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# The Diplomatic Maneuver

**A Winning Strategy to Sustain Israel's Cold Wars with Hamas and Hezbollah**

Gilad Raik



HARVARD Kennedy School

**BELFER CENTER**

for Science and International Affairs

RECANATI-KAPLAN FELLOW PAPER

AUGUST 2016



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**Cover photo:** Israeli Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman walks under a screen showing him and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu during the inauguration of their election campaign in Jerusalem, Dec. 25, 2012. (AP Photo/Dan Balilty, File)

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## About the Author

**Gilad Raik** is a Recanati-Kaplan Fellow at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs at Harvard Kennedy School. Prior to joining the Center, Gilad served as Department Director at Israeli Prime Minister's office, and as an Intelligence officer at Israel Defense Forces. He holds a Bachelor Degree Magna Cum Laude in Political Science and Art from Tel Aviv University.



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A man in a dark suit and tie is walking from left to right in the foreground. Behind him is a large, brightly lit screen displaying a close-up, high-contrast image of a man's face, likely Benjamin Netanyahu. The screen's image is partially obscured by the man in the foreground. The overall scene appears to be an inauguration or a formal event.

Israeli Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman walks under a screen showing him and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu during the inauguration of their election campaign in Jerusalem, Dec. 25, 2012. (AP Photo/Dan Balilty, File)





## Executive Summary

It is quite Ironical that much has been written about asymmetric war, but little has been devoted to build a mechanism to avoid or end such cycles of violence, in non-kinetic ways.

The tools both sides have today are not sustainable and effective enough to prevent or end a military conflict. The international players today will not be faster in their reaction than they were in the Second Lebanon War, which lasted 33 days, or the last war in the Gaza Strip (“Protective Edge”), which lasted 51 days.

It is in Israel’s best interest to create mechanisms that will ensure a quick end to an intensive war should it break out. Even if a “Third Lebanon War” or another “Gazan War” were to break out, it would still be in Hezbollah’s and Hamas’s best interest to safeguard their sovereignty and to maintain their military capacity the day after the war. This is why all players need to seek direct channels, mostly clandestine, and also to establish in advance an effective clandestine international mechanism that would be agreed to and trusted by both sides before any military conflict takes place. Such a mechanism would serve both sides’ common interests and bridge the big gaps between all parties’ propaganda and psychological warfare that plays a major role in this conflict.

**Israel’s adoption of this new creative thinking can be defined as the Diplomatic Maneuver.**

# Prologue

The black Suburban car was making its way through the curves of the winding road between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem when the cell phone in a shelter in Beirut rang: “*Ahalan Ya Sid Hassan, Kif el-Khal*” the General Director opens, letting the other side add his greetings. “*I listened to your speech at the Annual Martyr’s Memorial Day earlier today and I wish to thank you for keeping the mutual deterrence between the two of us alive and as strong as it has been the last decade. I believe that your policy of deterrence secures both societies in Lebanon and Israel. If you just could mitigate some of the Jihadist expressions and avoid some of the pejorative words that are irritating to the Israeli ears that would be perfect*”. The General Director of the Mossad- the Central Intelligence Agency in Israel could not restrain himself and added the last sentence, knowing it is inherent in the resistance approach that Sid Hassan is leading. “*Tislam Ya Sidi, please tell your Prime Minister and Defense Minister, that if they even think on planning some kind of operation in Lebanon they will find themselves as their predecessors Olmert and Sharon- In jail or six feet under*”.

**This Imaginary conversation cannot happen today.** Hassan Nasrallah, the head of Hezbollah terrorist group in Lebanon is not an Israeli agent and would not talk to the Israeli spy master directly. The Head of the Mossad would not engage with an arch terrorist who calls to demolish Israel. However, this fictional conversation highlights the current mutual deterrence between Israel and Hezbollah, and the need for mutual understanding in non-violent channels.

This paper analyzes the way Israel is mitigating the threats from its two permanent opponents, Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas in Gaza, highlighting the mutual deterrence and the weak understanding between the sides. This paper also emphasizes the importance of non-military capabilities in times of “Frenemies”, when countries can be at the same time allies and enemies. The paper suggests to build channels between the different sides to sustain a cold war, mitigate the risk of miscalculations and avoid kinetic clashes. The paper’s title—“**The Diplomatic Maneuver**”—refers to the vast sphere of non-kinetic actions in the fields of covert and overt security diplomacy, economics, law enforcements, public campaigns,



**information warfare, and psychological warfare that are essential parts of any strategic plan, alongside a corresponding military maneuver.**

This paper is the result of my one-year fellowship as a Recanati-Kaplan Fellow in the Belfer Center for Science and International affairs at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government. The paper is off-record and based on many interviews, discussions, and meetings with dozens of leaders in the diplomatic sphere, Intelligence community, and academia.

## Israel In the Grey Zone

During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the literature of war and peace evolved from traditional state-to-state war to guerilla war and then to asymmetric war. However, there is a vast range of conflict between these well-understood poles where we struggle to respond effectively. Since the First Lebanese War in 1982<sup>1</sup> all military campaigns that Israel conducted were of limited operations and not inclusive wars. The enemy also changed from sovereign states such as Egypt, Syria, and Jordan to terror organizations that evolved into ideological jihadist semi-state players such as Hezbollah and Hamas. But, Israel's Defense Doctrine remains largely based upon the elements set-tled by its first Prime Minister, David Ben Gurion, in 1949<sup>2</sup>. That strategy basically presumes that the status quo situation for Israel is a state of war, and in order to secure itself, Israel needs to create deterrence that will be based on: (1) decisive wins of inclusive wars which would create deterrence that could be expected to last about a decade; (2) short wars that preserve the Israeli economy and society; and (3) conducting wars on enemy territory vice Israeli soil. Unfortunately today most of Ben Gurion's doctrine is not relevant- Israel is struggling to mitigate challenges that enemies such as Hezbollah and Hamas pose. The cycles of violence are becoming more frequent, lasting longer, and ending without a decisive win<sup>3</sup>.

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1 and arguably since 1973 as the First Lebanese War began as a deterrence operation that then emerged into an inclusive war with the Israeli occupation of Lebanon

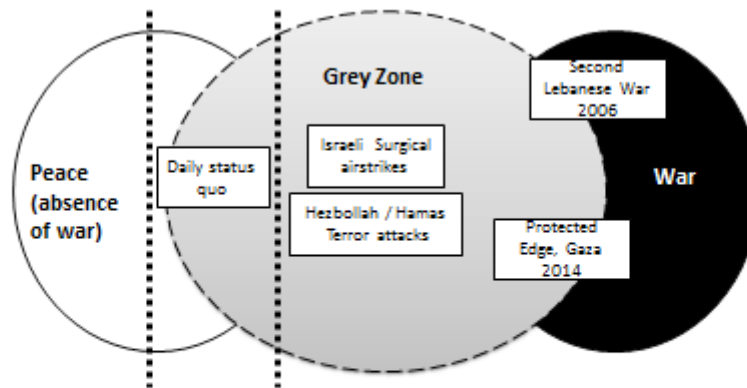
2 In that manner Israel is similar to the U.S where its National Security Architecture is based on the National Security Act of 1947.

3 Ofer Shelah, Dare to Win- A security Policy for Israel, Miskal, Tel-Aviv, 2015.

While the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) themselves are a leading military service in the world possessing the ability to adapt new strategies and tactics to confront challenges – the Military Maneuver - the Diplomatic Maneuver components are still underdeveloped, and little has been devoted to the creating of exit strategies and shaping the post-kinetic environment.

For the last 30 years, Israel has been operating in a Grey Zone of security challenges. The Grey Zone can be defined as **hostile interactions with non-state actors that fall between traditional war and peace extremes. Grey Zone challenges rise above normal, everyday peacetime geo-political competitions and are aggressive, perspective-dependent, and ambiguous**<sup>4</sup>. Israel has well developed vocabulary, doctrine, and tools to describe and handle war and peace, but the Grey Zones challenges, in between, defy easy categorization. Israel can improve its ability to operate effectively in the Grey Zones between war and peace, by reshaping its national security architecture and devoting more resources to the non-lethal tools of these conflicts. **Grey Zone** challenges are not new- but they offer new lenses to examine the security challenges that Israel is facing.

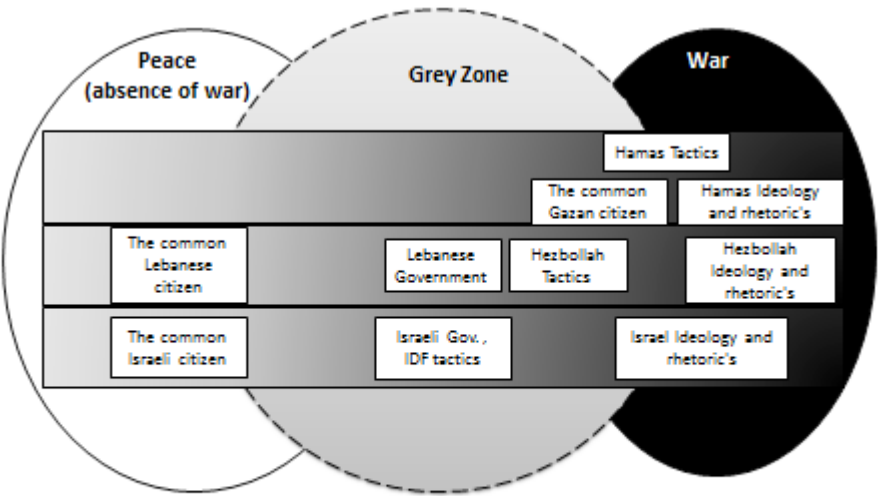
Figure 1: **Grey Zone Security Challenges in Israel**



4 "The Grey Zones"; Capt. Philip Kpusta, in "Special Warfare", Vol.28, Issue 4, October-December 2015.

There are different levels of aggression in the Grey Zone. Low-Intensity Conflicts, Asymmetric Warfare, and Military Deterrence Operations, exemplify extreme aggression inside the Grey Zone, falling only little short of the black zone of war. Israel has employed too many of these operations during the last decades. Less extreme aggressive methods, such as Israeli surgical airstrike or random terror attacks by Hezbollah and Hamas, are still parts of the military maneuver of both sides, but they can be better contained.

Figure 2: **Participant Perspectives of the Status-Quo in the Grey Zone**



The Grey Zone also allows us to better map the **different perspectives** of the players and their incentives, and to then predict and confront their next steps. For example, the common citizen from Tel-Aviv, just like his fellow Beirut citizen, enjoys the status quo almost as if there was peace, while the common Gazan citizen suffers the siege as an existential threat, and therefore, justifies military resistance rooted deeply in the black zone of war.



# From Grey Zone to a Cold War

While Grey Zone challenges are common to other western powers such as the U.S., Russia, and France, what is unique to Israel's conflict with Hezbollah and Hamas is the added layer of **ideology**. The ideology of Hezbollah and Hamas is characterized by the Islamist-Jihadist ideology of demolishing the state of Israel. From the Israeli side, there are the sub textual Ideologies of not recognizing the existence of the non-state actors<sup>5</sup>, avoiding dialog with terror organizations, and adopting **binary definitions of enemy and friend**<sup>6</sup>. This added layer of ideology causes both sides to reject the option of negotiated peace. This ideology layer changes the Grey Zone into a new local Cold War. The following three terms help to understand the strategic dilemma of sustaining this Cold War and avoiding a hot war: **Deterrence, Rules of the Game, and Bargaining**.

**Deterrence**- There are basically two ways to prevent war: by eliminating the sources of conflict, or by rendering the use of arms so unattractive that an adversary would rather tolerate existing conflicts or frustrations than start a war<sup>7</sup>. Israel, Hezbollah and Hamas are facing the obstacle of ideology and cannot eliminate the source of the conflict. Exceptional are the cases of “**Situational Deterrence**” where Israel, Hezbollah, and Hamas are all using a variety of tools to signal the price of war to the adversary in order to avoid escalation of a specific incident. But, most of these tools are military ones.

**Deterrence may prevent war for a long time, but if deep hostilities and the roots of sharp conflict persist, continued reliance on deterrence cannot foreclose all avenues that might lead to war.** The success of deterrence depends on whether the many individuals who hold the keys to war and peace think coherently- or think at all- about how fighting, if started, would come to an end<sup>8</sup>.

5 Daniel Serwer, Professor and Director Conflict Management, Johns Hopkins School of advanced international studies, in a conversation with the author, March 2016.

6 Tamir Dean Pardu (Former Head of the Mossad, 2011-2016), in a conversation with the author, May 2016.

7 Fred Charles Ikle, Every War Must End- Second Revised Edition, Columbia University Press, New York, 2005, pp. 108.

8 Fred Charles Ikle, Every War Must End- Second Revised Edition, Columbia University Press, New York, 2005, pp. 118.

Thus, deterrence alone is not enough to prevent war, especially between state and non-state actors. Less clearly recognized and discussed is the way to end a war and to have a strategic plan for the day after the war. Many wars have been started with only the most nebulous expectations regarding the outcome on the strength of plans that paid little, if any, attention to the ending. Most wars have begun inadvertently, without any plan at all for the aftermath.

**Rules of the Game-** *“If indeed war should break out, then it would not be in our power to stop it, for such is the logic of war. I have participated in two wars and know that war ends when it has rolled through cities and villages everywhere sowing death and destruction”*<sup>9</sup>. With this blunt language Nikita Khrushchev the leader of the Soviet Union at the time, warned that if the U.S. and Russia should become embroiled in a war, their governments would no longer be able to control the conflict.<sup>10</sup> As a real life expression of the fictional phone call between Nasrallah and the Head of the Israeli Mossad at the beginning of this paper, this quote highlights the need to create non-military **rules of the game** and to have some **channels of communication** between the sides.

Indeed, when we investigate **the relationship between Israel and Hezbollah under the leadership of Hasan Nasrallah in the last quarter of a century, most of the time, both sides were operating under some kind of agreed understanding**. At first, these understandings were oral (1993, after “Operation Accountability”), then written but not signed (1996, after Operation “Grapes of Wrath”), and then written and signed as a UNSC resolution (2006, after the Second Lebanon War). As it is well detailed and described in the impressive academic work of Daniel Sobelman<sup>11</sup>, Israel and Hezbollah agreed to certain rules of the game and improved the clarity of these understandings along the way. So it goes with Hamas, even in more complicated ways, as Israel feels obligated to take care of the basic needs of the people in Gaza, seeing Gaza as part of the Palestinian

9 Khrushchev’s letter to John F. Kennedy, on October 26, 1962, as was quoted by Robert F. Kennedy; *Thirteen Days: A memoir of the Cuban Missile Crisis*, New York, W. W. Norton. 1969)

10 Fred Charles Ikle, *Every War Must End- Second Revised Edition*, Columbia University Press, New York, 2005, pp. 106.

11 Daniel Sobelman, “Managing conflict between state and a non-state actor using the rules of the game: the relationship between Israel and Hezbollah 1993-2006”, Thesis for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Hebrew University, Jerusalem, 2014.

Authority. Therefore, Israel deals with Hamas representatives from the Gaza civil and governmental institutions on a daily basis, while at the same time disrupting Hamas's military activity. Both sides watch and interpret each other's behavior, each aware that its own actions are being interpreted, each, acting with consciousness of the expectations it creates. The result is the paradoxical regression in which I know that he knows that I know, etc.<sup>12</sup>

This is a classic example where both sides play by the **rules of a game in an interdependent relationship between players who do not communicate directly in diplomatic channels**. This situation is characterized by **suspicion** and **uncertainty** while both players are trying to set the expectations and use evident rules to mitigate the risks of miscalculations. In the long term, when both sides are keeping to these rules, as Israel and Hezbollah have done over the last 25 years, the sides are practically playing in the area of **"Nash Equilibrium" Theory**: where two players have high levels of clarity and stability in their relationship without direct communication.<sup>13</sup>

**Bargaining-** Finally, it is essential to mention **Thomas Schelling Bargaining Theory**, which finds room to bargain in security conflicts between two players, based on the presumption that both sides, although enemies with contradictory interests and goals, can also **find mutual interests and goals in order to avoid an action that both sides see as dangerous**.<sup>14</sup> In the Military Maneuver, the bargaining is usually violent<sup>15</sup>. **The Diplomatic Maneuver adds secret bargaining, covert diplomacy, economic sanctions, and international law as new and less violent fields of bargaining.**

Both Israel and Hezbollah share the objective of keeping peace and security in south Lebanon and Israel. This has been true for the last decade and, arguably, even since the May 2000 withdrawal of Israel from southern Lebanon. Other mutual interests for Israel and Hezbollah are the fighting against ISIS and some kind of stability in Lebanon and Syria. Whenever

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12 Graham Allison and Philip zelikow, *ESSENCE OF DECISION- Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* Second Edition, Addison-Wesley Educational Publishers Inc., 1999.

13 Drew Fudenberg, Jean Tirole, *Game Theory* (Cambridge, Mass.: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1991), pp. 11-14.

14 Thomas C. Schelling, *The Strategy of Conflict* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1963), pp. 3-5.

15 Lior Avni, Violent Bargaining between a state and non-state actors- Israel and Hezbollah 1993-1996, in *Politics*, vol.21, Summer 2012, pp. 4-33.



other competing objectives are risking mutual goals (objectives such as the Iranian nuclear program, The Palestinian question, political pressure etc.) local events that are misinterpreted by one of the sides can become strategic threats to equilibrium.

## Getting Past Ideology: the Implementation of the Diplomatic Maneuver

In his remarkable series of books on negotiation, William Ury, co-director of the Global Negotiation Project, at Harvard University, urges players to “get past no”. When investigating the roots of “no” in the Israel-Hezbollah and Israel-Hamas relationships, one eventually confronts ideology- as was illustrated in the previous chapter. After realizing that **there is vast room for bargaining in the conflicts**, it is helpful to bring new ideas to manage the conflict from the field of Negotiation Science. We can describe the Grey Zone as both sides’ ZOPA (Zone Of Possible Agreement) and the Black Zone of War as the BATNA (Best Alternative To No Agreement). Using this scale, we can see, once again, that it is insufficient to only make war as a non-attractive BATNA. It is necessary to also develop and practice the ZOPA, even when the agreement is oral or not signed.

Every intelligence officer knows that the basic rule of assessing and mitigating a threat from the adversary is to know the adversary’s incentives, intentions, and capabilities. However, in order to maintain equilibrium, the strategist should adopt many other tools of the negotiator. These other tools include focusing on the adversary’s difficulties and helping the other side to build a golden bridge<sup>16</sup>, all in order to avoid escalation. One such bridge, for example, can be a secret channel to message the adversary.

**Better cooperation between the intelligence officer, the strategist, and the diplomat can create better outcomes in building and maintain such channels.**

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<sup>16</sup> William Ury, *Getting Past No- Negotiating in difficult situations*, Bantam Dell, New York, New York, March 2007, pp. 105-129.

While most negotiation studies deal with the strategies and tactics around the table, James Sebenius and David Lax focused on designing the setup for **negotiating away from the table**. We can find much relevance in their “**3D Negotiation**” theory for the Israeli case where both players avoid sitting at the same table. The 3D Negotiation Theory focuses on two aspects of the deal. The theory’s so-called second dimension is **Deal Design**, which can **create value, often unexpectedly**, for both sides.<sup>17</sup> The third dimension is **Deal Set Up**, which takes place entirely away from the table to create the **optimum condition to de-conflict** well before the tactical interplay begins. “Setting the Table” means acting to ensure that the **right parties** have been involved, in the **right sequences**, to deal with the **right issues** that engage the **right set of interests**; doing it at the right table, at the **right time**, under the **right expectations**, and facing the **right consequences** of walking away if there is no deal<sup>18</sup>.

Indeed, there are enough smart people in the intelligence community (IC) and outside, working at the drawing board, who can **discover hidden sources of value that lead to better understandings with the other side**. The savvy intelligence officer and his peers in the other governmental offices and academia, must invoke notions of creativity, invention, and fresh thinking. They should be guided by deep understanding of the adversary and potent underlying deal-design principles. In order to achieve a deal which avoids war, those with the power to start a war must first expect that the ending would be worse than what their nation would have to concede or tolerate to preserve the status quo. Those leaders must then allow the professional institutions enough room to establish a wide and secure Grey Zone where they can operate, creating the de-facto feeling of nearly white-zone.

The first step that Israel should take to achieve peaceful operation in the Grey Zone is to **avoid the ideology and rhetoric of enemy or friend and widen the possibilities of working with “Frenemies”**.<sup>19</sup> While the defense establishment in Israel is already well engaged in such thinking,

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17 David A. Lax and James K. Sebenius, “3-D Negotiation- Powerful Tools to Change the Game in Your Most Important Deals”, Harvard Business School Press, Boston, Massachusetts, 2006, pp. 10-11.

18 Ibid, pp. 12.

19 Tamir Dean Pardu (Former Head of the Mossad, 2011-2016), in a conversation with the author, May 2016.

it is yet to be adopted as a new security doctrine. Israel could find mutual interest not only with Saudi Arabia and the Sunni countries but also with Iran and Hezbollah, if they could communicate directly, circumventing the ideology of hate. In the absence of regional or international institutions that can mitigate conflicts in the Middle East, the different players have to find bilateral channels to signal and communicate. **Here the intelligence community and the diplomats play a large role, because of their ability to build understanding on both sides:** their own decision makers and politicians and those of their adversaries. The former involves making sure that the leadership understands the consequences of war by assessing not only the enemy's intentions and capacities but also their own national capacities that may be at risk: delving into the incentives of the other side and trying to describe the options that exist the day after war. The latter involves monitoring and signaling the enemy as to the wide options of the ZOPA, even by sometimes helping the other side write their victory speech.<sup>20</sup>

**The Whole of Government-** The second step to achieve peaceful operation in the Grey Zone is to create synergy in the whole of government. As separate Israeli agencies strive to achieve their individual organizational goals, they seldom act in integrated ways to support wider governmental objectives, and even when they do so, the results often are local and short-term. Israel has to build a new National Security Architecture that must be responsive, integrated, and adaptable. The new architecture will be based on the current entities with new division of responsibilities and new abilities. The main challenge is to grow non-military capabilities and to allow room for non-lethal tools to be part of the solution.<sup>21</sup> **The role of the intelligence community is to remind the leadership that defense is risk-management on a long-term scale<sup>22</sup>.** While top secret breaking news often drives policy, **it is the intelligence community's role to “get on the**

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20 William Ury, *Getting Past No- Negotiating in difficult situations*, Bantam Dell, New York, New York, March 2007, pp. 105-129.

21 Dan Meridor, Former Israeli Deputy Prime Minister, in series of conversations with the author, November 2015.

22 Michel Hayden, Former Head of CIA (2006-2009), NSA (1999-2005), in a conversation with the author, May 2016.



**balcony**<sup>23</sup>, **party with other players**, and **allow the decision makers in the leadership the ability to design long term campaigns**. In order to do so the Intelligence community has to work closely with its liaisons: building trust that allows the counterparts to work together to establish a wider variety of tools to weaken the extremist elements inside Hezbollah and Hamas<sup>24</sup>. At the same time, the intelligence community should establish mechanisms that bridge between Israel and the moderate elements of the adversary, as they are **not a monolith**. While some parts of the intelligence community must support the Military Maneuver by **targeting** the enemy and creating decisive effects on the enemy's military capabilities, other parts of the intelligence community should focus on crafting effective information warfare, psychological warfare, and building databases and channels for diplomacy.

Intelligence has to serve tools other than targeting. The ability to sanitize intelligence and use it in real time for publicity or diplomatic needs on a daily basis, during a war, is crucial to influence the international arena and end war faster and more successfully<sup>25</sup>. Bilateral intelligence cooperation- both in the operational dimension and in the diplomatic dimension- can help Israel create opportunities to find better alternatives to war and to **adapt different vocabulary** from business, negotiation science, technology, or other fields.

Today, Israel's Grey Zone actions are overly militarized because the Israeli Defense Forces have the greatest capabilities and resources and therefore are often the default Israeli government answer<sup>26</sup>. By mapping the Grey Zone area and by adding the capabilities of the Diplomatic Maneuver, Israel can gain a new lens that allows it to see the bigger picture and provide the opportunity to achieve more favorable outcomes in these conflicts. Israel must grow its non-military capabilities. Having more institutional

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23 The metaphor of the balcony is borrowed from Professor Ronald Heifetz, who uses it in his courses on Leadership at Harvard Kennedy School of Government, which I participated in January 2016. It highlights the need to zoom-out, leave the "dancing floor" where the activity is happening and watch it from the balcony to better analyze, assess and implement the change needed".

24 Michel Morell, Former acting Director of the CIA, in a conversation with the author, October 2015.

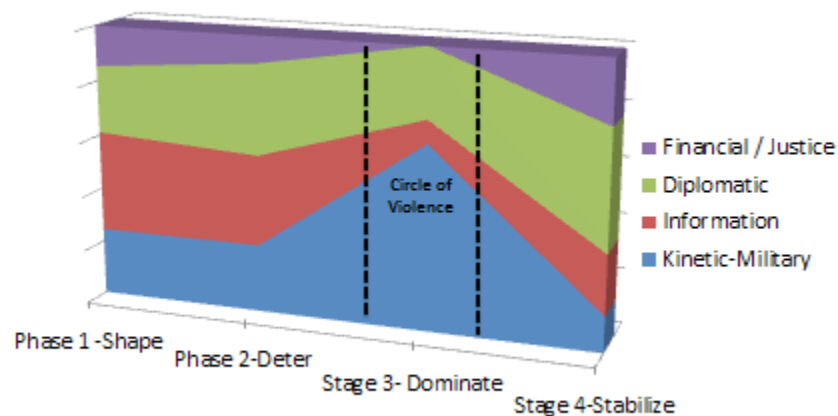
25 Dan Meridor, Former Israeli Deputy Prime Minister, in series of conversations with the author, November 2015.

26 Once again, the Israeli dependence on the IDF finds similarity in the U.S dependence on the D.O.D as the most resourced and organized entity, which is usually the default U.S government answer to different crises.

capabilities in the fields of information warfare, covert and overt diplomacy and economics, will avoid predictable binary responses.

The variety of non-lethal tools, when arranged under a governmental directory that integrates the capabilities of the different agencies, will enable Israel to design a “Soft Campaign” as described in **Joseph Nye’s Theory of “Soft Power”**. Nye claims that when dealing with terror organizations and non-state actors, it is necessary to integrate Soft Power capabilities alongside Hard Power. “Soft Power” is based on the ability to influence political agenda in a way that designs the adversaries’ preferences.<sup>27</sup>

Figure 3: **The Diplomatic Maneuver: The Whole of Government Approach at the Stages of War**



In Military Literature it is usual to characterize four stages for wartime. The first stage is the peaceful period; the second is escalation; the third is armed conflict; and the fourth is the day after war.<sup>28</sup> When applying this to Israeli cases vis-a-vis Hezbollah and Hamas, the first phase is the current status-quo; the second phase is the time of tension and escalation—usually

27 Joseph S. Nye, Jr., “Hard War, Soft Power, and the War on Terrorism.” In David Held and Mathias Koenig-Archibugi (eds.) *American Power in the Twenty-First Century* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004), pp. 124-131.

28 In recent studies in the U.S military literature there are suggestion to add 2 phases- 0, and 5 to highlight the importance of the pre-war preparation and the necessity of the enabling of civil authority in the day after the war- all are lessons from the recent wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. A good example can be found in the new study of Antulio J. Echevarria II, “OPERATING IN THE GREY ZONE: AN ALTERNATIVE PARADIGM FOR U.S MILITARY STRATEGY, Strategic Studies Institute and U.s Army War College Press, April 2006.

as a result of some incident or competing interest that jeopardizes the equilibrium; the third phase occurs when deterrence fails and the cycle of violence erupts and usually includes deterrence military operation; the fourth phase is the new understanding the day after the war that creates a new status-quo.

The “Whole of Government” approach enables Israel to operate in new spheres that were unoccupied until now. Parallel to the Military-kinetic effort, there should be an information campaign, which supports both the Military and the Diplomatic Maneuvers. The latter includes both the overt and covert **security diplomacy** tools, alongside financial and justice tools based on international law – all intended to shape the agenda and the preferences of the adversary and the international community. As seen in Figure 3, the Military-kinetic effort dominates the third phase while the Diplomatic Maneuver efforts dominate all the other stages and operate in parallel to the military in the third phase, shaping strategic readiness and outcomes of the conflict.

This approach can also highlight the need to plan, design and then implement quick and successful **exit points** to end a war, and focus **on the day after the war (phase 4)**. There is also the need to shape the new status quo based on the strategic diplomatic and security objectives and on the decisive military outcome<sup>29</sup>. In order to implement these plans, in time of war, it is vitally importance to redesign the **“Choice Architecture” of the Leadership Decision Making Process, which means to have an accountable decision making process that helps the bureaucracy to design different options, and the leaders to choose the best option**<sup>30</sup>.

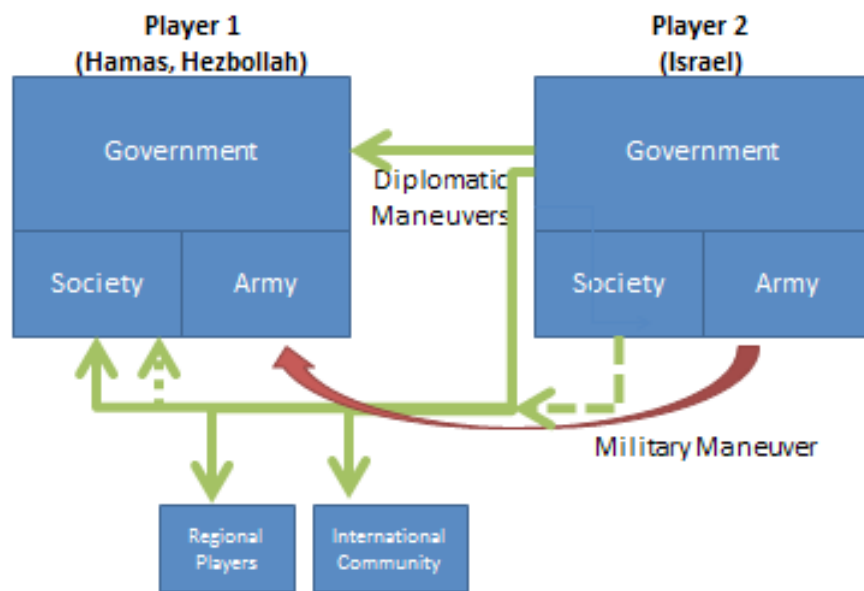
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29 Stephen Hadley, Former National Security Advisor 2005-2009, in a conversation with the author, March 2016.

30 There is a whole vast field of decision-making process that is led at the Harvard Kennedy School by Professor **Jennifer Lerner** and has great relevance to the decision of entering a war or ending it. This paper will not attend this fascinating field.



Figure 4: **The Diplomatic Maneuver: The Whole of Government Efforts in a Military Conflict**



The third step to achieve peaceful operation in the Grey Zone is **specialization**- being good at one type of conflict or in a particular arena (as with Hezbollah) does not necessarily mean Israel is good at another type (as with Hamas). The fundamentally different approaches required to do both well necessitate specialization. The intelligence community, working together with other governmental offices and international partners, should map precisely the incentives, plans, and capabilities of the enemy. Specialization is essential for the design of both the Military and the Diplomatic Maneuvers. By asking the right questions- for example- “what will make Nasrallah seek a ceasefire?” - Israel can better craft its military capabilities and its diplomatic tools to help end a war. This allows Israel to address the question of “who are the right people in the right place at the right time” that can help set up the environment for such a deal, based on the 3D Negotiation theory mentioned earlier. The process of making the other side adopt your ideas, but framed as his own interests, is the highest level of this craftwork and can only be achieved by setting up the diplomatic maneuver in advance, prior to the breakout of war.

The Military Maneuver tries to pressure the population and decision makers of the adversary by bombing civilian infrastructures, but the human and political price of such actions are high and the outcomes can be counter-productive. By Integrating other parts of the government to take part in a strategic effort and by specialization in different fields of expertise, the Diplomatic Maneuver also designates resources to influence not only the enemy's military wing but also its government and society.

Specialization in the Diplomatic Maneuver can accomplish these effects with psychological warfare and information warfare to influence the enemy's society and decision makers (as seen in figure 4 in green lines). When psychological warfare and information warfare are integrated with active diplomacy they initiate creative and cautious efforts to approach the different actors; the enemy, the regional players, international players, international public opinion, and the international legal institutes.<sup>31</sup> The recent conflicts are becoming more societal in the way the different structures of the society are involved in the social dimensions of the war, especially in the web and local communities. The Diplomatic Maneuver should allow space for **non-governmental players**, the high-tech industry, and the social networks, to take part in the **societal warfare** and to influence international public opinion and the adversary's society (refer to the dotted green lines in Figure 4).

Some examples<sup>32</sup> for non-violent tools are: using propaganda – such as true stories of Lebanese villages and civilians abused by Hezbollah for launching rockets; letting the international and Arab media learn of the Israeli soldier story during battle; countering the enemy's propaganda; and covert diplomacy - that is finding channels to communicate with Hezbollah leadership. Other peaceful tools are influence through information warfare, clandestine operations alongside **societal warfare activity in the web, media, and other society spheres**. And a final tool is the use of **economic sanctions as a successful diplomatic tool** against individuals, groups, and countries. All the above comprise the tip of the iceberg of **integrated operations in the Diplomatic Maneuver**.

31 Emile Simpson, Ernest May Fellow in History and Policy, International Security Program, Belfer Center, Harvard Kennedy School of Government, in conversation with the author, March 2016.

32 **This paper focuses in highlighting the need and laying the foundations for Diplomatic Maneuver and the examples here are only the tip of the iceberg, which I hope will facilitate future works.**

The specialization process enables Israel to attract **new conditional partners and to better cooperate with its long-time partners**. As for the summer of 2016, new partners in the northern front can be, for example, Russia, which is heavily operating in Syria with close relationships with both Hezbollah and Iran. In the southern front against Hamas, the new partners may be Turkey, the Gulf States, or even some kind of Israeli-Sunni cooperation to mitigate a crisis in Gaza<sup>33</sup>. As for old partners, Israel should consider sharing with the U.S. its strategic plans and goals for a potential war against Hezbollah or Hamas, allowing the U.S. to process this in advance and to devote efforts to support the plans prior to and during a war<sup>34</sup>. Leaving aside the political controversy around the first Lebanese war in 1982, that conflict is a striking example of the way the Israeli Defense Minister Ariel Sharon worked closely with the U.S. Department of Defense from September 1981 through June 1982 to convince the administration of the necessity of the war and his goals and plans for the first stages before it became an inclusive war.<sup>35</sup> In order for the U.S. to be an effective partner, Israel should share in advance its strategic plans, create channels of discussions not only between the Israeli and American intelligence communities and militaries, but also, the Israeli government (Defense Ministry, Foreign Ministry, Treasury Ministry) and the corresponding entities of the American administration (White-House, NSC, DOD, State Department, Treasury, The Departments of Justice and Home Land Security). This should be done in advance in order to designate P.O.C's and build trust to craft an affective mechanism when needed.<sup>36</sup>

33 Prince Sultan Ibn Al Saud, in a conversation with the author, February 2016.

34 Ambassador Wendy R. Sherman, Under Secretary of State 2009-2013, non-resident Senior Fellow at Harvard Kennedy School's Belfer Center, in conversation with the author, November 2015.

35 Chuck Freilich, former deputy national security adviser in Israel, International Security Program senior fellow at the Harvard Kennedy School's Belfer Center, in series of conversations with the author, February-May 2016.

36 Ambassador Wendy R. Sherman, Under Secretary of State 2009-2013, non-resident Senior Fellow at Harvard Kennedy School's Belfer Center, in conversation with the author, November 2015.



# Epilogue

*“A war is a competition of making the least mistakes when the biggest mistake is to open the war”<sup>37</sup>*

—Shimon Peres.

For more than three decades, Israel has struggled with security challenges without an updated security doctrine. Israel’s military and intelligence capabilities are of a high quality and are observed as a fascinating lab by many other countries<sup>38</sup>. However, Israel never developed other tools that may enable the country to gain better outcomes in security conflicts.

The two main adversaries Israel faces are Hezbollah in Lebanon, and Hamas in Gaza. Israel is sustaining a cold war while it maintains readiness for a future war. All around Israel the Middle East is undergoing major changes: the wars in Syria and Yemen, the involvement of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps Quds Forces (IRGC-QF) in those wars, and the change in the policy of Russia which has shifted from covert support to overt military involvement in the fighting in Syria.

All of these developments and factors could pose new challenges to Israel’s security. For example, the Iranians may try to challenge Israel by initiating terror activity by proxies along its borders with the Gaza Strip, Lebanon, and the Syrian Golan Heights. However, recent years have shown gaps emerging in the typically shared common interests of Hezbollah and the IRGC-QF.

While the latter sought to consistently disturb and challenge Israel, Hezbollah’s priority has been to secure its status as the leading political and military entity in Lebanon and to safeguard the so-called stability in Lebanon -- either from the Jihadists in Syria or from the risk of an Israeli invasion.

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37 Shimon Peres, Former Israeli President and Prime minister in his testimony at the Vinograd Comity to investigate the Second Lebanon War, April 2007, pp.3

38 Graham Allison, Head of the Belfer Center for science and international affairs, in a conversation with the author, November 2015.

Thus, in the unique “cold war” that has come to characterize the Israeli conflicts with Hezbollah and Hamas, all players have major common interests that can be summarized as maintaining the status quo - foiling each other’s activities while avoiding an inclusive war<sup>39</sup>.

This might be the time for all parties to create a better mechanism of communication on a regular basis to avoid miscalculations. Such mechanisms should also stand ready for a time when it would be necessary to bring a quick end to an intensive war or some kind of cycle of military violence that might erupt in the future.

In the current version of the cold war between Israel and Hezbollah, the mutual deterrence that defines their relationship is in reality not only reliant on the memory of the Second Lebanon War of 2006 and both parties’ subsequent military expansion but also on limited overt channels of communications. These channels include Hezbollah Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah’s speeches and Israeli security chiefs’ interviews in the media as well as even more limited rare covert channels, some of which are direct and some of which are through third-party channels. All of them are outcomes of the long lasting mind-game between the intelligence communities and the leaderships of both sides.

It is quite Ironical that much has been written about asymmetric war, but little has been devoted to build a mechanism to avoid or end such cycles of violence, in non-kinetic ways.

The tools both sides have today are not sustainable and effective enough to prevent or end a military conflict. The international players today will not be faster in their reaction than they were in the Second Lebanon War, which lasted 33 days, or the last war in the Gaza Strip (“Protective Edge”), which lasted 51 days.

It is in Israel’s best interest to create mechanisms that will ensure a quick end to an intensive war should it break out. Even if a “Third Lebanon War” or another “Gazan War” were to break out, it would still be in Hezbollah’s

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39 Gilad Raik, Sustaining the Cold War between Israel and Hezbollah after the Iran Deal, in Tipping the Balance-Implication of the Iran Nuclear Deal on Israel Security, Belfer Center for science and International Affairs, Harvard Kennedy School, December 2015, pp- 91-94

and Hamas's best interest to safeguard their sovereignty and to maintain their military capacity the day after the war. This is why all players need to seek direct channels, mostly clandestine, and also to establish in advance an effective clandestine international mechanism that would be agreed to and trusted by both sides before any military conflict takes place. Such a mechanism would serve both sides' common interests and bridge the big gaps between all parties' propaganda and psychological warfare that plays a major role in this conflict.

**Israel's adoption of new creative thinking can be defined as the Diplomatic Maneuver.** By avoiding the binary definition of either friend or foe and adopting new vocabulary, Israel can build coalitions with friends, "frenemies," and even enemies with common objectives. Subsequently, by adding new efforts to the military-kinetic effort, such as a clandestine information and intelligence effort, a covert and overt diplomacy and, an international economic and justice effort, all supporting the strategic goals set by the leadership, Israel can gain better outcomes in future conflicts.

The Diplomatic Maneuver not only equips Israel with tools to sustain a cold war and avoid a military war, it also enables Israel to plan better exit points and have better capabilities ready for the day after the war.











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