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**The Planning Directorate in “Momentum”: “Tnufa” – the New IDF
Multi-Year Plan**

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In mid-February 2020, IDF Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Aviv Kochavi presented the IDF’s new multi-year plan, “Tnufa” (“Momentum”). In the organizational realm, the plan includes a change to the General Staff: the division of the responsibilities of the Planning Directorate between two directorates to be established – a multi-service directorate for force buildup, and a strategy and Iran directorate. Like all organizational moves, this change will involve difficulties stemming from its very implementation. Moreover, the benefit it will generate depends on numerous variables that lie beyond organizational structure and hierarchy, including working processes, interfaces, and definitions of authority and responsibility between the directorates and the officials involved.

In mid-February 2020, IDF Chief of the General Staff Lt. Gen. Aviv Kochavi presented “Tnufa” (“Momentum”), the IDF’s new multi-year plan. In the organizational realm, the plan includes a change to the General Staff, whose thrust is the division of the responsibilities of the Planning Directorate between two directorates to be established: a directorate for multi-service force buildup, and a strategy and Iran directorate. This is neither the first change nor the end of the story: like all organizational moves, this change will involve difficulties stemming from its very implementation. Moreover, the benefit it will generate depends on numerous variables that lie beyond organizational structure and hierarchy, in issues of boundaries, processes, and interfaces.

The Planning Directorate was established on June 2, 1948 under the command of Maj. Gen. Yohanan Ratner on the basis of the Planning Department of the IDF Operations Directorate, but soon after was reduced in status to a department within the Staff Directorate. Following the 1973 Yom Kippur War, the Planning Directorate was reestablished under the command of Major General Avraham Tamir and included the Strategic Planning Department, which was upgraded to a staff division in 1994 during the period of political processes vis-à-vis the Palestinians, Jordan, and Syria and the staff work then involved in formulating the respective security arrangements. In 2006, as part of an organizational change implemented by then-Chief of General Staff Lt. Gen. Dan Haloutz, the Strategic Division was established under the Planning Directorate through

the merger of the Strategic Planning Division and the External Relations Division, which was transferred from the Operations Directorate to the Planning Directorate. In 2015, the Strategic Division was split once again into its two original divisions: Strategic Planning and External Relations.

In its current format, the Planning Directorate is a central body within the IDF General Staff that is charged with force buildup, strategic planning, formulation of IDF policy, and external relations and cooperation with foreign militaries – by means of the Planning Division, the Strategic Planning Division, and the External Relations Division, respectively. In this structure, which combines responsibility for politico-military planning and resource planning and programming, the Planning Directorate is comparable to the J5 and J8 Directorates of the US Military, and its two spheres – strategy and resources – complement different dimensions in multi-year planning, in preparing the IDF for future challenges, and in force buildup.

Thus far, the heads of the Planning Directorate have operated in parallel in three circles:

- a. Programming and force buildup, through multi-year plans, annual work plans, major projects, and IDF organization and infrastructure.
- b. Strategic planning for force buildup: mapping future challenges, formulating the IDF threat of reference and the scenario of reference; strategic planning for force employment: in strategic designs and by defining required strategic accomplishments for operations, campaigns, and war; and defining the security-military dimensions of political arrangements: the Staff's support of arrangements led by the political leadership and the formulation of IDF policy on political-military issues.
- c. Regional and international cooperation, in which the IDF conducts its relations with its partners around the world, with Israel's peace treaty neighbors, and with peacekeeping forces in the region. Like every directorate within the General Staff, the Planning Directorate implements its responsibility through close cooperation with the other directorates, the IDF's service branches and commands, and the Defense Ministry and other government ministries.

According to the change that is planned as part of Tnufa, the Planning Directorate will be split into two parts: a Multi-Branch Force Buildup Directorate, to be established based on the Planning Division and the addition of the recently established Warfare Methods and Innovation Division (Shiloah), and a Strategy and Iran Division, to be established based on the Strategic Planning Division and the External Relations Division, with the addition of a staff body responsible for Iran. At face value, this initiative is meant to ensure that full attention is paid to the buildup of the IDF's multi-branch force, and particularly to the execution of force buildup according to the Tnufa plan. Another motivation is improved

General Staff attention to the Iranian issue, which in the Tnufa multi-year plan has once again assumed major focus, after being less central in the outgoing Gideon plan. However, it appears that the Chief of Staff's primary motivation has been enhanced attention to force buildup and Iran ("so that there is someone who wakes up in the morning and has this as his mission"), and the decision regarding the Strategic Planning and External Relations divisions was an eventual outcome. The Chief of Staff's priorities in this initiative find practical expression in the diversion of one position of major general from the Depth Command to the Strategy and Iran Directorate by naming the Commandant of the Military Colleges to be the Depth Commander as a parallel and secondary appointment. Such an organizational solution has already been in use for years in the command of the General Staff Corps and the Northern Corps, both as secondary appointments.

The transition from the current configuration to the new structure will inevitably involve not only the natural costs of organizational change, but also challenges and opportunities over time. In any configuration, when issues and missions are not placed under the full ("end to end") responsibility of a single body, working processes, interfaces, and the definition of boundaries and responsibilities between bodies and officials hold major importance that is no less, and perhaps even greater than the importance of organizational structure. Still, organizational hierarchy has an impact on the height of the partitions between bodies, which tend to be lower when they are subordinate to a single commander and to grow higher when they are subordinate to several commanders.

In the realm of force buildup, it can indeed be expected that greater attention by a major general will be devoted to the issue when it is the sole responsibility of the Director of Multi-Branch Force Buildup. The re-organization will require revalidation of the boundaries of authority and responsibility between the head of the new directorate and the Deputy Chief of the General Staff, who for years has maintained close working interfaces with the Planning Directorate and the Planning Division, and for whom this has traditionally been the main realm of engagement. Despite their subordination to two different major generals, it will be important within the new structure to preserve the good working interfaces (which today are fully within the Planning Directorate) between the Strategic Planning Division and the Planning Division with regard to force buildup, and especially the planning continuum between the concepts, threat of reference, and scenario of reference on the one hand, and the working plans and multi-year plans on the other hand.

In the realms of strategic planning and external relations, the planned change has the potential to ensure increased attention by a major-general over the current situation, in which the Planning Directorate chief is also responsible for force buildup. In addition, the

Strategy and Iran Directorate can expect to face challenges in positioning and power relations vis-à-vis partners in its role within the General Staff. Balancing the Operations Directorate's, the Regional Commands', the Air Force's, and the Intelligence Directorate's command authorities means, information, and knowledge – the heads of the Planning Directorate have for generations held an institutional lever of influence stemming from their resource planning powers, as well as their recognized status within General Staff processes. The test facing the head of the new director will be in his ability to maintain and expand his realms of responsibility within IDF processes and Israel's security establishment. The launch of the new directorate will require its continued role in the planning and working processes of the General Staff as the Planning Directorate's successor in its areas of responsibility. Whereas the realms of the Strategic Planning Division and the External Relations Division will not undergo evident change because the divisions are already integrated in the working processes with the directorates, the service branches, and the regional commands, the picture is less clear with regard to the issue of Iran.

The Iranian challenge encompasses the nuclear threat and the Islamic Republic's campaign to expand its regional influence, wage proxy warfare, and increase the threat against Israel. The IDF's response to the challenge includes efforts in intelligence, planning, force buildup, and multi-service operational efforts in multiple theaters, both as part of the “campaign between wars” and Israel's readiness for war. In contrast to other theaters of operation, such as Syria, Lebanon, and the Gaza Strip, which are the responsibility of the regional commands, Iran is not under the overall responsibility of a single operational command but rather is the responsibility of the General Staff. In recent decades, Deputy Chiefs of the General Staff have led some of the staff work on the issue. The head of the new Strategy and Iran Directorate, whom some publications have been quick to award the title “General of Iran Command,” will not head an operational command for force employment but rather will be responsible for staff work to design, plan, and possibly also integrate between bodies and between military efforts and other efforts – diplomatic, economic, cognitive, informational, and cybernetic. A precise definition of the new directorate's responsibility has yet to be made public, and perhaps has also yet to be formulated. However, it is clear this responsibility will be implemented through close work with the Operations Directorate, the Intelligence Directorate, the Air Force, and the regional commands, as well as other bodies in the security and defense establishment, as is the case within the Planning Directorate today. Responsibility for policy and external relations will also enable it, as an executive body, to initiate and execute some of the policy measures it will formulate, such as cooperative efforts with foreign militaries, defense establishments, and governments around the world, in accordance with political leadership's directives. Within the new directorate, it will be very important to maintain the broad horizons of the strategic planning processes and to

prevent the entire directorate from focusing solely on Iran at the expense of other essential issues and theaters.

Beyond the definitions in the organizational orders, the effort to establish and ensure the new directorates' success depends on other ostensibly mundane aspects underlying the daily routine processes in the IDF and the General Staff. The directorate's positioning within the military organization is manifested in its place in the battle procedures, the combat timetable, the order of speakers, the seating order, and more importantly, the Chief of the General Staff's schedule, and in his support for the recommendations and decisions of the directorate's head and his role in the civil-military dialogue with the political level. At the end of all of these issues lies the actual appointments of the two directors, as in the IDF, like many other organizations, the human factor is the key question. On February 25, 2020 it was announced that the Force Buildup Directorate would be headed by Brig. Gen. (S) Tomer Barr, Air Force Chief of Staff, and the Strategy and Iran Directorate will be headed by Brig. Gen. (S) Tal Kelman, who is currently the head of the Strategic Division. Both future major generals possess a rich background in command and staff work, proven capabilities, and a guaranteed future in the IDF vanguard. This increases the prospects of success of the new directorates. In light of the complexity of the issues and missions under their responsibilities, it will be important to continue to staff the new directorates with diverse, multidisciplinary, multi-branch high quality personnel hailing from multiple professional backgrounds, as has been characteristic of the Planning Directorate so far. Such diversity and teamwork have been the keys to the success of the Planning Division, and will be just as important in the two new directorates.

Finally, a few words about names and titles: since its establishment, the Planning Directorate (Agat) has been widely known as a professional, businesslike, and impartial staff that focuses on the long term and leads high quality and continuous efforts in planning, policy, and external relations, preserves organizational memory, and serves as a national strategic planning asset for the State of Israel. The Planning Directorate has long been an acclaimed entity in the areas of policy and planning within the government, the security and defense establishment, and the IDF, and over its 50 years in existence has become part of the General Staff's organizational capital. The move planned as part of Tnufa is an important innovation that will also find expression in the names of the two new directorates. In addition to the new Multi-Branch Force Buildup Directorate, it is recommended that the directorate responsible for strategy, Iran, and external relations continue to bear the historical name and good reputation of renowned Planning Directorate.

The authors were heads of the Strategic Division.