

IDC HERZLIYA AND THE LEBANON WAR: SYMPOSIUM

SYMPOSIUM ON THE WAR GENERATES "CONCLUSIONS AND INSIGHTS"

With the ink on the mid-August cease-fire agreement barely dry, the **Institute of Counter Terrorism (ICT)** initiated a one-day symposium as a satellite event prior to its 6th International Conference (see coverage page 20). The symposium hosted leading figures from Israel's military and intelligence circles, as well as analysts and commentators, to focus on the lessons learned and ramifications of the conflict with Hezbollah, and was the first public professional discussion to take place since the hostilities stilled.

IDC Herzliya Founding President **Prof. Uriel Reichmann** set the tone for the day's deliberations in his opening and news-making remarks, calling for a national committee of inquiry into the second Lebanon war, rather than disjointed bodies "whose members are disqualified due to conflicts of interest. A committee cannot be appointed by those it is supposed to examine." In looking beyond the immediate aftermath of the war, Reichman commented, "The understanding is clear that a nuclear Iran will change the balance of power in the world and create a new threat to Sunni states as well. This opens new possibilities that can assist in the renewal of talks with the Palestinians and Lebanese. The government of Israel should take the appropriate political initiative before other parties take less desirable actions."

The symposium's three panel discussions presented blunt assessments and sobering observations. In looking at Israel's preparedness for the war, **Shabtai Shavit**, former head of the Mossad and Chairman of ICT's Israel Board of Directors, chaired a session which looked at the evaluation of the intelligence gathered prior to the war, the impact of prior budget cuts on reservists' training and equipment, as well as the vulnerability of Israel's northern population centers and impact of the damages sustained.

The second panel, on the war's operations and the interface between military and civilian-political leadership, was dedicated to the memory of

Conference photos: Harel Rinzler

SEMINAR ON DECISION MAKING

Israel's Chief of Staff, **General Dan Halutz** described the outcome of the second war in Lebanon as an Israeli "win by points." Others claimed that Israel did not win, while a few have even argued that Israel actually lost the war. A November seminar on **Decision-Making During the Lebanon War**, sponsored by the Lauder School of Government, Diplomacy and Strategy, focused on what went wrong in the second Lebanon war; lessons that can be drawn to avoid mistakes in the future; and recommendations to improve decision making during crises. A policy statement entitled, "Recommendations for Improving Decision Making during Crises in Israel," was circulated soon after to key policy makers and the media.

The symposium was organized by **Prof. Alex Mintz**, head of the Decision Making Project at IDC Herzliya and winner of the 2005 Distinguished Scholar Award of the International Studies Association in Foreign Policy Analysis.



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Herzliya's **Lauder School of Government, Diplomacy and Strategy**, suggested that the current question of who won the war be evaluated in terms of whether Israel succeeded in invoking an image of deterrence vis a vis Hezbollah – from both military and psychological angles. "All terror organizations are rational, although their rationality is different than yours or mine," Ganor posited. "Have we altered either their capability or their motivation to continue to inflict terror? And how do they assess *our* capability and motivation?"

Lt. Col. Emanuel Moreno, a graduate of IDC's Radzyner School of Law. **Col. (res.) Lior Lotan**, Executive Director of ICT who chaired the session, spoke of what all of us learn from Moreno's example of leadership, and thanked Moreno's wife and parents for their presence at the session, saying, "Emanuel, both warrior and father, in your life, and surely in your death, you taught that we must remain strong and vigilant against the constant tides in our region to wipe us out, until this tide has died out."

Former head of Israel's National Security Council **Maj. Gen. (res.) Giora Eiland**, reviewed the strategic options weighed at the fateful meeting of Israel's Cabinet on July 12 and the ramifications of the decisions taken. Fellow panelists – **Gen. (res.) Yoram Yair**, Paratrooper commander during the Lebanon war of 1982, **Brig. Gen. (res.) Ran Packer**, commander of fighter flight squadrons of the Israel Air Force, and **Col. (res.) Dr. Shmuel Gordon**, also a fighter pilot – analyzed the comparative effect of an air campaign in countering an insurgent terror organization such as Hezbollah which had free run of the infrastructure within a sovereign country, Lebanon. They also analyzed the effectiveness of ground forces – tanks and infantry – against an insurgency, and the challenge posed by short range missiles launched from within populated areas.

The symposium's final session examined the war's ramifications, both in terms of Israel's standing in world opinion and in terms of preparedness for the next conflict, which all agreed is in only a matter of time. **Dr. Boaz Ganor**, founder of ICT and Deputy Dean of IDC

Col. (res.) and Senior ICT Researcher **Yoni Fighel** surveyed the Palestinian perspective of the events of the summer, and that their reading of the events showed Hezbollah as more victorious than not, with their tactics thus worthy of emulation, while Member of Parliament **Prof. Irwin Cotler**, Canada's former Minister of Justice and Attorney General, observed that Israel is the only country which is the sole object of convergence for six fronts which intersect with the military dimension in the war on terror – political, diplomatic, media, legal, state-sanctioned genocidal anti-Semitism, and that of radical transnational totalitarian Islam.

Dr. Uzi Landau, former Minister of Internal Security and ICT research fellow, warned that radical Islam and its allies target Israel as part of its strategy for world domination and likened this summer's crisis to that of the Cuban missile stand-off of 1962. Member of Knesset **Silvan Shalom**, former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, pointed to the importance of building coalitions with Arab countries with which Israel shares a common interest of forestalling the progress of radical Islam. **Col. (res.) Daniel Reisner**, former head of the IDF's division for international law, illuminated the role of legal proceedings in times of war.

While its findings were interim, the questions raised at the symposium formed a fitting preamble to the three day conference that followed on the fight against terror. This summer's conflagration provided a case study examination of the constellation of forces involved and a chilling example of just what is at stake in the confrontation between western democracies and radical theocratic regimes.



Blunt observations and sobering assessments from speakers (l to r) Maj. Gen. (res.) Giora Eiland, Gen. (res.) Yoram (Ya-Ya) Yair, Brig. Gen. (res.) Ran Packer; Deputy Minister of Defense Dr. Ephraim Sneh; former head of the Mossad Shabtai Shavit; Col. (res.) Lior Lotan