

Policy recommendations for Dealing with Immediate Security Challenges

written by Meir Ben Shabbat | 11.10.2025

The following policy paper does not address the plusses and minuses of the hostage release agreement, which is now a fait accompli, nor does it address the ongoing mechanisms within the framework of the deal. Rather, its purpose is to recommend ways to cope with the security challenges that the new reality is likely to pose for the State of Israel.

Five Challenges:

1. **Policy on use of military force:** It is critical to adapt and clarify the policy for use of military force in the Gaza Strip at the different stages of implementation of the agreement. The sharp transition from a state of combat to a ceasefire while Israel's forces are still deployed in areas of the Strip may create a lack of clarity, disrupt the forces' ability to respond to various scenarios, and also endanger our soldiers. It is important to decide and make clear to IDF forces that in every situation, the leading consideration is the security of the IDF troops on the ground.

Israel should determine ahead of time the responses to the following plausible scenarios: how to act when armed Hamas operatives, tunnels, or weapons are detected; how to respond to "rogue" rocket fire; and how to react to Hamas activity aimed at repairing or reestablishing military capabilities.

2. **Protecting the security zone and preventing its erosion through creeping attrition:** The rules of engagement must be set so as not only to prevent a direct risk to IDF soldiers, but to protect the security zone and prevent its erosion through a Hamas strategy of creeping attrition. Hamas or other terrorist elements are likely to attempt to gradually erode the enforcement of this zone by habituating our forces to the arrival of children, women, or the elderly into these areas under various pretexts. This must not be allowed to happen.

- 3. Preventing the rehabilitation of Hamas's military capabilities under the cover of humanitarian efforts:** Among the hundreds of supply trucks entering the Gaza Strip will be weapons as well as dual-use materials and equipment needed to produce weapons and ammunition. The claim that goods will be transferred to Gaza only after inspection and verification, even if true, does not address dual-use materials. Fiberglass sheets, electrodes, adhesives, etc., will be presented as intended for legitimate civilian use but will be used by Hamas and other terrorist groups for military ends.

The challenge is even more complex regarding tractors and heavy mechanical equipment, whose entry is ostensibly required for clearing rubble and road repairs. It is clear that such equipment will also be used to prepare tunnels. Effective oversight in this domain will not be feasible given the reality that will prevail in Gaza. All that can be achieved is to slow and complicate the enemy's efforts by limiting the types of equipment that may be brought into Gaza.

- 4. Israeli civilian policy toward the Gaza Strip:** Israel may quickly find itself facing a flood of requests from Palestinians in Gaza, encouraged by the mediating countries, to enter Israel for medical treatment in hospitals or to transit to Judea and Samaria (West Bank.) The Israeli political echelon should decide now in a manner that leaves no room for interpretation that under no circumstances will Palestinians from Gaza be permitted to enter Israel. In this context, there is reason to be concerned that members of Gazan clans who fought against Hamas will seek refuge in Israel. The solution for them should not lie within the territory of the State of Israel.
- 5. Terrorism trends in Judea and Samaria (West Bank):** Given that the war is ending with Hamas still standing and with the release of numerous Palestinian terrorists, support for Hamas is expected to increase, and the potential for terror attacks originating in the West Bank, already on the rise, is expected to grow even further. Against this background, an immediate hardening of Israel's security policy in this arena is required. Israel should continue the offensive approach adopted at the outset of the war, including the use of targeted prevention measures. The Shin Bet has a key role in monitoring each of the terrorist prisoners who will be released. No tolerance should be shown toward any attempts by them to

return to terror activity in any form.

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