



Setting the conditions for disaster

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On Tuesday, Shin Bet head Yuval Diskin warned of the growing threats to Israel's security emanating from the Gaza Strip and Northern Samaria in the aftermath of the latest war. If the proper steps are not taken to stop the massive transfers of advanced armaments to Gaza, he warned, in just a few years, it will turn into a second south Lebanon.

In south Lebanon itself, Hizbullah is creating the illusion of cooperation with the Lebanese army in order to put us all to sleep as it quietly rebuilds its forces in anticipation of an Iranian order to renew the war against Israel. Hizbullah chieftain Hassan Nasrallah's assertions last week that his organization had no intention of starting a second round and that it had had no idea that Israel would respond so massively to its abduction of Ehud Goldwasser and Eldad Regev on July 12 were

aimed at confusing Israel and calming the Lebanese. At least as far as Israel is concerned, his goal was accomplished. Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and the Israeli media pounced on Nasrallah's statements as "proof" that Israel had won the war.

In the meantime, the Ayatollah Republic is proceeding steadily toward the acquisition of a nuclear capability. The conciliatory international reactions to Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's announcement Thursday that Iran rejected the UN Security Council's demand that it end all uranium enrichment actually preceded Ahmadinejad's insolent statement. On Wednesday, EU foreign policy chief Javier Solana was busily attempting to renew talks with Iran.

Meanwhile, the UN is behaving not as an international policeman, but

rather as Iran's defense attorney. During his visit to Israel Wednesday, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan sounded like an Arab leader with his unrestrained, obnoxious condemnations of Israel for every act of self-defense it has taken in Gaza and Lebanon on the one hand, and his seemingly endless tolerance for Iranian threats of nuclear genocide against Israel on the other.

During his press conference with Olmert, Annan intimated that from his perspective, the problem with Iran's threats to annihilate Israel is not that they are illegal or morally inexcusable. Rather, Iran's threats are wrong simply because Israel is a member of the UN. Surrealistically ignoring both Iran's efforts to acquire nuclear weapons and its command over the latest war in Lebanon and Gaza, Annan stated bizarrely, "One cannot wipe away Israel with statements."

Today, unbeknownst to the Israeli public, the Olmert-Livni-Peretz government is steering Israel down a course that, if not quickly abandoned, will render our right to self-defense - and by extension our independence - conditional. The proliferation of security threats is being exacerbated by the government's facilitation of an UN-EU diplomatic bid to chip away at Israel's right to defend itself against Hizbullah, the Palestinians and Iran.

The present danger is rooted in the text of UN Security Council Resolution 1701, which set the guidelines for the cease-fire in Lebanon. That decision constituted an unprece-

dent diplomatic victory for Hizbullah by placing the sub-national, jihadist, illegal militia on equal footing with Israel.

Moreover, Resolution 1701 set the terms for the reinforcement of UNIFIL forces in a way that enables Hizbullah to continue to reinforce its forces in south Lebanon while barring Israel from exercising its right to defend itself against the growing threat.

Resolution 1701 restricts Israel's freedom of action in three additional ways. First, the resolution named Ahmadinejad's solicitor, Kofi Annan, as arbiter of the sides' compliance. Annan revealed how he will be using this authority two weeks ago when he condemned the IDF's commando raid in Baalbek while beginning his calls for Israel to lift its air and sea blockade of Lebanon and so enable Hizbullah to rearm, not only by land, but by air and sea as well.

Second, although Olmert and Livni loudly champion the European forces being deployed to Lebanon as an important diplomatic achievement, the fact is that the decision to empower the EU to dominate UNIFIL is disastrous for Israel. While protesting their "love" for Israel, the Europeans are making no bones about the fact that their decision to lead UNIFIL is motivated by their intention to prevent Israel from defending itself.

Italy's Communist Foreign Minister Massimo D'Alema made this point clearly in his interview last Friday with *Ha'aretz*. There he explained

that the EU goal in Lebanon is to "prove to Israel that it can ensure its security better through the politics of peace than through war."

D'Alema then insulted the US by adding, "The American policy, which Israel also supported, created an impossible situation... The thinking was that it is possible to control the world via the power of a hegemonic liberal power. This philosophy has created serious damage, and now the US is looking for a logical way out."

So by deploying troops to UNIFIL, the Europeans will show us that the only way to contend with enemies who wish to destroy us is by appeasement and more appeasement.

The Europeans and Annan also do not hide the fact that they plan to use their deployment in Lebanon as a springboard for achieving greater influence on Israel in its dealings with the Palestinians. In this vein, D'Alema stated, "I think if things go well in Lebanon, a similar positive process could also begin in the Gaza Strip: The release of [Israeli hostage Cpl. Gilad] Shalit, a Palestinian unity government that meets the criteria set by the international community, and the presence of a UN force to bolster the Palestinian government."

Here the EU is openly joining forces with radical leftist Israeli policymakers led by Meretz leader MK Yossi Beilin, who for the past two years have been quietly advancing the idea of internationalizing the conflict. After both Israel's negotiations and its unilateral surrender of

land to the Palestinians both led to war, the thinking now is that the Palestinians will accept Israel after the UN divests the Jewish state of its ability to defend itself.

IF THE above is insufficient to convince us that the expanded UNIFIL force, whose arrival is so eagerly awaited by Olmert-Livni-Peretz, is not a good thing for Israel, there's also the Islamic element of the proposed force. Both Annan and the Europeans are insisting that a force of up to 7,000 soldiers from Muslim countries be included in the UNIFIL force. These soldiers are set to be sent by Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia and Turkey. All of these countries are commonly referred to as "moderate Muslim countries." This assertion bears investigation.

The jihadist party Jamaat-e-Islami is a member of Bangladesh's coalition government. Its student activists recently sent death threats to two prominent intellectuals for teaching the country's youth the values of secularism, democracy and science.

Furthermore, in November 2003, Bengali journalist Salah Uddin Shoaib Choudhury was arrested as he waited to board a flight to Bangkok with continuing service to Tel Aviv. Choudhury, who was set to attend a conference in Israel about how the media can promote peace, was accused of sedition and spying for Israel. He was repeatedly tortured during his 17-month incarceration. Bangladesh plans to send 2,000 soldiers to Lebanon.

Then there is Indonesia, the largest Muslim state. As punishment for

inciting the terror bombings in Bali in 2002 that killed 202 people, the not-particularly-independent Indonesian judiciary sentenced Jemaah Islamiyah leader Abu Bakar Bashir to 30 months in prison, the last five of which were commuted in June.

In May, Ahmadinejad was received by roaring crowds during a visit to Jakarta. In an interview with *The Wall Street Journal* Tuesday, Indonesian Defense Minister Juwono Sudarsono said he believed the best way to secure south Lebanon was for Hizbullah forces to be "absorbed" into the Lebanese army.

As the war in Lebanon raged, the Malaysian government called for all nations of the world to cut off diplomatic relations with Israel. This week, senior Malaysian officials said that there was no justification for the West's opposition to Iran's nuclear program.

Of all the Muslim countries who are planning to contribute forces to UNIFIL, Turkey is the only one that has diplomatic relations with Israel. As a result, to date, its forces are the only ones the Olmert-Livni-Peretz government is willing to see deployed in Lebanon. Two weeks ago, during a visit with Turkish Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul, Olmert said, "Turkey plays an important role in the Middle East and will continue to do so." He added, "Israel has confidence in Turkey."

While until the formation of the AKP's Islamist government in 2002 it made sense for Israeli prime ministers to say such things, today such statements are unjustified. Over the

past four years, Turkey has been transformed from a stalwart US and Israeli ally into one of the most overtly anti-American and anti-Semitic states in the world. By the same token, Turkey has gone to great lengths to warm its relations with the Arab world and Iran.

During the war, IDF Military Intelligence discovered that Iran was shipping weapons to Hizbullah through Turkey. After Hamas's electoral victory in January, Turkish Prime Minister Recep Erdogan was the first international leader to host Hamas terror leaders in an official visit. During the war, Erdogan announced Turkey's support for Hizbullah, saying that "nobody should expect us to be neutral and impartial."

From all of this it is apparent that the participation of Muslim armies in the UNIFIL force - even if they are only from Turkey - could easily lead to a situation where the IDF finds itself fighting UN forces. Alternatively, as the UN and EU foresee, cowed by the "international community," the Olmert-Livni-Peretz government may simply concede Israel's right to self-defense, in spite of the growing threats from Hizbullah, the Palestinians and Iran.

AS FOR America, disturbingly the Bush administration, like the Olmert-Livni-Peretz government, is showing acute signs of policy collapse. In a near inexplicable move, the State Department issued a visa to former Iranian president Muhammad Khatami. Obscenely, the former leader and regime flack for

the Islamic supremacist ayatollahs has been invited to speak at the National Cathedral in Washington.

As it did at the beginning of the war in Lebanon, the Olmert-Livni-Peretz government set the proper goals for managing the cease-fire. But as it did during the war, it has proceeded to take every step possible to ensure that those goals will not be achieved.

Now, the troika hopes that through UNIFIL, Israel will cobble together a coalition against Hizbullah, while it is actually facilitating the formation

of a coalition that will protect Hizbullah against Israel. They have failed to recognize that to secure its national security interests, Israel does not need to negotiate, it needs to act. The only reason the EU and the UN feel comfortable ordering Israel around is because the Olmert-Livni-Peretz government obeys them.

Things do not have to be this way. No country in the world lets outsiders dictate its policies on fundamental issues of national security. Israel must not be the first to do so.