

The Jordan Valley in an Israeli-Palestinian Peace Agreement

Ron Tira

The purpose of this article is to examine the preferred status of the Jordan Valley in the framework of the security arrangements for an Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement. The article presents two approaches. The stand-alone approach, embraced by many in Israel's security establishment, treats the security arrangements as an independent issue that is equal in importance to the political settlement. The integrated approach, which subordinates the security arrangements to an attempt to change the reality through the political agreement and proposes incorporating Israel's defense arrangements in a multilateral security system, is endorsed by many in the security and political establishments of Israel's allies in the West. The article compares the two approaches, and assesses their viability.

The Stand-Alone Approach

Working Assumptions

The analysis of the stand-alone approach is based on two working assumptions. The first regards the main objective of the security arrangements as providing a solution for a situation where the political agreement ("the primary agreement") breaks down. This means that in order to test the effectiveness and viability of the security arrangements, there must be a working assumption of such a collapse. In other words, according to this approach, examining the effectiveness of the security arrangements when all the parties involved comply with the primary agreement is of limited utility, because this is not the ultimate test. It therefore follows that the viability of

Ron Tira, author of *The Nature of War: Conflicting Paradigms and Israeli Military Effectiveness*, is a businessman and a reservist in the Israeli Air Force's Campaign Planning Department.

the security arrangements must rest on sources exogenous to the primary agreement. It is inherently illogical to attempt to guarantee the primary agreement through clauses and arrangements that are themselves derived from this very same agreement. The viability of the security arrangements must be based on assets and capabilities external to the primary agreement that will endure even if the primary agreement collapses.

The second working assumption is that the security arrangements should persist through decades of change that include a changing political landscape, a dynamic strategic climate, major technological developments, and so on. A glance at recent decades is enough to show both how much the surroundings have changed and the inability to anticipate these changes. The security arrangements must therefore include generic solutions to generic threats, even if a given threat is not concrete or tangible at the moment. The security arrangements should not be based on a situation snapshot, a transient political context, a temporary strategic assessment, or an inventory of technological capabilities that applies at a given time. The current situation should not be regarded as the chief source for the referenced threat or the main reference scenario. To some extent, the security arrangements should be independent of the context and time, and should rest on abiding military truths.

Security Arrangements and the Regional Puzzle

Around the turn of the century, Israel enjoyed a fairly comfortable strategic environment, owing to a number of regional stabilizing elements: the Iran-Iraq balance of power; partnerships with Turkey, Jordan, and Egypt; an effective threat against the Alawite regime in Syria that also controlled Lebanon; and the emergence of US hegemony in the region.

Over the past 15 years, the US, Israel, or their allies employed measures designed to improve the strategic environment, but these measures instead ultimately undermined the regional stabilizers.¹ The overthrow of Saddam Hussein upset the balance of power in the Persian Gulf, and created the conditions for making Iran the dominant foreign force in Iraq. The direct threat to Iran was removed, and the theater was shaped to reflect Iran's competitive advantage in indirect conflicts through its proxies. Syria was pushed to withdraw from Lebanon, yet Iran and Hizbollah exploited the resulting vacuum to achieve hegemony in the Land of the Cedars. Israel has effective means of exerting pressure on the Alawites, but its levers of pressure on Iran and Hizbollah are less effective, as seen in the Second

Lebanon War (only one year after Syria's withdrawal from Lebanon). The stated policy of the US is "Assad must go," which is liable to turn Syria into a failed state and lead to an enhanced threat of global jihad. The US gave Mubarak the cold shoulder and contributed to the rise of the Muslim Brotherhood, and American coldness toward el-Sisi has pushed him in the direction of Russia.²

This short review is relevant in two ways. First, it must be understood that a policy aimed at improving the strategic environment can sometimes have unintended negative consequences that overshadow its good intentions. Good intentions are not enough; every measure must be analyzed according to the harsh strategic truths. Second, from the list of regional stabilizers, Jordan stands out as almost the last stabilizing element in the region that is still intact. The Hashemite monarchy constitutes an essential geopolitical asset for Israel, the US, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt. Jordan serves as a buffer between Saudi Arabia and the Syria-Lebanon system and between Iraq and Israel, and now that Iran has become a dominant factor in Iraq, Jordan in effect buffers Israel from Iran. The Hashemites have played a stabilizing role in almost every regional balance of power, such as the Cold War front against the Soviet clients, the moderate front against the Shiite crescent, the radical countries, and at present against the Shiite crescent. Jordan is likewise a partner in containing the Palestinian challenge. In certain senses, Israel's effective strategic depth reaches eastern and northern Jordan, and Jordan provides Israel with calm on its longest border.

The kingdom is weak, however, and over the years has found itself threatened by foreign armies, internal factions, and Palestinian rebellion. The spectrum of threats is now widening, from the consolidation of Iranian influence at Jordan's back door, i.e., Iraq; the spillover of the Syrian civil war and its refugees to Jordan; and signs of disloyalty among the Bedouin, who constitute an important support for the Hashemites. Another important buttress for the Hashemites is Israel, which has defined the entry of foreign forces into Jordan as a *casus belli*, and has isolated the West Bank of the Jordan River from the East Bank.

Security arrangements must include generic solutions to generic threats, and not be based on a situation snapshot, a transient political context, a temporary strategic assessment, or an inventory of technological capabilities that applies at a given time.

In the test case of Black September, Israel was prepared to intervene with ground forces in the fighting in Jordan, and considered alternative plans with the US and the Hashemites for the application of ground forces.³ Israel's ability to dispatch ground forces into Jordan and assist the King in battle (mainly against the Syrians, but also against the Palestinians and the Iraqis) formed part of the strategic considerations accompanying the actors in the crisis.⁴ Israel's ability to intervene with ground forces – even if this ability has never been utilized – has affected the behavior of all the parties, given the Hashemites additional options, and provided them with critical support. Israel also contributed by arresting operatives of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) in the West Bank. At the strategic level, Israel helped isolate the Amman area from Syrian and Iraqi forces and from West Bank Palestinians, thereby helping to create conditions that enabled the Hashemites to concentrate their efforts against the Palestinian organizations and defeat them.

Among the factors benefiting the Hashemites is the Israeli military presence in the Jordan Valley. Deployed only 30 km from Amman,⁵ the Israel

Israel must make every political effort to reach a peace agreement with the Palestinians, but what Israel knows is what it has learned from its accumulated experience and observation of reality. This knowledge provides weighty reasons for preferring the stand-alone approach with respect to security arrangements.

Defense Forces (IDF) effectively divides between the two banks of the Jordan River. A strong IDF presence in the Jordan Valley provides a degree of deterrence to the east – which since Black September has proven effective – and insulates the Hashemite royal house from the dangers posed by a future Palestinian state.

Therefore, ceding the IDF's presence in the Jordan Valley has two potential geo-strategic consequences. One is the impairment of Israel's ability to help protect the Jordanian monarchy, which in turn heightens the concern about growing instability in the regional system. The second is the risk of effectively cutting Israel's strategic depth by 400 km: from the Iraqi-Jordanian border to Israel's coastal plain. This strategic depth, which is made possible by the friendly space, free of threats, provided by the Jordanian monarchy, might not survive if Israel's ability to protect the Hashemites is eroded. From

being an actor with the ability to project its power beyond the Jordan River, Israel is liable to turn into an actor preoccupied with the protection of its own low ground border. It is liable to lose its influence on the regional order,

which would have a negative impact on its deterrence and strategic weight, lower its value as an ally for the West and moderate Arab states (even if they do not see it that way at present), and detract from the motivation of its Arab neighbors to adhere to existing peace agreements.

The Jordan Valley and Israel's Security Concept

Israel's objective characteristics (mainly its small size) force it to adopt a distinct security concept.⁶ In order to lengthen the periods of time between wars, Israel labors to present a deterring posture. Its standing army is small; most of its fighting power consists of reservists, who can be called up within 24-48 hours of a suitable early warning. Given its small size, the IDF tries to avoid simultaneous major efforts on a number of fronts. It shifts its efforts to achieve decision rapidly in one front after the other, and to move forces between fronts, based on a "strategy of interior lines." Israel's ability to withstand a prolonged war is limited, and its concept is therefore based on an effective force seeking to achieve a quick decision.

Israel's ability to implement its distinct security concept pertaining to high intensity symmetrical warfare is closely linked to the IDF presence in the Jordan Valley. Most of Israel's reservists live in the urban bloc of the central coastal plain, which is controlled from the West Bank. Following a withdrawal from the West Bank, any movement on interior lines will be channeled to the choke point in the same narrow urban bottleneck (15 km wide) in the central coastal plain, which will be controlled from the future Palestinian state. Some of the air force, intelligence, and logistics bases as well as command and control posts are also controlled from the West Bank ridges. Moving Israel's "security border"⁷ from the Jordan Valley to the coastal plain is therefore liable to pose a challenge to Israel's ability to mobilize its reservists quickly and effectively, move its forces quickly and effectively along interior lines, and maintain continuous functionality in bases in the center of the country. It is clear that implementation of Israel's security concept can be impeded not only by denying it these capabilities, but also by slowing and disrupting its mobilization of reservists, its interior transportation system, and its overall ability to function.

Maintaining the ability to implement Israel's distinct security concept (again, derived from specific objective characteristics) therefore constitutes an important argument for retaining Israel's security border (as opposed to its political border) in the Jordan Valley.

Operational Aspects

As discussed below, the integrated approach does not completely rule out an IDF presence in the Jordan Valley; it merely proposes limiting and integrating it in a multilateral security system. As a substitute for the IDF's freedom of action in the area, a "virtual" system replete with remote sensory tools, standoff weapons, and foreign forces is proposed.

In order to analyze the minimal operational conditions that Israel requires in order to continue to regard the Jordan Valley as its security border (as opposed to its political border), we can sketch a matrix with three types of generic threats and two types of generic capabilities. The three threats are terrorism (such as global jihad), high competence guerilla forces (such as Hizbollah), and a peer state threat (a symmetric army or a coalition of armies). The two capabilities are detection and operation.

Terrorists tend to embed themselves among civilians, rendering remote detection difficult. Even after suspicious activity is detected (such as crossing the Jordan River at a place that is not a regulated crossing), unmediated contact is necessary to distinguish between a terrorist, a smuggler, or a lost shepherd and to use proportionate force. It is impractical to assume that terrorism can be stopped by remote sensory and standoff fire, and any attempt to do so will result in civilian deaths and the subsequent abandonment of this line of operation.

Guerilla forces likewise blend in among civilians, and operate in the subterranean space and with a low signature. The accumulated and well-established experience from the Second Lebanon War, the long years of conflict in the Gaza Strip, and more recently the jihadists in Sinai shows that an insufficient portion of the guerilla apparatus can be detected remotely to ensure that standoff fire will paralyze the guerrilla organization and prevent it from carrying out its mission. This is not a matter of opinion, but proven recurrent experience of the inability of "remote action" to thwart groups like Hizbollah and Hamas.⁸

Regarding a conventional state threat, even those adhering to the stand-alone approach acknowledge the good chances that regular peer armed forces can be detected from a distance and attacked with standoff fire. However, some satellites, unmanned aerial vehicles, and other sensors lose their effectiveness in difficult weather conditions, and are vulnerable to electronic warfare that jams the sensor, its remote control, or its data-link transmission. New generations of aerial defense systems (such as S-300, SA-17, and SA-22) are capable of threatening intelligence gathering aircraft

and unmanned aerial vehicles, and can even intercept missiles. An enemy's long range and accurate high trajectory firepower is capable of suppressing activity at air force bases. Therefore, while remote sensors and standoff fire are likely to constitute an effective concept against a conventional peer army, this concept cannot be relied on exclusively. A Plan B is also needed.

As to multilateral defense systems based on foreign forces, Israel has a great deal of disappointing experience, including with regard to guarantees of freedom of navigation in the Straits of Tiran, guarantees of barring Egyptian surface-to-air missiles (SAM) from the Suez Canal, and the total failure of the multinational force in Lebanon entrusted with enforcing UN Security Council Resolution 1701. The failure of this strong force, which was designed to stop the smuggling of weapons to Hizbollah and prevent the organization from deploying south of the Litani River, is especially resounding. The withdrawal of part of the UNDOF forces from the Golan Heights following attacks by Syrian rebels and the retreat by European observers from the Philadelphi corridor (Gaza border) under pressure from Hamas can be added to this list.

A Summary of the Stand-Alone Approach

The stand-alone approach attaches great importance to retaining the Jordan Valley as Israel's security border in order to defend the following vital Israeli national interests:

- a. Enforcing the demilitarization of the Palestinian state.
- b. Preventing the entry of weapons and sub-state militants into the West Bank (such militants entering into the Palestinian state with its permission or despite its opposition).
- c. Defending Israel against an attack by one or more peer state armies from the east.
- d. Projecting power beyond the Jordan River in order to deter foreign forces from entering Jordan, thus providing support for the Jordanian regime.
- e. Buffering the East Bank of the Jordan River from the West Bank in order to prevent the emergence of a pan-Palestinian threat to the Jordanian regime.
- f. Buffering the Israeli coastal plain from war fighting in order to facilitate quick, uninterrupted mobilization of the reservists, allow movement along interior lines, and facilitate continuous functionality of the military rear.
- g. Maintaining Israel's overall deterring posture and ability to project power.
- h. Maintaining Israel's defense self-reliance.

These objectives require the continued presence of a significant and scalable Israeli military force in the Jordan Valley, deployed with depth (the ineffectiveness of a line lacking depth has already been demonstrated in the Philadelphi corridor), that provides a balanced solution for a variety of generic threats in all theater and weather conditions. This force will be withdrawn by mutual consent and according to qualitative tests when the theater is stabilized, not according to a timetable set in advance.

The Integrated Approach: Starting Assumption

One of the main differences between the stand-alone and integrated approaches, if not the most important one, lies in the point of departure for the analysis. As discussed above, the working assumption of the stand-alone approach is that the main test of security arrangements occurs if and when the political agreement (the primary agreement) collapses. The viability of the security arrangements must rest on capabilities exogenous to the primary agreement, as the test of the effectiveness of the security arrangements is the breakdown of the primary agreement. In contrast, the point of departure for the integrated approach is the drive to achieve a change in the situation by means of the political agreement. According to this rationale, the situation arising as a result of the primary agreement will generate a turnaround in the strategic environment, and therefore the security arrangements should be examined in the light of the new strategic environment that will be created, not in the light of the past environments.

The integrated approach assumes that as a result of the primary agreement, both legitimacy and motivation among the Arabs and the Palestinians for a confrontation with Israel will disappear, and they will become active and effective partners in enforcing a joint security regime. To this way of thinking, the situation that will be created will make it possible to maintain a security system within the primary agreement that includes multilateral security arrangements (joint to Israel, the Palestinians, Jordan, and the international community), and the parties will create new layers of regional security, spanning both sides of the Jordan Valley.

In contrast to the stand-alone approach, which regards the security arrangements as an independent element, equally valuable as the primary agreement, the integrated approach holds that in the tension between the primary agreement and the security arrangements, the primary agreement should take precedence. To this way of thinking, Israel's overall situation will be better with the primary agreement in place despite less than ideal

security arrangements, rather than without a political agreement but with the current security capabilities.

The Debate

Integrated Approach Proponents Respond to the Stand-Alone Proponents

According to the integrated approach, Israel will continue to benefit from most of the strategic advantages conferred by control of the Jordan Valley (such as projecting its power to the East Bank), because it will withdraw only about 100 km, and will continue to hold the 260 km of the Jordan Valley that it held before 1967.⁹ Furthermore, the provisions in the agreement will allow Israeli reentry to the center of the Jordan Valley in agreed cases of a clear and immediate threat (anything from terrorism to a symmetric military threat). If the system in the agreement collapses, Israel may simply be able to ignore it and unilaterally return to the central Jordan Valley. Even currently, IDF forces are for the most part routinely deployed in permanent barracks, not in offensive or defensive combat deployments, and it makes no difference whether they are deployed to emergency positions from barracks located in the Jordan Valley itself or from permanent camps located to the Valley's north (but inside pre-1967 Israel) in Beit Shean and to its south in Neot HaKikar.

Under the integrated approach too Israel's security border will remain in the Jordan Valley and not be moved to the coastal plain, but via mechanisms in the agreement. The Palestinian state will be demilitarized, and the array of sensors, together with the multinational security system's boots on the ground, will detect any attempt to violate demilitarization or bring forces or weapons into the West Bank. Following detection, the parties will deal with the threat, and in the absence of Palestinian cooperation, the Israelis and Western powers may deal with the threat unilaterally. In this way, any threat to the Israeli coastal plain will be thwarted before it materializes, and Israel will be able to continue maintaining its security concept.

While admittedly Israel will not be able to rely solely on itself for its defense, it can look to models elsewhere for reassurance: the UK and Germany, for example, also effect their security through multinational systems in which the US military is the main building block. What is important, though, is that the proposed arrangements are distinguishable from the extensive past unsuccessful experience of international guarantees and foreign forces in three ways: first, more than a verbal commitment is involved; it will be backed by placing forces in the field. Second, US

troops, which are a more serious element than some of the foreign forces that failed, will likewise be positioned in the theater. Third, analogies of an American commitment to an intimate ally like Israel should not be made with American commitments to certain countries that were not honored. The credibility of this specific commitment will therefore be different from examples from past experience.

The Stand-Alone Rejoinder to the Integrated Approach

Those advocating a stand-alone approach contend that the key word in the integrated approach is “if.” The integrated approach is not based on the existing environment and does not conform to accumulated past experience, and is sustainable only if the environment and dynamic are fundamentally changed. It presents a complicated system with multiple “modules,” each of which is vulnerable, based on a series of hypotheses about the future, and is replete with conditional mechanisms and weak nodes. It is valid if the desired change in political motivations occurs; if the Palestinian state is coherent and united, and enforces its will on its territory and people; if the strategic environment stabilizes; if all the parties cooperate as planned; if the threats emerge according to the planned paradigms; if the technological supremacy is maintained; if the weather is good and enables the aerial and standoff gathering of visual intelligence, and so on. In practice, the integrated approach can be implemented only if we agree that “this time will be different,” and that this new difference remains steady from now on.

Another weakness resulting from the world of “if” is the many “if-then” conditions. For example, according to the proposed arrangements, if a clear immediate symmetric military threat emerges from the east, then the IDF will be able to return to the central Jordan Valley. If it becomes evident that significant smuggling of weapons into the West Bank is underway, then entry into the West Bank will be permitted, even by force. This approach, called the tripwire mechanism,¹⁰ assumes that if a certain condition is fulfilled, an overpowering response will ensue almost automatically. Experience with tripwire mechanisms, however, is not so auspicious. Often, the opposite side does not necessarily take a distinct and dramatic step constituting a blunt violation of the “if”; it erodes the red line a little at a time, with each action in and of itself not perceived as significant. In such circumstances, it is hard to muster the diplomatic and political will required to carry out the overwhelming “then.” An example of the failure of “if-then” mechanism

can be found in the arrangement for keeping the Suez Canal zone free of surface-to-air missiles at the end of the War of Attrition. Egypt advanced SAM components to the Canal zone gradually, carefully keeping each step by itself below the Israeli and American appetite threshold for creating a crisis. Henry Kissinger describes well in this book¹¹ how the Nixon administration was preoccupied with the extension of the Vietnam War to Cambodia, the Soviet attempt to establish a submarine base in Cuba, and a variety of internal American complications to the extent that it bent over backwards in order to reach the conclusion that the Egyptians were not violating the terms of the ceasefire. Israel's Prime Minister, Golda Meir, weary of the risk of renewing the War of Attrition and concerned with Nixon's response to an independent Israeli action against Egypt's "non-violation," also chose to look the other way. The result was that over three years of careful, measured steps, Egypt built one of the most saturated integrated air defense systems in history, and this system severely hampered the performance of Israel's war machine in the Yom Kippur War.

Those designing security arrangements must also make a working assumption of a scenario in which the threat is crystallizing gradually step-by-step (whether the threat is a symmetric peer state or erosion of the demilitarization of the Palestinian state), at a time when the political and international circumstances make it impossible to automatically put the overwhelming "then" mechanism into operation, and a conflict breaks out in circumstances of enemy deployment that differs from that described in the "if-then" mechanism. A realistic security solution therefore requires the avoidance of "if-then" dichotomies. Instead, reliance should be on the ability to continuously control the scale and timing of the response. Scaling up and down the size of the Israeli force in the Jordan Valley and the characteristics of its deployment should be part of the freedom of action offered by the security arrangements, not a crisis event vis-à-vis the Palestinians and the international community.

The security solution should feature scalability based on situation assessment, not just two extreme situations: routine deployment and emergency deployment. The two situations are interdependent, and should gradually evolve from one to the other. The Jordan Valley's geographical center of gravity is the plain around Jericho, which is the starting point of the most feasible access routes to both Jerusalem and Amman. No less important geographic features are the choke points that enable access to the center of gravity.¹² Experience shows that under challenging terrain conditions and

with few alternatives other than advancing via choke points such as those leading to the central Jordan Valley, even a small enemy force is capable of delaying and disrupting movement, such as movements from barracks to emergency combat positions. The IDF is liable to find itself engaged in battles at the essential passages, similar to the Ein Zablata battle in 1982 and the Wadi Saluki battle in 2006, on the way to its defensive positions in the Jordan Valley. Routine control of the area (which allows for the securing of essential choke points according to the situation assessment), is therefore an important factor enabling effective and rapid deployment to the Jordan Valley's center of gravity in an emergency.

Nor is reliance on foreign forces a simple matter. Even if interests and threat perceptions are identical, differences in perspective are liable to create a gap in the actions taken. For example, Israel and the US agree about the Iranian nuclear threat and the desirable end state, but the difference in their willingness to bear risks and costs led to the US signature on the November 24, 2013 interim agreement with Iran – an agreement that the Israeli government believes fails to meet the minimum necessary conditions and thus constitutes a serious strategic error. The November 2013 agreement teaches Israel that the internationalization of its vital security interests leads to both a loss of influence over the internationalized process's outcome, as well as a disappointing outcome driven by the international community's calculations that differ from Israel's.

The test of a commitment is often the willingness to fulfill it in the long term, despite constant attrition and the absence of an end date. Time after time, however, American political and public systems have found it difficult to persist in fulfilling open-ended overseas commitments under conditions of attrition. Only Israel has the concrete and vital interest in the security arrangements that can ensure that its political and public systems will allow ongoing persistence in the security effort under conditions of attrition (IEDs, shootings, kidnappings, and so on).

Conclusion: Experience and Observation of the Surroundings

One of the main sources for an analysis of this type is proven experience. There is little international experience with complex security arrangements, as proposed by the integrated approach, and there may be a good reason for that. Israel's experience includes security arrangements with Jordan and Egypt. The security arrangements with Jordan are simple, and with neither Jordan nor Egypt have the security arrangements been tested by

a challenging situation¹³ or the collapse of the primary agreement. At the same time, Israel has extensive and discouraging experience with the various elements that collectively constitute the security arrangements proposed by the integrated approach. This experience includes Abba Eban's description of the collapse of the international guarantees of freedom of navigation in the Straits of Tiran as a "an umbrella that is taken away as soon as it begins to rain";¹⁴ the intelligence failure in the Yom Kippur War and the impairment of the freedom of flight of the Israel Air Force (IAF) by the Egyptian SAM batteries that were not attacked in 1970; the difficulty in overcoming small Syrian forces at a choke point under challenging geographic conditions in the attempt to reach the Beirut-Damascus road in 1982; and the fact that Israel attacked Hizbollah with 160,000 artillery shells, 1,800 rockets bearing hundreds of small bombs, 2,500 naval bombardments, and 15,000 sorties flown by IAF planes, without being able to disable the organization. Basing security arrangements that are supposed to last for many decades on the assumption that "this time will be different" and that the accumulated experience is of no relevance in this particular case is a highly questionable proposition.

When Russia invaded Ukraine, US Secretary of State John Kerry declared, "You just don't in the 21st century behave in 19th century fashion by invading another country."¹⁵ However, when Israel looks around, from Syria to the Gaza Strip and to more distant surroundings from Pakistan to Libya, the twenty-first century is nowhere in sight. Indeed, in certain respects, the environment is more reminiscent of the fourteenth century. Even if an Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement changes the bilateral dynamic between the governments, such an arrangement will not create a different Middle East and will not make the violence and instability characteristic of the region disappear.

Israel must make every political effort to reach a peace agreement with the Palestinians, but what Israel knows is what it has learned from its accumulated experience and observation of reality. This knowledge provides weighty reasons for preferring the stand-alone approach with respect to security arrangements.

Notes

- 1 Ron Tira, "The Breakup of Israel's Strategic Puzzle," *Strategic Assessment* 14, no. 3 (2011): 43-56; Ron Tira, "The United States in the Middle East: An Exercise in Self-Defeat," *Strategic Assessment* 14, no. 1 (2011): 41-54.

- 2 Ephraim Kam and Zvi Magen, "The New Contacts between Egypt and Russia: How Far Will They Go?" *INSS Insight* No. 522, February 27, 2014.
- 3 For sources on Israel's preparations for intervention with ground forces in the fighting in Jordan in Black September, see the following documents from the US Department of State, Office of the Historian: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76v24/d254>; <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76v24/d286>; <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76v24/d287>; <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76v24/d290>; <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76v24/d292>; <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76v24/d299>; <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76v24/d303>; <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76v24/d306>; <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76v24/d308>; and <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76v24/d309>.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 See *ibid.*, and for example, <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76v24/d254>.
- 6 Israel Tal, *National Security: The Israel Experience* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2000).
- 7 A "security border" can be defined as the space in which the main operations begin. For example, in the Cold War, the US was prepared to begin its main defensive operations in the area between East and West Germany.
- 8 Ron Tira, *The Limitations of Standoff Firepower-Based Operations: On Standoff Warfare, Maneuvers, and Decision*, Memorandum 89 (Tel Aviv: Institute of National Security Studies, 2007).
- 9 Although the shortest and most feasible road to the heart of Jordan is from the center of the Jordan Valley line attained in 1967.
- 10 Ron Tira, *Forming an Israeli Policy toward Syria* (Tel Aviv: Yediot Ahronot, 2000), pp. 146-51.
- 11 Henry Kissinger, *White House Years* (Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1979).
- 12 For example, the Ein Gedi passage from the south, the Shadmot Mehola-Argaman passage from the north, or the Maale Adumim-Vered Jericho passage from the west.
- 13 Even during the year in which the Muslim Brotherhood ruled Egypt, it did not attempt to challenge the security arrangements.
- 14 Michael Bar-Zohar, *The Longest Month* (Tel Aviv: Levin Epstein, 1968), p. 53.
- 15 Will Durham, "Kerry Condemns Russia's Incredible Act of Aggression in Ukraine," *Reuters*, March 2, 2014.