Two years to October 7: The Strategic Costs of the IDF's Operational Inadequacy

written by Dr. Yitzhak Klein | 16.10.2025

Main Points

- Israel neutralized Hezbollah's missile threat but failed to dismantle its ground forces or Hamas's rule in Gaza.
- The IDF lacks a coherent concept of operational maneuver – the coordinated use of ground forces to destroy enemy capabilities and achieve strategic goals.
- Brilliant air and intelligence operations were not matched by decisive ground campaigns, leaving enemy forces largely intact.
- Operations in both Gaza and Lebanon unfolded too slowly, allowing the enemy to recover and denying Israel strategic momentum.
- The IDF repeatedly fought over the same areas instead of seizing and controlling critical ground to deny Hamas sanctuary and supply.
- These operational shortcomings weakened Israel's deterrence and may embolden regional actors, notably Egypt, to reassess Israel's military credibility.
- The IDF must relearn the art of operational maneuver – integrating speed, initiative, and decisive ground action – to transform tactical superiority into strategic victory.

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