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THE 2006 ISRAELI WAR ON LEBANON: ANALYSIS AND STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

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ABSTRACT

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On July 12, 2006, Israel started a devastating war against Lebanon following Hizbollah's kidnapping of two Israeli troops. The Israeli reaction was quick and massive, and much different from the past attacks. What were the reasons of this war?

Israel and Hizbollah entered the war ferociously and each hoped to achieve specific goals. What were these goals? Did they succeed in achieving them?

The fighting ended after 34 days when UN Resolution 1701 was adopted. It called for a full cessation of hostilities and for an Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon in parallel with a deployment of UN and Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF). Would this Resolution lead to a peaceful and stable situation on the Lebanese-Israeli border?

After the war, the status quo in south Lebanon, and possibly in the region, will change. The war and its outcome will likely establish new arrangements and obligations. What are they?

This SRP will try to answer these questions, analyze the background, causes and outcome, and discuss the potential strategic implications of the war at the domestic, regional, and international levels.

THE 2006 ISRAELI WAR ON LEBANON: ANALYSIS AND STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

> It is also impossible for any people who live within borders and spaces exposed
> to military clashes to enjoy peace, calm and stability.
>
> —General Michel Sleiman [1]

On July 12, 2006, Israel attacked Lebanon after Hizbollah killed several and abducted two of its soldiers. Hizbollah's operation was not very different from earlier operations in which it hoped to exchange the abductees for its own prisoners held in Israel. Yet, the Israeli response was more devastating than any since its invasion of Lebanon in 1982. What had changed? What were the causes and background of the conflict? Was the war meant to settle old scores with Hizbollah? Or were its dimensions and objectives far greater and related to other crisis and conflicts in the Middle East region?

During 34 days of the war, Israel tried to militarily, politically, and economically impose its will on Hizbollah and Lebanon. Finally, United Nations Resolution No. 1701, called for a cessation of hostilities, imposed new arrangements in South Lebanon and provided a special framework for the relationship between the concerned parties. Who won the war? Did Israel achieve its objectives? And how far did UN Resolution 1701 change the rules of the game between Israel and Hizbollah and Lebanon?

The post-war reality is different because the war impact went beyond Israel and Lebanon, affecting other countries within the region and the world. What were the results of this war and its implications on the various instruments: political, economic and military, and levels: domestic, regional and international?

Background

The first Arab-Israeli war dated to 1948 when Israel declared the State's establishment. Lebanon participated with other Arab countries in that war which ended in the signing of a truce agreement with Israel in 1949. Since that time, Lebanon refrained from any attack on Israel, but on the other hand, Israel missed no opportunity to attack Lebanon, first to retaliate or forestall attacks by the Palestinian Resistance Movement, and later, the Islamic Resistance and Hizbollah. Israeli incursions escalated to the point that it invaded southern Lebanon in March 1978 to destroy Palestinian bases and establish a "security zone" in the south. At that time, the UN passed Resolution 425 that called "upon Israel immediately to cease its military action against Lebanese territorial integrity and withdraw forthwith its forces from all Lebanese territory."[2]

In 1982, Israel invaded Lebanon again and its forces reached the capital, Beirut, on the pretext of eliminating the PLO (Palestine Liberation Organization). This invasion became a lengthy occupation of south Lebanon and according to Sami Hajjar, "the single event that gave rise to Hizbollah."[3] Hizbollah's aim was to defend the people of the South and liberate their land. During the invasion and the occupation, large numbers of the Lebanese, particularly the Shi'a, of the South were displaced, and suffered, whether they transplanted themselves to Beirut or remained in the South.[4] Hizbollah tried to find a concrete and workable solution to the fundamental political, social, and economic needs of the Shi'a community at a time when the Lebanese authority was absent and disabled because of the civil war.[5]

Hizbollah's resistance against Israel became more effective after the end of the civil war, in 1990, by gaining the political support of the Lebanese government and people. Israel responded to Hizbollah's operations by bombing its strongholds or areas of presence and influence. Israel also carried out large-scale military strikes, in July 1993 and April 1996, in order to pressure the Lebanese government and dissuade Lebanese from supporting Hizbollah. Israel aimed to limit Hizbollah's political and military capabilities, but it failed.

Hizbollah succeeded in executing military operations against the IDF (Israeli Defense Forces) that were costly and detrimental to the IDF's maintenance of their military personnel in Lebanon. These costs ultimately forced Israel to withdraw unilaterally and unconditionally from southern Lebanon in May 2000. Before its withdrawal, Israel tried to obtain guarantees or understandings from Lebanon, aiming to deploy the Lebanese armed Forces (LAF) and limit Hizbollah freedom of action. However, Lebanon insisted on the complete implementation of the Resolution 425 and an unconditional Israeli withdrawal. The Lebanese government also announced that the Israeli withdrawal itself did not signal the end of the conflict between the two states. The outstanding issues that required resolution included those Lebanese prisoners who remained in Israel, the status of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, compensation for damages during the Israeli occupation, and withdrawal from the Shab'a Farms area at the Lebanese-Syrian border.[6] On the other hand, Israel believed that its withdrawal from southern Lebanon would remove the cause for belligerence with Hizbollah, although it ignored the other unsettled issues. So long as these issues remained unaddressed, they could justify continued Hizbollah actions against Israel. The question was, and remains: does Israel desire to end its conflict with Lebanon? Or does Israel wish to retain conditions that provide a pretext for interfering in Lebanese affairs? If so, this may lead to a low intensity conflict that could spiral out of control.[7]

Syria was a major player in Lebanese affairs. During the last decade, it had insisted in linking the Lebanese-Israeli track to the Syrian-Israeli track in the Middle East peace process.

That necessitated the simultaneous Israeli withdrawal from Lebanese and Syrian occupied territories, and also that Israel will not come to terms with Lebanon independently from its stance vis a vis Syria.[8] Hence, Lebanon backed by Syria, refused to send its national troops to the South, and because it did not regard the Israeli withdrawal as being complete, since it left the issues mentioned above unresolved.[9] However, the Lebanese government sent a security force consisted of 1500 personnel to maintain security and stability within the previously occupied area, but not to defend northern Israel. Hizbollah has repeated many times that it is free to continue its "resistance" as long as any occupation of Lebanese territory continues. Consequently, Shab'a Farms became the "flashpoint region where Hizbollah concentrates its military operations against Israeli occupation forces."[10]

During the six years that followed the withdrawal, Hizbollah continued to launch military operations against the IDF in the Shab'a farms whenever it had an opportunity to reiterate Lebanon's right to liberate the area. The Israeli government responded to these operations in a limited manner. That may have been because, as Gary Gambill suggests, due to Israel's "preoccupation with the second Palestinian Intifada, and the American desire for stability in …Lebanon …, the day of reckoning was continually put off."[11]

The summer of 2006 was not the first time that Hizbollah succeeded in capturing Israeli soldiers. In October 2000, it captured three soldiers. Following that, the German government conducted mediation between the two sides. That resulted in a prisoner swap in 2004 of 435 Lebanese and Palestinian prisoners for the bodies of the three dead soldiers and Israeli businessman Elham Tannenbaum.[12] However, Israel refused to hand over all the Lebanese prisoners it held at that time. It retained three prisoners one of them Samir al-Kentar who had spent the lengthiest period in Israeli custody.[13] Perhaps Israel did not want to settle the disputes about the Lebanese prisoners and abductees it holds.

During this period, some Lebanese leaders and western states demanded that the Lebanese government deploy the LAF in the south, and disarm Hizbollah and integrate it into the armed forces, but the government did not agree. In September 2004, the Security Council adopted UN Resolution 1559,[14] under pressure by France and the United States, to confirm the support of the United Nations for disarming all militias (including Hizbollah). UN Resolution 1559 also called for an end to the Syrian presence in Lebanon by calling on all foreign forces to withdraw from Lebanon. This Resolution did not address the Shab'a Farms issue or call on Israel to withdraw from it, because the U.N. did not consider it to be Lebanese territory. The Israelis contend that it is former Syrian territory. However, the Shab'a Farms is not Israeli territory. Both Syria and Lebanon hold that the Shab'a Farms are Lebanese territory. This meant

that the Lebanese interpreted the UN Resolution differently than the United Nations or the Western nations. In turn, this supported Hizbollah's argument that it is a "resistance" movement and not a militia, thus there was no justification for the Lebanese government to disarm it.

The assassination of Lebanon's Former Prime Minister (FPM) Rafiq al-Hariri, on 14 February 2005 changed the rules of the game. This event generated popular and western rage against Syria; hundreds of thousands of Lebanese demonstrated and called for Syria's withdrawal from Lebanon. Additionally the UN, United States and France called and insisted for immediate Syrian withdrawal. Finally, Syria was obliged to end its presence in Lebanon by April 2005, and Lebanon entered a new era following the forming of an anti-Syrian majority within the new parliament and government.[15] The new political alliance composing this majority benefited from popular anger about the former PM Hariri's assassination. Western countries believed that this new majority would work to end the military role of Hizbollah and possibly weaken its political strength. However, they did not fully understand the complexity of the Lebanese political or governmental system, and that it is not easy for any party to override another one.

In order to resolve this crisis, a forum for dialogue was convened in meetings from March to June 2006, which brought together all political leaders and key Lebanese parties, but they failed to come up with a formula or acceptable solution regarding Hizbollah's armed status. Perhaps that was because the debate focused on disarming Hizbollah in advance of discussion of an alternative mechanism to protect and defend Lebanon and stop the Israeli air, sea and ground violations. In hindsight, this was a serious error of the majority governmental coalition backed by the West. A few days later (July 12), Hizbollah carried out its operation that ignited the flames of war, awakening the sleeping tiger, Israel, and gave it the pretext to retaliate against the entire country of Lebanon. The kidnapping of two soldiers became the direct cause and justification for the Israeli escalation. Now we must ask: was this war a coincidence and a reaction to the soldiers' kidnapping? Or was it preplanned and simply awaiting an appropriate moment and justification? And for what reasons? Were Hizbollah's calculations accurate? And for what objectives? Or had it committed a strategic mistake that was irredeemable?

Hizbollah's Goals

Hizbollah's operation came at a time when it was under strong pressure from other Lebanese leaders and parties, to re-emphasize the importance of its role, locally and regionally, especially if it could succeed in liberating Lebanese prisoners in exchange for the Israeli soldiers. Hizbollah could have hastened its operation to deprive Israel of the "element of surprise" since the Israeli offensive had reportedly been planned for September 2006.[16] Some

reports suggested that Israel had been planning the attack since 2004 and that President Bush, in his meeting with PM Olmert on 23rd of May 2006, offered full support for Israel to attack Hizbollah.[17]

During the war, Hizbollah adopted new objectives. Its survival became the main goal. That meant preventing Israel from achieving its goals by preserving its power and its military capabilities. Its target was not to conduct a static defense and hold all territory, but to inflict a high number of Israeli casualties that would put pressure on the Israeli government from public opinion. Succeeding in these goals would mean victory for Hizbollah. The Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah, in an interview on al-Jazeera TV on July 21, declared: "The victory we are talking about is when the resistance survives. When its will is not broken, then this is victory . . . When we are not defeated militarily, then this is victory."[18] Consequently, Hizbollah's goals reflected and countered Israel's aims and strategy. As Sun Tzu wrote: "What is of supreme importance in war is to attack the enemy's strategy."[19]

Israel's Goals

Some argued that Israel did not have clear and permanent objectives, and its intention was merely to wage a war. Logically, Israel had expected such an operation. Hizbollah had vowed several times to kidnap Israeli soldiers if possible. Therefore, Israel asked its soldiers constantly to stay alert and cautious. During the last six years, Israel has monitored Hizbollah's build up of rockets and its bunkers construction and battlefield preparation, but it did nothing.[20] Hizbollah's aim was to create a balance of terror on both sides of the border and deter Israel from attacking Lebanon by convincing it that the cost would be exorbitant. Some observers thought that Hizbollah's missiles were to deter Israel, the United States or anyone else from attacking Iran's nuclear facilities.[21] In fact, Gary Gambill wrote that Hizbollah "never displayed any willingness to sacrifice its pursuit of political hegemony among Shiite Lebanese to advance Iranian interests."[22]

Consequently, Israel was concerned over the continued flow of Hizbollah's arms toward its northern border, while it was unable to prevent the flow. Therefore, it urged the United States to bring pressure on the Lebanese government in order to complete the implementation of the UN Resolution 1559, particularly the disarmament of militias. The United States was hoping that the Lebanese government and other parties could resolve this issue through the dialogue process referred to above. After the dialogue process failed, a military option was the next best resort for the Israelis. Hizbollah was aware of this reality. Perhaps it chose to advance the date of confrontation, to surprise Israel before it had completed its preparations. Despite its

concentration on combating Palestinians, Israel was planning for this war, and "the IDF conducted a major exercise or war game sometime in June 2006 based on scenarios of conflict with Hizbollah, in which plans for a major operation including a ground advance up to the Litani River were tested."[23] Israel's approach followed Clausewitz' principle: "For if war is an act of violence meant to force the enemy to do our will its aim would have always and solely to be to overcome the enemy and disarm him."[24]

It was clear that the disarming of Hizbollah was a consistent goal of Israel. At the outbreak of the war, its goal was redefined as the destruction of Hizbollah, the elimination of its military, missiles capabilities, and the restoration of the captured soldiers.[25]

In addition to these stated objectives, Israel had several that were undeclared. First, it had a strong desire to avenge for its humiliating withdrawal from Lebanon in 2000 and for Hizbollah's subsequent provocations. Second, it needed a major achievement to return its prestige and its deterrence ability within the region. Third, the destruction of Lebanese infrastructure, homes, and industries made it clear that Israel wanted to attack the Lebanese economy and disrupt the tourist season by scaring off the tourists, since all hotel rooms were fully booked for the 2006 summer.[26] Fourth, both PM Olmert and Defense Minister Peretz had no military background,[27] and they want to demonstrate their competencies. Olmert had suddenly assumed his position at the beginning of 2006, and one argument is that he did not have "sufficient public trust to make a restrained response if attacked by Hizbollah."[28]

However, Olmert told the Winograd Commission that investigated shortcomings of Israeli leadership during the war in Lebanon that his decision to respond to any abduction of soldiers with a broad military operation was made as early as March 2006, four months before last summer's Lebanon war broke out.[29] There must have been an Israeli assessment of such an operation in conjunction with its other immediate goals.

Gary Gambill talked about four types of Israeli objectives: military, which were to destroy and disarm Hizbollah; strategic which were to deter other enemies (Iran, Syria, and Palestinians); diplomatic, which was to deploy multinational forces; and political, which was strengthen the March 14 coalition[30] to contain Hizbollah. That converged neatly with American and European interests in weakening Iranian strategic power and with Saudi Arabia's ambition to diminish Shiite influence in the region.[31]

During the war, the Israeli objectives were not consistent and clear. Israel tried to adjust and align them with the developments of the war. In the beginning, its goals were ambitious, but when it found that it is hard to achieve them, it evolved and moderated them. With the continuation of the campaign and Israel's inability to prevent the firing of rockets, especially the

short-range ones, Israel began calling for the elimination of Hizbollah fighters who threaten its northern border, the creation of a buffer zone south of the Litani River and the deployment of Multinational or NATO forces. Israel's inability to achieve victory in the ground battle, the objections of the Lebanese government and Hizbollah to the deployment of a non-United Nations force, the reality that Hizbollah rocket capability had not been affected, and the decision of the Lebanese government to send 15,000 troops to the south, challenged the international community, and the United States in particular to hurry for the proper end to the conflict. In addition, they were no longer able to keep silent about the excess of violence and devastation practiced by Israel in Lebanon.[32]

Meanwhile, all parties began looking for a reasonable solution. The cost of the war increased, and neither side could achieve decisive results. That paved the way for UN Resolution 1701 adopted on August 11, 2006. The new Resolution called for an end to hostilities and called for additional actions. It might succeed in providing stability in the event of cooperation of the concerned parties; otherwise, a second round of hostilities might result.

At the cessation of hostilities, both sides, Israel and Hizbollah, declared victory. This was perplexing. As UN Deputy Secretary General, Mark Malloch Brown, remarked during the fourth week of fighting, this was an "odd war" in which "both sides think they're winning."[33] It was not easy to decide who was the victor and who was the vanquished. Analysts, who wrote about the war, come up with different views depending on their backgrounds and opinions. In fact, one could argue that each side has achieved some successes and some failures.

Hizbollah's Failures and Achievements

For Nasrallah, victory came to mean survival.[34] Until the last day of the war, Hizbollah succeeded in demonstrating its strength, by continuing to release a large number of rockets, (246 rockets on that day)[35] and preventing the Israeli advance into Lebanese territory up to the Litani River, although Hizbollah was facing an enemy with significant superiority in the resources and capabilities. Israeli claims that its forces reached the Litani River[36] were intended to mislead public opinion and cause it accept the cease-fire. True, it advanced as far as Marjayoun, where the Litani River is only a few kilometers away from the border (see Map 1), and where Hizbollah had not focused its defenses because of the flat terrain. Even so, it was able to carry out counterattacks causing considerable losses in Israel troops and tanks, and forcing it to retreat.
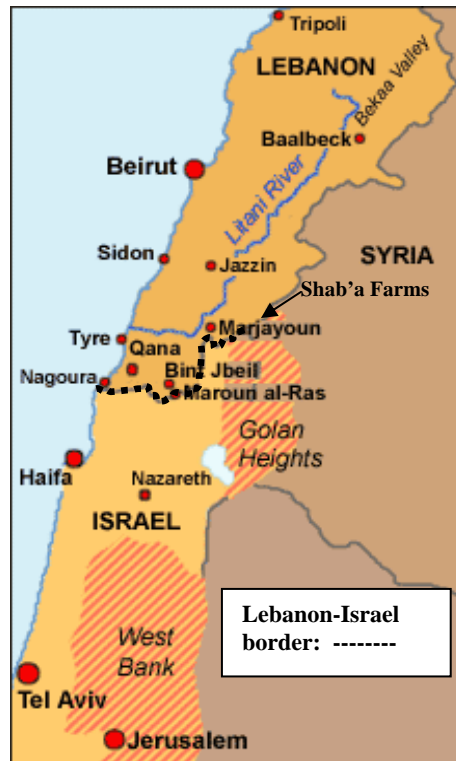
Map 1. Lebanon-Israel Border[37]

In addition, Hizbollah succeeded in maintaining its Command and Control (C2) system, despite massive and focused air strikes, and was, with some limitations, able to resupply its rockets and ammunitions. IDF senior commanders concluded that Hizbollah leadership was in touch with its commanders on the ground, and that those commanders were able to maintain a robust communications network despite Israeli interdiction.[38]

Hizbollah succeeded in its intelligence efforts; before and during the war, in cooperation with Lebanese Intelligence, it arrested at least 16 Israeli spies, and it was able to "feed back" to Israel false information about its fighters and positions to mislead it, so that the Israelis identified key emplacements that were phantoms. It had, as well, the ability to intercept inter-Israeli communications and know in advance where and when Israeli fighters and bombers would likely strike.[39]

Gary Gambill noted:

> Indeed, there was no observable degradation of Hizbollah military capabilities at all during the war. The quality and endurance of its military performance exceeded Israeli expectations in virtually every domain, from the volume and accuracy of rocket fire into northern Israel… to the sophistication of its communications network and artful camouflage of heavy military equipment and bunkers... Hizbollah even managed to intercept IDF radio communications...[40]

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On the other hand, Hizbollah's "balance of terror" concept failed. Its arms and missiles did not prevent and deter Israel from waging wide hostilities against Lebanon. Hizbollah made many mistakes. First, it miscalculated the political repercussions of September 11 and the American War on Terror, whereby the US classification of Hizbollah as a terrorist group became part of plans to reduce its presence. Hizbollah should have understood Resolution 1559 with this in mind, and anticipated the war, as its timing and justification were linked to larger Israeli and American objectives. Second, by breaking the informal rules of engagement that had been observed between Israel and Hizbollah over the previous six years by attacking Israel outside the disputed Shab'a Farms area,[41] Hizbollah gave Israel a "just cause" for escalation. Hizbollah should have been sensitive to this infraction before conducting its operation. The argument that it did not expect a massive reprisal that targeted the Lebanese infrastructure[42] was an insufficient excuse in the eyes of Lebanese. Yet Hizbollah Secretary-General Hassan Nasrallah's denial in an August 27 TV interview: "if it were known on July 11 …that the operation would lead to such a war, would I do it? I say no, absolutely not,"[43] could be true, or simply a political maneuver to deflect a negative Lebanese reaction, and some allegations that he was responsible for the war and the damages.

Some wondered how Hizbollah declared "divine victory", when the war resulted in such devastating destruction of infrastructure. [44] In addition to more than 15,000 destroyed homes, and 1,200 civilian deaths, there were 4,000 injured. Hizbollah knew it would not bear the total cost of the war, materially and economically, and that the Lebanese state, with the help of friendly countries would take care of the reconstruction and rehabilitation. For those who lost their lives and their families, the war was a huge sacrifice. However, the Lebanese people were used to sacrifices and hardship during the civil war and the long conflict with Israel. Casualties and destruction in and of themselves do not mean defeat. The United States, for example, lost more than 3000 soldiers in Iraq, in addition to tens of thousands of Iraqis. Does the United States consider these losses to imply that it has lost the war in Iraq? In fact, the large number of civilian deaths in Lebanon, in comparison with a proportionally low number of Hizbollah fighters (about 200),[45] is a condemnatory statement about Israel, illustrating its excessive firepower and targeting of civilians. Israel took these actions because of its inability to face the professional Hizbollah fighters who mastered the art of warfare. Conversely, one could argue that the low number of Israeli civilian deaths, and the high number of soldiers deaths (43 civilians, 116 soldiers), prove that Hizbollah targeted primarily military persons, due to the nature of the conflict. This would underline Hizbollah's success and therefore the Israeli failure.

<u>Israel's Failures and Achievements</u>

A war initiated under favorable conditions, with international support and against a limited enemy, should not end without a victory.[46] Israel's desire for revenge prevented it from proper planning to achieve its goals. A general impression remained that Israel lost the war, or at least, failed to achieve its objectives, which overshadowed its few successes. First, in previous wars with the Arabs, Israel achieved a quick, decisive and clear victory when facing several armies simultaneously. This time, despite the fact that its enemy was a guerrilla force of about 3,000 fighters faced by about 30,000 Israeli soldiers,[47] Israel fought the lengthiest war since 1948 and failed to achieve a clear or decisive victory. It seems because "in an asymmetrical warfare, the test of victory is asymmetric too."[48]

Secondly, Prime Minister Olmert set an unattainable goal; the complete erasure of Hizbollah's power in Lebanon.[49] Third, in contrast, Hizbollah's goal, its survival, was simple and it was not disarmed so its threat remains as effective as prior to the war. A month of fighting has not weakened Hizbollah, nor beaten it back to the Litani River, nor retrieved the two soldiers.[50] In addition, Hizbollah marketed its "victory" through the media and the celebration of the "divine victory." Fourth, Israeli public opinion was negative. The media kept up discussion about the shortcomings during the war. Several probes were conducted. Some asked for the resignation of Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and the Chief of Staff (who did resign).

Israel failed to collect reliable and accurate intelligence about Hizbollah, prepare the IDF for the war, define "a relationship between tactical and operational military moves and strategic political objectives,"[51] estimate the possible Lebanese and Arab world reaction, and gain significant achievements by its military forces. The inquiries carried out following the war showed that "the intelligence work was unprofessional and mediocre to inferior" and there was an absence of updated intelligence that left the force without knowledge of Hizbollah's deployment and the extend of its forces,[52] and military intelligence (MI) knew too little of Hizbollah cached weapons and bankers.[53] Moreover, some units were not familiar with the terrain.[54] Why was that the case, when southern Lebanon had been occupied by IDF for more than 22 years?

Israel was unable to predict the Lebanese response to its attack. The targeting of Lebanon's infrastructure and industry gave credence to Nasrallah's warnings that Israel was looking for any pretext to damage the Lebanese economy; However, public anger at Hizbollah, at the beginning of the war, in Lebanon and some Arab countries, was quickly overshadowed by outrage toward Israel as the economic toll of the bombardment mounted.[55] Israel, as well as some western countries, erred by following propaganda that suggests that Hizbollah is an alien

group and could be eliminated easily. They ignored the basic definition of any militia: the fact that Hizbollah fighters are the sons of the southern Lebanese. They live and work in their own towns, and in wartime, they became competent fighters. Israel's military performance was not at the highest level. Troops were sent into battle without sufficient logistics and basic supplies. Gambill noted, "The prioritization of diplomatic goals accounts for much of the vacillation and hesitancy of Israeli officials in directing the campaign - a leadership failure terribly out of step with Israeli military doctrine."[56] Peter W. Singer wrote:

> The Israeli plan was predicated on having good intelligence on three things, each of which has proved wrong. First, the IDF… underestimated both the number and variety of weapons in the group's arsenal ... Second, the plan depended on an understanding of Hizbollah as a brittle organization that would crumble if pushed hard enough. In actuality, the group has proven both motivated to fight and die... Finally, the plan depended on the belief that Israel's bombs could send just the right message to the Lebanese elites. Instead, the general takedown of infrastructure and resultant civilian casualties … inflaming opinion not against Hizbollah, but against Israel.[57]

On the other hand, Israel was able to achieve some military and diplomatic successes. Hizbollah speculated that Israeli government could not afford the missiles attacks on its northern citizens, especially when the number of casualties increased. In reality, the war demonstrated that Israel is not "weaker than a spider web" as Nasrallah declared[58], and its people are willing to sacrifice to defend Israeli interests. As result, civilian casualties did not influence the Israeli strategic decisions.[59]

In addition, Resolution 1701, if applied, might be considered an Israeli "diplomatic coup". It would provide Israel what it failed to achieve militarily. The heavy deployment of UN and Lebanese forces should prevent Hizbollah from rebuilding its bunkers, gathering information easily, and deploying and firing rocket in response to its air, sea or ground provocations.[60] Israel destroyed a significant number of the long- and medium-range rockets,[61] while the short-range rockets are unable to reach the border. Moreover, according to 1701, Hizbollah has to withdraw north of the Litani River and disarm, and the Lebanese army and UN troops will take over the area. Israel believed that would put an end to Hizbollah's "state within the state." It would if it were to happen. However, Nasrallah said, within days of the cease-fire; "it was too early to discuss disarming."[62] Israel succeeded in imposing a sea and air blockade until mid-September, and to some extent ground, preventing Hizbollah from arms resupply. One more positive effect of the war was that Hizbollah would be more wary of provoking another attack,[63] because it might face significant opposition from other political parties in Lebanon.

Hizbollah decided to conduct its operation unilaterally, and Israel replied with a swift, incisive escalation. Lebanon and its people did not have any choice in the situation, but they paid a heavy toll. As the war took place on Lebanese terrain, it stands to reason that the country itself would incur the most severe losses. Despite some diplomatic and military gains, Lebanon suffered economically, socially and politically. Economic losses were huge (about $7 billion),[64] especially for a small country with a debt that exceeds $40 billion. A great deal of infrastructure has been destroyed (the infrastructural damage estimated at $3.9 billion),[65] most of the major bridges (80 bridges),[66] electricity installations and residential areas (15,000 homes were destroyed by Israeli bombing).[67] Major damage was caused to the sectors of tourism, industry and services.

At the social level, the massive number of displaced persons (970,000 persons)[68] caused numerous problems, and revealed the weakness of the government. The government did little to evacuate or aid displaced from south Lebanon in the first days of the war. The government's relief effort mainly involved transferring aid supplies to local civic groups for distribution to victims, but even this modest task was hampered by incompetence and corruption. In fact, some officials and parties tried to use this situation to increase suffering in the south and the poorer Beirut suburbs, which have a majority Shi'a population, and turn the people against Hizbollah.[69] Politically, the war intensified the dispute between the Lebanese political parties, over several issues such as the need for a new 'unity government', Hizbollah's disarmament and the international tribunal on Hariri's assassination. If these political disputes continued, it would threaten national unity. Moreover, the war proved that Lebanon could not expect political intervention by the international community. Lebanon's alliances with United States, France and Arab countries did not prevent Israel from destroying it, which undermined the March 14 coalition's political advantage, illuminated its modest placement in American priorities, and exposed the government's lack of planning for contingencies.[70]

Another problem emerged after the war and continues to threaten Lebanese; unexploded cluster bombs dropped by Israel. These bombs have killed or wounded more than 218 people in the south since the ceasefire in August 2006.[71] That type of bomb is forbidden under international law. Moreover, the US is investigating if Israel had violated US rules by employing these US-made bombs in Lebanon.

At the diplomatic level, the Resolution 1701 could be considered a gain for Lebanon.[72] It was issued under Chapter VI of the United Nations charter not VII, as Israel preferred. Under Chapter VI, Security Council seeks "pacific settlement of disputes" by negotiation, mediation,

conciliation, or arrangements (article 33).[73] Moreover, the Security Council may investigate any dispute and recommend appropriate procedures but it cannot decide what measures shall be taken and UN Forces are not authorized to use force unless in self-defense. Otherwise, Chapter VII allows "action with respect to threats to the peace and acts of aggression." In this case, the Security Council may take action by air, sea, or land forces, if necessary, to maintain or restore international peace and security (article 42).[74] What Israel had preferred that UNIFIL do, under Chapter VII, might have been to resort to force to implement Resolution 1701, disarm Hizbollah, and prevent it from re-armament.

The Resolution was aligned with the seven-point plan proposed by PM Saniora,[75] and supported the Lebanese state to extend its authority over all of its territory. This, as well as the decision to deploy 15,000 Lebanese army troops supported by 15,000 UN troops, strengthened the government and showed the importance of Lebanon's stability. Moreover, Hizbollah agreed to abide by the government decisions and facilitate the mission of the Lebanese army and UNIFIL.[76]

For the first time in decades, the Lebanese Army executed a large deployment on the southern border. Before its withdrawal in 2000, Israel had refused and prevented any such activity. Simultaneously, the Army deployed on the Lebanese-Syrian border to control it and prevent the entry of arms. Consequently, the shortcomings of the successive governments that followed the Lebanese Civil War to properly prepare the Army and provide it the necessary gear and equipment, has become evident.

In addition to the direct outcomes, the war had many after-effects, short- and long-term, domestically, regionally and internationally, and at the political, economic and military levels. What are the implications of these after-effects?

Implications of the War

Implications for Lebanon

The consequences of the war on Lebanon could be more dangerous than the war itself. Political divisions returned sharply, as each group trying to capitalize on the war for political gain. With the continued refusal of both sides to make any concessions, these gains will be at the expense of Lebanon, its unity, stability, and prosperity. American support for the March 14-dominated Lebanese government did not help it domestically. On the contrary, it made that government and its cabinet even more unacceptable to Hizbollah and the Shi'a in general, as America is a close ally to Israel, which seeks to divide and weaken Lebanon. Experiencing significant limitations on its ability to conduct military operations, and make decisions, and

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fearing increased domestic and international desire to disarm it, Hizbollah sought to strengthen its political guarantees.[77] It benefited from the government's policy mistakes over the eighteen months prior, which had prompted other parties, particularly the most prominent Christian leader General Michel Aoun, to support the Shiites. Banding together, Aoun, Hizbollah and the Shi'a plus others, formed a considerable opposition, seeking effective participation and calling for amendments or changes within the government. As they are the largest group outside the government, they wanted one third plus one of the cabinet ministers, in order to prevent the cabinet from enacting important decisions that need the approval of two third of its members (like the disarmament of Hizbollah[78] or the international tribunal[79]), without the agreement of the opposition. As the government refused such a new arrangement, the opposition called for early parliamentary elections. The governing coalition continued to stonewall the opposition's demands. That pushed the sole five Shiite ministers of the cabinet plus one Christian minister to resign, on November 11. Their resignation de-legitimized the cabinet in the eyes of a large group of Lebanese. Since the government standoff, the opposition resorted to demonstrations and protests in Beirut's downtown area, near the governmental palace and the House of Representatives. Consequently, internal division increased, the government was placed in an awkward situation, since the president, and a part of the Lebanese government, considered it illegal and unconstitutional.

The failure of many proposals, principally ones by the Arab League, to reach an acceptable compromise caused the opposition to escalate its movement. This resulted in street confrontations, some armed, taking place on Jan 23 and 25 threatened the possibility of a civil war. Hizbollah's engagement in internal and sectarian conflict, will affect its position and reduce its popularity in Lebanon and the Arab world, and make its disarmament a priority of its opponents' agenda. True, the Lebanese people and the Arab stood with Hizbollah against Israel, but a large part of them will not support it against the Saniora government, which has Arab and Western World support, especially given the argument that Hizbollah's goal is to strengthen the Iranian-Syrian role in Lebanon at a time when Iranian nuclear program is on the UN and US agenda. Despite Hizbollah's attempt, to make its opposition a national character, through broad alliances and through the nomination of General Aoun as leader of the opposition, many still realize that Hizbollah and the Shiites are the primary catalyst of the political debate, and they would be the greatest beneficiary.

One should ask if the opposition succeeds in imposing its conditions, would Hizbollah share the gains with its allies? Nasrallah said that he would give his share of the opposition cabinet seats to his partners within that movement. Moreover, the struggle for power and the

inability of each party to find constitutional and legal solutions, confirmed a dire need in Lebanon for reforms and amendments in order to achieve a "real victory" for the nation. That would prevent similar problems in the future, as B. H. Liddell Hart Wrote:

> If you concentrate exclusively on victory, with no thought for the after effect, you may be too exhausted to profit by the peace, while it is almost certain that the peace will be bad one, containing the germs of another war.**[80]**

At the economic level, even with economic assistance, the country needs several years to address and overcome the substantial economic losses. Several national and international efforts have been made; the most significant was the Paris III Conference, which provided Lebanon $7.6 billion.[81] But without economic reforms to ensure the use of the funds in the appropriate manner, and without political and security stability, these amounts will be lost in the pockets of officials and burn up in the streets of Beirut, the result could be an increase of the public debt to about $50 billion.

Militarily, it has been shown that the armed forces played a critical and effective role in controlling the situation in the south and along the borders with Syria and Israel, and maintaining home security. The army command, thanks to its understanding of Lebanese internal dynamics, was able to build a national army for all of Lebanon and all the Lebanese without discrimination. While the Lebanese are divided, and each party is trying to draw the army to its side, the army, by remaining impartial, retains the trust of the Lebanese people. The military is the guardian of the constitution, Lebanese institutions and people, and the main guarantor of the unity and survival of the country, despite its smaller size and insufficient equipment. Militarily as well, the Hizbollah's pre-war strategy to maintain a "balance of terror" or "deterrence" of Israel, failed since it could not prevent Israel from waging the war. At the same time, it proved that "war with Lebanon will not be a picnic."[82]

Implications of the war for Israel

Israel's inability to win the war brought about various changes, particularly at the political and military levels. The government lost much of its public credibility. People called for the prime minister and the minister of defense to resign. They blamed successive governments for allowing Hizbollah to acquire more than 12,000 missiles. Many probes on the shortcomings of the war were conducted. Olmert, who suffered the most rapid plummet of public approval ratings for an Israeli prime minister in decades, is seen as being unable to guarantee Israel's security. As a result, opinion polls show Peretz, the defense minister and Labor party leader, drawing even more blame for the shortcomings of the conduct of the war (74% of the Israelis

wanted Peretz to resign).[83] On the other hand, Binyamin Netanyahu, leader of Likud, might make a political comeback. For that, pundits expect an early election in Israel.[84]

In Israel, accusations abound. The generals blame the politicians for holding back the army for several days before ordering the final push. The prime minister blames the defense minister and the army. The defense minister accuses the chief of staff, Dan Halutz, who resigned later, of creating expectations that the air force alone could destroy Hizbollah.[85]

The war could influence the Israeli decision to withdraw from Shab'a Farms or could hinder that outcome. For Israel to agree to a withdrawal, it must obtain something substantial in return, such as the actual removal of Hizbollah's arms.[86] Otherwise, it would be held accountable for its non-withdrawal from these areas even before the summer conflict, as it could then have avoided the war and its outcome. The war will increase Israeli consultation and coordination with United States at all levels to mitigate the influence of Hizbollah, Iran and Syria in Lebanon.[87] Moreover, Israel, through its US alliance, may try to develop closer ties with Sunni regimes[88] within the region if it can convince them that there is an Iranian threat.

Militarily, this war demonstrated to Israel that, in an asymmetric war, tanks, air forces or navy are not necessarily effective. High-tech systems could easily be avoided and deceived, and ground forces, especially infantry and Special Forces and highly-trained individual combatants remain essential. This war could provide lessons for the US in Iraq or perhaps in Iran in the future. There is a feeling of disappointment in Israel and a sense that it has lost its deterrent capability, especially against non-state groups.[89] In consequence, it is working on rebuilding and training the IDF, exploiting the lessons and mistakes of the war, and conducting exercises to be ready for any potential confrontation on the northern front.[90] Therefore, the IDF is seeking a budgetary increase to deal with national security threats.[91] Another major implication is on the morale of the soldiers.[92] Morale suffers when the media and the public focus on failure and shortcomings, and are aware of the many probe commissions, which coincided with the resignations of Maj. Gen. Udi Adam, head of the IDF's Northern Command, in mid-September 2006,[93] and Lt. Gen. Dan Halutz, Chief of Staff, in mid-January 2007.[94] Consequently, the IDF aims for revenge if there is a second round. Will the Israeli people support another war while there is a strong public consensus that the military campaign was a failure? [95]

Regional Implications

It is not possible to isolate the Israeli-Hizbollah War from what is happening in the region. The war was part of the 'global war on terror' (GWOT), the American-Iranian, and Arab-

Persian[96] conflict. Therefore, it has implications for Middle East countries, particularly Iran, Syria, Palestine and Iraq. From US perspective Hizbollah is a terrorist group supported by Iran and Syria.

The war overshadowed events in the Palestinian arena to the point that Israel's military imprisoned many Hamas officials in Gaza and arrested suspected terrorists with very little media coverage. Since Israeli withdrawals from Lebanon and Gaza have spurred radicalism,[97] Israelis do not believe that a unilateral withdrawal would provide them more security and stability, in turn; their neighbors understood it as a victory and a sign of Israeli weakness.[98] In addition, the withdrawal provided the enemies new positions and sites to fire rockets and carry out attacks against Israel. Consequently, Olmert's promises to withdraw from the West Bank[99] will be delayed or abandoned, if not coupled with agreements and understandings to guarantee Israel security. The demise of the direct threat on the northern border may provide Israel greater capabilities, political and military, to deal with the Palestinian issue, while the war will encourage Hamas to step up its military actions. Nevertheless, any success of the international community in stabilizing southern Lebanon will presage "a more active NATO intervention in the West Bank and Gaza during the years ahead."[100]

On the Syrian side, the idea that Hizbollah's use of Russian sophisticated anti-tank missiles, provided by Syria, would complicate "future Syrian arms purchases from Moscow,"[101] is not realistic. During the Syrian president's visit to Moscow, in December 2006, Russia agreed to sell Syria sophisticated air defense missiles. It is likely that Russia will set some conditions on Syria. In addition, UN Resolution 1701 and the likelihood of calm in southern Lebanon, will limit Syrian influence and its ability to exploit the Lebanese paper in its conflict with Israel. On the other hand, the survival of Hizbollah, and its attempt to strengthen its posture within the Lebanese system at the expense of Hariri alliance, and the accompanying events are indications that Syria still possesses several cards, which could be exploited to destabilize Lebanon and the region. Therefore, for those who are seeking resolutions for Lebanese and regional problems, talking with Syria is a necessity. In January, the media reported on a series of peace talks held secretly in Europe up to August 2006 between Syrian and Israeli teams. The talks resulted in an agreement on several key points for the resumption of the peace process, but both Syria and Israeli denied such initiative and considered it an unofficial and informal initiative.[102]

Experience shows that peace between Israel and Syria might greatly help in regional stability, particularly in Lebanon, Palestine and Iraq. In other words, the resumption of the peace process in the Middle East is now more critical than ever. As part of broader efforts to address

regional problems, we could also mention the UN conference on Iraq's future held in Baghdad on 10 March 2007 with the participation of officials from Iraq's neighboring states (Iran, Syria, …) and the five permanent members of the UN security Council (US, France, UK, Russia, and China).

For Iran, the war was an indirect "show of force." Hizbollah's survival provides it several elements of power. Iran will try to employ them to influence western interests and move forward in its nuclear program. Some experts believed that objections or opposition to its nuclear program would cause Tehran to encourage Hizbollah to engage in hostile operations against Israel.[103] Iran is still a key player in the stability of Lebanon and Israel through Hizbollah, in addition to its role in Iraq and Palestine. It employs the anti-American sentiments that spread within the Arab world, during the war, to discourage some Arab governments from overtly supporting American threats against it. The same could be said for some countries that participated in UN forces in south Lebanon, within Hizbollah's areas of influence. The aftermath of the war in Lebanon and the risk of the outbreak of Shiite-Sunnite strife obliged Saudi Arabia to intensify its communications and deliberations with Tehran in order to tame Hizbollah and prevent a probable explosion. Of course, "nothing is for free." Iran attempted to absorb and minimize the negative effects of the unanimous resolution adopted by Security Council, which imposes sanctions on Iran for its decision to go on with the nuclear program. On the other hand, Resolution 1701 and the political opposition in Lebanon to Hizbollah's unilateral decision of "war" would limit the Iranian role and its ability to incite or carry out acts of aggression against Israel from Lebanese soil.[104]

International Implications

In the era of globalization, the implications of any crisis, such as this war, go beyond geographic boundaries to influence major countries and organizations, like the United Nations, the United States, and the European Union, particularly France.

Lebanese blamed the United Nations for its stance during the war for two reasons. First, during the past six years, UN has monitored the growing tensions between Hizbollah and Israel based on several issues like the Shab'a Farms, prisoners and Hizbollah's arms. The UN did not play an effective role in defusing the crisis to prevent a war. Secondly, the UN was blamed for its delay in calling for the convocation of the Security Council to alleviate casualties and damage, and end the war. However, the UN remains an essential player in order to reconcile between the parties of the conflict, stop the war, and mitigate its effects and consequences. A UN insistence on the complete implementation of the Resolution 1701, by clarifying some points

and setting the right process for execution, may assist in resolving the outstanding issues and paving the way for long-term stability in the border region.

Some argued that the war was a win-win situation for the United States. If Israel won, that meant a victory on "terrorism". If Israel failed to achieve a decisive victory, then the US would highlight the Iranian threat to rally more regional allies to its cause.[105] In fact, the US lost some credibility in Lebanon and the Arab world by remaining silent about the Israeli violence, targeting of civilians, and destruction of infrastructure, and due to its unqualified financial, military and political support for Israel. America's refusal to call for an unconditional cease-fire and request that the Security Council to convene, in order to provide Israel additional time to eliminate Hizbollah, ignited anti-American sentiments throughout Lebanon and the Arab and Islamic world. Consequently, that weakened the position of the United States and its ability to affect the Lebanon's political trajectory, and embarrassed its allied governments in Lebanon and the Arab world.[106] Later, the United States was able to improve its image through its political and financial support to the Lebanese government, promising about $1 billion in Stockholm and Paris III conferences. But, given the sharp political divide in Lebanon, the US does not realize that an entire sector in Lebanon believes that it is supporting one group against the other, and that US assistance is conditional. However, unconditional American support to the Lebanese armed forces (LAF) at all levels by strengthening and enhancing its capacities, could be more credible and seen as helpful support to Lebanon.

The war offered an opportunity for Europe to re-engage in the region.[107] The European Union interaction with the war was more impartial than that of the US. The EU council considered Israel's response to Hizbollah's attack was "disproportionate" and accused Israel of attacking civilian targets indiscriminately.[108] This position made EU contacts more acceptable to Hizbollah, Syria and Iran plus a large sector of Lebanese. The EU's role, in particular France's, was critical to the production of the Resolution 1701 and support of the seven-point plan provided by PM Saniora. The EU decision to participate effectively in the UNIFIL provided a real successful impetus to the practical application of the Resolution, especially after the French significant participation. Thus, the European Union's moderation and its understanding of the reality of the region and the conflict enhances its credibility and makes it acceptable to all parties.

Resolution 1701: A Fragile Truce or a Path to a Diplomatic Solution:

The Resolution 1701 was adopted on August 11, 2006, after long discussions and deliberations between the Security Council members, especially France and the United States,

and Israel, Lebanon and Hizbollah. The approved wording was the best possible compromise. Despite the shortcomings and ambiguity that it contains,[109] the Resolution will create both risks and opportunities.

The UN Resolution considers Hizbollah to be responsible for what happened in Lebanon without condemning the Israeli violence and excessive destruction. It does not put clear limitations on Israel. While 1701 calls for the "the immediate cessation by Hizbollah of all attacks," it calls for Israel merely to cease all "offensive military operations," a deliberately vague phrase that allows Israel to justify virtually anything as a defensive military operation.[110] The resolution requires the Lebanese government and the United Nations forces to implement the resolutions 1559 (the disarmament of the militias) and 1680 (the demarcation of the border between Syria and Lebanon),[111] which were not implemented completely.

Hizbollah considers itself a resistance and not a militia. It has accepted the Resolution 1701, but it is not in hurry to implement it.[112] If it refuses to disarm, even in the south, who can compel it? The UN forces will not try to carry out Israel's own goal.[113] In addition, UNIFIL is not authorized to disarm Hizbollah, since it is working under Chapter VI that means its role is to assist the Lebanese government, which could not take "any decision without Hizbollah's endorsement."[114] The arms embargo imposed by Resolution 1701 cannot be enforced without Lebanese and Syrian cooperation,"[115] which is not actually occurring. If the Resolution is not applied or upheld, then war could recur.[116] One of the most important risks is the attempt to utilize the resolution to settle regional accounts, which exceeds Lebanon's political abilities and threatens its unity and stability. The recent events, the confrontations between pro-government and opposition, are indicators of this trend.

On the other hand, the participation of more than 23 nations in a strong UNIFIL peacekeeping force is a broad umbrella to ensure that Lebanese territory south of the Litani River is not used for hostile activities. UNIFIL will employ forceful means to resist attempts to prevent it from discharging its duties.[117] It will take all necessary action to prevent hostile acts of any kinds in the area and to protect civilians under "imminent threat."[118] These limitations will affect both sides, it will deny Hizbollah the freedom of action and resupply, and limit Israel's conduct of hostilities against Lebanon. The Lebanese Government, including Hizbollah ministers, had unanimously adopted the resolution 1701, consequently it has a duty to honor the agreement it signed. The same could be said about the Israeli government.

Hizbollah's cooperation with the LAF and UNIFIL is a positive sign of its commitment to the Resolution south of the Litani. Critics of Hizbollah consider its opposition to the Lebanese government as an attempt to circumvent Resolution 1701, by forcing the LAF to reduce its

presence in the south and return to Beirut in order to maintain security, then weakening UNIFIL by forcing some states, particularly Western, to withdraw their forces. Therefore, the south of Lebanon would return to Hizbollah control. But, there are no facts to support their hypothesis.

The United Nations forces are not capable of ensuring stability, stopping Israeli violations and preventing the renewal of war. They do lack wide powers and may leave Lebanon when encountering any setback. The only guarantee is the Lebanese Army and the ability of its wise leadership to protect it from the political and sectarian divisions facing Lebanon. That depends on the consolidation of the political decision in Lebanon to support the Army.

Recommendations

To Hizbollah

- Recognize that it cannot make decisions on behalf of all Lebanese and that Lebanon's economy cannot afford another war.
- Continue cooperating with the Lebanese government, Armed forces and UNIFIL by facilitating the implementation of Resolution 1701.
- Protect the "achievements of the resistance" by accepting the new reality that it no longer has the undivided support of all Lebanese in its struggle against Israel, and it must disarm and continue its transformation to a political party and social organization without a militia. In so doing, it can prevent other groups from arming themselves, and instead, lend all of its capabilities and experience to assist and support the government and the LAF.
- Cease military ties with Syria and Iran and employ other social or spiritual ties that promote common Lebanese-Iranian interests.

To Lebanese political or religious groups and parties

- Understand that the national interests such as unity, stability and prosperity of Lebanon are more important than personal, religious or sectarian interests.
- Consider democratic and peaceful ways to express demands for reforms or solve recent disputes, by resorting to soft dialogue, recognizing each group's right to participate in governance. Cease manipulating external powers to achieve personal gain, thereby benefiting those powers.

- Generate a positive environment to create mutual trust and confidence among Lebanese. Such an environment would encourage Hizbollah to end its "state within a state".

To the Government of Lebanon

- Exercise its authority on all Lebanese territory by strengthening and equipping its Armed Forces and Security Forces, imposing the rules of law, and developing a defense policy to control and defend the borders, maintain internal security and stability stop the flow of arms to all parties and disarm militias, and eliminate the justification for any group, to retain its arms.

- Conduct political, economic, and administrative reforms by setting a new electoral law that guarantees broader democracy representing all Lebanese parties and sects, excluding and prosecuting those involved in corruption, applying a balanced development policy, providing administrative transparency, preventing interventions within the governmental institutions, and addressing social issues.

- Cooperate with and urge the United Nations and international community to resolve outstanding matters of discord between Israel and Syria in order to reduce the internal tensions in Lebanon and encourage Hizbollah's gradual demilitarization.

- Deal with all Lebanese people and groups without discrimination or favoritism based on political loyalty or opposition. All are Lebanese and must enjoy the same rights and responsibilities.

To Israel

- Understand that Hizbollah is the result of its continuous occupation and hostilities against Lebanese and Arab people and territories, and that disarming or eliminating it without ceasing its own excessive use of and resort to force would provide justification for other groups and the next generation to resist.

- Halt hostile actions against Lebanon by ceasing ground and air space violations.

- Cooperate with UN efforts to solve remaining disputes such as Lebanese prisoners held in Israel and the Shab'a Farms.

To Syria

- Normalize relations with Lebanon by conducting direct dialogue with Lebanese officials addressing points of contention and common interests and exchanging

embassies to recognize Lebanon as a sovereign and independent state, control the common border, and clarify the Shab'a Farms' dispute.

To Syria and Iran

- Cooperate with UN, international and Arab efforts to imply the resolution 1701 by prohibiting the flow of arms to Lebanese groups, especially Hizbollah.
- Enforce Lebanon's stability and sovereignty by ceasing the use of Lebanese soil as a battlefield to achieve political interests.

To the Arab states, especially Saudi Arabia

- Continue efforts to stabilize Lebanon by assisting and dealing with the Lebanese central government rather than particular sects or communities, and by communicating with other essential external parties, in particular Syria and Iran, to play a positive role in Lebanon.

To the United Nations, Security Council and UNIFIL

- Continue efforts to ensure the effective implementation of Resolution 1701 by working with the governments of Lebanon, Israel and Syria to prevent any type of violation, investigate any violation, publicly condemn it, and take necessary measures to stop it.
- Work and coordinate with Lebanon, Syria and Israel to resolve the pending issues such as (1) Shab'a Farms by putting it under UN control and demarcating it, (2) Lebanese prisoners held in Israel by conducting prisoners' exchanges, (3) and Lebanese-Syrian border control by urging US, EU and Arab countries to provide technical assistance to Lebanese Armed and Security Forces to boost law enforcement.
- Call on US, EU, GCC and other countries to continue providing financial, military and humanitarian assistance to Lebanon to aid in post-war reconstruction, facilitate disarmament of Lebanese parties, and develop the economy.

To United States and European Union

- Make necessary efforts to prevent future hostilities by calling on Israel, Iran, Syria and Lebanon to reduce tensions in the region, and putting pressure on Israel to avoid resorting to force and halt its air and ground violation and provocations against Lebanon.

To the US, EU, Iran, Israel, and Arab countries

- Intensify efforts to ensure regional stability by engaging in bilateral or multilateral, direct or indirect talks and negotiations pertaining to the Arab-Israeli peace process, and reach an acceptable and equitable resolution to the conflicts between nations and parties.

- Be more conscious of Lebanon's fragility and complexity and conciliate between the Lebanese parties, rather than siding with one group against another. Encourage all parties to return to the national dialogue process in order to solve their internal disputes and stabilize the country.

Conclusion

Hizbollah's capture of two Israeli soldiers was the spark that ignited the war of July 2006. The underlying reasons were in the long conflict between Lebanon or Hizbollah and Israel. Hizbollah and Israel each had their initial objectives. Hizbollah's main goal became its survival, while Israel's goal was the elimination of Hizbollah. Each party made major efforts to achieve its objectives at any price, threatening Lebanon's stability and economy. Hizbollah celebrated its "divine victory" since it prevented the huge military machine of Israel from achieving its political goals. Hizbollah should not have considered itself victorious given the enormous damage to Lebanon. Israel's diplomatic gains may compensate for its political and military failures.

The implications of the war went beyond its geographic and domestic dimensions to regional and international ones. Israel has lost its ability to deter military operations in the region; probe committees were formed to investigate the shortcomings during the war, and Israelis wanted accountability for poor decision-making during the war, which resulted in resignations. At the same time, lessons were learned. Lebanon had no breathing space after the conflict for political pressures mounted from it. The aftermath of the war became a period of internal conflict and division. Amongst political parties, no one realized there was nothing left to gain. It appeared the Lebanese had not learned from their previous experiences of civil war and decades-long occupation, since they were moving toward a crisis, thereby offering Israel what it failed to achieve with its military capabilities.

In Palestine, as in Iraq, we see increasing tensions and violence, and the success of Hizbollah's tactics encourages further insurgency. Syria and Iran have proven that they can destabilize the region. They are trying to factor in Hizbollah's successes in their own struggles against America and Israel. Thus, Lebanon has become an arena of regional and international dispute.

Now it is clear that one of the purposes of the war was not Hizbollah itself, but a means to use Lebanon to pressure Syria and Iran and to avert an ongoing threat from Israeli borders in case the United States or Israel should attack the Iranian nuclear installations. However, any excess pressure on Lebanon is beyond its political capacity to endure. Further threats to its unity and stability, might lead to a new civil war, making it a new haven for terrorists and extremists. Is that in America's best interest? Probably not.

Finally, the deployment of a considerable number of UN and Lebanese troops on the borders could be a first step in controlling military operations across the Lebanon-Israel border. The proper and just implementation of the resolution 1701 would eliminate the arguments and justifications for any hostile acts. However, a long–term resolution to the interrelated crises within the Middle East, specifically in Lebanon, Palestine, and Iraq, dictates a direct dialogue between Iraq and Syria and Iran, and the resumption of the Arab-Israeli peace process. Such an approach would also help in achieving a global aim, the eradication of terrorism, and align with some of the recommendations of the Baker-Hamilton report, which went beyond Iraq.[119] Here is the pressing question, are the major players engaged in these various regional conflicts ready to compromise? The answer is simply no. Unless this situation changes, it is impossible to predict an end to hostilities, causalities, and damage, and any truce will be of a temporary nature. The need for a comprehensive regional solution depends on the "willingness of Washington and Israel to accept and digest the geo-political lessons of the war."[120] In the meantime, the July 2006 war proved again that, as Hajjar wrote in 2002, there is "No military solution to the menace of Hizbollah … such tactical measures will not resolve what is fundamentally a strategic problem [issue] and challenge to US Middle East policy."[121]

Endnotes

[1] Michel Sleiman, Lebanese Armed Forces Commander, "Order of the Day, no. 173," issued for Lebanon's Independence Day, 2006; available from http://www.lebarmy. gov.lb/article.asp?cat=2&ln=en; internet; accessed on 1 Dec 2006. The preceding comments were: Military men, make certain that your deployment along the length of the Lebanese maritime and land borders shelters the country from the winds of war that the Lebanese people endured for so long. This deployment likewise represents a strong motivation to accomplish the liberation of the remaining occupied lands in Shab'a farms, Kfar Shouba Hills and the town of Ghajar, reinforces domestic security and stability, and prepares the ground for drawing all citizens together, for exchanging ideas and reinforcing national unity. If it is impossible for a people suffering from domestic conflicts to liberate their land and safeguard their Independence…

[2] United Nations, Security Council, "Resolution 425," 19 March 1978; available from http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/368/70/IMG/NR036870.pdf?OpenElement; Internet; accessed 17 December 2006.

[3] Sami G. Hajjar, *Hizbollah: Terrorism, National Liberation, or Menace?* (Carlisle, PA: US Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, August 2002), 3.

[4] Ibid., 7.

[5] Ibid., 8.

[6] The Shab'a farms are the border area between Lebanon and Syria in the Golan Heights that is under Israeli occupation. The Blue Line along the Syrian occupied Golan Heights and Lebanon was based on the line separating the areas of operations of the U.N. Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and U.N. Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) in Golan Heights. These farms were occupied with Golan Heights during the Six-Days Arab-Israeli war in June 1967. For that, Israel considers it connected to UN Resolution 242 issued in 1967 after the war. The Israeli scholar, Dr. Asher Kaufman of the Truman Institute at the Hebrew University, reported on the basis of his research at the Cartographic Institute in Paris, that documents dating to the French Mandate period support Lebanon's claim to the land (Shab'a Farms). (Ibid., 19-25)

[7] Ibid., 33.

[8] Ibid., 17-18.

[9] Ibid., 26.

[10] Ibid., 22.

[11] Gary C. Gambill, "Implications of the Israel-Hezbollah War," *Mideast Monitor*, September-October 2006 [journal online]; available from http://www.mideastmonitor.org/issues /0609/ 0609_2.htm; Internet; accessed 3 November 2006.

[12] David Makovsky & Jeffrey White, *Lessons and Implications of the Israel-Hizballah War: A Preliminary Assessment* (Washington, D.C.: Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2006), 12; available from http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/pubPDFs/PolicyFocus60.pdf; Internet; accessed 3 November 2006.

[13] Amal Saad-Ghorayeb, *Hizbollah's Outlook in the Current Conflict: Part One: Motives, Strategies, and Objectives* (Washington, D.C.: *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, 2006), 1; available from http://www.carnegieendowment.org/files/ottaway_ghorayeb_final.pdf; Internet; accessed 21 August 2006.

[14] United Nations, Security Council, "Resolution 1559," 2 September 2004; available from http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N04/498/92/PDF/N0449892.pdf?OpenElement; Internet; accessed 13 March 2007. The main points of this Resolution are: (1) Reaffirms its call for the strict respect of the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity, and political independence of Lebanon under the sole and exclusive authority of the Government of Lebanon throughout Lebanon; (2) Calls upon all remaining foreign forces to withdraw from Lebanon; (3) Calls for the

disbanding and disarmament of all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias; (4) Supports the extension of the control of the Government of Lebanon over all Lebanese territory.

[15] In June 2005, two months after the Syrian withdrawal, a new parliament was elected. The Hariri (Future party)-Jumblat (Progressive Socialist party)-Geagea (Lebanese Forces Party) coalition gained 72 seats over 128. They were in agreement with the Shiite group against General Michel Aoun (Free Patriot Movement Party). In fact, the coalition was unable to gain this number without the Shiite votes. Today given the alliance between Aoun, Hizbollah (Shiite) and other groups, if a new parliamentary election were held the balance would alter in favor of the Aoun-Shiite (opposition). Consequently, the majority coalition refuses to move to early elections or to change the cabinet structure, because it would not enjoy the same strength of its majority.

[16] Saad-Ghorayeb, *Part One*, 2.

[17] Stephen Zunes, "How Washington Goaded Israel into War," 26 August 2006; available from http://www.antiwar.com/orig/zunes.php?articleid=9605; Internet; accessed 26 November 2006.

[18] Makovsky & White, 9.

[19] Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, trans. and introduction by Samuel B. Griffith (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), 77.

[20] Ze'ev Schiff, "Israel's war with Iran," *Foreign Affairs* 85 (November/December 2006): 23-31 [database on-line]; available from Wilson Omnifile; Internet; accessed 4 December 2006.

[21] Asher Susser, "The War in Lebanon and the New Middle East," *Rusi journal* 151 (August 2006). See also Zunes.

[22] Gambill.

[23] Makovsky & White, 43.

[24] Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*, edited and trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1989), 90.

[25] "Nasrallah: Build a strong State, then Discuss Arms," *The Daily Star*, 6 October 2006 [newspaper on-line]; available from http://www.dailystar.com.lb/article.asp?edition_id=75264 &categ_id=2; Internet; accessed 6 September 2006.

[26] Gambill.

[27] Shibley Telhami, "Lebanese Identity and Israeli Security in the Shadows of the 2006 War," *Current History* 106 (January 2007): 21 [database on-line]; available from ProQuest; accessed on 9 March 2007.

[28] Makovsky & White, 11.

[29] Aluf Benn, "PM: War in Lebanon was planned months in advance," *Haaretz*, 8 March 2007 [newspaper on-line]; available from http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/835044.html; Internet; accessed 9 March 2007.

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[34] "Nasrallah Wins the War," *The Economist*, 19 August 2006, 9.

[35] Ibid.

[36] Zeina Karam, "Israeli Troops Reach the Litani River," *ABC News International*, 12 August 2006 [newspaper on-line]; available from http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory?id= 2305375&CMP=OTC-RSSFeeds0312; Internet; accessed 12 August 2006.

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[38] Ibid.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Gambill.

[41] Dov Waxman, "Between Victory and Defeat: Israel after the War with Hizballah," *Washington Quarterly* 30 (Winter 2006-07): 28.

[42] Ibid.

[43] "Interview with Hassan Nasrallah," *New TV*, 27 August 2006. See also Gambill.

[44] Fahed al-Masri, "An Exclusive Interview with the French Author Renaud Girard," trans. by the author, *Elaph*, 7 January 2007 [journal on-line]; available from http://www.elaph.com/Elaph Web/Interview/2007/1/202386.htm; Internet; accessed 07January 2007.

[45] International Crisis Group, "Lebanon at a Tripwire," 21 December 2006; available from http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?l=1&id=4586; Internet; accessed 23 December 2006, 4.

[46] "The Army Has No Commander," *Haaretz*, 14 December 2006 [newspaper on-line]; available from http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/801432.html; Internet; accessed 14 December 2006.

[47] Karam.

[48] "Nasrallah Wins the War," 9.

[49] Ibid.

[50] "The Blame Game," *The Economist*, 19 August 2006, 43.

[51] Makovsky & White, 3.

[52] Amos Harel, "MI Official: Intelligence Work during the War Was Unprofessional," *Haaretz*, 7 January 2007 [newspaper on-line]; available from http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/810132.html; Internet; accessed 7 January 2007.

[53] "The Blame Game," 43.

[54] Harel.

[55] Gambill.

[56] Ibid.

[57] Peter W. Singer, "Mike Tyson and the Hornet's Nest: Military Lessons of the Lebanon Crisis," 1 August 2006; available from http://www.brookings.edu/ views/op-ed/fellows/singer 20060801.htm; Internet; accessed 18 September 2006.

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[59] Gambill.

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[62] "Nasrallah Wins the War," 9.

[63] "The Blame Game," 43.

[64] Paul Salem, "The Future of Lebanon," *Foreign Affairs* 85 (November/December 2006): 13-22 [database on-line]; available from Wilson Omnifile; accessed 4 December 2006.

[65] Edward P. Djerejian, "From Conflict Management to Conflict Resolution," *Foreign Affairs* 85 (November/December 2006): 41-48 [database on-line]; available from Wilson Omnifile; Internet; accessed 4 December 2006.

[66] Salem.

[67] "Divided Lebanon," *The Economist*, 19 August 2006, 41.

[68] Amnesty International, "Israel/Lebanon: Deliberate Destruction or 'Collateral damage'?," 10 August 2006; available from http://web.amnesty.org/library/index/engmde180072006; Internet; accessed 19 September 2006.

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[70] Ibid.

[71] "US Admits Israel 'Likely' Broke Rules on Cluster Bombs," *The Daily Star*, 30 January 2007 [newspaper on-line]; available from http://www.dailystar.com.lb/article.asp?art_id=79070 &cat_id=2; Internet; accessed 1 February 2007.

[72] International Crisis Group, "Lebanon at a Tripwire," 6.

[73] United Nations, "Charter of the United Nations," 26 June 1945; available from http://www. un.org/aboutun/charter/; Internet; accessed 20 March 2007.

[74] Ibid.

[75] "PM Saniora's 7-Point Plan," 3 August 2006; available from http://www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/ Front/TextOnly?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1153392753889&t o=true; Internet; accessed 15 August 2006. The plan called for an immediate and comprehensive cease-fire and a declaration of agreement on the following issues: (1) An undertaking to release the Lebanese and Israeli prisoners and detainees through the ICRC; (2) The withdrawal of the Israeli army behind the Blue Line, and the return of the displaced to their villages; (3) A commitment from the Security Council to place the Shab'a Farms area and the Kfar Shouba Hills under UN jurisdiction until border delineation and Lebanese sovereignty over them are fully settled. While in UN custody, the area will be accessible to Lebanese property owners there. Further, Israel surrenders all remaining landmine maps in South Lebanon to the UN; (4) The Lebanese government extends its authority over its territory through its own legitimate armed forces, such that there will be no weapons or authority other than that of the Lebanese state as stipulated in the Taef national reconciliation document; (5) The UN international force, operating in South Lebanon, is supplemented and enhanced in numbers, equipment, mandate and scope of operation, as needed, in order to undertake urgent humanitarian and relief work and guarantee stability and security in the south so that those who fled their homes can return; (6) The UN, in cooperation with the relevant parties, undertakes the necessary measures to once again put into effect the Armistice Agreement signed by Lebanon and Israel in 1949, and to insure adherence to the provisions of that agreement, as well as to explore possible amendments to or development of said provisions, as necessary; (7) The international community commits to support Lebanon on all levels, and to assist it in facing the tremendous burden resulting from the human, social and economic tragedy, which has afflicted the country, especially in the areas of relief, reconstruction and rebuilding of the national economy.

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[77] International Crisis Group, "Lebanon at a Tripwire," 3.

[78] Ibid.

[79] The international tribunal was formed in December 2005 by UN Resolution 1644 to prosecute those responsible for the killing of FPM Rafiq Al-Hariri. (Ibid.).

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[82] Gambill.

[83] Makovsky & White, 24.

[84] "The Blame Game," 43

[85] Ibid.

[86] "Nasrallah Wins the War," 9

[87] Susser.

[88] Makovsky & White, 28-30.

[89] Telhami, 22.

[90] Mohammed Badir, "The Largest Israeli Maneuver… in Preparation for a 'War on the Northern Front'," trans. by the Author, *Al-Akhbar*, 12 January 2007 [newspaper on-line]; available from http://www.al-akhbar.com/ar/taxonomy/term/14%2C13061; Internet; accessed 12 January 2007.

[91] Makovsky and White, 25.

[92] "The Army Has No Commander".

[93] Makovsky and White, 24.

[94] "Dan Halutz' Letter of Resignation as IDF Chief of Staff," *Haaretz*; 17 January 2007 [newspaper on-line]; available from http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/814313.html; Internet accessed 17January 2007.

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[98] Susser.

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[100] Makovsky & White, 27.

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[104] Gambill.

[105] Nahum Barnea, "Israel vs. Hizbollah," *Foreign Policy* (November/ December 2006): 27 [database on-line]; available from Wilson Omnifile; accessed 4 December 2006.

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[109] Toni Abi Najem, "The Resolution 1701: Does it Establish a Final Solution to the Lebanese Crisis," trans. by the Author, *Annahar*, 19 September 2006, 1.

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[113] Ibid.

[114] Gambill.

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