

"Swords of Iron" - Commanders for Israel's Security

Key Messages

The aims & objectives of the war should be pursued & prioritized as follows:

- Bring the abducted Home, to Israel
- Destroy the military capabilities of all terror organizations in the Gaza Strip
- Terminate Hamas' rule in Gaza
- Create conditions for the rapid rehabilitation of the "Otef Israel" border communities

Critical considerations and policy directions:

1. Repatriate the abducted, through negotiation or operational activity, must be accorded highest priority. A range of international diplomatic and legal means should be employed, backed by civil society mobilization. This is a moral obligation, and no price will be considered too high in fulfilling this obligation.
2. The war must end decisively for Israel, in a manner which will restore Israel's standing and enhance deterrence. Towards this end, diplomatic, economic and other tools of statecraft should be pursued alongside the military campaign.
3. Israel has no intention of occupying the Gaza Strip and will not reassume responsibility for it. The Gaza Strip must be ruled by a Palestinian government



with the assistance of international entities and a direct connection to the Palestinian government in the West Bank.

4. Israel should relinquish control of territory captured during the operation as quickly as possible and should not repeat the scenario of becoming mired in the Lebanese quagmire. This imperative does not include territory captured for the purpose of widening the buffer zone.
5. As long as the military effort in the Gaza area continues, Israel should endeavor to act firmly but with restraint in response to provocations in the northern arena with the aim of preventing the spread of war to the north and other regions, and in order to create conditions for striking at Hezbollah later on.
6. During and after the war, the struggle against terrorism and the enforcement of law and order must continue vis-à-vis both Palestinians and Israelis in the West Bank. This includes immediately and firmly blocking attempts to expand settlements, harm Palestinians and thus incite a conflagration that would open another front and stir tension and confrontations in Jerusalem and in the domestic security arena. Preventing flareups, particularly in regard to events on the Temple Mount, is a vital strategic need and point of emphasis.
7. Israel must avoid sliding into a humanitarian disaster in the Gaza Strip for moral reasons and to prevent severe damage on the international level, with an emphasis on our relations with the U.S., Europe and the peace states in the Middle East, and with world Jewry. This would harm the war effort, engender internal Israeli conflict and entrench feelings of hatred and vengeance among the Palestinians that would impede future accords.
8. Israel must revise its national priorities in order to urgently and efficiently address the needs of the civilian home front during the war, to rehabilitate the



damaged “Otef Israel” communities and serve Israel’s citizenry at large. For this purpose, a Ministry for the Civilian Front (formerly the Ministry of Home Front Defense) should be immediately reestablished and headed by a senior minister with proven leadership and management abilities, and resources must be diverted toward this effort.

9. It should be emphasized that the war is not against the Palestinians, but rather against Hamas-ISIS, whose outlook and actions do not represent the Arab and Muslim world. Millions of Palestinians will continue to live alongside us between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River, in the Gaza Strip and West Bank. And in order to sustain Israel as a democratic and Jewish state, political separation from the Palestinians in the territories will be necessary, in a format to be agreed upon.
10. Adapting public expectations to the reality and constraints is critical for the success of the war, and Israel’s decision makers must not act from a sense of revenge and public pressure.

We are confident that the IDF and the security forces will act with professionalism and determination to achieve the war objectives, and we call upon the political leadership and public to back them.

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