Palestinian Rocket Attacks," *Jerusalem Issue Brief*, vol. 7, no. 34, Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs / Institute for Contemporary Affairs, March 3, 2008.
6. Lt.-Gen. (ret.) Moshe Yaalon, *Iran's Race for Regional Supremacy: Strategic Implications for the Middle East*, Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, 2008, p. 11, <http://www.jcpa.org/text/iran2-june08.pdf>.
7. Dore Gold, "Al-Qaeda, Zarqawi, and Israel: Is There a New Jihadi Threat Destabilizing the Eastern Front?" *Jerusalem Viewpoints*, no. 538, Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, January 1, 2006. See also, Lt.-Gen. (ret.) Moshe Yaalon, "The Second Lebanon War: From Territory to Ideology," *Iran's Race for Regional Supremacy*, p. 35.

8. <http://www.miftah.org/Display.cfm?DocId=10400&CategoryId=21>.
9. For examples, see Galant, "The Strategic Challenge of Gaza."
10. The PA's U.S.- and European-backed Presidential Guard force in Gaza that was to have protected the Gaza crossings under the control of PA leader Mahmoud Abbas and his Gaza security chief Mohammed Dahlan is a good example of the type of security failure that must be prevented in any future agreement. The day that Hamas took control over Gaza in June 2007, it dispersed the Presidential Guard and appropriated all of its arms and war materials — much of which was provided by the United States — and which ended up being used against Israel.
11. The military cooperation between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the PLO, as revealed in the Israeli capture of the Iranian "Karine A" weapons ship in 2002, is a good example of this type of dangerous military pact between the Palestinians and a hostile sovereign entity such as the Iranian regime. In 2002 PA Chairman Yasser Arafat, whose deputy at the time was current PA Chairman Mahmoud Abbas, requested 50 tons of weapons and ammunition from the IRGC leadership in Tehran. The weapons ship was captured by Israeli naval commandoes in the Red Sea about 500 kilometers from Gaza. See "The PLO Weapons Ship from Iran," *Jerusalem Issue Brief*, vol. 1, no. 15, Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs / Institute for Contemporary Affairs, January 7, 2002, <http://www.jcpa.org/art/brief1-15.htm>.
12. "Abbas: PLO Accepts Egyptian Plan for Palestinian Unity," Maan Palestinian News Agency, October 27, 2008, <http://www.maannews.net/eng/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=205902>.
13. This principle remains important. Even in the peace agreement with Egypt, definitions were included on what war materials could be introduced into the Sinai and what were prohibited. But over the years, developments occur, new systems are perfected, and new capabilities are created that were inconceivable years ago.
14. [http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/Peace%20Process/Guide%20to%20the%20Peace%20Process/Israel Egypt%20Peace%20Treaty](http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/Peace%20Process/Guide%20to%20the%20Peace%20Process/Israel%20Egypt%20Peace%20Treaty).
15. The principle of demilitarization determines that a Palestinian state will not have the capability of operating combat aircraft, combat helicopters, or a missile capability that threatens Israel; it will not develop "balance-destroying" weaponry. This principle also applies to preventing the development of intelligence and surveillance capabilities over current Israeli activity (in other words, the Palestinians should not develop capabilities that are equal to Israel's or that can damage Israel's broader ability for action) and the Palestinians should not have a regular army. Problems resulting from these limitations can be overcome through a regional cooperation apparatus.
16. We are not dealing with a situation such as the transfer of Hong Kong to the Chinese after 99 years, or U.S. withdrawal from the Panama Canal. If such was the situation, then we could discuss demilitarization in stages where the Palestinians were given a sense of independence and Israel was provided with a sense of security.
17. Even vis-a-vis countries where relations of trust have existed for many years, demilitarized zones still remain, and this applies a fortiori to the Palestinians, with whom Israel has a historical long-term enmity that cannot be solved in one day. Therefore, it is impermissible to rely purely on agreements and signatures on paper. Israel must insist on preventive measures on the ground.
18. For a comprehensive overview of the role of the Palestinian National Security Forces that were trained and supervised by Lt.-Gen. Keith Dayton and with EU participation, see "Speech by Lt.-Gen. Keith Dayton, U.S. Security Coordinator for Israel and the Palestinian National Authority," Washington Institute for Near East Policy, May 7, 2009, <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/html/pdf/DaytonKeynote.pdf>. See also, "U.S. Plans to Expand Program for Abbas' Forces," Reuters, April 27, 2009.
19. In establishing the boundaries for the demilitarization of a prospective Palestinian state, a clear distinction will need to be drawn between defining an army and an internal police force for securing the government, guaranteeing public security, and preventing crime and smuggling. This would be similar to what the U.S.-sponsored "Dayton forces" are doing in the West Bank.

20. Following the armed takeover of Gaza by Hamas, the Palestinian Authority consented to a U.S.-backed security reform process directed by former Prime Minister Salam Fayyad. Fayyad cooperated with the U.S. security reform plan in line with the Quartet Roadmap to establish an independent force called the Palestinian National Security Forces — known as the “Dayton forces” on the Palestinian street. Its ranks were vetted and trained by U.S. security subcontractors in Jordan under the supervision of Gen. Keith Dayton. Under Fayyad’s supervision, the Palestinian National Security Forces were mobilized to establish law and order in West Bank cities including Jenin, Nablus, Bethlehem, and Hebron.

The IDF General Staff has also noted the positive contribution of the “Dayton forces” in preventing violence in the West Bank during Israel’s war against Hamas in Gaza in the beginning of 2009. However, Brig.-Gen. Michael Herzog, chief of staff to Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak, said in a 2009 presentation together with Gen. Dayton at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy that while the PA security forces had improved significantly, they were still far from ready to assume full security responsibility in the West Bank. See “Speech by Brig.-Gen. Michael Herzog, The Middle East Security Agenda, an Israeli Assessment,” Washington Institute for Near East Policy, May 7, 2009, <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/html/pdf/HerzogKeynote.pdf>.

21. Israel will have to be persuaded that there is an effective apparatus on the Palestinian side to handle the problems, and will have to examine whether interdiction activities and prevention actually do take place on the ground. Israel will have no recourse but to transfer authority for performing these actions to the Palestinians. This is the type of risk that Israel will have to take from the outset of an agreement in view of the lack of confidence between the parties. The parties will have to build an apparatus that constantly examines and ascertains that the Palestinians are doing what is permitted and are not developing substantial military or terror capabilities that can inflict serious damage on Israel. Clearly the Palestinian side will always have some capability, such as light arms, for which there must be sufficiently strong apparatuses controlling and supervising their use. These apparatuses will also have to prevent the border with Jordan from turning into a smuggling conduit for war materials and the infiltration of terror elements, as occurred along the Philadelphi Corridor separating Egyptian Sinai from Palestinian-controlled Gaza. The prevention of smuggling and infiltration are key aspects of demilitarization.
22. The future Palestinian state will be located topographically in an area that dominates Israel’s strategic and civil home front — a situation which could enable the disruption of all wireless communication activity. Thus, there has to be coordination, with a joint body for distributing frequencies (and ranges), and the ability to immediately correct violations and enforce obligations. Since Israel will be the more vulnerable of the two parties (topographically, technologically, and security-wise) — certainly as compared with its situation today — it will be Israel that must have priority in the distribution of frequencies and ranges, as well as in the prevention of jamming and disturbances.
23. Enforcement of the principle of demilitarization vis-a-vis Syria and Egypt was performed in the past by photo reconnaissance flights by a third-party once every three months that photographed 10 km. on both sides of the border. That same film was transferred both to the Syrians and to the Israelis. In the case of Egypt, both sides viewed a similar security film. Hence, it is clear to everyone who is violating the agreement and who is not. This is one of the enforcement methods, but it is relevant only for activities that can be seen from the air.

In the Egyptian example of demilitarization, in line with the 1979 Treaty of Peace, specific weapons are prohibited at specific ranges. This is easier than in the Palestinian case, since in Sinai there is sufficient space for the implementation of force limitations. For example, Egypt can introduce up to one Egyptian division until line “A” which is 50 km. east of the Suez Canal. There is a line “B” and a line “C,” up to 3 km. from the border, to which it is prohibited to introduce any sort of weapons. The agreement between Israel and Egypt also regulates limitations on armaments within Sinai. The limitations are predicated on the category of war materials and the type of units and are divided according to geographic areas.



A jet airliner hijacked by al-Qaeda terrorists plunges into the south tower of the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, in the worst terror attack in U.S. history. The 9/11 attacks underscored the importance of Israeli control of a unified airspace above Israel and a prospective Palestinian state.

Control of Territorial Airspace and the Electromagnetic Spectrum

Brig.-Gen. (res.) Udi Dekel

Israel's Vulnerability to Air Attacks

During the Camp David Summit in the summer of 2000, American military experts raised the question of whether the Israeli demand for control of a unified airspace over all the territory between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River was essential. Among the justifications provided by Israeli representatives were the dangers of aerial terrorism. The Israelis explained the need to be prepared in the event of a suicide attack – carried out by a civilian aircraft laden with explosives – over a major Israeli urban center. One of the Americans present responded to this with disdain, asserting that the Israelis had a vivid imagination when it came to implausible threats, which they employed to justify exaggerated security demands.

A year later, on September 11, 2001, al-Qaeda sent airliners plunging into the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., causing the death of thousands of people and illustrating the importance of creative thinking in assessing terrorist and national-security threat scenarios.

Such thinking is especially crucial for Israel, whose geography puts it at high military risk, in general, and at a great disadvantage in terms of its ability to prevent or respond to attacks from the air, in particular.

Israel has a very narrow “waist” – the distance between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea is approximately 40 nautical miles (approximately 70 km.). This means that a combat aircraft can fly across the country in less than four minutes. A plane could penetrate the country via the Jordan Valley and reach Jerusalem in less than two minutes.

Map 6 – Israel's Airspace Vulnerabilities: The Limited Time for Interdicting Hostile Aircraft



This aerial threat creates a great defense challenge for Israel. It takes at least three minutes for a scramble takeoff of an interceptor aircraft that can identify such a potential enemy penetration – and this is without factoring in the flight time from the airbase until the interceptor engages the penetrating aircraft to identify it, or shoot it down if it is on a hostile mission.

In the event of an aerial attack aimed at Jerusalem, the hostile plane must be shot down at least 10 nautical miles east of the city – not directly over it. Otherwise, both the plane and its munitions would crash into population centers, with dire consequences.

In recent years, in addition to hostile planes, Israel must contend with unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), which pose more complex threats to Israel's security. According to reports, Iran has been developing a fleet of UAVs. Iranian technology is continuously improving, so the threat of an unmanned aircraft being launched from Iran towards Israel must be taken into account. Moreover, Iran has supplied UAVs to its proxy ally – Hizbullah, which in a future scenario could launch unmanned aircraft toward Israel not only from Lebanon, but also via Jordan and a future Palestinian state. This new route would enable them to fly undetected until they penetrate Israel's major cities and strategic infrastructure. Most troublesome yet, the rapid and continuous advances in technology in this field have already put small drones within the reach of any terrorist organization. A civilian drone, purchased for a few thousands of dollars online, can easily be converted into a lethal weapon by fitting it to carry explosives and shrapnel and crashing it into a crowded street. Such an aircraft, if launched from the Jordanian border, could reach Israel within minutes.

Because of their small size, their resemblance to other airborne objects (such as balloons or birds), and the great variance in shapes and types of UAVs currently on the market, when such an object is potentially detected, the IDF must scramble an interceptor in order to identify whether the object is indeed a UAV, and it must be able to do this far from population centers (both Israeli and Palestinian).

This explains why Israel lacks sufficient time and space to respond to and prevent an aerial attack on Jerusalem and other Israeli cities from the east, particularly if Israeli interceptor planes are not free to operate over the Jordan Valley.

Today, the IDF responds to such threats by scrambling interceptors at unidentified aerial targets while they are still in Jordanian airspace, to ensure that any encounter with a hostile plane will take place immediately after it crosses the Jordan River line. This still requires precious time, since the intentions of the aerial targets first have to be identified (as hostile, friendly, or merely a civilian plane that strayed from its flight path).

Scramble takeoffs of this type occur daily because it is impossible to obtain a precise aerial picture of potential threats coming from the direction of Jordan on a regular basis, despite ties and coordination between the military and civilian air traffic control centers in Jordan and Israel.

Access to Israeli airspace from the Mediterranean Sea to the west is permitted only to planes that have identified themselves and have been identified before they come within 100 km. of Israel.

The Role of Air Defenses

Surface-to-air missiles and anti-aircraft weapons are not the solution to Israel's air defense problem. Unlike interceptor planes – which are equipped with comprehensive identification capabilities including the possibility of visual identification – anti-aircraft batteries cannot determine with certainty which aerial targets are hostile and need to be shot down. Anti-aircraft batteries also involve shooting down hostile planes far from the target of their attack – over non-Israeli territory.

Non-hostile aerial activity – both civilian and military – must also be taken into account. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine a situation in which ground-to-air missiles would be launched at the airspace of a neighboring country without definite identification of targets as hostile aircraft on a mission to attack Israel.

This substantial defense limitation, therefore, does not allow for Israel's complete and continuous protection from hostile air attacks. Thus, the deployment of missile batteries and anti-aircraft weapons, while complementing aerial interception, cannot replace it.

True, peaceful relations exist today between Israel and Jordan, which include mutual respect for both countries' territorial airspace, civilian air links, and coordination of the passage of civilian planes through the international air corridor. However, there is no guarantee that such coordination will continue in the future. In light of the upheavals in the Arab world, we cannot rely on the assumption that the relationship between Israel and Jordan will retain their current format. In other words, despite the current relative calm, Israel cannot entrust its security to the goodwill of the Jordanians or the Palestinians in the future.

Defending Ben-Gurion International Airport

Israel faces another great challenge in defending Israel's primary international airport – Ben-Gurion Airport – both from hostile fire at its runways and from possible attempts to shoot down civilian planes as they approach the airport. These threats, if carried out, would be especially lethal, since even a one-time failed attack would surely result in a severe decrease in international civil aviation traffic at Ben-Gurion Airport as civilians would refuse to take such risks during their travels. Specifically, these threats include:

1. The launching of high trajectory weapons towards the airport.
2. Shooting precision-guided weapons from Palestinian territory, which is situated topographically higher than the airport.
3. Attempts by hostile elements, using shoulder-launched anti-aircraft missiles, to target civilian airliners while they fly over or adjacent to Palestinian territory as they take off or land.

At the beginning of the year 2000, with the outbreak of the Palestinian terror war that came to be known as the Second Intifada, many commercial airlines canceled their flights to Israel. It should be expected that if Palestinian terrorists open fire toward Ben-Gurion Airport, even once, all foreign airlines would immediately halt their flights, effectively isolating the country.

Airspace Security Arrangements for Israel in any Israeli-Palestinian Agreement

During previous rounds of negotiations with Israel, the Palestinians agreed to limitations on their military air capabilities, acknowledging that they have no need for combat aircraft or attack helicopters and other offensive aerial weapons that could threaten Israel. A Palestinian state will not have any air defensive capabilities.

As part of any peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinians, both sides will recognize each other's sovereignty in the air, on land, and in the sea. That being said, in light of the assessment of the severe threat facing Israel, agreement will be required on the following points:

- A unified airspace will need to be preserved, with Israel assuming overriding responsibility to enable it to deal with deviant situations, in light of the severe time constraints Israel faces in responding to potential security threats.
- Israel will have the freedom to operate over Palestinian airspace in order to identify potentially hostile aircraft and, if necessary, intercept them and shoot them down. Thus, Israel will maintain its crucial capacity to counter threats over a unified airspace (an area whose width totals 40 nautical miles), which cannot be divided for operational needs, as well as to protect regional civil aviation and Ben-Gurion Airport, in particular.
- Due to Israel's "narrow waist," with the resulting limitations of time and space for detecting and identifying aerial threats, Israel will have to protect itself beyond its borders.
- Due to the urgency and the shortage of time during a live-threat scenario, clear and detailed rules of engagement (ROE) will be required by both sides.
- The Palestinians would have the right to operate civil aviation that meets the safety and security standards of the Israeli Civil Aviation Administration, on the basis of international criteria.
- The Palestinian side would receive financial remuneration for the use of its airspace, in accordance with what is customary in international aviation.

- In order to ensure smooth coordination and in order for the sides to solve issues immediately as they come to light, rather than once they have become major obstacles, a Joint Aviation Coordination Center (JACC) will be erected. Palestinians, Jordanians, and Israelis will all participate in the JACC, which will serve both as a mechanism for everyday coordination and for handling larger issues, on all matters of joint airspace and civil aviation. The JACC's operations center will be staffed around the clock by Israeli, Jordanian, and Palestinian air traffic controllers who will all have access to a live aerial image and the ability to communicate in real-time. This will enable them to handle relevant issues as they come to light and to prevent errors and miscalculations.
- A Palestinian air traffic controller will monitor civilian traffic through Palestinian skies in the JACC.

Palestinian Airports

The Palestinians have demanded control over the Kalandia (Atarot) airfield in Jerusalem, to have it become the international airport of the Palestinian state. They also intend to establish additional airports for internal Palestinian air traffic. Israel opposes handing over Atarot airfield to the Palestinians since a Palestinian airport adjacent to Israel's capital poses an unacceptable risk.

The operation of a Palestinian airport in the heart of the West Bank would also entail substantial risks – both in terms of security and in terms of flight safety. Israel would lack the sufficient response time required to intercept a hostile plane on a mission to attack an Israeli target. In addition, there is the danger of traffic overload in the international corridor between Israel and Jordan, and an overlap of activity (circling) involving Ben-Gurion and Israeli military airports.

In the event that Israel is prepared to take the security risks associated with the establishment of a Palestinian airport, its establishment should meet the following strict conditions:

- The airport must be located far from Israeli population centers, preferably in the Jordan Valley, in the Jericho area, near the Jordanian border. The airport and its staff will meet all international and regional security and safety norms and regulations.
- Since the airport will serve as an international crossing, all the arrangements for international crossings shall apply to it, including the capability to effectively inspect personal baggage and merchandise, and to prevent the smuggling of war materiel and illicit goods. In addition, measures will be required to prevent the infiltration of terrorist elements into the prospective Palestinian state, similar to those established at other Palestinian border-crossings.

- No equipment that could constitute a direct threat to Israel or abet parties hostile to Israel will be installed at the airport (such as radar detection capabilities, which could monitor sensitive aerial activity within Israel and relay this information to parties hostile to Israel).
- The new Palestinian international flight paths will not harm or affect current Israeli and Jordanian aviation routes, and all regional Palestinian traffic will be coordinated in real-time through the JACC.

Finally, an agreement between the parties would enable the opening of an Israeli international flight path that traverses the shared airspace, facilitating transport to the east. Israel can consider opening such an aerial corridor if Israeli commercial planes are permitted to use international flight paths that pass over Arab states. This would significantly shorten flights to India, China, and the Far East.

Control of the Electromagnetic Spectrum

Just as it is vital to Israel's security to control a unified airspace if a Palestinian state is established, the topographical conditions and limited distance between the population and communication centers of the two entities do not allow for division of the electromagnetic spectrum. Since it largely occupies the central mountain ridge, the Palestinian Authority enjoys a topographical advantage – with its communication systems far less vulnerable to disruptions and jamming than those of largely coastal Israel. A small Palestinian transmitter station on Mount Eival, near Nablus, for example, could jam virtually the entire communication system in Israeli areas broadcasting on the same frequencies.

This problem of disruption is not new to Israel, which has suffered from a recurring problem of jammed civil aviation communication channels at Ben-Gurion Airport. At times it has been necessary to close the airport to landings. Generally, these disruptions are caused by unlicensed local radio stations broadcasting on the frequency ranges of the control tower.

When they originate from a radio station in the Palestinian territories, Israel demands that the PA halt the station's activity. If the disturbances do not cease, forces are dispatched to impound the transmitter.

Since borders cannot stop the spread of electromagnetic waves, the electromagnetic spectrum must be managed jointly.

In the framework of the interim accords between Israel and the PA, a committee for electromagnetic coordination was established to allocate frequencies to both parties and prevent mutual jamming and disturbances. Indeed, throughout the world it is customary to maintain electromagnetic coordination between states in areas up to 80 km. from the border. This means the entire area between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea,

including all of the Palestinian areas. It is thus clear to both parties that electromagnetic coordination is required. The question remains, however, whether one of the parties will have overriding responsibility and the final say.

Israel's interest is to preserve the normal functioning of its public, private, and military communications systems. Equally crucial is guaranteeing that the Palestinians do not exploit their topographical advantage to block or neutralize Israel's communication systems, or to gather intelligence on their own behalf or on behalf of hostile states.

Israel must guarantee that the Palestinians do not exploit their topographical advantage to block or neutralize Israel's communication systems, or to gather intelligence on their own behalf or on behalf of hostile states.

This concern is well-founded. For example, when IDF forces entered Lebanon during the Second Lebanon War in 2006, they discovered advanced Iranian intelligence-gathering systems whose coverage capability extended deep into Israel. In light of this, Israel's position is that it must retain overriding control of the electromagnetic spectrum, and there must be an effective supervisory apparatus in place to guarantee that its decisions are implemented. The Palestinians, on the other hand, view this issue – as in the case of airspace – in the context of sovereignty. They demand full independence in managing the electromagnetic spectrum and consider Israel's demands to be excessive and their own to be based on international conventions.

The way to bridge the gap between the parties is to establish a new Joint Committee for Electromagnetic Coordination whose tasks will be:

- Allocating frequencies on the electromagnetic spectrum for use by the parties.
- Guaranteeing Israel's security needs, and assuring the demilitarization of the Palestinian state's military capabilities in the area of communications (for example, by prohibiting jamming and disruption equipment). For this purpose, effective inspection at international border crossings is required to prevent the introduction of equipment prohibited under the agreements.
- Upholding the understandings between the parties about limitations on Palestinian military capabilities, which means limiting frequency ranges allocated for military use.
- Imposing limitations on the operation of systems that damage the continuity and reliability of the communications of the other party. In this context, the Palestinians currently operate communications systems using antiquated technology that breaks into other frequencies and causes local communications disruptions.

- Preventing illegal broadcasts and ensuring enforcement capability in supervision, monitoring, and inspection in the Palestinian areas.
- Creating a mutual apparatus to terminate disruptive broadcasts and to reach agreements on the continued operation of communications systems.
- Supervising the installation of antennas and other equipment that could be exploited for use by hostile parties.
- Due to its topographical and technological vulnerability and its security needs
 - and in order to prevent damage to its existing communications capabilities
 - Israel must have overriding prerogatives on this committee.

The mutual lack of trust between the parties stems from contradictory interests, as well as differences in how they approach the issue. Israel views the electromagnetic spectrum from the perspective of security and the maintenance of normal functioning of communications systems, while the Palestinians are primarily concerned with demonstrating their sovereignty. In order to overcome this divide, a third party can be enlisted to supervise the honoring of agreements by both sides, and verify whether significant or deliberate harm has been done to the interests of either party.

Summary

The Palestinians repeatedly argue that they understand Israel's security needs, but insist that peace will bring security. They therefore believe their own interests take precedence over Israel's. Conversely, Israel views its security as a necessary condition for maintaining peace and stability, and cannot agree to proposals that would base its vital security needs solely on diplomatic agreements.

It is only through mutual understanding of the other party's needs – and by building an effective coordination apparatus to provide fitting solutions to demands on both sides – that a stable and viable agreement can be implemented. In light of the stringent time, space, and topographical conditions of the area, it is not possible to divide the airspace and the electromagnetic spectrum between Israel and a future Palestinian state. For both of these, unified solutions are required. In this context, the brunt of responsibility for making decisions and implementing them must be in the hands of one of the parties. Given Israel's complex security needs, including the need to maintain stability and security following the establishment of an independent Palestinian state, overriding responsibility must be in Israel's hands. At the same time, the Palestinian need to exhibit elements of sovereignty in the realms of airspace and the electromagnetic spectrum should be respected. This can be accomplished through joint apparatuses for coordination, management, and problem-solving.



The United Nations Security Council in session, May 23, 2002

Understanding UN Security Council Resolution 242 of November 22, 1967, on the Middle East

Ambassador Meir Rosenne

UN Security Council Resolution 242 has been the pivotal point of reference in all Arab-Israeli diplomacy since 1967. Every major Arab-Israeli agreement – from the 1979 Egyptian-Israeli Treaty of Peace through the 1993 Oslo Agreements – refers to Resolution 242. Significantly, Resolution 242 defined, for the first time, international expectations about the extent of any future Israeli withdrawal from the territories the Israel Defense Forces captured in the 1967 Six-Day War. It linked that withdrawal to the achievement of peace between the parties. Finally, it established the basis of Israel's legal right to defensible borders.

Many articles have been written on Resolution 242 by international legal experts, government officials, and the news media. Unfortunately, since many of these interpretations have no connection whatsoever to the actual substance of the resolution itself, it is important to clarify its true meaning. Indeed, even Israeli politicians interpret Resolution 242 incorrectly and in a manner that totally contradicts the resolution's language and the express intent of its authors.

Three key questions need to be considered separately:

1. How was Resolution 242 born?
2. What is the content of Resolution 242?
3. What is the legal significance of Resolution 242?

The Birth of Resolution 242

On November 7, 1967, the United Arab Republic (Egypt) turned to the president of the UN Security Council and requested an urgent meeting of the Council, considering that Israel refused to pull its forces out of the territories it occupied in the Six-Day War of June 1967. The Security Council met for several sessions from November 9, 1967, through November 22.

Two draft resolutions were presented to the council: First, there was a draft resolution introduced by India, Mali, and Nigeria; and second, the U.S. prepared a draft resolution, as well. During the meetings, two other draft resolutions were prepared; one by the British of November 16, 1967, and a second resolution by the Soviets on November 20.

After a number of Security Council debates, there was only a vote on the British draft resolution, which was finally adopted *unanimously*. In practice, the proposed British text was a compromise between the various drafts that had been considered. Once adopted, the British draft resolution was formally numbered Resolution 242.

It should be emphasized that in the various debates that had been held previously in the UN General Assembly, where the Arab bloc enjoyed an automatic majority against Israel, many anti-Israeli resolutions had been adopted regarding the Arab-Israel conflict. However, General Assembly resolutions are only recommendations and, therefore, do not create international legal obligations. In contrast to the resolutions of the UN General Assembly, UN Security Council resolutions are legally binding, to the extent to which they are adopted under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. A Chapter VII resolution, according to the Charter, is an “action with respect to threats to the peace, breaches of the peace and acts of aggression.”

All the efforts of the Arab bloc to have Israel branded at the UN as the aggressor in the Six-Day War completely failed.

But Resolution 242 did not fit into the category of a Chapter VII resolution (for Israel’s action in the Six-Day War did not merit that characterization). Instead, Resolution 242 was adopted under Chapter VI of the UN Charter that deals with “peaceful resolution of disputes.” Thus, all the efforts of the Arab bloc to have Israel branded at the UN as the aggressor in the Six-Day War completely failed. Therefore, according to Resolution 242, Israel was assigned rights and obligations with respect to the territories its forces had captured.

Appendix 1

UN Security Council Resolution 242, November 22, 1967

The Security Council,

Expressing its continuing concern with the grave situation in the Middle East,

Emphasizing the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war and the need to work for a just and lasting peace in which every State in the area can live in security,

Emphasizing further that all Member States in their acceptance of the Charter of the United Nations have undertaken a commitment to act in accordance with Article 2 of the Charter,

1. *Affirms* that the fulfillment of Charter principles requires the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East which should include the application of both the following principles:

- (i) Withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict;
- (ii) Termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for and acknowledgement of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force;

2. *Affirms further* the necessity

- (a) For guaranteeing freedom of navigation through international waterways in the area;
- (b) For achieving a just settlement of the refugee problem;
- (c) For guaranteeing the territorial inviolability and political independence of every State in the area, through measures including the establishment of demilitarized zones;

3. *Requests* the Secretary General to designate a Special Representative to proceed to the Middle East to establish and maintain contacts with the States concerned in order to promote agreement and assist efforts to achieve a peaceful and accepted settlement in accordance with the provisions and principles in this resolution;

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the Security Council on the progress of the efforts of the Special Representative as soon as possible.

Adopted unanimously at the 1382nd meeting.

Appendix 2

UN Security Council Resolution 338, October 22, 1973

The Security Council,

1. Calls upon all parties to the present fighting to cease all firing and terminate all military activity immediately, no later than 12 hours after the moment of the adoption of this decision, in the positions they now occupy;
2. Calls upon the parties concerned to start immediately after the cease-fire the implementation of Security Council Resolution 242 (1967) in all its parts;
3. Decides that, immediately and concurrently with the cease-fire, negotiations start between the parties concerned under appropriate auspices aimed at establishing a just and durable peace in the Middle East.

The Legal Significance of Resolution 242

Resolution 242 applies only to “every state in the area” of the Middle East. It states explicitly that it is necessary to establish “secure and recognized boundaries.” The U.S. ambassador to the UN at the time, Arthur Goldberg, clarified this point when he addressed the Security Council on November 15, 1967: “Historically, there have never been any secure and recognized boundaries in the area. Neither the armistice lines of 1949 nor the cease-fire lines of 1967 have answered this description.”

Indeed, during the debates in the UN Security Council that transpired in May 1957, all the representatives of the Arab states declared that Israel and its Arab neighbors were only separated by armistice lines and that definitive political boundaries between them had not been established. Clearly, Resolution 242 sought to replace these truce lines with permanent political borders.

The word “Palestinian” did not even appear in Resolution 242, which, as already noted, applied only to existing states. True, in the Oslo Agreements, Israel recognized the rights of the Palestinians to self-determination. However, Resolution 242 is mentioned only as the basis for a regional peace settlement.

Resolution 242 in no way called on Israel to withdraw to the lines of June 4, 1967, before the outbreak of the Six-Day War.

It is important to stress that Resolution 242 in no way called on Israel to withdraw to the lines of June 4, 1967, before the outbreak of the Six-Day War. Arab diplomats have tried to argue nonetheless that the resolution precludes any territorial modifications since the resolution’s preamble refers to the international principle that the annexation of territory by force is illegal. True, the preamble specifically refers to “the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war.” Yet this principle was placed by the drafters of Resolution 242 in the

preamble and not in the operative paragraphs below. There is a ruling of the International Court of Justice (from the dispute over Danzig) that preambles of League of Nations resolutions are not binding – only the operative parts of these resolutions can create legal responsibilities. This determination carried over from the era of the League of Nations to that of the United Nations.

The Acquisition of Territory Captured in a War of Self-Defense is Different from a War of Aggression

There is a further cardinal point regarding the question of whether the acquisition of captured territory from 1967 by Israel can be regarded as illegal. The great authority in international law, Elihu Lauterpacht, has drawn the distinction between unlawful territorial change by an aggressor and lawful territorial change in response to an aggressor. In drafting its preamble, the architects of Resolution 242 were referring to known international legal principles that precluded territorial modifications as a result of aggression. The preamble talks about “acquisition of territory by *war*.”

Is the acquisition of captured territory by Israel in 1967 illegal? There is a distinction between unlawful territorial change by an aggressor and lawful territorial change in response to an aggressor.

The case of a war of self-defense in response to aggression is a very different matter. This distinction was further made by Stephen Schwebel, who would later become the legal advisor of the U.S. Department of State and then serve as President of the International Court of Justice at The Hague. The preamble of Resolution 242 was a compromise that took into account the other drafts that were before the Security Council, even though it did not really apply to Israel’s case. And by keeping it in the preamble and not in the operative parts of the resolution, the architects of Resolution 242 avoided creating any legal obligations for Israel that could be construed as precluding the resolution’s call for new “secure and recognized boundaries” beyond the earlier 1967 lines.

Soviet Efforts to Modify Resolution 242 Failed

Another argument raised by Arab diplomats over the years is the difference between the English text of the withdrawal clause, which calls for the “withdrawal of Israeli armed forces *from territories* occupied in the recent conflict,” and the French text which calls for “retrait des forces armées israéliennes *des territoires* occupés lors du récent conflit.” The English text intentionally left out the definite article “the” before the word “territories,”

leaving indefinite the amount of territory from which Israel might be expected to withdraw. In contrast, the French text is an improper translation since “des territoires” has a definite meaning (a better translation would have been “de territories”).

True, the official languages of the UN in 1967 were only English and French – sometime later, additional languages were added. Yet the accepted procedure to be followed in cases of clashing texts due to language differences is to give preference to the text that was originally submitted to the Security Council. In the case of Resolution 242, the original draft resolution that was voted on was a *British* text, which of course was written in English. There was a separate French text submitted by Mali and Nigeria over which there was no vote. The USSR proposed on November 20, 1967, to include a clause requiring Israel to withdraw to the pre-war lines of June 5, 1967, but this language was rejected. The very fact that the Soviet delegation sought to modify the British draft with additional language is a further indication that the British did not intend to suggest a full Israeli withdrawal. Indeed, after Resolution 242 was adopted, the Soviet deputy foreign minister, Vasily Kuznetsov, admitted: “There is certainly much leeway for different interpretations that retain for Israel the right to establish new boundaries and to withdraw its troops only so far as the lines it judges convenient.”

The USSR proposed on November 20, 1967, to include a clause requiring Israel to withdraw to the pre-war lines of June 5, 1967, but this language was rejected.

Moreover, Resolution 242 itself relates to the need to establish “secure and recognized boundaries,” which, as already noted, were to be different from the previous armistice lines. If the UN Security Council intended, as the incorrect French text suggests, that a full Israeli withdrawal from *all the territories* take place, then there would be no need to write language into the resolution that required new borders to be fixed. Lord Caradon, the British ambassador who submitted to the Security Council what was to become the accepted version of Resolution 242, publicly declared afterward on repeated occasions that there was no intent to demand an Israeli withdrawal to the 1967 lines.

From time to time, the argument is made that according to Resolution 242 the occupation of territories is illegal. As previously noted in the discussion over the preamble of Resolution 242, there is an international legal principle against “the acquisition of territory by war.” Yet there is nothing in Resolution 242 that states the occupation of territory is illegal. Thus, it is incorrect to argue that according to Resolution 242 the occupation of the territories Israel captured in the 1967 Six-Day War is illegal, especially since that war was imposed on Israel through the aggression of Arab states along three of Israel’s fronts.

Resolution 242 and the Refugee Problem

Resolution 242 also deals with the resolution of the refugee problem. During the drafting phase of the resolution, the Arab states demanded that there be explicit reference to “Arab” refugees, but their proposals were not accepted. U.S. Ambassador Arthur Goldberg repeatedly emphasized that the refugee clause in Resolution 242 also covers the need to take care of the issue of Jewish refugees who were expelled from Arab states since 1948 and who lost all their property.

In order to understand the extent to which Resolution 242 constituted the basis for a peace settlement in the Middle East (as well as how much Israel attached importance to what it said), there is a need to look back and remember that the U.S. and Israel indeed signed an agreement in December 1973, right before the Geneva Peace Conference, in which a specific clause was included that stated:

The United States will oppose and, if necessary, vote against any initiative in the Security Council that alters adversely the terms of reference of the Geneva Peace Conference or to change Resolutions 242 and 338 in ways which are incompatible with their original purpose. (Paragraph 4)

This commitment at the time seemed to be very unusual in the view of a number of U.S. Senators, so the legal advisors of the U.S. Senate were asked whether it was consistent with U.S. law. What disturbed them was the fact that, according to the above-mentioned clause, the Nixon administration undertook to adopt a line of foreign policy for the future that was determined through an agreement with a foreign country, rather than by the administration itself. The Senate legal advisor, nonetheless, determined that the Nixon administration’s commitment to Israel had legal standing, and it should be stressed that this clause continued to be respected even when subsequent agreements were signed with the U.S.

Resolution 242 is not self-enforcing; Israel is not expected to unilaterally withdraw from territories to fulfill its terms. It requires direct negotiations between Israel and its Arab neighbors.

Conclusions

UN Security Council Resolution 242 – along with Resolution 338 – serves as the only agreed legal basis for resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict that is acceptable to both Israel and the Arab states (Syria agreed after the 1973 Yom Kippur War to Resolution 242 when it accepted Resolution 338 which refers to a resolution of the conflict that must be based on Resolution 242). The elements of Resolution 242 that should be considered in any discussion of the resolution’s meaning include:

- Resolution 242 is not self-enforcing; Israel does not just withdraw from territories to fulfill its terms. As a Chapter VI resolution, it requires direct negotiations between Israel and its Arab neighbors.
- There is no condemnation of Israel's occupation of the territories that the Israel Defense Forces captured in 1967, nor is Israel's occupation of territories defined as "illegal."
- The various elements of the resolution must be implemented in parallel. There is no Israeli obligation to withdraw prior to the achievement of a comprehensive peace.
- There is no Israeli requirement to withdraw fully from the territories it captured in 1967. While Israel agreed to a full withdrawal in the case of its 1979 peace treaty with Egypt, the Egyptian case is not a precedent for other fronts. True, the Egyptians sought to include a reference in the Camp David Accords that the Egyptian-Israeli Treaty of Peace will constitute the principal basis of future agreements with other Arab states. However, what was finally concluded was an important caveat that limited the Egyptian model to other cases "as appropriate."
- There is no reference to a Palestinian "right of return" in Resolution 242.
- The main principle inferred in the resolution is that everything is still open for negotiation between the parties.



Secretary of State John Kerry was the latest of a long line of senior U.S. officials who dealt with the security dimensions of the Arab-Israeli peace process.

The U.S. and Israel's Struggle Against the 1967 Lines

Ambassador Dore Gold

U.S. Policy Has Not Sought Israel's Return to the 1967 Lines

The United States has historically backed Israel's view that UN Security Council Resolution 242, adopted in the wake of the Six-Day War on November 22, 1967, does not require a full withdrawal to the 1949 armistice lines (sometimes loosely called the 1967 borders). Moreover, in addition to that interpretation, both Democratic and Republican administrations have argued that Israel was entitled to "defensible borders."

Why is the U.S. position so important to consider? First, while it is true that ultimately Israel and the Palestinians themselves must decide on the location of borders as part of any negotiation, the U.S. position on borders directly affects the level of expectation of the Arab side regarding the depth of the Israeli concessions they can obtain. To the extent that the U.S. limits its demands of Israel through either presidential declarations or statements of the secretary of state, then the Arab states and the Palestinian Arabs will have to settle for less in terms of any Israeli withdrawal. U.S. declaratory policy, then, fundamentally affects whether Arab-Israeli differences can ultimately be bridged at the negotiating table or whether they simply remain too far apart.

Second, there is a related dynamic. Historically, Arab diplomats have preferred to extract Israeli concessions through international bodies, like the UN, or even through the U.S., thereby limiting the direct concessions they must make to Israel. According to this scenario, the UN, with U.S. acquiescence, could set the terms of an Israeli withdrawal in the West Bank that Israel would be pressured to fulfill with only minimal bilateral commitments provided by the Arab states. In fact, it was Egyptian President Anwar Sadat who used to say that the U.S. "holds 99 percent of the cards" in the peace process, before he signed the

Israel-Egypt Treaty of Peace in 1979. Therefore, if the Arab states understand that the U.S. won't just deliver Israel according to their liking, then they will be compelled to deal with Israel directly.

Confusion in Jerusalem about the U.S. Position

Yet despite the critical importance of America's traditional support for Israel's understanding of Resolution 242, historically there has been considerable confusion in Jerusalem about this subject. All too frequently, Israeli diplomats err in asserting that, according to the U.S., Israel must ultimately pull back to the 1967 lines, with perhaps the addition that minor border modifications will be allowed. Those Israelis who take this mistaken position about U.S. policy tend to conclude that Israel has no alternative but to accept this policy as a given, and thereby concede Israel's right to defensible borders.

Over time, successive U.S. administrations have issued explicit declarations rejecting an Israeli pullback to the 1967 lines and backing Israel's right to defensible borders instead.

However, a careful analysis of the development of the U.S. position on Resolution 242 reveals that this "maximalist" interpretation of U.S. policy is fundamentally mistaken. In fact, successive U.S. administrations following the Six-Day War have demonstrated considerable flexibility over the years regarding the extent of withdrawal that they expected of Israel. True, sometimes the State Department bureaucracy – especially diplomats in the Near Eastern Affairs division that dealt with the Arab world – adhered to a harder-line view of Israel's requirements for withdrawal. But this issue was not decided at their level. Indeed, over time, successive administrations would even go so far as to issue explicit declarations rejecting the requirement of full withdrawal and backing Israel's right to defensible borders instead.

What was the source of America's support for Israel? It is important to recall that Resolution 242 was a joint product of both the British ambassador to the UN, Lord Caradon, and the U.S. ambassador to the UN, Arthur Goldberg.

This was especially true of the withdrawal clause in the resolution which called on Israeli armed forces to withdraw "from territories" and not "from all the territories" or "from the territories" as the Soviet Union had demanded.

The exclusion of the definite article "the" from the withdrawal clause was not decided by a low-level legal drafting team or even at the ambassadorial level. And it was not an oversight or a matter of petty legalism. The decision was taken at the highest level of the U.S. government and was the subject of direct communications between the White House and the Kremlin. In fact, President Lyndon Baines Johnson himself decided that it was

important to stick to this phrasing, despite the pressure from the Soviet premier, Alexei Kosygin, who sought to incorporate stricter additional language requiring a full Israeli withdrawal.¹

The meaning of Resolution 242 was absolutely clear to those who were involved in this drafting process. Thus, Joseph P. Sisco, who would serve as the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, commented on Resolution 242 during a Meet the Press interview some years later: “I was engaged in the negotiation for months of that resolution. That resolution did not say ‘total withdrawal.’”² This position was fully coordinated with the British at the time. Indeed, George Brown, who had served as British foreign secretary in 1967 during Prime Minister Harold Wilson’s Labour government, summarized Resolution 242 as follows: “The proposal said, ‘Israel will withdraw from territories that were occupied,’ not ‘from the territories,’ which means Israel will not withdraw from all the territories.”³

President Johnson: ‘67 Line a Prescription for Renewed Hostilities

President Johnson’s insistence on the territorial flexibility of Resolution 242 could be traced to statements he made on June 19, 1967, in the immediate wake of the Six-Day War. Johnson declared that “an immediate return to the situation as it was on June 4,” before the outbreak of hostilities, was “not a prescription for peace, but for renewed hostilities.” He stated that the old “truce lines” had been “fragile and violated.” What was needed, in Johnson’s view, were “recognized boundaries” that would provide “security against terror, destruction and war.”⁴

There were several key figures who contributed to how senior officials in the Johnson administration viewed the question of Israeli security needs after the Six-Day War. Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara asked the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), General Earl Wheeler, what was the “minimum territory” that Israel “might be justified in retaining in order to permit a more effective defense.”

Wheeler responded with a memorandum on June 29, 1967, which concluded: “From a strictly military point of view, Israel would require the retention of some captured Arab territory in order to provide militarily defensible borders.” Specifically, regarding the West Bank, the JCS suggested “a boundary along the commanding terrain overlooking the Jordan River,” and considered taking this defense line up to the crest of the mountain ridge.⁵ There were other reasons why changing the previous 1949 armistice line might be considered for security reasons. Article II of the Armistice Agreement clarified that it did not prejudice the rights of the parties or their future claims, since the agreement had been “dictated exclusively by military considerations.” As a result, the old armistice line was not a recognized international border. On May 31, 1967, the Jordanian ambassador to the UN made this very point to the UN Security Council just days before the Six-Day War. He stressed that the old armistice agreement “did not fix boundaries.”⁶



On November 22, 1967, the UN Security Council unanimously approved Resolution 242 that called on Israel to withdraw “from territories” to “secure and recognized boundaries.” President Lyndon B. Johnson refused to accept the demand of Soviet Premier Alexei Kosygin that Israel withdraw from “all the territories” to the prewar lines. Johnson said Israel needed “recognized boundaries” that provided “security against terror, destruction and war.”

Ambassador Goldberg would note sometime later another aspect of the Johnson administration's policy that was reflected in the language of its UN proposals: "Resolution 242 in no way refers to Jerusalem, and this omission was deliberate."⁷ The U.S. was not about to propose the restoration of the status quo ante in Jerusalem either, even though successive U.S. administrations would at times criticize Israel's construction practices in the eastern parts of Jerusalem that it had captured.

Within a number of years, U.S. diplomacy would reflect the idea that Israel was entitled to changes in the pre-1967 lines. At first, public expressions by the Nixon administration were indeed minimalist; Secretary of State William Rogers declared in 1969 that there would be "insubstantial alterations" to the 1967 lines. At the time, Rogers' policy was severely criticized by Stephen W. Schwebel, the Executive Director of the American Society of International Law, who would become the Legal Advisor of the U.S. Department of State and later serve on the International Court of Justice in The Hague. Schwebel reminded Rogers of Israel's legal rights in the West Bank in the *American Journal of International Law* (64/344,1970) when he wrote: "Where the prior holder of territory had seized that territory unlawfully, the state which subsequently takes that territory in the lawful exercise of self-defense has, against that prior holder, better title."

In the international legal community there was an acute awareness that Jordan had illegally invaded the West Bank in 1948 and held it until 1967, when Israel captured the territory in a war of self-defense. Indeed, only two countries in the world recognized Jordanian sovereignty in the West Bank between 1948 and 1967: the United Kingdom and Pakistan. Even the Arab states refused to recognize Jordan's claim to the territory. In short, according to Schwebel, Israel's entitlement to changes in the pre-1967 lines did not arise because it had been vulnerable, but rather because it had been the victim of aggression in 1967.

In the international legal community there was an acute awareness that Jordan had illegally invaded the West Bank in 1948 and held it until 1967, when Israel captured the territory in a war of self-defense.

President Richard Nixon: The Israelis "Can't Go Back" to the 1967 Borders

Rogers was soon replaced, in any case, by Henry Kissinger, Nixon's national security advisor, who significantly modified Rogers' position. Already in 1973, in subsequently disclosed private conversations with Kissinger, in reference to the 1967 lines Nixon admitted: "You and I both know they [the Israelis] can't go back to the other borders."⁸ This became evident in September 1975, under the Ford administration, during the Sinai II Disengagement Agreement. While the agreement covered a second Israeli pullout from the Sinai Peninsula, Israel's prime minister at the time, Yitzhak Rabin, achieved a series of

understandings with the U.S. that covered other fronts of the Arab-Israeli peace process. For example, President Ford provided Prime Minister Rabin with a letter on the future of the Golan Heights that stated:

The U.S. has not developed a final position on the borders. Should it do so it will give great weight to Israel's position that any peace agreement with Syria must be predicated on Israel remaining on the Golan Heights.⁹

This carefully drafted language did not detail whether the U.S. would actually accept Israeli sovereignty over parts of the Golan Heights or just the continued presence of the Israel Defense Forces on the Golan plateau. In either case, the Ford letter did not envision a full Israeli pullback to the 1967 lines or even minor modifications of the 1967 border near the Sea of Galilee.

The Durability of Presidential Commitments: The Case of the Ford Letter

The details of the Ford letter should not be viewed as a subject for academics doing research into U.S. diplomatic history in an archive. It should be recalled that the U.S. explicitly renewed its commitment to the Ford letter just before the 1991 Madrid Peace Conference, when Secretary of State James Baker issued a letter of assurances to Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir. Moreover, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu obtained the recommitment of the Clinton administration to the Ford letter prior to the opening of Israeli-Palestinian negotiations over Hebron in 1996. In other words, U.S. letters of assurance were treated as durable commitments that lasted from one administration to the next, according to U.S. diplomatic practice.

President Reagan: I Can't Ask Israel to Return to the Pre-1967 Borders

It was the administration of President Ronald Reagan that most forcefully articulated Israel's right to defensible borders, just after President Jimmy Carter appeared to give only lukewarm support for the U.S.-Israel understandings of the Ford-Kissinger era. Reagan himself stated in a September 1, 1982, address that became known as the "Reagan Plan": "In the pre-1967 borders, Israel was barely ten miles wide at its narrowest point. The bulk of Israel's population lived within artillery range of hostile armies. I am not about to ask Israel to live that way again." Reagan came up with a flexible formula for Israeli withdrawal: "The extent to which Israel should be asked to give up territory will be heavily affected by the extent of the peace and normalization."¹⁰ Secretary of State George Shultz was even more explicit about what this meant during a September 1988 address: "Israel will never negotiate from or return to the 1967 borders."¹¹

What did Shultz mean by this statement? Was he recognizing Israel's right to retain large portions of the West Bank? A half-year earlier, he demonstrated considerable diplomatic creativity in considering alternatives to a full Israeli withdrawal to the 1967 lines. He even proposed what was, in effect, a "functional compromise" in the West Bank, as opposed to a "territorial compromise." Shultz was saying that the West Bank should be divided between Israel and the Jordanians according to different functions of government, and not in terms of drawing new internal borders. In an address to the Council on Foreign Relations in February 1988, he asserted: "the meaning of sovereignty, the meaning of territory, is changing, and what any national government can control, or what any unit that thinks it has sovereignty or jurisdiction over a certain area can control, is shifting gears."¹²

In his memoirs, Shultz elaborated on his 1988 address. He wrote that he had spoken to both Israeli and Jordanian leaders in the spirit of his speech and argued that "who controls what...would necessarily vary over such diverse functions as external security, maintenance of law and order, access to limited supplies of water, management of education, health, and other civic functions, and so forth."¹³ The net effect of this thinking was to protect Israel's security interests and provide it with a defensible border that would be substantially different from the 1967 lines.



President Ronald Reagan, January 20, 1981. The 1982 Reagan Plan called for Israel to retain defensible borders, while his secretary of state, George Shultz, stated explicitly, "Israel will never negotiate from or return to the 1967 borders."

The Clinton Administration Reaffirms Defensible Borders

U.S. support for defensible borders had clearly become bipartisan and continued into the 1990s, even as the Palestinians replaced Jordan as the primary Arab claimant to the West Bank. At the time of the completion of the 1997 Hebron Protocol, Secretary of State Warren Christopher wrote a letter of assurances to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. In the Christopher letter, the Clinton administration basically stated that it was not going to second-guess Israel about its security needs: “a hallmark of U.S. policy remains our commitment to work cooperatively to seek to *meet the security needs that Israel identifies*” (emphasis added). This meant that Israel would be the final arbiter of its defense needs. Christopher then added: “Finally, I would like to reiterate our position that Israel is entitled to secure and *defensible borders* (emphasis added), which should be directly negotiated and agreed with its neighbors.”¹⁴

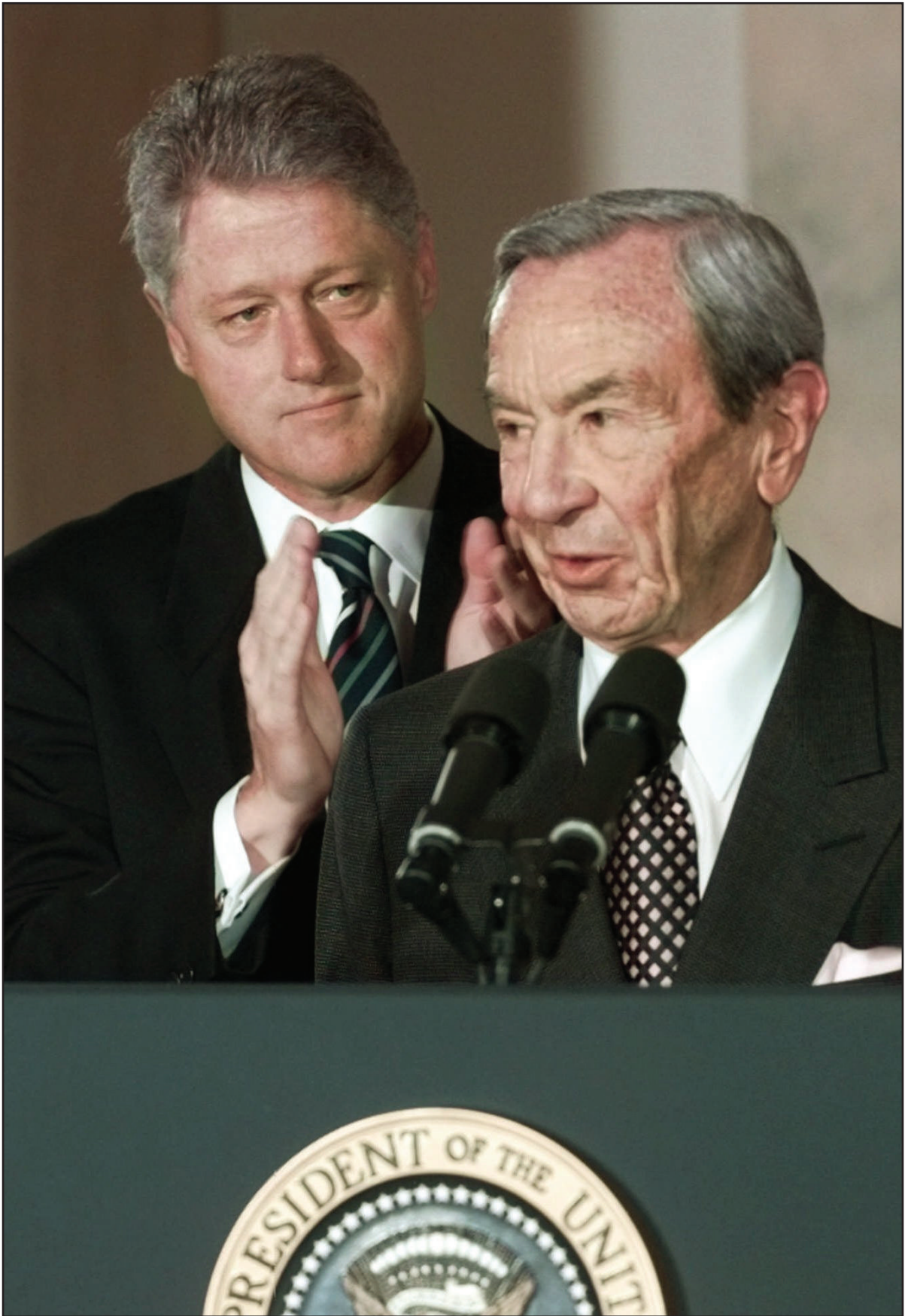
The 1997 Christopher letter was significant since it showed U.S. deference to Israel’s judgments concerning its security needs. During this period, Israel was to designate “specified security locations” as part of the redeployment of its troops under the Oslo Accords. Christopher stated separately that the designation of Israeli security locations was an Israeli responsibility. These guarantees contained an implicit assurance: that the U.S. was not going to second-guess Israeli judgments about Israeli security needs.

In summary, there is no basis to the argument that the U.S. has traditionally demanded of Israel either a full withdrawal or a nearly full withdrawal from the territories it captured in the Six-Day War. This is particularly true of the West Bank and Gaza Strip where only armistice lines were drawn in 1949, reflecting where embattled armies had halted their advance and no permanent international borders existed. The only development that altered this American stance in support of defensible borders in the past involved changes in the Israeli position to which the U.S. responded.

The Unofficial Clinton/Barak Parameters Are Off the Table

On January 7, 2001, two weeks before completing his second term in office, President Clinton presented his own plan for resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The Clinton parameters were partly based on the proposals made by Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak at the failed Camp David Summit of July 2000.

In the territorial sphere, Clinton spoke about Israel annexing “settlement blocs” in the West Bank. However, he made this annexation of territory by Israel conditional upon a “land swap” taking place, according to which Israel would concede territory under its sovereignty before 1967 in exchange for any new West Bank land. This “land swap” was not required by Resolution 242, but was a new Israeli concession made during the Barak government that Clinton adopted; it should be noted for the record, however, that Maj.-Gen. (res.) Danny Yatom, who served as the head of Barak’s foreign and defense staff, has argued that Barak himself never offered these land swaps at Camp David.



President Bill Clinton and Secretary of State Warren Christopher, November 7, 1996. Christopher wrote to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu: “A hallmark of U.S. policy remains our commitment to work cooperatively to seek to meet the security needs that Israel identifies.” The Christopher letter specified “defensible borders for Israel.”

Additionally, under the Clinton parameters, Israel was supposed to withdraw from the Jordan Valley (which Rabin sought to retain) and thereby relinquish defensible borders. Instead, Clinton proposed an “international presence” to replace the IDF. This particular component of the proposals severely compromised Israel’s doctrine of self-reliance in matters of defense and seemed to ignore Israel’s problematic history with the UN and other international forces in even more limited roles such as peace monitoring.

IDF Chief of Staff Lt.-Gen. Shaul Mofaz severely criticized the Clinton parameters as a virtual disaster for Israel, conveying not only just his own view but that of the entire IDF General Staff.

Prior to their formal release, the Chief of Staff of the IDF, Lt.-Gen. Shaul Mofaz, severely criticized the Clinton parameters before the Israeli cabinet as a virtual disaster for Israel: *Yediot Ahronot* reported on December 29, 2000, his judgment that: “The Clinton bridging proposal is inconsistent with Israel’s security interests and, if it will be accepted, *it will threaten the security of the state*” (emphasis added). Mofaz was not just voicing his own opinion, but was actually conveying the view of the entire IDF General Staff. In short, there were real U.S.-Israel differences at the time over the requirements of Israeli self-defense.

The Clinton parameters did not become official U.S. policy. After President George W. Bush came into office, U.S. officials informed the newly-elected Sharon government that the administration would not be bound by the Clinton parameters. Conversely, it was understood that the Sharon government would likewise not be bound by its predecessor’s proposals. Nevertheless, the ideas raised during this period continue to hover over most discussions in Washington policymaking circles about a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, especially in think tanks and research institutes.

President Bush: It is Unrealistic to Expect a Return to the Armistice Lines of 1949

The best proof that the U.S. had readopted its traditional policy that Israel was entitled to defensible borders came from the letter of assurances written by President Bush to Prime Minister Sharon on April 14, 2004, after Sharon’s presentation in Washington of Israel’s disengagement plan from the Gaza Strip. Bush wrote: “The United States reiterates its steadfast commitment to Israel’s security, including secure and defensible borders, and to preserve and strengthen Israel’s capability to deter and defend itself, by itself, against any threat or possible combination of threats.”¹⁵ Here, then, was an implicit link suggested between the letter’s reference to defensible borders and Israel’s self-defense capabilities, by virtue of the fact that they were coupled together in the very same sentence.

Bush clearly did not envision Israel withdrawing to the 1967 lines. Later in the letter he stated: “In light of new realities on the ground, including already existing major Israeli

population centers, it is unrealistic to expect that the outcome of final status negotiations will be a full and complete return to the armistice lines of 1949.” Bush did not use the term “settlement blocs,” as Clinton did, but appeared to be referring to the same idea. Less than a year later, on March 27, 2005, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice explained on Israel Radio that “Israeli population centers” referred to “the large settlement blocs” in the West Bank.¹⁶

More significantly, Bush did not make the retention of “Israeli population centers” in the West Bank contingent upon Israel agreeing to land swaps, using territory under Israeli sovereignty from within the pre-1967 borders as Clinton had proposed. In that sense, Bush restored the original terms of reference in the peace process that had been contained in Resolution 242 by confining Israel’s eastern territorial dispute to the West Bank, without involving any additional territorial exchanges.

Bush’s recognition of Israel’s right to defensible borders was the most explicit expression of the U.S. stand on the subject, for the Bush letter endorsed clear-cut modifications of the pre-1967 lines. Moreover, by linking the idea of defensible borders to Israel’s defensive capabilities, Bush was making clear that a “defensible border” had to improve Israel’s ability to provide for its own security. True, a “secure boundary,” as mentioned in Resolution 242,



President George W. Bush and Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon at the White House, June 14, 2004. Sharon exchanged letters with Bush in which Israel committed to withdraw from Gaza and the United States endorsed defensible borders for Israel.

included that interpretation as well. But it could also imply a boundary that was secured by U.S. guarantees, NATO troops, or even other international forces. Bush's letter did not contain this ambiguity, but rather specifically tied defensible borders to Israel's ability to defend itself.

On March 25, 2005, the U.S. ambassador to Israel, Daniel Kurtzer, was quoted in the Israeli daily *Yediot Ahronot* as saying that there was no U.S.-Israel "understanding" over Israel's retention of West Bank settlement blocs. Kurtzer denied the *Yediot* report. Yet the story raised the question of what kind of commitment the Bush letter exactly constituted. In U.S. practice, a treaty is the strongest form of inter-state commitment, followed by an executive agreement (such as a Memorandum of Understanding without congressional ratification). Still, an exchange of letters provides an international commitment as well. Kurtzer himself reiterated this point on Israel's Channel 10 television: "Those commitments are very, very firm with respect to these Israeli population centers; our expectation is that Israel is not going to be going back to the 1967 lines." When asked if these "population centers" were "settlement blocs," he replied: "That's correct."¹⁷

Separately, Bush introduced the idea of a viable and contiguous Palestinian state, which has territorial implications. At a minimum, contiguity refers to creating an unobstructed connection between all the West Bank cities, so that a Palestinian could drive from Jenin to Hebron. Palestinians might construe American references to contiguity as including a Palestinian-controlled connection from the West Bank to the Gaza Strip, like the "safe passage" mentioned in the Oslo Accords. But this would entail bifurcating Israel in two. In any case, there is no international legal right of states to have a sovereign connection between parts that are geographically separated: The U.S. has no sovereign territorial connection between Alaska and the State of Washington. Similarly, there is no such sovereign connection between the parts of other geographically separated states, like Oman. On February 21, 2005, President Bush clarified that his administration's call for territorial contiguity referred specifically to the West Bank.

In the last year of the Bush administration, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert made far-reaching concessions in private discussions with Palestinian Authority Chairman Mahmoud Abbas. In many respects, Olmert's proposals of 2008 went well beyond what was expected of Israel in the Bush letter, but certainly did not cancel the commitments that had been made to Prime Minister Sharon. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice monitored the Olmert-Abbas discussions closely, though ultimately they failed to produce an Israeli-Palestinian agreement. Rice reported her impressions to the incoming administration of President-elect Barack Obama. Nonetheless, as was the case after the Camp David and Taba talks in 2000, it was not suggested that Israel should be bound by the diplomatic record of a failed negotiation.

The Obama Administration and Defensible Borders

During the 2008 presidential campaign, then-Senator Barack Obama spoke at the annual policy conference of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC). He spoke on June 4, 2008, about the establishment of a Palestinian state “that is contiguous and cohesive.” But he also stipulated that “any agreement with the Palestinian people must preserve Israel’s identity as a Jewish state, with secure, recognized and defensible borders.” While Obama subsequently modified the statement he made at AIPAC on Jerusalem – watering down his original declaration that it must remain “undivided” – he did not change his remarks in any way about Israel’s right to defensible borders.

Yet after Obama entered office, questions emerged about the extent to which the administration still supported the idea of defensible borders. His national security adviser, General James Jones, was known to support the deployment of a NATO force in the West Bank instead of the IDF.¹⁸ There was also some ambiguity over whether the Obama administration felt it was legally bound by the 2004 Bush letter. When asked on two successive days, on June 1 and on June 2, 2009, whether the administration was committed to the letter, Robert Wood, the deputy spokesman of the U.S. Department of State, would only say in response that the administration wanted to see both parties implement their Roadmap obligations. When pressed yet again, he finally answered: “I’m giving you what I got.” In other words, Wood had no instructions to confirm whether the administration still supported the Bush letter.

It appeared that the Obama administration preferred to avoid making a clear-cut statement on defensible borders. In November 2009 when the government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced its readiness to implement a ten-month settlement freeze in the West Bank, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton made a brief statement that summarized the Obama administration policy on borders:

We believe that through good-faith negotiations the parties can mutually agree on an outcome which ends the conflict and reconciles the Palestinian goal of an independent and viable state on the 1967 lines, with agreed swaps, and the Israeli goal of a Jewish state with secure and recognized borders that reflects subsequent developments and meets Israeli security requirements.¹⁹

Thus Secretary Clinton did not identify with either the Palestinian goal of a territorial settlement on the 1967 lines or the Israeli goal of secure borders, but placed the U.S. in a middle position between the two parties. This represented a shift from Bush’s 2004 commitments, but did not amount to a complete rejection of defensible borders either.

Toward the fall of 2010, the Obama administration’s policy on the 1967 lines further evolved when the U.S. sought to re-start Israeli-Palestinian negotiations as Israel’s ten-month settlement freeze ended. The U.S. and Israel negotiated the terms of a second freeze, at which time the Obama administration tried to reach out to the Palestinians with positions that were intended to pull them back to the negotiating table. At that time, the



Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and President Barack Obama at the White House during the first official meeting between the two leaders, May 18, 2009.

U.S. offered Mahmoud Abbas that the next round of negotiations would be based on the 1967 lines. But this concession from Washington did not appear to alter the Palestinian position in any way. It did, however, put into the American bureaucracy a new position that the U.S. was considering but did not make public.

A dramatic change in the U.S. position emerged on May 19, 2011, when President Obama delivered a major address at the State Department which sought to produce a unified American policy on the popular uprisings in the Arab world. The last part of Obama's speech dealt with Israel and the Palestinians, where he set forward his position that the "core issues" must be negotiated. He then clarified his view that negotiations should result in two states and that the borders of a Palestinian state should be with Israel, Jordan, and Egypt, thereby precluding Israel retaining territory in the Jordan Valley separating the Palestinian state from the Jordanians. Finally came the bombshell for most Israelis: "We believe the borders of Israel and Palestine should be based on the 1967 lines with mutually agreed swaps, so that secure and recognized borders are established for both states." Obama was the first U.S. president to use the explicit reference to 1967. His qualifications about land swaps that might have been intended to offset this new position were of limited value. After all, the Palestinians themselves spoke only about land swaps of 1.9 percent, making this a mechanism for only miniscule modifications of the 1967 lines.

The day after his statement on the 1967 lines, Obama met Prime Minister Netanyahu in the White House as U.S.-Israel tensions rose. Before leaving for Washington, Netanyahu's office released a statement according to which he expected to hear from President Obama "a reconfirmation of commitments to Israel from 2004 that received wide support in both houses of Congress." This was a direct reference to the April 14, 2004, Bush letter which had said that the U.S. did not envision a complete Israeli withdrawal in the West Bank and that new demographic realities had to be taken into account. In the aftermath of the meeting, the administration issued a number of clarifications regarding the U.S. position.

Appearing on the BBC on May 20, Obama stated that the basis of negotiations will involve "looking at the 1967 border, recognizing that conditions on the ground have changed, and that there are going to be swaps to accommodate the interests of both sides." He believed that any negotiation at this point should begin with "a conversation about territory and security." Finally, in his address to AIPAC on May 22, Obama clarified further that his reference to the 1967 lines should not have been taken literally: "By definition it means that the parties themselves – Israelis and Palestinians – will negotiate a border *that is different than the one that existed on June 4, 1967* (emphasis added)."

In his AIPAC address, Obama added that the formula he had in mind "allows the parties themselves to account for the changes that have taken place over the last forty-four years, including the new demographic realities on the ground and the needs on both sides." While he still insisted that the future Palestinian state needed to have a common border with Jordan, he nonetheless added that: "Provisions must be robust enough to prevent a resurgence of terrorism; to stop the infiltration of weapons; and to provide effective border security."

Many questions remained. Why did President Obama decide to make these public statements on the 1967 lines, even with all the qualifications that he subsequently issued? If he wanted to trigger new peace negotiations, then his timing was difficult to explain. After all, Abbas and his Fatah movement had just tied their fate to Hamas by signing a reconciliation agreement with the Palestinian terrorist organization. Hamas had just condemned the U.S. for killing Osama bin Laden and demonstrated that it was still rigidly committed to its *jihadi* agenda and not to peace.

At AIPAC, Obama explained the logic of what he was doing. The Palestinians wanted to abandon negotiations, which meant that momentum would be building for unilaterally declaring a Palestinian state or at least using the UN to assist in winning support for its establishment. He stated that he needed "leverage with the Palestinians, with the Arab states, and with the international community," so he needed "a basis of negotiations" that held out "the prospect of success." Obama then stated that he was starting a five-day trip to Europe. In short, the shift in U.S. policy, according to his explanation, was tied to an upcoming American effort to head off a unilateral declaration of Palestinian statehood.

Obama's clarifications ameliorated many Israeli concerns. Nonetheless, a gap appeared to have emerged between the new U.S. position and Israel's insistence that at the end of any negotiating process it be left with defensible borders.

Historically, the U.S. Has Not Insisted on Full Israeli Withdrawal

In conclusion, historically the U.S. has not insisted on a full Israeli withdrawal to the 1949 armistice lines from the territories that Israel captured in the Six-Day War. Yet it is still possible to ask what value these American declarations have if they are made with the additional provision that the ultimate location of Arab-Israeli borders must be decided by the parties themselves. This is particularly true of the 2004 Bush letter, which reiterates this point explicitly. Clearly the U.S. cannot impose the Bush letter on Israel and the Palestinians if they refuse to accept its terms. The Bush letter only updates and summarizes the U.S. view of the correct interpretation of UN Resolution 242 in any future negotiations. Its importance emanates from four possible future considerations:

- Traditionally, Israel has sought assurances from the U.S. prior to the formal opening of negotiations. This was Israeli practice before the Geneva Peace Conference after the 1973 Yom Kippur War; it was also Israeli practice prior to the 1991 Madrid Peace Conference. But the April 2003 Quartet "Roadmap" was silent on the subject of Israel's future borders and those of the proposed Palestinian state. The Bush letter protected Israel's vital interests prior to the beginning of any future negotiations. It was tantamount to a diplomatic safety net for Israel.
- In the future, if the U.S. and Israel are at a Camp David-like summit and the Palestinians ask U.S. officials to unveil Washington's position on borders, then if the Bush letter is respected, those officials should still back its contents.
- The Bush commitments were intended to last regardless of who was in power in Washington. The Bush letter was greeted with overwhelming bipartisan congressional approval on June 23-24, 2004. The House of Representatives approved it by an overwhelming majority of 407 to 9, the Senate by 95 to 3. Both Rep. Rahm Emanuel and Senator Hillary Clinton voted for the Bush letter.
- In July 2009, the European Union's foreign policy chief recommended that if Israel and the Palestinians did not reach an agreement among themselves, the UN Security Council should call for the recognition of a Palestinian state. He recommended that such a UN resolution dictate the key final status issues, including borders and the status of Jerusalem. If an effort to impose the 1967 lines on Israel by means of a UN Security Council resolution were to move forward, the Bush commitments create an expectation that the U.S. would move to veto such a resolution.²⁰

Defensible borders entered the U.S. diplomatic lexicon for Arab-Israeli peacemaking over several administrations. Today, Israel must provide further details about the territorial meaning of defensible borders and seek to reach a more specific understanding with the U.S. administration regarding its commitment to the durability of this longstanding component of American diplomacy in the Middle East.

Notes

1. Premier Kosygin wrote to President Johnson on November 21, 1967, requesting that the UK draft resolution, that was to become Resolution 242, include the word “the” before the word “territories.” Johnson wrote back the same day refusing the Soviet request. The Soviet deputy foreign minister, Kuznetsov, tried the same day in New York to insert the word “all,” but was rebuffed. See *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1967-1968*, volume XIX, Arab-Israeli Crisis and War 1967, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/frus/johnsonlb/xix/28070.htm>
2. Adnan Abu Odeh, Nabil Elaraby, Meir Rosenne, Dennis Ross, Eugene Rostow, and Vernon Turner, *UN Security Council Resolution 242: The Building Block of Peacemaking* (Washington, D.C.: Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 1993), p. 88.
3. See Meir Rosenne in *ibid.*, p. 31.
4. Speech by President Lyndon Johnson, June 19, 1967; <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/US-Israel/lbjpeace.html>
5. For a complete text of the memorandum, JCSM-373-67, see Michael Widlandski, *Can Israel Survive a Palestinian State?* (Jerusalem: Institute for Advanced Strategic and Political Studies, 1990), pp. 148-152.
6. See Ambassador Yehuda Blum, “The Territorial Clauses of Security Council Resolution 242,” in *Israel’s Rights to Secure Boundaries: Four Decades Since UN Security Council Resolution 242* (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, 2009), p. 29. See also Arthur Lall, *The UN and the Middle East Crisis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), pp. 22-24.
7. Arthur J. Goldberg, Letter to the Editor of *The New York Times*, March 5, 1980.
8. Henry Kissinger, *Crisis: The Anatomy of Two Major Foreign Policy Crises* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2003), p. 140.
9. Letter from President Ford to Prime Minister Rabin, September 1, 1975; http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Peace/ford_rabin_letter.html
10. Speech by President Ronald Reagan, September 1, 1982; <http://www.reagan.utexas.edu/resource/speeches/1982/90182d.htm>
11. Secretary of State George P. Shultz’s address, September 16, 1988; http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1079/is_n2140_v88/ai_6876262
12. George P. Shultz, *Turmoil and Triumph: My Years as Secretary of State* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1993), p. 1022.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 1023.
14. Letter of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, January 17, 1997; <http://mfa.gov.il/mfa/go.asp?MFAH00q0015>. Exchange of letters between President Bush and Prime Minister Sharon, April 14, 2004; <http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/Peace+Process/Reference+Documents/Exchange+of+letters+Sharon-Bush+14-Apr-2004.htm>

15. Exchange of letters between President Bush and Prime Minister Sharon, April 14, 2004; <http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/Peace+Process/Reference+Documents/Exchange+of+letters+Sharon-Bush+14-Apr-2004.htm>
16. Aluf Benn, "PM: Understanding with U.S. about West Bank Settlement Blocs Holds Firm," *Ha'aretz*, March 27, 2005.
17. <http://www.usembassy-israel.org.il/publish/mission/amb/032505b.html>
18. Aluf Benn, "Candidate for U.S. Security Adviser Wants NATO Force in West Bank," *Ha'aretz*, November 23, 2008, <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/1039923.html>
19. Hillary Rodham Clinton, Secretary of State, "Israel's Announcement Regarding Settlements," *U.S. Department of State Diplomacy in Action*, PRN: 2009/1175, <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2009a/11/132434.htm>
20. "EU's Solana Calls for UN to Recognize Palestinian State," July 12, 2009, <http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSLC616115>
21. <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/04/20040414-3.html>

Appendix 3

Letter from U.S. President George W. Bush to Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, April 14, 2004²¹

His Excellency Ariel Sharon
Prime Minister of Israel

Dear Mr. Prime Minister,

Thank you for your letter setting out your disengagement plan.

The United States remains hopeful and determined to find a way forward toward a resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian dispute. I remain committed to my June 24, 2002, vision of two states living side by side in peace and security as the key to peace, and to the roadmap as the route to get there.

We welcome the disengagement plan you have prepared, under which Israel would withdraw certain military installations and all settlements from Gaza, and withdraw certain military installations and settlements in the West Bank. These steps described in the plan will mark real progress toward realizing my June 24, 2002, vision, and make a real contribution towards peace. We also understand that, in this context, Israel believes it is important to bring new opportunities to the Negev and the Galilee. We are hopeful that steps pursuant to this plan, consistent with my vision, will remind all states and parties of their own obligations under the roadmap.

The United States appreciates the risks such an undertaking represents. I therefore want to reassure you on several points.

First, the United States remains committed to my vision and to its implementation as described in the roadmap. The United States will do its utmost to prevent any attempt by anyone to impose any other plan. Under the roadmap, Palestinians must undertake an immediate cessation of armed activity and all acts of violence against Israelis anywhere, and all official Palestinian institutions must end incitement against Israel. The Palestinian leadership must act decisively against terror, including sustained, targeted, and effective operations to stop terrorism and dismantle terrorist capabilities and infrastructure. Palestinians must undertake a comprehensive and fundamental political reform that includes a strong parliamentary democracy and an empowered prime minister.

Second, there will be no security for Israelis or Palestinians until they and all states, in the region and beyond, join together to fight terrorism and dismantle terrorist organizations. The United States reiterates its steadfast commitment to Israel's security, including secure, defensible borders, and to preserve and strengthen Israel's capability to deter and defend itself, by itself, against any threat or possible combination of threats.

Third, Israel will retain its right to defend itself against terrorism, including to take actions against terrorist organizations. The United States will lead efforts, working together with Jordan, Egypt, and others in the international community, to build the capacity and will of Palestinian institutions to fight terrorism, dismantle terrorist organizations, and prevent the areas from which Israel has withdrawn from posing a threat that would have to be addressed by any other means. The United States understands that after Israel withdraws from Gaza and/or parts of the West Bank, and pending agreements on other arrangements, existing arrangements regarding control of airspace, territorial waters, and land passages of the West Bank and Gaza will continue.

The United States is strongly committed to Israel's security and well-being as a Jewish state. It seems clear that an agreed, just, fair and realistic framework for a solution to the Palestinian refugee issue as part of any final status agreement will need to be found through the establishment of a Palestinian state, and the settling of Palestinian refugees there, rather than in Israel.

As part of a final peace settlement, Israel must have secure and recognized borders, which should emerge from negotiations between the parties in accordance with UNSC Resolutions 242 and 338. In light of new realities on the ground, including already existing major Israeli population centers, it is unrealistic to expect that the outcome of final status negotiations will be a full and complete return to the armistice lines of 1949, and all previous efforts to negotiate a two-state solution have reached the same conclusion. It is realistic to expect that any final status agreement will only be achieved on the basis of mutually agreed changes that reflect these realities.

I know that, as you state in your letter, you are aware that certain responsibilities face the State of Israel. Among these, your government has stated that the barrier being erected by Israel should be a security rather than political barrier, should be temporary rather than permanent, and therefore not prejudice any final status issues including final borders, and its route should take into account, consistent with security needs, its impact on Palestinians not engaged in terrorist activities.

As you know, the United States supports the establishment of a Palestinian state that is viable, contiguous, sovereign, and independent, so that the Palestinian people can build their own future in accordance with my vision set forth in June 2002 and with the path set forth in the roadmap. The United States will join with others in the international community to foster the development of democratic political institutions and new leadership committed to those institutions, the reconstruction of civic institutions, the growth of a free and prosperous economy, and the building of capable security institutions dedicated to maintaining law and order and dismantling terrorist organizations.

A peace settlement negotiated between Israelis and Palestinians would be a great boon not only to those peoples but to the peoples of the entire region. Accordingly, the United States believes that all states in the region have special responsibilities: to support the building of the institutions of a Palestinian state; to fight terrorism, and cut off all forms of assistance

to individuals and groups engaged in terrorism; and to begin now to move toward more normal relations with the State of Israel. These actions would be true contributions to building peace in the region.

Mr. Prime Minister, you have described a bold and historic initiative that can make an important contribution to peace. I commend your efforts and your courageous decision which I support. As a close friend and ally, the United States intends to work closely with you to help make it a success.

Sincerely,
George W. Bush

Appendix 4

U.S. Senate and House of Representatives Approve Commitments to Israel in President Bush's Letter of April 14, 2004

H. CON. RES. 460

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Whereas the United States is hopeful that a peaceful resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict can be achieved;

Whereas the United States is strongly committed to the security of Israel and its well-being as a Jewish state;

Whereas Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon has proposed an initiative intended to enhance the security of Israel and further the cause of peace in the Middle East;

Whereas President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Sharon have subsequently engaged in a dialogue with respect to this initiative;

Whereas President Bush, as part of that dialogue, expressed the support of the United States for Prime Minister Sharon's initiative in a letter dated April 14, 2004;

Whereas in the April 14, 2004, letter the President stated that in light of new realities on the ground in Israel, including already existing major Israeli population centers, it is unrealistic to expect that the outcome of final status negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians will be a full and complete return to the armistice lines of 1949, but realistic to expect that any final status agreement will only be achieved on the basis of mutually agreed changes that reflect these realities;

Whereas the President acknowledged that any agreed, just, fair, and realistic framework for a solution to the Palestinian refugee issue as part of any final status agreement will need to be found through the establishment of a permanent alternative and the settling of Palestinian refugees there rather than in Israel;

Whereas the principles expressed in President Bush's letter will enhance the security of Israel and advance the cause of peace in the Middle East;

Whereas there will be no security for Israelis or Palestinians until Israel and the Palestinians, and all countries in the region and throughout the world, join together to fight terrorism and dismantle terrorist organizations;

Whereas the United States remains committed to the security of Israel, including secure, recognized, and defensible borders, and to preserving and strengthening the capability of Israel to deter enemies and defend itself against any threat;

Whereas Israel has the right to defend itself against terrorism, including the right to take actions against terrorist organizations that threaten the citizens of Israel;

Whereas the President stated on June 24, 2002, his vision of two states, Israel and Palestine, living side-by-side in peace and security and that vision can only be fully realized when terrorism is defeated, so that a new state may be created based on rule of law and respect for human rights; and

Whereas President Bush announced on March 14, 2003, that in order to promote a lasting peace, all Arab states must oppose terrorism, support the emergence of a peaceful and democratic Palestine, and state clearly that they will live in peace with Israel: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That Congress -

(1) strongly endorses the principles articulated by President Bush in his letter dated April 14, 2004, to Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon which will strengthen the security and well-being of the State of Israel; and

(2) supports continuing efforts with others in the international community to build the capacity and will of Palestinian institutions to fight terrorism, dismantle terrorist organizations, and prevent the areas from which Israel has withdrawn from posing a threat to the security of Israel.

Passed the House of Representatives, June 23, 2004

Passed the Senate, June 24, 2004



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu delivers a major policy speech at Bar-Ilan University, June 14, 2009. Netanyahu called for the Palestinian leadership to recognize Israel as the nation-state of the Jewish people, called for the establishment of a demilitarized Palestinian state, and stated that Jerusalem would remain Israel's united capital city.

Israel's Return to Security-Based Diplomacy

Dan Diker

Diplomacy-Based Security vs. Security-Based Diplomacy

Since the 1993 Oslo Declaration of Principles was signed with Yasser Arafat's Palestine Liberation Organization, Israel's vital security requirements have been relegated to a position of secondary importance in the service of reaching a final peace agreement. Israel's traditional "security-based diplomacy" approach to foreign relations that had anchored the Jewish state's defense doctrine since the Six-Day War in 1967 had been reversed. Instead, a doctrine of "diplomacy-based security" had come to dominate Israeli diplomatic thinking, as peace agreements were thought to be the guarantor of Israel's safety.

In service to this new doctrine, Israeli efforts to end the Arab-Israeli conflict, including the initiative of Secretary of State John Kerry in 2013-14, the Annapolis process in 2008, the Gaza disengagement in 2005, the Lebanon withdrawal in 2000, and the Camp David Summit in 2000, were marked by far-reaching and often unilateral Israeli concessions. At the same time, the Israel Defense Forces were called upon to retrofit Israel's security needs into a political model instead of establishing security "red lines" prior to or in the initial stages of diplomatic initiatives.¹

Israel's previous policy of making concessions first and trying to enforce its vital security rights and requirements second has raised international expectations that Israel will continue to offer an intransigent Palestinian leadership greater concessions as "sweeteners" to coax them into negotiations. The Palestinians, in contrast, have been sensitizing the international community to what the PA leadership calls "Palestinian rights" underpinning their statehood quest.² The public silence of Israeli governments on Israel's own rights-based case for a viable, secure Jewish state with defensible borders has encouraged confusion among allies and exacerbated the antagonism of adversaries.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's foreign policy speech at Bar-Ilan University on June 14, 2009 – the first one of his administration – represented a fundamental restoration of Israel's security- and rights-based approach to the conflict. Netanyahu's sharp break from past policy was his insistence, up front, that reciprocity govern relations between the sides: that Israel be recognized as the nation-state of the Jewish people,³ that a future Palestinian state be demilitarized, and that Israel's critical security needs be honored.

Netanyahu was indeed articulating a new Israeli political consensus about the peace process, and at the same time restoring Israel's traditional, "security-first" approach to diplomacy that had been reflected in Israeli policy by every Israeli government from 1967 until the first years of the Oslo peace process.

When it came to the West Bank, the security-first approach was guarded by Prime Ministers Yitzhak Rabin and Benjamin Netanyahu. Ariel Sharon would also protect Israel's rights and security interests there, despite his unilateral withdrawal from Gaza. Netanyahu's revival of this approach since his 2009 election seems particularly relevant in the context of Iranian- and Al-Qaeda-backed campaigns to threaten Arab regimes amenable to the West, such as Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon, and the Gulf States. At the same time as the Iranian regime leads a campaign to destabilize the Sunni regimes that have either made formal or de facto peace with Israel, the Iranian regime funds, trains, and arms terror groups on Israel's northern and southern borders, and even in the West Bank.

Israel's return to security-based diplomacy and insistence on Palestinian demilitarization and defensible borders are vital guarantors of Israel's security in the face of the profound uncertainties surrounding both the Palestinians and the rise of Iranian power in the region.

In this context, Israel's return to security-based diplomacy and insistence on Palestinian demilitarization and defensible borders are vital guarantors of Israel's security in the face of the profound uncertainties surrounding both the Palestinians and the rise of Iranian power in the region.

Netanyahu's Bar-Ilan Speech

When Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu stood before a packed auditorium at the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies at Israel's Bar-Ilan University, it was a defining moment. Several months earlier, he had established a strong center-right coalition that reflected a 30 percent rise in public support for right-of-center parties.⁴ The Israeli public was looking to move away from the policies of former Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, whose unsuccessful bid to negotiate a peace accord and establish a Palestinian state had brought him to offer unprecedented concessions to Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas.⁵ Despite Abbas' public admission of Olmert's far-reaching concessions, the Palestinian leader

noted that there remained “wide gaps between the sides” that had led to the collapse of peace talks.⁶ Newly-elected President Barack Obama had placed exceptional pressure on the Netanyahu government for additional concessions, including a full freeze on Jewish building in the West Bank and parts of Jerusalem that contradicted firm understandings reached with the Bush administration and even collided with the Oslo Accords and the policies of the Clinton administration.⁷

Netanyahu accepted the notion of a future Palestinian state,⁸ but insisted that the Palestinians would need to make reciprocal gestures and accept two principles: recognition of Israel as the nation-state of the Jewish people; and demilitarization of a future Palestinian state and accession to additional security guarantees, including defensible borders for Israel.⁹ He also stated that Jerusalem would remain a united city under Israeli sovereignty.

Netanyahu placed Israel’s national rights and vital security needs first, and only then accepted Palestinian demands. This was a major shift away from the Olmert approach at Annapolis, where many of the fundamental security requirements that Israel had insisted upon in the past were dropped in the context of far-reaching concessions he had offered to Mahmoud Abbas.¹⁰



Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin at the Knesset debate on the Oslo peace accords signed with the Palestine Liberation Organization, September 21, 1993. Rabin foresaw Israeli control of the Jordan Valley and a united Jerusalem in any final status agreement with the Palestinian Authority.

Prime Minister Netanyahu's commitment to a security-first paradigm has been well-received by Israelis because nearly two decades of concession-driven diplomacy not only failed to yield security or earn international goodwill, but led to broad public understanding that Israel's security situation had become perilous.

During the first three years of the Oslo process, more Israelis were killed by Palestinian terror attacks than during the fifteen years prior to the signing of the Oslo accords in 1993.¹¹ The collapse of the Camp David Summit in 2000 and the ensuing suicide bombing war claimed the lives of more than 1,100 Israelis.¹² Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon in 2000 led to an emboldened Hizbullah firing more than 4,000 rockets at Israeli cities in the 2006 Second Lebanon War. Furthermore, Israel's withdrawal from Gaza in 2005 multiplied the rocket and mortar attacks from there on southern Israel – more than 12,000 since 2001 – and resulted in Israel's defensive operation in Gaza in December 2008 and January 2009 that was condemned around the world.¹³

The failure of Oslo, Annapolis, and territorial withdrawals to improve the prospects for peace did not deter Israelis from yearning for peace. But they did offer a sobering lesson to the Israeli public about the dangers of indulging in wishful thinking. The public today is in no mood for unrealistic plans that are long on hope and short on credibility. They want security first, and a united Jerusalem. Netanyahu's Bar-Ilan speech was so well received in Israel because it articulated this broad public consensus.¹⁴

Netanyahu's approach won the support of more than 70 percent of the Israeli public, according to a poll conducted by *Ha'aretz* the day after the speech.¹⁵ *Ha'aretz* columnist Ari Shavit called the speech "Netanyahu's Revolution," compared the prime minister to Theodor Herzl – the founder of modern Zionism, and noted: "With the seven-word formula – a demilitarized Palestinian state alongside a Jewish Israeli state – he changed the discourse on the conflict from its very foundations. He set an unprecedented challenge before the Palestinian nation and the international community."¹⁶

Elaborating on his thinking, Netanyahu noted in a November 2009 speech, "We have to ensure that weapons do not flow into the Palestinian areas of the West Bank, which overlooks Tel Aviv and surrounds Jerusalem."¹⁷ On March 3, 2010, Netanyahu told the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee that the Jordan Valley's strategic importance along the eastern border of the West Bank made it impossible for Israel to withdraw from there.¹⁸

This was not the first time that Netanyahu stressed the security-first paradigm for peacemaking. In early 1997, during his first term in office, Netanyahu was asked by the Clinton administration to agree to a "further re-deployment" (FRD), in accordance with the Oslo Agreements, that required Israel to make a new withdrawal of an unspecified size in the West Bank.

Instead of engaging in a debate with the administration over the terms of a “credible” re-deployment, including specific percentages of territory, Netanyahu asked the IDF to provide him with a security map delineating Israel’s vital territorial needs in the West Bank that would be required for the country’s defense. The IDF map came to be known as “The Interests Map,” and Netanyahu took a version of it to Washington to present to President Bill Clinton.¹⁹ Netanyahu’s decision-making at the time illustrated an important principle of his approach to peacemaking on which he insisted then and still embraces today: Israel’s formal diplomatic positions on the peace process must be derived by first establishing its security needs, rather than the reverse.

Restoring Israel’s Security-First Approach

Netanyahu’s insistence on a demilitarized Palestinian state and defensible borders did not represent a new strategy. Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin had presented his vision for defensible borders at the height of the Oslo peace process, on October 5, 1995, during the Knesset ratification of the Oslo II interim agreement. He said of the final-status arrangement with the Palestinians: “The borders of the State of Israel, during the permanent solution, will be beyond the lines which existed before the Six-Day War. We will not return to the 4 June 1967 lines.”²⁰ In fact, Rabin told the IDF leadership that Israel would need to retain approximately 50 percent of the West Bank in any future settlement.²¹

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, like Netanyahu today, insisted on retaining the Jordan Valley, telling the Knesset in 1995: “The security border of the State of Israel will be located in the Jordan Valley, in the broadest meaning of that term.”

Rabin, like Netanyahu today, insisted on retaining the Jordan Valley, telling the Knesset at the time: “The security border of the State of Israel will be located in the Jordan Valley, in the broadest meaning of that term.”²² Rabin meant that the Jordan River alone was an inadequate defensive barrier to prevent hostile forces and weaponry from reaching the West Bank’s high ground, and that Israel would need to rely on the eastern slopes of the 2-3,000-foot-high West Bank mountain ridge that rises from the Jordan riverbed, constituting the Jordan Rift Valley. This was clearly Rabin’s intention when he stipulated that Israel needed this zone in “the broadest meaning” of the term. Rabin also insisted on maintaining a united Jerusalem under Israeli sovereignty.

Rabin had rejected a fully sovereign Palestinian state, telling Israeli lawmakers in 1995, “We would like this to be an entity which is less than a state, and which will independently run the lives of the Palestinians under its authority.”²³

On April 14, 2004, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon exchanged letters with President George W. Bush in which Israel committed to withdraw from Gaza and the United States endorsed defensible borders for Israel.²⁴ A week later, Sharon explained the language of the U.S.

letter to the Knesset, noting that the U.S. guarantees included two territorial components: Israel would retain the major settlement blocs in the West Bank and would also obtain defensible borders. In the midst of his Hebrew address, Sharon repeated “defensible borders” in English to emphasize the American presidential commitment. Implicit in Sharon’s review of the U.S. letter was that beyond the large settlements close to the pre-1967 lines, there was also recognition of a vital geographic zone in the West Bank, namely the Jordan Valley.²⁵ Sharon told *Ha’aretz* on April 24, 2005, “The Jordan Rift Valley is very important and it’s not just the rift valley we’re talking about [but]...up to the Allon road and a step above the Allon road. In my view, this area is of extreme importance.”²⁶

Defensible Borders: Historical Context

The 1949 armistice lines, which stood as Israel’s de facto eastern border from the end of the War of Independence until the 1967 Six-Day War, left the Jewish state with critical vulnerabilities and were therefore unsuitable as permanent borders. Israel’s former foreign minister, Abba Eban, referred to these lines in 1969 as “Auschwitz borders that must not be restored.”²⁷

Yigal Allon, a commander of the pre-state Palmach and foreign minister under Rabin, was the architect of the defensible borders doctrine. In a 1976 essay in *Foreign Affairs*, he wrote:

One does not have to be a military expert to easily identify the critical defects of the armistice lines that existed until June 4, 1967....The gravest problem is on the eastern boundary, where the entire width of the coastal plain varies between 10 and 15 miles, where the main centers of Israel’s population, including Tel Aviv and its suburbs, are situated, and where the situation of Jerusalem is especially perilous. Within these lines a single successful first strike by the Arab armies would be sufficient to dissect Israel at more than one point, to sever its essential living arteries, and to confront it with dangers that no other state would be prepared to face. The purpose of defensible borders is thus to correct this weakness, to provide Israel with the requisite minimal strategic depth, as well as lines which have topographical strategic significance.²⁸

In Allon’s view, which was shared by successive Israeli prime ministers, the concept of defensible borders means that Israel has a right and a responsibility to establish boundaries that provide for its citizens’ basic security requirements, as opposed to accepting a geography that invites attack. This has always meant that Israel would retain some territories east of the 1949 armistice lines as part of any peace agreement with the Palestinians, especially in the largely unpopulated Jordan Valley.²⁹

Allon's plan for defensible borders has been a key point of reference for Prime Minister Netanyahu. Netanyahu's foreign policy advisor, Amb. Dore Gold, noted that in 1997 Netanyahu proposed a plan for a final agreement with the Palestinians based on what he termed "Allon plus."³⁰

Israel's Confused Diplomatic Messages

The international criticism of Netanyahu's security-first posture is more comprehensible when considered in the context of the heightened expectations that were created by the willingness of previous Israeli governments to make deep concessions first, and only then attempt to retrofit Israeli security requirements. The following three cases illustrate the perils of concession-driven diplomacy:

Ehud Barak at Camp David in 2000

Prime Minister Ehud Barak's determination to reach an "end of conflict" agreement with Yasser Arafat at Camp David in July 2000 and again at Taba in early 2001 was the driving force behind his idea of creating a new concept of security arrangements in the territory of a future Palestinian state. Barak's proposals reflected the first abandonment by an Israeli government of defensible borders in the West Bank. He apparently believed it possible to keep Israel safe by settling for Israeli control of 12 percent or less of the West Bank,³¹ as opposed to the 33 to 45 percent required by a defensible borders strategy.³² Barak may have made his proposal in order to "unmask" Yasser Arafat, but his ideas would shape the intellectual legacy of the peace process for years to come.

Barak also proposed a sovereign Palestinian state with the proviso that the West Bank be demilitarized and Israeli early-warning stations and IDF troops be placed on Palestinian soil. However, despite Barak's unprecedented offer, then-Palestinian security chief Mohammed Dahlan categorically refused to accept the proposed Israeli security arrangements. As former U.S. Middle East envoy Dennis Ross wrote, "Dahlan was dead set against any Israeli or foreign presence in the West Bank border crossing and rejected the idea that the Israelis should have guaranteed access routes into the West Bank."³³

Barak's seeming abandonment of defensible borders and his acquiescence to security arrangements in their stead whittled down and even undermined Israel's long-standing insistence on retaining the Jordan Valley and other vital security areas in the West Bank. Despite the fact that during the Bush administration, the Clinton parameters and the Camp David proposals were off the table, the Palestinians pocketed the concessions and would always be able to insist on them as a starting point for future negotiations.



Former Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, July 11 1999. Barak's adoption of a new concept for security arrangements on the territory of a future Palestinian state, essentially on the 1967 lines, would recalibrate international expectations of Israel.

As Defense Minister and former IDF Chief of Staff Lt.-Gen. (ret.) Moshe Yaalon notes in the Introduction to this study, “from that point on, Israel was expected to live within the curtailed borders that Barak had proposed. Even more far-reaching, the Palestinian leadership succeeded in establishing in the minds of Western policymakers the idea that the 1967 lines – that is, the 1949 armistice lines – should be the new frame of reference for all future negotiations.”

Sharon's Unilateral Gaza Withdrawal

Ariel Sharon, too, would whet the international appetite for a full return to the 1949 lines stemming from his decision to withdraw from the Gaza Strip. Sharon conceded the Gaza Strip in 2005, believing that he would provide security for Israelis and win international praise and goodwill for handing the Palestinians their first mini-state.³⁴ However, Israel's generosity did not earn durable support from Europe and even provoked fears that the Gaza pullout was a ploy to avoid further territorial concessions.³⁵

Israel's concession of Gaza has been minimized internationally as organizations such as the United Nations, Amnesty International, and Human Rights Watch continue to refer to Gaza as “occupied territory.”³⁶ Europe's expectation of future Israeli withdrawals reflects

the degree to which Israel's unconditional unilateral pullout in Gaza undermined its territorial rights in the West Bank. This was the central reason that Israel's former Deputy Chief of Staff and National Security Council head Maj.-Gen. Uzi Dayan had publicly opposed full withdrawal from Gaza. He noted on June 4, 2007, that Gaza established an "immoral and dangerous diplomatic precedent for the West Bank."³⁷

Olmert's Unprecedented Concessions Backfire on Israel

The idea that Israeli concessions only drive international expectations for further concessions was best illustrated by former Prime Minister Ehud Olmert during the Annapolis peace process that collapsed in late 2008. Olmert went beyond any other prime minister in the concessions he was willing to make to strike an agreement with the Palestinians. He offered between 93.5 and 97 percent of the West Bank, half of Jerusalem including an international regime for the "Holy Basin" containing the Temple Mount and Muslim shrines, and expressed a willingness to allow 10,000 Palestinian refugees to resettle in Israel on humanitarian grounds.³⁸

Olmert's negotiation team, headed by Brig.-Gen. Udi Dekel, an author in this study, also tried to retrofit security demands into the final agreement, such as the demilitarization of a Palestinian state, special security arrangements in the Jordan Valley, and Israeli security control of the Gaza coast, all of which were rejected by the Palestinians.³⁹ It was also clear to Palestinian and Israeli negotiators that nothing was agreed until everything was agreed.⁴⁰ However, when negotiations collapsed, the pattern from the Barak proposals re-emerged: Israel's unprecedented concessions were rejected by the Palestinians but simultaneously pocketed, so as to form the basis for the next round of negotiations.



Former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and PA Chairman Mahmoud Abbas, August 28, 2009. Regarding his unprecedented offer of 93.5 percent of the West Bank and a shared Jerusalem, Olmert recalled in a November 2009 interview: "I told him (Abbas) he'd never get anything like this again from an Israeli leader for 50 years."

Reconsidering Israel's Legal and Diplomatic Rights

One of the basic sources of tension between the Obama and Netanyahu administrations regarding the peace process is that the U.S. has grown accustomed to a concessions-based Israeli diplomacy that sidelines Israel's legal and diplomatic rights. Israel's return to security-based diplomacy is both rooted in and protected by international resolutions such as UN Security Council Resolution 242 of November 1967, which was unanimously approved and protected Israel's rights in the West Bank as a result of having fought a war of self-defense there.⁴¹ Since 1967, Resolution 242 has governed all Arab-Israeli diplomacy and has been the legal backbone upholding Israel's right to "secure and recognized boundaries" – that is, defensible borders – that the Security Council recognized as part of its determination that the Arabs, not Israelis, were the war's aggressors.⁴²

Resolution 242 would also form the legal infrastructure for future peace processes, such as the 1979 peace treaty with Egypt, the 1991 Madrid conference, the 1993 exchange of letters with the PLO, the 1994 peace treaty with Jordan, and the 2004 presidential letter commitment from Bush to Sharon.⁴³

The U.S. has grown accustomed to a concessions-based Israeli diplomacy that sidelines Israel's legal and diplomatic rights. Yet Israeli concessions only drive expectations for further concessions.

A major challenge for Israel's return to security-based diplomacy is that the Obama administration seems to have broken sharply from past U.S. agreements. It has been virtually silent on Resolution 242 and has apparently disregarded Bush's 2004 presidential letter guarantee to Israel that was overwhelmingly approved by bipartisan majorities in the House and Senate. President Bush had quoted the exact language of Resolution 242 for emphasis and reassured Sharon: "As part of a final peace settlement, Israel must have secure and recognized borders, which should emerge from negotiations between the parties in accordance with UNSC Resolutions 242 and 338....The United States reiterates its steadfast commitment to Israel's security, including secure, defensible borders, and to preserve and strengthen Israel's capability to deter and defend itself, by itself, against any threat or possible combination of threats."⁴⁴

As the Obama administration breaks from the traditional practices and understandings that have governed Middle East diplomacy for decades, the Israeli government will have to adjust its practices and understandings. As the administration weakens its commitment to Resolution 242 and other guarantees, the Israeli government must insist even more on the salience of these legal precedents and diplomatic guarantees.

Regional Threats and Israel's Return to Security-Based Diplomacy

Regional threats both to Arab states and Israel from a nuclearizing Iran, its Syrian ally, and regional terror proxies, as well as the ongoing activities of Al-Qaeda ever closer to Israel's borders, further justify Israel's insistence on a security-first, diplomacy-second approach to the Palestinians. While Al-Qaeda first emerged in Afghanistan in 1989, it has moved its subversive activities closer to Israel's borders and has inspired new followers in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Lebanon, and Gaza. Jordan has been the repeated target of Al-Qaeda assaults.⁴⁵

Every Israeli territorial withdrawal since 2000 has created a security vacuum that has been exploited by Iran-backed forces in Lebanon and Gaza to improve their position against Israel.

These developments – especially the rise of the Iranian-backed “resistance bloc,” consisting of Syria, Hizbullah, and Hamas – have shattered the illusion that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict could be isolated from larger regional trends and that a stable territorial settlement could be reached without considering these regional developments.

Every Israeli territorial withdrawal since 2000 has created a security vacuum that has been exploited by Iranian-backed forces in Lebanon and Gaza to improve their position against Israel. The 2006 Israel-Hizbullah war and the 2008-2009 and 2012 Israel-Hamas conflicts have underscored the threat of short-range rockets and highlighted the importance of territorial protection for Israel.⁴⁶

Conclusion

By all indications, President Barack Obama continues to make the Palestinian-Israeli peace process and the establishment of a Palestinian state along the 1949 armistice lines a centerpiece of his agenda. He may even present an American plan, perhaps forcefully, if the peace process does not progress to his liking, and despite intense opposition to the idea in Israel.⁴⁷ This new U.S. diplomatic approach has put the Netanyahu government on the defensive, and has allowed the Palestinians to harden their positions on the core issues even beyond their demands at Annapolis. It has also provided succor to Palestinian hopes for a unilaterally-declared Palestinian state, which the PA leadership has referred to as their “Kosovo strategy.”⁴⁸

Under these adverse conditions, a security-first diplomatic posture is needed more than ever. Israel will continue to find itself under intense pressure to make concessions to the Palestinians; frequently, no reciprocal gestures will be demanded from them, and Israel's failure to comply with Washington's demands will likely be met with criticism and punishment. In this environment, the Israeli government must stake out its position

on a rock-solid foundation. The only foundation that provides the strength and solidity to resist U.S. diplomatic pressure for additional concessions and Palestinian plans for a unilaterally-declared state along the 1949 armistice lines is a confident insistence on Israel's fundamental and non-negotiable security requirements, whose centerpieces are defensible borders in the West Bank and a demilitarized Palestinian state.

Notes

1. Former Prime Minister Ehud Barak's attempts to concede territories to reach a peace agreement with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and then negotiate Israeli security arrangements during the Camp David and Taba summits in 2000 and early 2001 respectively are good examples of this strategy. See Dan Diker, "A Return to Defensible Borders," *Azure*, no. 21 (Summer 2005), <http://www.azure.org.il/article.php?id=174>.
2. See, for example, Arafat's address to the World Economic Forum in Davos, January 28, 2001, <http://www.gamla.org.il/english/article/2001/jan/ler4.htm>.
3. See Netanyahu's speech at http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/Government/Speeches+by+Israeli+leaders/2009Address_PM_Netanyahu_Bar-Ilan_University_14-Jun-2009.htm. Netanyahu's insistence that the PA recognize Israel as a Jewish state had also been raised by former Prime Minister Ehud Olmert as part of the Annapolis peace process. However, the Palestinian leadership refused to accede on this issue. See <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/923076.html>.
4. In the 2009 elections for the 18th Knesset, Israeli center-right parties increased their strength from 50 to 65 seats (out of 120), representing, among other issues, the public's displeasure with Olmert's unprecedented concessions to the Palestinian Authority, including the concession of defensible borders in the strategically vital West Bank and the division of Jerusalem.
5. Greg Sheridan, "Olmert Still Dreams of Peace," *The Australian*, November 28, 2009, <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/opinion/ehud-olmert-still-dreams-of-peace/story-e6frg76f-1225804745744>.
6. See Jackson Diehl, "Abbas' Waiting Game," *Washington Post*, May 29, 2009, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/05/28/AR2009052803614.html>.
7. Elliot Abrams, "Hillary is Wrong about the Settlements," *Wall Street Journal*, June 26, 2009, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124588743827950599.html>. The insistence of the Obama administration that Israel undertake a full cessation of building in the West Bank and east Jerusalem had no precedent in U.S. policy in the Middle East peace process. The 1995 Oslo interim agreements, which still govern Palestinian-Israeli relations pending a final agreement between the sides, do not prohibit either Palestinian or Israeli building in the West Bank or Jerusalem, whose final status was to be negotiated between the sides. See Dan Diker, "Does the International News Media Overlook Israel's Rights in the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict," *Jerusalem Viewpoints*, no. 495, Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, April 2003, <http://www.jcpa.org/jl/vp495.htm>.
8. Ari Shavit, "Netanyahu's Revolution," *Ha'aretz*, June 19, 2009, <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/1093877.html>.
9. Netanyahu insisted on Israel maintaining defensible borders, Israeli control of a unified airspace over the Palestinian state, and electromagnetic security. He stated that a future Palestinian state would be prohibited from engaging in military covenants with foreign armies, and that no foreign forces would be allowed in Palestinian territory. Netanyahu also declared that "Jerusalem, the capital of Israel, must remain undivided with continued religious freedom for all faiths." Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Speech at Bar-Ilan University, June 14, 2009, <http://www.pmo.gov.il/PMOEng/Communication/PMSpeaks/speechbarilan140609.htm>.

10. Abbas acknowledged to the *Washington Post*'s Jackson Diehl after the failure of Annapolis that Olmert's offer of between 93.5 and 97 percent of the West Bank, eastern Jerusalem, a special custodial regime for the "Holy Basin," and the recognition of the right of return (that included the return of 10,000 refugees to Israel for humanitarian reasons – according to a senior official on Olmert's negotiating team) was more generous to the Palestinians than the offers of either George Bush or Bill Clinton, and yet Abbas said: "The gaps were wide." See Jackson Diehl, "Abbas' Waiting Game," *Washington Post*, May 29, 2009, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/05/28/AR2009052803614.html>.
11. "The number of people killed by Palestinian terrorists in the five years immediately after the Oslo Accord (256), was greater than the number killed in the 15 years preceding the agreement (216)." See "Terrorism and Oslo," *Daily Forward*, September 19, 2003, <http://www.forward.com/articles/8161/>.
12. <http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/Terrorism-+Obstacle+to+Peace/Palestinian+terror+since+2000/Victims+of+Palestinian+Violence+and+Terrorism+sinc.htm>.
13. Dore Gold, "Israel's War to Halt Palestinian Rocket Attacks," *Jerusalem Issue Brief*, vol. 7, no. 34, March 3, 2008.
14. Yossi Verter, "Sharp Rise in Support for Netanyahu Following Speech," *Ha'aretz*, June 16, 2009. Regarding the Israeli public's support for a united Jerusalem, see Dore Gold, *The Fight for Jerusalem: Radical Islam, the West, and the Future of the Holy City* (Washington: Regnery, 2007), pp. 277-8.
15. Verter, "Sharp Rise."
16. Shavit, "Netanyahu's Revolution."
17. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Speech to the Jewish Federations of North America General Assembly, November 11, 2009, <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/1127027.html>.
18. Jonathan Lis, "Netanyahu: Israel Will Never Cede Jordan Valley," *Ha'aretz*, March 2, 2010.
19. Dennis Ross, *The Missing Peace: The Inside Story of the Fight for Middle East Peace* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005), p. 327.
20. Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin at the Knesset, October 5, 1995, http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/MFAArchive/1990_1999/1995/10/PM+Rabin+in+Knesset-+Ratification+of+Interim+Agree.htm.
21. Meeting with former senior IDF official in Jerusalem, April 4, 2010.
22. Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin at the Knesset.
23. Ibid.
24. <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2004/04/20040414-3.html>.
25. Diker, "A Return to Defensible Borders," pp. 52-53.
26. Dan Diker, "Sharon's Strategic Legacy for Israel: Competing Perspectives," *Jerusalem Issue Brief*, vol. 5, no. 15, January 12, 2006.
27. Interview with *Der Spiegel* magazine, November 5, 1969.
28. Yigal Allon, "Israel: The Case for Defensible Borders," *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 55 (October 1976), pp. 41-42.
29. Specifically, the Allon Plan, which has guided the thinking of Prime Minister Netanyahu since his first administration from 1996 to 1999, holds that Israel's new defensible borders would mean "retaining absolute control of the 700-square-mile strategic Jordan Rift Valley east of the major Arab population centers," a zone that lies between the Jordan River to the east and the eastern slopes of the Samarian and Judean mountains to the west, as well as greater Jerusalem and certain relatively unpopulated sections of the Judean Desert. Allon's recommendation for annexing the Jordan Valley was supported by the fact that this area was – and continues to be – largely unpopulated, aside from the approximately thirty thousand Arab residents of Jericho, which would not be part of the annexed territory. This demographic reality and the need for control of the Jordan Valley would remain true over the following years and would be a key benefit for Israel, as reflected in President George W. Bush's presidential letter in exchange for

Israel's 2005 withdrawal from Gaza. It has also been noted in more recent interviews with Netanyahu, preserving the plan's relevance for today.

30. Dore Gold, "Defensible Borders for Israel," *Jerusalem Viewpoints*, no. 500, June 15, 2003, <http://www.jcpa.org/jl/vp500.htm>.
31. Barak was reported to have approved an offer of between 93 and 95 percent at Camp David and 97 percent at Taba in line with the Clinton bridging proposals. He also was believed to have offered the Palestinians at the Taba talks a compensatory 3 percent land swap from pre-1967 Israel, although this was denied by MK Danny Yatom, Barak's national security adviser, during a Knesset conference on defensible borders on October 19, 2004, sponsored by the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee.
32. The Allon Plan was based primarily on Israel retaining the Jordan Valley, a full third of the West Bank. The "Allon-plus" doctrine adopted by Prime Ministers Rabin and Netanyahu would also include other strategically vital settlements that would constitute approximately 45 to 49 percent of West Bank land. This assessment is based exclusively on Israel's defense needs and does not include other national security interests such as the West Bank aquifers from which Israel draws a third of its potable water. A former IDF official told the author that in the beginning of the Oslo process in 1994, Prime Minister Rabin had determined that Israel would need to retain 63 percent of the West Bank, which he had seen as a security red line. Meeting in Jerusalem, April 4, 2010.
33. Ross, *The Missing Peace*, p. 703, cited in Dore Gold and David Keyes, "What If Bush Invited Sharon and Abu Mazen to Camp David?" *Jerusalem Viewpoints*, no. 526 (January 2, 2005), p. 10.
34. Dan Diker, "Why Israel Must Now Move from Concessions-Based Diplomacy to Rights-Based Diplomacy," *Jerusalem Issue Brief*, no. 554, June-July 2007.
35. Spanish Foreign Minister Javier Solana warned at the time that the European Union would not support the Gaza disengagement if it did not lead to a full Israeli pullout from the West Bank. Solana called that scenario "nightmarish." Diker, *ibid*.
36. See, e.g., John Dugard, Report of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Palestinian Territories Occupied Since 1967, A/ HRC/4/17, January 29, 2007 (esp. paragraphs 1, 6 and 22 referring to Gaza as part of the "Occupied Palestinian Territory" and applying the Fourth Geneva Convention regarding "occupied" territory).
37. Speech by Maj.-Gen. Uzi Dayan at the conference on "40 Years of UNSC Resolution 242," Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs and Konrad Adenauer Foundation, Jerusalem, June 4, 2007.
38. Jackson Diehl, "Abbas' Waiting Game." The number of Palestinian refugees Olmert offered to accept is a matter of debate. Arab diplomatic sources have indicated that Olmert would accept 100,000 over 10 years. However, an IDF official involved in the Annapolis peace negotiations told the author that the number did not exceed 10,000. Meeting in Jerusalem, April 17, 2010.
39. Udi Dekel, *Demilitarization - Preventing Military and Terrorist Threats from Within and By Way of the Palestinian Territories*, Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, 2010.
40. Aluf Benn and Barak Ravid, "Olmert's Negotiator: Full Mideast Peace Impossible," *Ha'aretz*, January 25, 2010, <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/1144854.html>.
41. Yehuda Blum, "The Territorial Clauses of Security Council Resolution 242," in *Israel's Rights to Secure Boundaries: Four Decades Since UN Security Council Resolution 242*, Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, 2009, pp. 32-33.
42. Gold, "Defensible Borders for Israel," *Israel's Rights to Secure Boundaries: Four Decades Since UN Security Council Resolution 242*; and *Defensible Borders for a Lasting Peace*, Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, 2008. http://www.defensibleborders.org/db_introb.pdf.
43. Gold, *Defensible Borders for a Lasting Peace*, Introduction.
44. <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2004/04/20040414-3.html>.

45. Dore Gold and Lt. Col. (res.) Jonathan D. Halevi, "Al-Qaeda, Zarqawi, and Israel: Is There a New Jihadi Threat Destabilizing the Eastern Front?" *Jerusalem Viewpoints*, no. 538, Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, January 1, 2006, <http://www.jcpa.org/jl/vp538.htm>.
46. Lt.-Gen. (ret.) Moshe Yaalon, "The Second Lebanon War: From Territory to Ideology," *Iran's Race for Regional Supremacy*, Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, 2008, p. 33, <http://www.jcpa.org/text/iran2-june08.pdf>.
47. Gil Hoffman, "Poll: 91% Against Obama Imposing Deal," *Jerusalem Post*, April 14, 2010, <http://www.jpost.com/Israel/Article.aspx?id=173093>. Notably, the numbers were similar for the Jordan Valley, where 90 percent opposed relinquishing Israeli control and 10 percent were in favor.
48. Dan Diker, "The Palestinians' Unilateral 'Kosovo Strategy': Implications for the PA and Israel," *Jerusalem Viewpoints*, no. 575, Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, January 2010.

Appendix 5

Address by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu at Bar-Ilan University, June 14, 2009

Peace has always been our people's most fervent desire. Our prophets gave the world the vision of peace, we greet one another with the word "peace" and our prayers conclude with the hope for peace.

We are gathered this evening in an institution named for two pioneers of peace, Menachem Begin and Anwar Sadat, and we share their vision.

Two and half months ago, I took the oath of office as the Prime Minister of Israel. I pledged to establish a national unity government – and I did. I believe that unity is essential for us now more than ever as we face three immense challenges – the Iranian threat, the economic crisis, and the advancement of peace.

The Iranian threat looms large before us. The greatest danger facing Israel, the Middle East and the entire world is the joining of radical Islam with nuclear weapons. I discussed this matter with President Obama during my recent visit to Washington, and I will raise it again in my meetings next week with European leaders. For years, I have been working tirelessly to forge an international alliance to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons.

Confronting a global economic crisis, the government acted swiftly to stabilize Israel's economy. We passed a two-year budget in the government – and the Knesset will soon approve it.

And the third challenge, so exceedingly important, is the advancement of peace. I spoke about this as well with President Obama, and I fully support the idea of a regional peace that he is leading.

I share the President's desire to bring about a new era of reconciliation in our region. To this end, I met with President Mubarak in Egypt and King Abdullah in Jordan to elicit the support of these leaders in expanding the circle of peace in our region.

I turn to all Arab leaders tonight and I say: Let us meet. Let us speak of peace and let us make peace. I am ready to meet with you at any time. I am willing to meet in Damascus, in Riyadh, in Beirut, anywhere – including Jerusalem.

I call on the Arab countries to cooperate with the Palestinians and with us to advance an economic peace. An economic peace is not a substitute for a political peace but an important element in achieving it. Together we can undertake projects that overcome the scarcities of our region, like water desalination, or maximize its advantages, like developing solar energy, and exploiting our geographic location by laying gas and petroleum lines and establishing transportation links between Asia, Africa and Europe.

The economic success of the Gulf States has impressed us all and it has impressed me. I call on the talented entrepreneurs of the Arab world to come and invest here and to assist the Palestinians and us in spurring the economy.

Together we can develop industrial areas that will generate thousands of jobs and develop tourist sites that will attract millions of visitors eager to walk in the footsteps of history – in Nazareth and in Bethlehem, around the walls of Jericho and the walls of Jerusalem, on the banks of the Sea of Galilee and the baptismal site on the banks of the Jordan.

There is an enormous potential here for archeological tourism, if we can only learn to cooperate to realize it.

I turn to you, our Palestinian neighbors led by the Palestinian Authority, and I say: Let us begin negotiations immediately without preconditions.

Israel is obligated by its international commitments and expects all parties to keep their commitments.

We want to live with you in peace, as good neighbors. We want our children and your children to never again experience war: that parents, brothers and sisters will never again know the agony of losing loved ones in battle; that our children will be able to dream of a better future and realize that dream; and that together we will invest our energies in plowshares and pruning hooks, not swords and spears.

I know the face of war. I have experienced battle. I lost close friends. I lost a brother. I have seen the pain of bereaved families. I do not want war. No one in Israel wants war.

If we join hands and work together for peace, there is no limit to the development and prosperity we can achieve for our two peoples – in the economy, agriculture, trade, tourism and education – and most importantly, in providing our children a better world in which to live, a life full of tranquility, creativity, opportunity and hope.

The Root of the Conflict

If the advantages of peace are so evident, we must ask ourselves why has peace eluded us, even as our hand remains outstretched to peace? Why has this conflict continued for more than sixty years?

In order to bring an end to the conflict, we must give an honest and forthright answer to the question: What is the root of the conflict? In his speech to the first Zionist Conference in Basel, the founder of the Zionist movement, Theodor Herzl, said about the Jewish national home: “This idea is so big that we must speak of it only in the simplest terms.” Today I will speak about the immense challenge of peace in the simplest words possible.

Even as we look toward the horizon, we must be firmly connected to reality, to the truth. And the simple truth is that the root of the conflict was and remains the refusal to recognize the right of the Jewish people to a state of their own in their historic homeland.

In 1947, when the United Nations proposed the partition plan of a Jewish state and an Arab state, the entire Arab world rejected the resolution. The Jewish community, by contrast, welcomed it by dancing and rejoicing. The Arabs rejected any Jewish state, in any borders.

Those who think that the continued enmity toward Israel is a product of our presence in Judea, Samaria and Gaza are confusing cause and effect.

The attacks against us began in the 1920s, escalated into a comprehensive attack in 1948 with the declaration of Israel's independence, continued with the *fedayeen* attacks in the 1950s, and reached their peak in 1967, on the eve of the Six-Day War, in an attempt to tighten a noose around Israel's neck.

All this occurred during close to fifty years before a single Israeli soldier ever set foot in Judea and Samaria.

Fortunately, Egypt and Jordan left this circle of enmity. The signing of peace treaties with them brought about an end to their claims against Israel and an end to the conflict. But regrettably, this is not the case with the Palestinians. The closer we get to an agreement with them, the further they retreat from it and raise demands that are inconsistent with a true desire to end the conflict.

Many good people have told us that withdrawal from territories is the key to peace with the Palestinians. Well, we withdrew. But the fact is that every withdrawal was met with massive waves of terror, by suicide bombers and thousands of missiles.

We tried withdrawal with an agreement and withdrawal without an agreement. We tried a partial withdrawal and a full withdrawal. In 2000 and again last year, Israel proposed an almost total withdrawal in exchange for an end to the conflict, and twice our offers were rejected.

We evacuated every last inch of the Gaza Strip, uprooted over twenty settlements and evicted thousands of Israelis from their homes. In response, we received a hail of missiles on our cities, towns and children.

The claim that territorial withdrawals will bring peace with the Palestinians, or at least advance peace, simply does not square with the facts.

In addition, Hamas in the south, like Hezbollah in the north, repeatedly proclaims its commitment to "liberate" the Israeli cities of Ashkelon and Beersheba, Acre and Haifa, Ashdod and Tiberias.

Territorial withdrawals have not lessened the hatred. And to our regret, even Palestinian moderates are not yet ready to say the simple words: Israel is the nation-state of the Jewish people, and it will stay that way.

The Principle of Recognition

Achieving peace will require courage and candor from both sides, not just from the Israeli side. The Palestinian leadership must rise and say: “Enough of this conflict. We recognize the right of the Jewish people to a state of their own in this land, and we are prepared to live beside you in true peace.”

I am yearning for that moment, for when Palestinian leaders say those words to our people and to their people, the path will be opened to resolving all the other problems between us, however difficult.

Therefore, a fundamental prerequisite for ending the conflict is a public, binding and unequivocal Palestinian recognition of Israel as the nation-state of the Jewish people. To vest this declaration with practical meaning, there must also be a clear understanding that the Palestinian refugee problem will be resolved outside Israel’s borders. Clearly, any demand for resettling Palestinian refugees within Israel undermines Israel’s continued existence as the state of the Jewish people.

The Palestinian refugee problem must be solved, and it can be solved, as we ourselves proved in a similar situation. Tiny Israel, with a speck of land and no natural resources, successfully absorbed hundreds of thousands of Jewish refugees who left their homes and belongings in Arab countries.

Justice and logic therefore demand that the Palestinian refugee problem be solved outside Israel’s borders. On this point, there is a broad national consensus. I believe that with goodwill and international investment, this humanitarian problem can be settled once and for all.

So far I have spoken about the need for Palestinians to recognize our rights. In a moment, I will speak openly about our need to recognize their rights.

But let me first say that the connection between the Jewish people and the Land of Israel has lasted for more than 3500 years. Judea and Samaria – the places where Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, David and Solomon, and Isaiah and Jeremiah lived – are not alien to us. This is the land of our forefathers.

The right of the Jewish people to a state in the Land of Israel does not derive from the cascade of catastrophes that befell our people. True, for 2000 years the Jewish people suffered expulsions, pogroms, blood libels, and massacres which culminated in the Holocaust, a chain of suffering which has no parallel in the history of nations.

There are those who say that if the Holocaust had not occurred, the State of Israel would never have been established. But I say that if the State of Israel would have been established earlier, it is the Holocaust that would not have occurred.

The tragic history of powerlessness of our people explains why the Jewish people need a sovereign power of self-defense. But our right to build our sovereign state here, in the Land of Israel, arises from one simple fact: this is the homeland of the Jewish people, this is where our identity was forged.

As Israel's first Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion said in proclaiming Israel's independence: "The Jewish people arose in the Land of Israel and it was here that its spiritual, religious and political character was shaped. Here they attained their sovereignty, and here they bequeathed to the world their national and cultural treasures, and the most eternal of books."

But we must also tell the truth in its entirety: Within this homeland lives a large Palestinian community. We do not want to rule over them, we do not want to govern their lives, we do not want to impose our flag and our culture on them.

In my vision of peace, in this small land of ours two peoples will live freely, side-by-side, as good neighbors with mutual respect. Each will have its own flag, its own anthem, its own government. Neither will threaten the security or survival of the other.

These two realities – our connection to the Land of Israel and the Palestinian population living within it – have created deep divisions in Israeli society. But the truth is that much more unites us than divides us.

I have come tonight to give expression to that unity, and to the principles of peace and security on which there is broad agreement within Israeli society. These are the principles that guide our policy, a policy that must take into account the international situation that has recently developed. We must recognize this reality and at the same time stand firmly on those principles essential for Israel.

The Principle of Demilitarization

I have already stressed the first principle – recognition. The Palestinians must clearly and unambiguously recognize Israel as the state of the Jewish people. The second principle is – demilitarization. The territory under Palestinian control must be demilitarized with ironclad security provisions for Israel.

Without these two conditions, there is a real danger that an armed Palestinian state would emerge that would become another terrorist base against the Jewish state, such as the one in Gaza.

We do not want Kassam rockets on Petach Tikva, Grad rockets on Tel Aviv or missiles on Ben-Gurion airport. We want peace.

In order to achieve peace, we must ensure that Palestinians will not be able to import missiles into their territory, to field an army, to close their airspace to us, or to make pacts with the likes of Hezbollah and Iran. On this point as well, there is wide consensus within Israel.

It is impossible to expect us to agree in advance to the principle of a Palestinian state without assurances that this state will be demilitarized. On a matter so critical to the existence of Israel, we must first have our security needs addressed.

We therefore ask our friends today in the international community, led by the United States, for what is critical to the security of Israel. We ask for clear commitments that in a future peace agreement, the territory controlled by the Palestinians will be demilitarized: namely, without an army, without control of its airspace, and with effective security measures to prevent weapons smuggling into the territory – real monitoring, and not what occurs in Gaza today. And obviously, the Palestinians will not be able to forge military pacts.

Without this, these territories will sooner or later become another Hamastan, something we cannot accept. Israel must control its security and its destiny.

I told President Obama when I visited Washington that if we could agree on the substance, then terminology would not pose a problem.

And here is the substance which I now clearly state: If we receive this guarantee regarding demilitarization and Israel's security needs, and if the Palestinians recognize Israel as the state of the Jewish people, then we will be ready in a future peace agreement to reach a solution where a demilitarized Palestinian state exists alongside the Jewish state.

Regarding the remaining important issues that will be discussed as part of a final peace settlement, my positions are known: Israel needs defensible borders, and Jerusalem, the capital of Israel, must remain undivided with continued religious freedom for all faiths.

The territorial question will be discussed as part of the final peace agreement. In the meantime, we have no intention of building new settlements or of expropriating additional land for existing settlements.

But there is a need to enable the residents to lead normal lives, to allow mothers and fathers to raise their children like families elsewhere. The settlers are neither the enemies of the people nor the enemies of peace. They are an integral part of our people, a principled, pioneering and Zionist community.

Unity among us is essential and will help us achieve reconciliation with our neighbors. That reconciliation must begin today by altering realities on the ground. I believe that a strong Palestinian economy will bolster peace. It will strengthen the moderates and weaken the radicals.

If the Palestinians turn toward peace – in fighting terror, in building governance and the rule of law, in educating their children for peace and in stopping incitement against Israel – we will do our part in making every effort to facilitate freedom of movement and access, and to help them achieve prosperity. All of this will help us advance a peace treaty between us.

Above all, the Palestinians must make a critical choice between the path of peace and the path of Hamas. The Palestinian Authority will have to establish the rule of law in Gaza and overcome Hamas. Israel will not sit at the negotiating table with terrorists who seek our destruction.

Hamas will not even allow the Red Cross to visit our kidnapped soldier Gilad Shalit, who has spent three years in captivity, cut off from his parents, his family and his people. We are committed to bringing him home, safe and sound.

With a Palestinian leadership committed to peace, the active participation of the Arab world, and the support of the United States and the international community there is no reason why we cannot achieve a breakthrough to peace.

Our people have already proven that we can achieve the impossible. Over the past 61 years, while constantly defending our existence, we have performed wonders.

Our microchips are powering the world's computers. Our medicines are treating diseases once considered incurable. Our drip irrigation is bringing arid lands back to life in five continents. And Israeli scientists are expanding the boundaries of human knowledge.

If only our neighbors would respond to our call – peace too will be in our reach.

I call on the leaders of the Arab world and on the Palestinian leadership: Let us continue together on the path of Menahem Begin and Anwar Sadat, Yitzhak Rabin and King Hussein. Let us realize the vision of the prophet Isaiah, who said in Jerusalem 2700 years ago: "Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, and they shall learn war no more."

With God's help, we will know no more war. We will know peace.

Source: Prime Minister's Office website, <http://www.pmo.gov.il/PMOEng/Archive/Speeches/2009/06/speechbarilan140609.htm>

Appendix 6

Address by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to a Joint Session of the U.S. Congress, May 24, 2011

I am deeply moved by your warm welcome. And I am deeply honored that you have given me the opportunity to address Congress a second time.

Mr. Vice President, do you remember the time that we were the new kids in town?

And I do see a lot of old friends here. And I see a lot of new friends of Israel here. Democrats and Republicans alike.

Israel has no better friend than America. And America has no better friend than Israel. We stand together to defend democracy. We stand together to advance peace. We stand together to fight terrorism. Congratulations America, congratulations, Mr. President. You got bin Laden. Good riddance!

In an unstable Middle East, Israel is the one anchor of stability. In a region of shifting alliances, Israel is America's unwavering ally. Israel has always been pro-American. Israel will always be pro-American.

My friends, you don't need to do nation-building in Israel. We're already built. You don't need to export democracy to Israel. We've already got it. You don't need to send American troops to Israel. We defend ourselves. You've been very generous in giving us tools to do the job of defending Israel on our own. Thank you all, and thank you President Obama, for your steadfast commitment to Israel's security. I know economic times are tough. I deeply appreciate this.

Some of you have been telling me that your belief has been reaffirmed in recent months that support for Israel's security is a wise investment in our common future. For an epic battle is now unfolding in the Middle East, between tyranny and freedom. A great convulsion is shaking the earth from the Khyber Pass to the Straits of Gibraltar. The tremors have shattered states and toppled governments. And we can all see that the ground is still shifting. Now this historic moment holds the promise of a new dawn of freedom and opportunity. Millions of young people are determined to change their future. We all look at them. They muster courage. They risk their lives. They demand dignity. They desire liberty.

These extraordinary scenes in Tunis and Cairo evoke those of Berlin and Prague in 1989. Yet as we share their hopes, we must also remember that those hopes could be snuffed out as they were in Tehran in 1979. You remember what happened then. The brief democratic spring in Iran was cut short by a ferocious and unforgiving tyranny. This same tyranny smothered Lebanon's democratic Cedar Revolution, and inflicted on that long-suffering country the medieval rule of Hezbollah.

So today, the Middle East stands at a fateful crossroads. Like all of you, I pray that the peoples of the region choose the path less traveled, the path of liberty. No one knows what

this path consists of better than you. This path is not paved by elections alone. It is paved when governments permit protests in town squares, when limits are placed on the powers of rulers, when judges are beholden to laws and not men, and when human rights cannot be crushed by tribal loyalties or mob rule.

Israel has always embraced this path in the Middle East that has long rejected it. In a region where women are stoned, gays are hanged, Christians are persecuted, Israel stands out. It is different.

As the great English writer George Eliot predicted over a century ago, once established, the Jewish state will “shine like a bright star of freedom amid the despotisms of the East.” Well, she was right. We have a free press, independent courts, an open economy, rambunctious parliamentary debates. You think you guys are tough on one another in Congress? Come spend a day in the Knesset. Be my guest.

Courageous Arab protesters are now struggling to secure these very same rights for their peoples, for their societies. We’re proud that over one million Arab citizens of Israel have been enjoying these rights for decades. Of the 300 million Arabs in the Middle East and North Africa, only Israel’s Arab citizens enjoy real democratic rights. I want you to stop for a second and think about that. Of those 300 million Arabs, less than one-half of one percent are truly free, and they’re all citizens of Israel!

This startling fact reveals a basic truth: Israel is not what is wrong about the Middle East. Israel is what is right about the Middle East.

Israel fully supports the desire of Arab peoples in our region to live freely. We long for the day when Israel will be one of many real democracies in the Middle East.

Fifteen years ago, I stood at this very podium and said that democracy must start to take root in the Arab world. Well, it’s begun to take root. This beginning holds the promise of a brilliant future of peace and prosperity. For I believe that a Middle East that is genuinely democratic will be a Middle East truly at peace.

But while we hope and work for the best, we must also recognize that powerful forces oppose this future. They oppose modernity. They oppose democracy. They oppose peace.

Foremost among these forces is Iran. The tyranny in Tehran brutalizes its own people. It supports attacks against American troops in Afghanistan and Iraq. It subjugates Lebanon and Gaza. It sponsors terror worldwide.

When I last stood here, I spoke of the dire consequences of Iran developing nuclear weapons. Now time is running out, and the hinge of history may soon turn. For the greatest danger facing humanity could soon be upon us: A militant Islamic regime armed with nuclear weapons.

Militant Islam threatens the world. It threatens Islam. I have no doubt that it will ultimately be defeated. It will eventually succumb to the forces of freedom and progress. It depends on cloistering young minds for a given amount of years and the process of opening up

information will ultimately defeat this movement. But like other fanaticisms that were doomed to fail, militant Islam could exact a horrific price from all of us before its inevitable demise.

A nuclear-armed Iran would ignite a nuclear arms race in the Middle East. It would give terrorists a nuclear umbrella. It would make the nightmare of nuclear terrorism a clear and present danger throughout the world. I want you to understand what this means. If we don't stop it, it's coming. They could put the bomb anywhere. They could put it on a missile. They're working on missiles that could reach this city. It could be on a container ship in a port, or in a suitcase on a subway.

Now the threat to my country cannot be overstated. Those who dismiss it are sticking their heads in the sand. Less than seven decades after six million Jews were murdered, Iran's leaders deny the Holocaust of the Jewish people, while calling for the annihilation of the Jewish state.

Leaders who spew such venom should be banned from every respectable forum on the planet. But there is something that makes the outrage even greater: The lack of outrage. In much of the international community, the calls for our destruction are met with utter silence. It is even worse because there are many who rush to condemn Israel for defending itself against Iran's terror proxies.

But not you. Not America. You have acted differently. You've condemned the Iranian regime for its genocidal aims. You've passed tough sanctions against Iran. History will salute you America.

President Obama has said that the United States is determined to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons. He successfully led the Security Council to adopt sanctions against Iran. You in Congress passed even tougher sanctions. These words and deeds are vitally important.

Yet the Ayatollah regime briefly suspended its nuclear program only once, in 2003, when it feared the possibility of military action. That same year, Muammar Qadaffi gave up his nuclear weapons program, and for the same reason. The more Iran believes that all options are on the table, the less the chance of confrontation. This is why I ask you to continue to send an unequivocal message: that America will never permit Iran to develop nuclear weapons.

As for Israel, if history has taught the Jewish people anything, it is that we must take calls for our destruction seriously. We are a nation that rose from the ashes of the Holocaust. When we say "never again," we mean never again. Israel always reserves the right to defend itself.

My friends, while Israel will be ever vigilant in its defense, we will never give up on our quest for peace. I guess we'll give it up when we achieve it. Israel wants peace. Israel needs peace. We've achieved historic peace agreements with Egypt and Jordan that have held up for decades.

I remember what it was like before we had peace. I was nearly killed in a firefight inside the Suez Canal. I mean that literally, inside the Suez Canal. I was going down to the bottom with a 40-pound ammunition pack on my back, and somebody reached out to grab me, and they're still looking for him, for the guy who did such a stupid thing. I was nearly killed there. I battled terrorists along both banks of the Jordan River. Too many Israelis have lost loved ones. I know their grief. I lost my brother.

So no one in Israel wants a return to those terrible days. The peace with Egypt and Jordan has long served as an anchor of stability and peace in the heart of the Middle East.

This peace should be bolstered by economic and political support to all those who remain committed to peace.

The peace agreements with Egypt and Jordan are vital. But they're not enough. We must also find a way to forge a lasting peace with the Palestinians. Two years ago, I publicly committed to a solution of two states for two peoples: A Palestinian state alongside the Jewish state.

I am willing to make painful compromises to achieve this historic peace. As the leader of Israel, it is my responsibility to lead my people to peace.

This is not easy for me. I recognize that in a genuine peace, we will be required to give up parts of the ancestral Jewish homeland. In Judea and Samaria, the Jewish people are not foreign occupiers. We are not the British in India. We are not the Belgians in the Congo.

This is the land of our forefathers, the Land of Israel, to which Abraham brought the idea of one God, where David set out to confront Goliath, and where Isaiah saw a vision of eternal peace. No distortion of history can deny the four-thousand-year-old bond between the Jewish people and the Jewish land.

But there is another truth: The Palestinians share this small land with us. We seek a peace in which they will be neither Israel's subjects nor its citizens. They should enjoy a national life of dignity as a free, viable and independent people in their own state. They should enjoy a prosperous economy, where their creativity and initiative can flourish.

We've already seen the beginnings of what is possible. In the last two years, the Palestinians have begun to build a better life for themselves. Prime Minister Fayad has led this effort. I wish him a speedy recovery from his recent operation.

We've helped the Palestinian economy by removing hundreds of barriers and roadblocks to the free flow of goods and people. The results have been nothing short of remarkable.

The Palestinian economy is booming. It's growing by more than 10% a year.

Palestinian cities look very different today than they did just a few years ago. They have shopping malls, movie theaters, restaurants, banks. They even have e-businesses. This is all happening without peace. Imagine what could happen with peace. Peace would herald

a new day for both peoples. It would make the dream of a broader Arab-Israeli peace a realistic possibility.

So now here is the question. You have to ask it. If the benefits of peace with the Palestinians are so clear, why has peace eluded us? Because all six Israeli Prime Ministers since the signing of the Oslo accords agreed to establish a Palestinian state. Myself included.

So why has peace not been achieved? Because so far, the Palestinians have been unwilling to accept a Palestinian state, if it meant accepting a Jewish state alongside it.

You see, our conflict has never been about the establishment of a Palestinian state. It has always been about the existence of the Jewish state. This is what this conflict is about. In 1947, the United Nations voted to partition the land into a Jewish state and an Arab state. The Jews said yes. The Palestinians said no. In recent years, the Palestinians twice refused generous offers by Israeli Prime Ministers to establish a Palestinian state on virtually all the territory won by Israel in the Six-Day War.

They were simply unwilling to end the conflict. And I regret to say this: They continue to educate their children to hate. They continue to name public squares after terrorists. And worst of all, they continue to perpetuate the fantasy that Israel will one day be flooded by the descendants of Palestinian refugees.

My friends, this must come to an end. President Abbas must do what I have done. I stood before my people, and I told you it wasn't easy for me, and I said... "I will accept a Palestinian state." It is time for President Abbas to stand before his people and say... "I will accept a Jewish state."

Those six words will change history. They will make clear to the Palestinians that this conflict must come to an end. That they are not building a state to continue the conflict with Israel, but to end it. They will convince the people of Israel that they have a true partner for peace. With such a partner, the people of Israel will be prepared to make a far-reaching compromise. I will be prepared to make a far-reaching compromise.

This compromise must reflect the dramatic demographic changes that have occurred since 1967. The vast majority of the 650,000 Israelis who live beyond the 1967 lines reside in neighborhoods and suburbs of Jerusalem and Greater Tel Aviv.

These areas are densely populated but geographically quite small. Under any realistic peace agreement, these areas, as well as other places of critical strategic and national importance, will be incorporated into the final borders of Israel.

The status of the settlements will be decided only in negotiations. But we must also be honest. So I am saying today something that should be said publicly by all those who are serious about peace. In any real peace agreement that ends the conflict, some settlements will end up beyond Israel's borders. The precise delineation of those borders must be negotiated. We will be generous on the size of a future Palestinian state. But as President

Obama said, the border will be different than the one that existed on June 4, 1967. Israel will not return to the indefensible lines of 1967.

I want to be very clear on this point. Israel will be generous on the size of the Palestinian state but we'll be very firm on where we put the border with it. This is an important principle. It shouldn't be lost.

We recognize that a Palestinian state must be big enough to be viable, independent and prosperous. President Obama rightly referred to Israel as the homeland of the Jewish people, just as he referred to the future Palestinian state as the homeland of the Palestinian people. Jews from around the world have a right to immigrate to the one and only Jewish state. Palestinians from around the world should have a right to immigrate, if they so choose, to a Palestinian state. This means that the Palestinian refugee problem will be resolved outside the borders of Israel.

As for Jerusalem, only a democratic Israel has protected freedom of worship for all faiths in the city. Throughout the millennial history of the Jewish capital, the only time that Jews, Christians and Muslims could worship freely, could have unfettered access to their holy sites, has been during Israeli sovereignty over Jerusalem. Jerusalem must never again be divided. Jerusalem must remain the united capital of Israel. I know that this is a difficult issue for Palestinians. But I believe with creativity and goodwill a solution can be found.

This is the peace I plan to forge with a Palestinian partner committed to peace. But you know very well that in the Middle East, the only peace that will hold is a peace you can defend.

So peace must be anchored in security. In recent years, Israel withdrew from South Lebanon and Gaza. We thought we'd get peace, but that's not what we got. Instead, we got 12,000 rockets fired from those areas on our cities, on our children, by Hezbollah and Hamas. The UN peacekeepers in Lebanon failed to prevent the smuggling of this weaponry. The European observers in Gaza evaporated overnight. So if Israel simply walked out of the territories, the flow of weapons into a future Palestinian state would be unchecked. Missiles fired from it could reach virtually every home in Israel in less than a minute. I want you to think about that too. Imagine there's a siren going on now and we have less than 60 seconds to find shelter from an incoming rocket. Would you live that way? Can anyone live that way? Well, we aren't going to live that way either.

The truth is that Israel needs unique security arrangements because of its unique size. Israel is one of the smallest countries in the world. Mr. Vice President, I'll grant you this. It's bigger than Delaware. It's even bigger than Rhode Island. But that's about it. Israel on the 1967 lines would be half the width of the Washington Beltway.

Now here's a bit of nostalgia. I first came to Washington thirty years ago as a young diplomat. It took me a while, but I finally figured it out: there is an America beyond the Beltway. But Israel on the 1967 lines would be only nine miles wide. So much for strategic depth.

So it is therefore absolutely vital for Israel's security that a Palestinian state be fully demilitarized. And it is absolutely vital that Israel maintain a long-term military presence along the Jordan River. Solid security arrangements on the ground are necessary not only to protect the peace, they are necessary to protect Israel in case the peace unravels. For in our unstable region, no one can guarantee that our peace partners today will be there tomorrow.

And when I say tomorrow, I don't mean some distant time in the future. I mean tomorrow. Peace can be achieved only around the negotiating table. The Palestinian attempt to impose a settlement through the United Nations will not bring peace. It should be forcefully opposed by all those who want to see this conflict end.

I appreciate the President's clear position on this issue. Peace cannot be imposed. It must be negotiated. But it can only be negotiated with partners committed to peace.

And Hamas is not a partner for peace. Hamas remains committed to Israel's destruction and to terrorism. They have a charter. That charter not only calls for the obliteration of Israel. It says "kill the Jews wherever you find them." Hamas' leader condemned the killing of Osama bin Laden and praised him as a holy warrior. Now again I want to make this clear. Israel is prepared to sit down today and negotiate peace with the Palestinian Authority. I believe we can fashion a brilliant future of peace for our children. But Israel will not negotiate with a Palestinian government backed by the Palestinian version of Al Qaeda.

So I say to President Abbas: Tear up your pact with Hamas! Sit down and negotiate! Make peace with the Jewish state! And if you do, I promise you this. Israel will not be the last country to welcome a Palestinian state as a new member of the United Nations. It will be the first to do so.

My friends, the momentous trials of the last century, and the unfolding events of this century, attest to the decisive role of the United States in advancing peace and defending freedom. Providence entrusted the United States to be the guardian of liberty. All peoples who cherish freedom owe a profound debt of gratitude to your great nation.

Among the most grateful nations is my nation, the people of Israel, who have fought for their liberty and survival against impossible odds, in ancient and modern times alike.

I speak on behalf of the Jewish people and the Jewish state when I say to you, representatives of America, thank you. Thank you for your unwavering support for Israel. Thank you for ensuring that the flame of freedom burns bright throughout the world. May God bless all of you. And may God forever bless the United States of America.

Source: Prime Minister's Office website, <http://www.pmo.gov.il/PMOEng/Communication/PMSpeaks/speechcongress240511.htm>

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The Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs is a leading independent research institute specializing in public diplomacy and foreign policy. Founded in 1976, the Center has produced hundreds of studies and initiatives by leading experts on a wide range of strategic topics. Dr. Dore Gold, Israel's former ambassador to the UN, has headed the Jerusalem Center since 2000.

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Jewish Political Studies Review – a scholarly journal founded in 1989.

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