‘Spider web’ theory unravels

written by Meir Ben Shabbat | 30.09.2024
Nasrallah’s infamous speech following the IDF’s withdrawal from Lebanon in 2000, once thought prophetic, crumbles in the face of Israeli resolve.

Israel Reestablished Deterrence. It Should be Praised, Not Admonished

written by Arsen Ostrovsky | 30.09.2024
In the last 48 hours, confirmation of Israel’s stunning elimination of arch-terrorists Mohammed Deif of Hamas and Fuad Shukr of Hezbollah, as well as the presumed elimination of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh in Iran, will redefine Israeli deterrence and create a paradigm change in the Middle East, likely bringing the war with Hamas closer to an end.

Each of the three terrorists eliminated were the embodiment of evil, dripping with the blood of thousands of innocent civilians, both Israeli and foreign nationals, including Americans.

As leaders of Hamas, Haniyeh and Deif, were the masterminds of the October 7 massacre and decades of terror attacks in Israel. Shukr, the deputy leader of Hezbollah, was responsible for the Majdal Shams rocket attack last weekend in northern Israel, in which 12 children were murdered while playing football. He had also been directing Hezbollah’s rocket attacks on Israel since October 8 and responsible for procuring the terror group’s advanced weaponry.

In case it needs to be reiterated, the elimination of these arch-terrorists and murderers was entirely legal, just, and moral. The world today is a safer place without them and Israel ought to congratulated for their elimination.

But what is the military and geo-strategic impact of these operations?

There is no denying that the brazen October 7 attacks and abductions by Hamas, as well as the ongoing rocket fire by Hezbollah, struck a massive arrow through the heart of Israel's much-vaunted defense and intelligence apparatus. In the last 72 hours, Israel not only regained its deterrence, but has taken it to a new level, with the potential to permanently alter the landscape of the Middle East.

The pin-point operations against Shukr in Beirut and Haniyeh, while asleep in an apartment building in Tehran on Day 1 of the new President's tenure, were daring, audacious, and brilliantly executed, with minimum to no civilian casualties and no harm to Israeli soldiers and assets.

That they were carried out great distance away from Israel under the noses of the Hezbollah and Iranian leaderships, and relying on such precise intelligence, will also cause enormous embarrassment to Hezbollah and especially Tehran, because Haniyeh's security was under their responsibility, underscoring that Israel can strike any target, at any time, effectively turning their leaders and military sites into sitting ducks.

This in turn ought to give them pause for consideration for any future military actions they might seek to undertake, knowing the possible response they might face.

There are those who now insist that the elimination of Haniyeh and Shukr will only escalate regional tensions. To them we ask: Where have you been the last 10 months?

Hamas initiated the massacre of October 7 and were joined by Hezbollah the day after, having since fired over 7,250 rockets at northern Israel from Lebanon.

Iran has meantime been pulling the strings from Tehran as the grandmaster of both Hamas and Hezbollah, as well as the Houthis, who joined long ago from Yemen.

If anyone has been escalating regional tensions, it has been the international community, which has been largely trying to pressure Israel into showing restraint or compromise, instead of demanding Hezbollah and Hamas, cease the attacks, disarm and release all the hostages, or that Iran reign in their proxies.

In doing so, the international community has only emboldened these terror groups and encouraged their regional patrons to escalate tensions further.

If anything, the world should thank Israel now, as the elimination of Haniyeh and Shukr ought to send a clear message to all the terror groups and their enablers that their actions come at a heavy price, and they should reconsider their involvement.

Israel's renewed deterrence can also have a positive impact on the hostage negotiations. Although there will be some uncertainty with respect to the negotiations in the short-term, in the medium term, it should place greater pressure on Hamas to accept a deal.

There is no denying that Hamas has been utterly decimated and embarrassed. Their leadership is destroyed, its military dismantled into a fraction of its former self, and Sinwar has never been so isolated. Although Hamas is unlikely to re-engage in negotiations so soon for fear of losing face and being seen as succumbing to Israel's overpowering, they will need to reach some kind of agreement, so as to have at least something to show and avoid the fate of Haniyeh and Deif.

Israel's audacious targeted operations this past week only underscore that the path to stability in the region and return of the hostages, will come from renewed Israeli deterrence and strength.

The article was written together with John Spencer.

Published in Newsweek, August 2, 2024.

Robust resilience for Israel

written by David M. Weinberg | 30.09.2024
It is time for Israel to diversify its strategic alliances, sources of raw materials and weaponry, technological partnerships, and more.