



THE SABAN CENTER  
*for* MIDDLE EAST POLICY  
at THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

ANALYSIS PAPER

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Number 14, October 2007

# LESSONS FROM ISRAEL'S INTELLIGENCE REFORMS

YOSEF KUPERWASSER



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YOSEF KUPERWASSER

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Last but not least is the incredible support I received—as always—from my wife Tsionit who took care of the many issues in Israel which enabled me to spend the time necessary in Washington writing this paper.

## PREFACE

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Daniel L. Byman, Senior Fellow at the Saban Center for Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institution and Director of the Center for Peace and Security Studies at Georgetown University's Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service

The once-cloistered world of U.S. intelligence is openly in turmoil. The September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States and the subsequent failure to find weapons of mass destruction in Iraq both led to extensive reforms of the U.S. intelligence community. The very heart of the intelligence process—collection, analysis, and dissemination—all changed dramatically as the community underwent reorganization after reorganization. Less publicly, but no less dramatically, the U.S. military has also transformed the mission, scope, and organization of its intelligence activities. Bureaucracies with primarily domestic responsibilities, such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Department of Homeland Security, further complicated the intelligence picture, offering new capabilities but also placing new demands on the system. Even farther away from the spotlight, but perhaps more consequential in the long term, are changes in technology, society, and the very nature of warfare, all of which shape the demands on intelligence. The U.S. intelligence community has struggled to adapt to these criticisms and challenges, and the jury is still out on the effectiveness of the new approach.

While intelligence professionals struggle with these changes, they must also confront a perennial yet daunting problem: policymakers' limited comprehension of the intelligence process. As a result, intelligence officials must not only ensure that the best information is collected and properly analyzed, but also that it is read and understood.

These challenges lie at the heart of this analysis paper. What are the true priorities of intelligence agencies? What is the best way to assure objectivity in intelligence while ensuring that intelligence is tightly integrated into the policy process? How should analysts and collectors best interact? Given changing missions and technologies, what are the most effective ways to disseminate information while still protecting sources?

Yosef Kuperwasser is an ideal person to answer these questions. Having served in several senior-level Israeli intelligence positions, he is well versed in the new world facing intelligence professionals. Kuperwasser, however, goes well beyond the perspective he gained in his own experience as an intelligence professional, integrating the many (and often competing) concerns of Israeli policymakers and applying the lessons to America's unique dilemmas.

U.S. policymakers and intelligence professionals have much to learn from Kuperwasser's insights into the Israeli experience. Israel's intelligence community, particularly its military intelligence, has changed dramatically in the last decade in order to meet better the threats facing the Jewish state. As the dangers of terrorism and proliferation have come to overshadow the conventional military threat from neighboring Arab states, Israeli military intelligence has gone well beyond its historic "what is over the next hill?" focus to address a wider range of operational and strategic issues. Their analysts have had to learn how to expand the scope of

what they do while retaining the long-standing expertise they have gained on adversary military capabilities. In addition, Israeli military intelligence has had to expand its dissemination and work with new partners both inside and outside of Israel.

Although America and Israel face distinct challenges today, Americans can learn from Israel's successes and problems as they struggle to remake U.S. intelligence and meet tomorrow's threats.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The events of September 11, 2001 led to large-scale examination of the American intelligence system, with many questioning whether the failure to prevent the terrorist attacks lay on the doorstep of decision makers or intelligence personnel. The questions and concerns stemming from 9/11 led to a commission of inquiry and, ultimately, passage of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act, which was signed by President Bush in December 2004. Many of the provisions of the Act advanced specific structural and cultural changes, and were coupled with measures to improve the intelligence “product.” Around the time that the debate surrounding 9/11 was taking place, however, another intelligence failure unfolded. The contention that Saddam Hussein possessed weapons of mass destruction, a key rationale behind the George W. Bush Administration’s drive to war in Iraq, could not be substantiated. Again, the debate resurfaced about who—the intelligence community or the policymakers—was responsible. The underlying premise in this discussion over the American intelligence system was that structural, professional, and cultural changes had to be implemented in order to improve the way intelligence agencies perform their missions, and that within the United States, intelligence and policymaking are in fact two separate spheres.

In Israel, there was no major intelligence failure in recent years akin to those mentioned above, and policymaking and intelligence are more intertwined than in the United States. Nevertheless, in the late 1990s,

Israel’s intelligence leadership felt it necessary to reform the concepts, perceptions, and practices of intelligence since existing methodologies could no longer fully address the growing complexity of the security environment and the emerging threats. While ideas for improving intelligence date back over thirty years in Israel, to the aftermath of the 1973 Yom Kippur War, the reforms in the late 1990s grew from the identification of a number of geo-strategic changes and some new understandings:

- **Changes in the Characteristics of Wars and Changes in the Military Doctrine of the Enemies.**

The changing nature of battle was a major catalyst for Israel’s intelligence reform. In the past, most wars in which Israel was involved were well defined in place and time, with the enemy having a relatively centralized and well-defined decision-making process, and a high-profile military presence. However, in recent years, the nature of war has changed. In many instances the battlefield is one in which entire societies are involved, as the battle is about the endurance of these societies. The decision-making process of the enemy is ambiguous and involves many elements, and the enemy employs a strategy of concealment. As a result, indicators of success have changed, with territory no longer the only focus. Instead, legitimacy in the eyes of one’s own citizens, in the eyes of the international community, and even in the eyes of the enemy’s constituency has become a main priority in battle.

- **The Impact of the Information Age.** Intelligence is fundamentally about acquiring and interpreting information. As a result, the information revolution of the 1990s forced the Israeli intelligence community to face many new challenges. The growth in methods of communication and the improvement in the way in which communications are secured (partly due to the growing awareness of intelligence capabilities) made it much more difficult and much more expensive to garner desired pieces of information. At the same time, the media itself turned into another important dimension of the battlefield. Radical elements in the Middle East were quick to learn that electronic media are an effective way to reach the hearts and minds of large populations. The influence of these groups has only grown with the increasing popularity of alternative on-line media outlets.

There were also long-standing issues in need of being addressed. These included:

- **The Relationship between Intelligence Personnel and Decision Makers.** For many years, the intelligence community had grappled with defining its relationship with decision makers. The growing complexity of the battlefield emphasized the benefits of having a close relationship between intelligence personnel and decision makers, which include the development of clear lines of communication in which valuable discourse may take place and the intelligence picture and the caveats and lynchpins which are attached to it are understood. Furthermore, a close relationship helps ensure that intelligence products are relevant and influential. However, in order for the intelligence community to retain independence and objectivity—two elements necessary to guard against dangerous biases in intelligence assessments—intelligence personnel need to establish the proper distance between themselves and the decision makers. There was a need, therefore, to define the nature of the relationship between the intelligence community and the decision maker.

- **The Relationship between Analysts and Collectors.** There are often divisions within intelligence organizations, and in Israel one of the most salient divisions was that between the analysts and collection personnel. The lack of a strong relationship between analysts and collectors was problematic because the processing of raw intelligence data (by collectors) is an analytical practice and includes making decisions that directly impact the conclusions analysts may reach. In addition, analysts can play a significant role in helping to design collection capabilities because they understand the strategic and operational needs of the country. As such, there was a need to institute dialogue between analysts and collectors that would ensure that the collection efforts would match the focus of the analysts and the analysts would be familiar with the collection environment.

To address these issues, Israel's main intelligence agency, the Directorate of Military Intelligence (AMAN), instituted wide-scale reforms. Broadly, the theme of the Israeli reforms was to change the overall thinking about intelligence. The prevailing mindset that focused on discovering secrets and solving mysteries about events “on the other side of the hill” and then providing intelligence products to the consumer, namely the decision maker, was still relevant to many of the intelligence tasks, but a new approach was added to it. The reforms called for a new way of classifying the external environment upon which intelligence officers focused and a new way of defining the relationship between intelligence officers and decision makers. The new paradigm stressed a holistic attitude and focused on understanding and conceptualizing the way systems that concern Israel's security behave and using this understanding as an input in the decision-making process. The reforms created a mutual learning process between all the components that craft the intelligence product and stressed cooperation among departments within AMAN and between AMAN and the various decision makers that work with AMAN.



Fundamentally, Israel's intelligence community adopted a mindset that stressed a continuous process of improvement and learning. To achieve this, AMAN instituted a number of specific changes:

- **The Introduction of Systemic Thinking as an Analytical Tool.** A major element of AMAN's intelligence reform was the introduction of Systemic Thinking as an analytical tool. Systemic Thinking did not replace existing methodologies as a tool for coping with tactical issues (these methodologies were improved as well), but gave analysts a suitable framework to use in assessing complicated arenas—of great importance given the changes in the nature of war. Systemic Thinking allowed analysts to offer more rounded intelligence estimates and produce a holistic intelligence product by better understanding the way arenas develop and increasing focus on the cultural surroundings of a subject (ideology, religion, public opinion, psychology, literature, and arts).
- **Altering the Structure of the Analysis Units and the Relationship between Analysts, Collectors, and Operators.** Parallel to the introduction of Systemic Thinking, AMAN introduced new ways of classifying the subject areas upon which analysts concentrate by creating nine analysis teams that focus on "Systems" (*Maarechet*) rather than on countries. Therefore, analysis is no longer focused solely on the capabilities and policies of Syria and political actors in Lebanon, for example, but rather on the entire "System," including all the elements that affect it, such as the Iranian influence, international pressures, cultural aspects, media, and perceptions of Israel's activities. The effect of the reform is that analysts are tasked with generating a more holistic understanding and knowledge of the tensions and conflicts that characterize a given arena. Each System is overseen by a Head of Intelligence System (HIS) who is responsible not only for generating the knowledge and presenting it, but also for shaping the intelligence campaign within his or her

System, including the collection policy. The benefit of granting new collection and operational authority to the HIS is that it has forced a much closer relationship between the collectors and the analysts, synchronizing the intelligence activities vis-à-vis the System and reducing the likelihood that information or issues are overlooked. All the different intelligence contributors who work on a specific System become members of a "knowledge group," with increased transparency and cooperation among all of them.

- **Defining the Relationship between Decision Makers and Intelligence.** AMAN took steps to strengthen the partnership between the intelligence community and the decision makers. One step was the development of a learning process that enabled AMAN to become a full-fledged member in the decision-making process. AMAN took upon itself the mission of offering policy recommendations to decision makers (separate from the intelligence picture) and to enable the decision makers to be more involved in the overall intelligence assessment. The use of Systemic Thinking by some of the decision makers themselves facilitated this process.
- **Redefining the Intelligence Products and Goals.** AMAN redefined the type of intelligence products and desired capabilities it should produce in order to be effective. The intelligence community divided these assessments into three categories: Relevant National Intelligence (RNI), which refers to the intelligence needed to develop strategy in a given arena; Strategic Intelligence Superiority (SIS), which refers to the intelligence needed for designing, planning, and executing campaigns in the context of a strategy, and enables one to have a better understanding than one's opponent of a specific situation or environment; Operational and Tactical Intelligence Dominance (OTID), which refers to the intelligence needed for operational and tactical activities. This may often include real-time assessments.

- **Creating New Tools for Dissemination.** AMAN developed an electronic communication system that has enabled it to disseminate to decision makers in almost real-time analytical products and raw multimedia intelligence material. The greatest achievement of this system is that it has helped make intelligence more accessible and desirable to decision makers and enabled direct, real-time communication between the decision makers on all levels and the analysts.
  - **Creating Operation-Level Intelligence.** AMAN introduced new measures to account for the shift from traditional military threats, to wider, unconventional threats (such as weapons of mass destruction and terrorism). Specifically, AMAN understood that in the current security environment, in which the enemy has a strategy of concealment, intelligence has new operational dimensions that may include exposing the enemy and influencing the perception that people may have of the enemy. In addition, AMAN instituted a two-step process to deal with large-scale, abstract threats by first identifying a threat and then breaking it down into tangible pieces that can be addressed. Special intelligence teams that have functional expertise on a defined aspect of the threat are formed and tasked with offering recommendations for coping with that aspect of the threat. Once the strategies are presented, special operational teams are formed, manned by some of the analysts together with collection and operation experts, to implement the strategy. This methodology has also been applied to traditional threats that characterize regular warfare.
  - **Strengthened Relations with Foreign Intelligence Agencies.** The changes in the nature of war emphasized the growing importance of international intelligence cooperation. Structurally, AMAN created a new department for international intelligence cooperation. Culturally, AMAN moved beyond the viewpoint that international cooperation is mainly meant to close intelligence gaps about remote areas that Israeli intelligence cannot afford to cover. AMAN instituted an understanding among its personnel that international cooperation is a major force multiplier since it may help other countries that fight against terror and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in their efforts, contribute to their understanding of the Israeli intelligence picture, and has a direct impact on strengthening Israeli and foreign intelligence assessments.
  - **Focus on the Human Factor.** AMAN redefined what characteristics it looks for in intelligence officers. Reforms were made in the recruitment and training processes to find and hone officers who align with AMAN's new vision of intellectual strength, creativity, and diversity. Intelligence reform in Israel did not only address new officers, it also targeted existing officers. The reforms pressed officers to adjust to a new spirit within the organization, one which values cooperation and collaboration. One of the biggest priorities of the reforms was to instill a sense of leadership in the analysts. AMAN made great efforts, through additional training and specially-designed courses, to prepare intelligence officers to become leaders, and organized numerous workshops in which notions of leadership were thoroughly discussed. At the same time, AMAN reevaluated its own definition of leadership and changed the criteria for choosing leaders to reflect the new paradigm.
- Israel and the United States have fundamental differences in their structures of government, strategic concerns, and priorities. For this reason, the reforms described above are not meant to be a set of recommendations for an American audience. Rather, they are hoped to be a catalyst for debate within the American intelligence community about overall ideas for improving intelligence in the United States. The paper focuses on "higher level" changes (those that go beyond restructuring) and it may be the discussion of these ideas, and possible implementation of some, that will be most beneficial to the American community.

## THE AUTHOR

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**YOSEF KUPERWASSER** was the Charles and Andrea Bronfman Visiting Fellow at the Saban Center for Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institution during the winter of 2006-7. Kuperwasser was previously the head of the Research Division of the Israel Defense Forces' (IDF) Directorate of Military Intelligence (AMAN) for five years until June 2006. In this capacity he was responsible for preparing Israel's national intelligence assessment. He was the Assistant Defense

Attaché for Intelligence at the Israeli embassy in Washington, DC (1992-4) and the Intelligence Officer of the IDF Central Command (1998-2001). During his military service he was involved in shaping the way that Israel understood regional developments and the way Israel shared those understandings with U.S. officials. Kuperwasser has a B.A. in Arabic language and literature from Haifa University and an M.A. in Economics from Tel Aviv University.

## INTRODUCTION

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*... it is not the function of the poet to relate what has happened, but what may happen – what is possible according to the law of probability or necessity. The poet and the historian differ not by writing in verse or in prose....The true difference is that one relates what has happened, the other what may happen. Poetry, therefore, is a more philosophical and a higher thing than history: for poetry tends to express the universal, history the particular. By the universal I mean how a person of a certain type will on occasion speak or act, according to the law of probability or necessity; and it is this universality at which poetry aims in the names she attaches to the personages....*

—Aristotle, *Poetics*, Chapter 9

*The courage of life is often a less dramatic spectacle than the courage of a final moment; but it is no less a magnificent mixture of triumph and tragedy. A man does what he must – in spite of personal consequences, in spite of obstacles and dangers and pressures – and that is the basis of all human morality.*

—John F. Kennedy, *Profiles in Courage*

I chose to open this paper with President John F. Kennedy’s words about courage because I believe that intelligence personnel are extremely brave. They take upon themselves the responsibility to carry out a mission that, on its surface, is almost impossible. The primary task of intelligence is to prevent surprises by accurately predicting future events, a feat largely beyond the capabilities of man or science. To make judgments about what may or may not occur, intelligence officials try to gather as many facts as possible about the individuals, institutions, or governments that make up a given arena or external environment. Unlike other predictive professions, the challenge here is heightened by the fact that those upon whom intelligence organizations focus try to prevent access to information, and even attempt to mislead. Furthermore, in many cases the subjects of intelligence gathering may not know themselves what they will do in the future. This can lead to the ironic situation in which intelligence agencies “know” better than the actor they are analyzing what he or she might do.

There also exist internal and institutional difficulties. Although all elements within the intelligence community should collaborate, often there is distrust and competition among various agencies and individuals. Furthermore, the “customers” of intelligence, namely the policymakers, are often reluctant to cooperate with the intelligence community; they can be skeptical of its ability to forecast the future and even suspicious about the reliability of its information. As a result, the intelligence community is often a convenient scapegoat when military operations or homeland security fail.

The current security environment further complicates the challenges that intelligence agencies face. The nature of war has changed dramatically, evolving from campaigns between conventional armies on fixed battlefronts to long-term struggles between societies. The victor is no longer simply the side that suffers the fewest casualties, it is the side that gains legitimacy among its public and the enemy’s public. The new security environment necessitates a new framework for

intelligence, one that can address the aforementioned challenges.

This paper describes and analyzes some of the reforms that Israel's defense intelligence community, specifically AMAN, has implemented in recent years. It is hoped that the paper offers lessons relevant to an American audience, bearing in mind the substantial differences that exist between the Israeli and the American intelligence communities. The reader should regard the lessons offered not as recommendations, but as a springboard for further discussion. It is important to note that whereas conventional wisdom expects reform to deal primarily with changing the structure of an organization, in Israel, this has only started to take place recently. Instead, intelligence reform in Israel has dealt primarily with:

- The method of analyzing external arenas;
- The nature of the relationship between the various elements of the intelligence community;
- The nature of the relationship between the intelligence community and decision makers.

## BACKGROUND: ISRAEL'S INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY

The classical approach to intelligence regards intelligence as the collection of information about "others," the usage of which generates "knowledge" (an understanding of a situation, country, or threat) that can aid the government's decision-making process. Intelligence may also involve special offensive and defensive covert operations. To achieve this, there are often multiple agencies, each with its own area of expertise. Israel's intelligence community is divided into three main agencies: AMAN, SHABAK, and the Mossad.

The Directorate of Military Intelligence (AMAN) is a branch within the Israel Defense Forces' (IDF) headquarters. Its primary responsibility is to generate "knowledge" needed for strategic and operational decision making at the national level. It therefore has the largest analytical division which studies political trends, economic activity, technological innovations, and military affairs throughout the world.<sup>1</sup> To aid its analysis, AMAN maintains control of electronic and visual collection units. The fact that AMAN lies within the military does not mean it is responsible solely for generating intelligence for the IDF. Rather, AMAN serves as the main generator of intelligence for a variety of individuals and agencies that lie both within, as well as outside the armed forces. These audiences include the military's general staff, the military's chief of staff (who in Israel is the commander of the IDF), the minister of defense, the ministry of defense, the Knesset (the Israeli parliament), the security cabinet, and the prime minister.

The primary mission of the Israel Security Agency (SHABAK, aka the Shin Bet) is to foil terrorist attacks against Israeli targets, especially attacks launched from areas under Israeli control. SHABAK uses its own sources to produce intelligence but shares the information it collects with AMAN who, at the same time, provides SHABAK with a significant amount of information from its own sources. The Mossad is responsible for intelligence activity outside of Israel. This includes information collection, special operations, and liaising with other national intelligence organizations.

While each intelligence arm has its own responsibilities, there is a high level of cooperation that exists between the agencies and cross-agency fluidity that enables, if necessary, one agency to shift resources to another agency to address a pressing concern or threat

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<sup>1</sup> Following the 1973 Yom Kippur War, the military instituted a level of redundancy in its intelligence analysis: analysis was assigned to the regional commands of the IDF, so that they would produce competing analyses to those of AMAN. In addition, to ensure a plurality of opinions on political and counterterrorism matters, analysis and production departments were formed in the Mossad, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and SHABAK. Despite this, only AMAN has the responsibility and ability to provide a holistic and comprehensive intelligence picture.

indicated by another agency. This level of cooperation is achieved through the Committee of the Heads of the Services (VARASH), within which the heads of the three intelligence organizations sit. VARASH convenes to discuss major intelligence issues and to ensure that each intelligence agency is updated on the needs and activities of the others. None of the members of the committee has authority over the others, and it is ultimately the prime minister, who occasionally participates in the meetings, who is head of the intelligence community.

Despite the many achievements of Israel's intelligence community and the relative ease with which information is shared, there are many shortcomings. As a result, tensions between the various agencies have surfaced, leading to suggestions to change the structure of the intelligence system. Thus far, however, such changes have not been implemented.

### IDEAS FOR REFORM FROM OUTSIDE THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY

Following the October 1973 Yom Kippur War, in which Israel failed to foresee an impending attack by Egypt and Syria, Prime Minister Golda Meir established the Agranat Commission (so named because it was headed by Shimon Agranat, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court) to investigate the intelligence failure. One recommendation of the Commission was for the prime minister to appoint an intelligence advisor. This proposal called for the advisor to oversee the activities of the three intelligence organizations, coordinate them, and present a unified intelligence opinion to the office of the prime minister. While there were several attempts to implement this recommendation, they were short lived and left no imprint on the intelligence community. This is because the three intelligence organizations opposed

the proposal and indicated that they would paralyze and isolate any such advisor. More importantly, perhaps, has been the consistent opposition to the idea by the prime ministers themselves who believed that any go-between would disrupt the close relationship they enjoyed with the intelligence agencies.<sup>2</sup>

Other suggestions for reform have focused on the fact that Israel's main intelligence agency, AMAN, is housed within the military. Having AMAN within the IDF, critics contend, creates difficulties for both the analysts and the head of AMAN, leading to the possibility of poor intelligence. Critics argue that the conformity found within military culture may stifle creativity and the diversity of opinion necessary for strong intelligence analysis. For the head of AMAN, they contend, multiple responsibilities may jeopardize the focus needed. For instance, it is difficult to focus on national intelligence at the same time as overseeing military intelligence. Even worse is the flip side: it is difficult to focus on military intelligence while overseeing national intelligence. As such, some have argued for Israel to follow the model of foreign intelligence structures according to which non-military organizations are responsible for national intelligence.

The recommendation to move responsibility for national intelligence out of the military structure has not been initiated because, in practice, there has not been a downside to the prevailing structure. In fact, there are many benefits to it. AMAN is large enough that the attention given to any aspect of intelligence does not preclude it from devoting attention to other aspects (bearing in mind that there will always be limited resources). But more than this, AMAN is the only agency that is capable of providing a holistic intelligence picture (by combining all aspects of the evolving realities).<sup>3</sup> It makes sense to have the main intelligence

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<sup>2</sup> This also prevented the National Security Council, established on March 7, 1999, from having the intelligence oversight proposed by the Agranat Commission. The Cabinet communiqué announcing the formation of the National Security Council is available at <<http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/Government/Communiques/1999/Cabinet%20Communique%20-%2007-Mar-99>>.

<sup>3</sup> Israel's other intelligence agencies are primarily operational institutions, whereas AMAN's primary task is intelligence analysis.

agency within the military: Israel is in a continuous war, and for this reason it is logical to have the defense intelligence agency as the country's primary intelligence unit. Specifically, Israel's national defense strategy is based largely on the expectation that AMAN will provide the early warning needed for the country to react militarily to an emerging threat, and provide the intelligence needed for the war thereafter. Because AMAN is naturally "in the loop" on the most pressing security issues, it can contribute knowledge and rapidly adjust its collection efforts and analysis to evolving situations. Therefore, given the current climate, AMAN's presence within the defense establishment is a strategic advantage rather than a strategic liability.

Still, even though it is advantageous to have AMAN within the IDF, there is a fear that the situation will cause intelligence officers to have a "military state of mind" and recommend only military solutions. However, this is not the case. As the organization responsible for national intelligence, AMAN has many experts who focus on political issues. But the key reason that AMAN has not become an arm of the military is that it has in place a number of tools to ensure the promotion of diverse views. First, in order to make sure that different and opposing opinions are heard within the Israeli intelligence community, AMAN has a culture of openness, where individuals are expected to voice dissenting opinions. The organizational slogan that reflects this openness is, "Freedom of opinion, discipline in action." AMAN has two other tools that promote diversity: the "devil's advocate" office and the option of writing "different opinion" memos.

The devil's advocate office ensures that AMAN's intelligence assessments are creative and do not fall prey to group think. The office regularly criticizes products coming from the analysis and production divisions,

and writes opinion papers that counter these departments' assessments. The staff in the devil's advocate office is made up of extremely experienced and talented officers who are known to have a creative, "outside the box" way of thinking. Perhaps as important, they are highly regarded by the analysts. As such, strong consideration is given to their conclusions and their memos go directly to the office of the Director of Military Intelligence, as well as to all major decision makers. The devil's advocate office also proactively combats group think and conventional wisdom by writing papers that examine the possibility of a radical and negative change occurring within the security environment. This is done even when the defense establishment does not think that such a development is likely, precisely to explore alternative assumptions and worst-case scenarios.

While the devil's advocate office is an institutional-level safeguard against group think, there is also an individual-level safeguard. The analysts themselves are given venues for expressing alternate opinions. Any analyst can author a "different opinion" memo in which he or she can critique the conclusions of his or her department. Senior officers do not criticize analysts who choose to write such memos.<sup>4</sup>

Although the structure of Israel's intelligence system has been scrutinized, it was not the reason for the intelligence reforms that began in 1998. The main catalyst for reform was concern within the intelligence community that new security challenges required new methods for intelligence collection, processing, analysis, dissemination, and tasking. Hence, the need for reform came mainly from within the intelligence community and reflected a feeling that the existing professional tools and procedures were not adequate to deal with the emerging challenges.

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<sup>4</sup> Analysts do not regularly exercise the option of authoring "different opinion" memos. One possible explanation for this is that the process of authoring the official assessment involves incorporating various opinions. As such, their opinions may already be in the official assessment.

# THE NEED FOR INTELLIGENCE REFORM IN ISRAEL

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There was no catastrophic event in the 1990s, akin to the Yom Kippur War, to prompt a major intelligence reform in Israel. However, beginning in the late 1990s, many in the intelligence community, including analysts and decision makers, felt there was a need for reform. Although multiple factors contributed to the reforms within AMAN, two were most influential: the shift in the nature of the threat to Israel and the understanding that strategic intelligence requires a different and more relevant methodology to address the threat.

Israel's intelligence community had been built on the assumption that the country's primary concern was a conventional attack from neighboring armed forces. The long-held practice of addressing this threat was to gather as much information as possible about the enemy to determine what the enemy could or would do—that is, to assess capabilities and intentions. However, a series of events altered the likelihood of a conventional attack against Israel. First, Israel signed peace treaties with Egypt and Jordan, in 1979 and 1994 respectively, which removed two threats from its borders. Second, Syria became weaker after the fall of the Soviet Union. Third, and perhaps most important, terrorism, and the use of catastrophic attacks by terrorist groups, emerged as the primary security threat to Israel. Within the new security landscape, intelligence analysts had to assess the phenomena of terrorism and non-state actors acting outside the purview of a single decision maker. Non-conventional attacks are often the result of a va-

riety of variables, including possible grievances and the state of mind of many individuals within a specific society. Israel's intelligence community understood that non-conventional attacks were of more concern than conventional, cross-border attacks and there was a need to design a fresh approach to intelligence that accounted for this shift in climate. The elements that contributed to the need for a multifaceted intelligence strategy included:

- Changes in the characteristics of war and changes in the military doctrine of Israel's enemies;
- The impact of the "information age."

At the same time, there were long-running issues that many within the intelligence community felt were in need of improvement. Among these were the need to improve the way intelligence needs relate to: collection efforts, "reality," and decision makers.

## CHANGES IN THE CHARACTERISTICS OF WARS AND CHANGES IN THE MILITARY DOCTRINE OF THE ENEMIES

The changing nature of battle was one catalyst for Israel's intelligence reforms. In the past, most wars in which Israel was involved were well-defined in place (on Israel's borders) and time (usually short). The kind of forces against which Israel fought, and the way in which the enemy fought, were also well-defined; the military of Israel was on one side and the



military of the enemy on the other, both looking alike and using similar weapons, techniques, and formations. However, for some time (at least since 1982), the way in which wars are fought has been changing. The time-scale is almost open ended, with short periods of high-intensity skirmishes. In addition, the enemy looks much different than it did in the past, operating in small formations with low signatures. The battlefield itself has also changed, becoming wider and multidimensional, with the enemy of today operating all over the world. The notion of defending one's border against an invading army has become less important because the enemy is ubiquitous, is made up of individuals who penetrate borders, and is sometimes comprised of individuals who are residents in one's own country.

In a sense, there is no frontline where the two sides engage. Rather, in many instances the battlefield is one in which entire societies are involved and the battle is about the endurance of these societies. As a result, indicators of success have changed, with territory no longer the only focus. Instead, legitimacy in the eyes of one's own citizens, in the eyes of the international community, and even in the eyes of the enemy's constituency has become a priority in battle. Because of the changing nature of war, where legitimacy is of primary importance, new tactics for victory have emerged. Today, a major part of the battle is strengthening one's own narrative and weakening the enemy's narrative, or exposing the enemy's real intentions.

Legitimacy is one reason that Western powers continue to be committed to combating militant groups according to liberal norms and values. For Western states, battling according to commonly agreed-upon tactics is the linchpin of maintaining legitimacy. Radical forces know this and look to exploit it by targeting civilians and using civilians as human shields. If a Western nation harms civilians (because civilians are being used as human shields), its legitimacy is challenged and the narrative of the radical group is reinforced. But there is another element at play. Radicals have rewritten the laws of legitimacy, glorifying not only suffering and

sacrifice, but also the specific tactics they employ. Once they have established that their behavior, as carried out by them, is the only legitimate tactic, each time they attack (without being punished), they strengthen their narrative.

The new characteristics of war, along with changes in the military doctrine of Israel's enemies necessitated a new approach to intelligence. Conceptually it means that intelligence has a crucial role in understanding the new reality and exposing the activities and narratives of the new kind of enemy. On a practical level, the new nature of the threat means that various agencies, not just the military, are charged with national security; immigration control, local authorities, and law enforcement agencies have all assumed national security responsibilities. From an intelligence point of view, this means that it is vital to strengthen cooperation among all agencies involved in intelligence collection and operations and to change the way intelligence is gathered and analyzed.

## THE IMPACT OF THE INFORMATION AGE

Intelligence is fundamentally about acquiring and interpreting information. As a result, the information revolution of the 1990s forced the Israeli intelligence community to face many new challenges. First, new methods of communication and improvements in the way communications are secured (partly due to the growing awareness of intelligence capabilities) made it more difficult and more expensive to garner desired pieces of information. At the same time, the media turned into an important player on the battlefield. Radical elements in the Middle East were quick to learn that electronic media are an effective way to reach the hearts and minds of large populations. By taking advantage of mass media opportunities, beginning in the 1980s, radical groups began to influence many Middle Easterners' understanding of the world and their own situation in it. The influence of these groups has only grown with the increasing popularity of alternative online media outlets such as blogs and chat rooms.

But the growth in global communication created another, more unexpected, challenge for the Israeli intelligence community, this one stemming from within Israel itself. The information age challenged the supremacy of intelligence organizations as the main supplier of information and analysis. Because of its speed, electronic media proved to be much more effective than intelligence agencies in shaping decision makers' views of the world. Invariably, the media's quick analysis (via the Internet or television) would make the first, and therefore strongest, impression on decision makers.

### THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INTELLIGENCE PERSONNEL AND DECISION MAKERS

While new factors such as modified enemy tactics and mass communication warranted changes to intelligence practices, so too did long-standing challenges. For many years, the intelligence community had grappled with the problem of how to define its relationship with decision makers. The question of how much interaction there should be between decision makers and intelligence officers was discussed in Israel intensively on many occasions. Both the Agranat Committee and the Kahan Commission<sup>5</sup> concluded that intelligence officers should be close to decision makers so that intelligence officers could intervene in the decision-making process if need be to preempt possible mistakes. The committees did not, however, answer the difficult question of how to ensure that close interaction not lead to the politicization of intelligence.

There are clear benefits to having a close relationship between intelligence personnel and decision makers. One reason for possible failures of communication between decision makers and intelligence officers may be the lack of a shared vocabulary. Fundamentally, a vocabulary is developed within the intelligence commu-

nity that expresses specific situations and threats. This vocabulary may not be understood by the decision maker if he or she is an outsider; a decision maker who is not in close contact with the intelligence community may not be able to understand the real meaning of the caveats and lynchpins that intelligence personnel attach to their reports. But the problem goes both ways: while decision makers may not understand the vocabulary of the intelligence community, the intelligence community may not fully understand the vocabulary of the decision makers. The dangerous result may be that the intelligence produced is not relevant to the needs of the decision makers, and that the intelligence community is deprived of significant intelligence material that the decision makers collect and produce themselves (for example, information and impressions that a decision maker may receive from conversations with foreign leaders). A close relationship can enable decision makers to become familiar with intelligence vocabulary and vice versa.

Intelligence must be relevant and influential. One way to achieve relevancy is to have intelligence personnel close to decision makers and part of the decision-making process. However, in order to retain independence and objectivity, and refrain from dangerous biases in assessments, some argue that intelligence personnel need to distance themselves as well (aside from giving briefings about the enemy).<sup>6</sup> The need to define the nature of the relationship between the intelligence community and the decision makers is clear.

One goal of any intelligence reform should be to create a relationship in which the intelligence community can articulate to the decision makers the logic and the foundations of its assessments. This relationship will allow discussion over the differences each side may have in understanding what is occurring within a given

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<sup>5</sup> The Kahan Commission (so named because it was chaired by the President of the Supreme Court, Yitzhak Kahan) was established by the Israeli government in 1982 to investigate the Sabra and Shatila killings. For the Commission's report, see "Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the events at the refugee camps in Beirut," February 8, 1983, Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, available at <<http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/Foreign%20Relations/Israels%20Foreign%20Relations%20since%201947/1982-1984/104%20Report%20of%20the%20Commission%20of%20Inquiry%20into%20the%20e>>.

<sup>6</sup> Author's discussion with former senior intelligence official, Washington, DC, November 6, 2006.

situation. This can help strengthen intelligence assessments because both sides have different perspectives and approaches that are bound to produce different interpretations.

### THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ANALYSTS AND COLLECTORS

While there was a need in Israel to address the relationship between intelligence personnel and outside actors, such as decision makers, there was also a need to address the relationships between personnel within the intelligence community. There are often divisions within intelligence organizations, and in Israel one of the most salient divisions was that between the analysts and collection personnel. The lack of a strong relationship between analysts and collectors was problematic because the processing of raw intelligence data (by collectors) is an analytical practice and includes making decisions that directly affect the conclusions analysts may reach. For instance, processing personnel decide how to phrase and translate data; they thus act as a filter and affect the way analysts understand the data. Moreover, because processing personnel handle large amounts of data, they must decide what data to

pass to analysts and what data to file away. It is therefore vital that there be dialogue between analysts and collectors so that collectors provide the best possible information. But there is another benefit to dialogue. Because collectors accumulate a significant amount of information and knowledge that ultimately may not be disseminated, they are themselves experts, and should be consulted on a regular basis.

While a close relationship between analysts and collectors benefits the analytical process, it also benefits the collection process. Building interception capabilities, planning satellite orbits, or recruiting human sources takes years to implement. Yet, in recent times, intelligence requirements change more rapidly than the pace at which intelligence assets can be built. Therefore, there is a growing need for flexible capabilities that can be shifted depending on current needs. Analysts can play a significant role in designing these capabilities because they understand the country's strategic and operational needs. As such, there must be a dialogue and a learning process between analysts and collectors to ensure that collection efforts match the analysts' focus, and also that analysts are familiar with the collection environment.

# ISRAEL'S INTELLIGENCE REFORMS

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In the late 1990s, the changing nature of warfare and the revolution in information technology created an environment in which intelligence reform was needed. But there were long-standing challenges to address as well, such as the relationship between intelligence officers and decision makers. Two key elements of Israel's intelligence reforms were the introduction of Systemic Thinking as an analytical tool, and the reclassification of threat arenas.

## THE INTRODUCTION OF SYSTEMIC THINKING AND THE LIMITS OF INDUCTION AS AN INTELLIGENCE METHODOLOGY

In years prior to the outbreak of the Palestinian violence and terror campaign in 2000, Israel's national security priorities were focused on four primary matters: the possibility of war or peace with Syria; the buildup of Hizballah's strength in Lebanon; the possibility of reaching a permanent-status agreement with the Palestinians; and the development of long-range missiles by Iran (and the perception that the United States was doing little to prevent Iran from developing such missiles). Many felt that existing intelligence tools functioned well enough to address these threats. However, there was a fundamental problem with the way Israel assessed its security.

The major problem was the objective behind the methodology. It was believed that intelligence was meant to reveal secrets—"facts" about tangible and abstract

objects hidden on "the other side of the hill"—and that each of these "facts" constituted a piece of a complicated puzzle, the full outline of which would only be revealed when all the pieces were fit together. The perception was that "reality" (the overall external environment) consists of two sides: Israel and the enemy. The enemy's strength could be evaluated in terms of military assets, economic activity, political stature, and aspirations. This paradigm did not mean that producing intelligence was easy. On the contrary, revealing secrets and solving mysteries about the enemy required very efficient collection and analytical practices. Many a time, intelligence organizations made dreadful mistakes that, though reviewed in lessons-learned sessions, were often repeated (Barbarossa, Pearl Harbor, the Yom Kippur War, etc.). Yet, these mistakes were perceived to be either an inevitable part of intelligence, since intelligence deals with uncertainty, or a consequence of personnel not performing their duties well. The idea that these failures could result from a flawed intelligence methodology was hardly considered.

A major reason for the recurrence of intelligence failures is the use of induction as an analytic methodology. The inductive reasoning model holds that if a certain state or military has acted in a certain way under specific conditions, it will act, more-or-less, in the same way under similar conditions in the future. As a methodology, induction was ubiquitous among intelligence agencies throughout the world and was used to predict the intentions and actions of foreign leaders and mili-

taries. While induction is an essential component of intelligence predictions, especially on a tactical level, and it forms the basis of the military's early-warning toolkit, in many instances when strategic issues are at stake, it is irrelevant or misleading. For example, the Yom Kippur War of 1973 proved that Israel's enemies at the time did not act as they had done in the past under similar conditions. A shortcoming of induction is that there can be various explanations for the behavior of an enemy, and it is therefore difficult to identify the key variable. In addition, what may have been relevant in the past may not be relevant in the present, since every situation is singular and particular.<sup>7</sup>

More importantly, it is dangerous to rely solely on induction as an analytical methodology because environments develop in a complicated manner and not in a linear way. Induction tends to be too rigid, and does not enable an analyst to alter his or her assessment until after the situation has already changed. This can be illustrated through the behavior of leaders. Leaders act according to a strategy that they have adopted, which reflects their understanding of what is the best way to fulfill their vision, given the domestic and external constraints they perceive. By using induction, intelligence analysts may make predictions about the future behavior of the foreign leader, based on their observations of the behavior of the foreign leader and their understanding of the leader's strategy. However, when a leader notices the emergence of new constraints or the removal of existing ones, he or she may alter his or her strategy. As the leader does this, he or she may temporarily stay on the course of the original strategy. Therefore, the way the leader acts may no longer be relevant in predicting how he or she will behave in the future. In fact it may be misleading. Strategies change quite often, inter alia because as soon as an actor notices that some other actor has adopted a new strategy, he might consider changing his own, lest his strategy and he become irrelevant. The major failures of intelligence are often

based on an analyst's over-reliance on induction and difficulty in predicting changes in the enemy's strategy. In some cases the failures have to do with the difficulty of understanding the way a specific leader reacts to changes, because of cultural gaps and because intelligence analysts tend to attribute to the leaders and states much more power, wisdom, and self confidence than is deserved. The problem is often compounded when the threat is not based on a specific leader or state, but is based on social and cultural trends. One way to cope with these problems is to use Systemic Thinking.

### THE INTRODUCTION OF SYSTEMIC THINKING: CHANGES IN ANALYTICAL TOOLS AND CONCEPTS

The introduction of Systemic Thinking was the main reform to the analysts' toolkit and helped them cope with the complexities in the arenas under their purview. This tool has enabled analysts to produce a holistic intelligence product that is not simply the accumulation of several separate assessments. Rather, it is a creation of a new discourse space in which fresh holistic thinking and genuine integration can take place. By increasing attention to the cultural surroundings of a subject (ideology, religion, public opinion, psychology, literature, and arts), Systemic Thinking has allowed analysts to offer more rounded intelligence estimates. Systemic Thinking enables the analyst to develop a comprehensive picture of relevant arenas, analyze the tensions and conflicts that characterize them, assess how they may develop, and produce options for successfully addressing emerging situations and threats. At the same time, Systemic Thinking developed new ways for intelligence analysts to express abstract matters.

The elements that comprise Systemic Thinking are meant to help analysts improve their "understanding of the other" and avoid, as much as possible, the trap of "mirror imaging." In other words, key aspects of

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<sup>7</sup> Isaac Ben-Israel, *The Philosophy of Military Intelligence* (Israel: Ministry of Defense Publishing, 1999) (in Hebrew).

Systemic Thinking help analysts avoid making assessments that assume the enemy is acting within the same logical framework as the analyst.<sup>8</sup>

### CHANGES IN THE STRUCTURE OF THE ANALYSIS UNITS AND THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ANALYSTS, COLLECTORS AND OPERATORS

In addition to introducing Systemic Thinking, AMAN made two major changes to its intelligence practices by redesigning its analysis teams and establishing a strong relationship between its analysts and collectors. Regarding the redesign of its analysis teams, AMAN introduced new ways of classifying the subject areas upon which analysts focused. In the past, AMAN had looked at the world in terms of states and created analysis teams that reflected this. As part of the intelligence reforms, AMAN created analysis teams that focused on Systems (*Maarechet*) rather than on states. For instance, a team that once was devoted to analyzing Syria and Lebanon became a team responsible for analyzing the northern System. As a result, analysts no longer focus solely on the situation within Syria and Lebanon; they look at the entire System and anything that may affect it, including Iran's influence, international pressure, and the way in which Israel's own activities are perceived and may affect this threat arena. The effect of the reform is that analysts gain and can present a more

holistic understanding of the tensions and conflicts that characterize a given arena. Now, issues such as the relationship and balance of power between opposing players are vital to intelligence assessments.

AMAN established nine Systems, divided into two echelons: higher echelon Systems focus on political issues (such as the Palestinian arena) and lower echelon Systems focus on functional issues (such as terrorism or counter proliferation).<sup>9</sup> The rationale behind this structure is that the upper echelon addresses the motivations and ideas of participants in an arena (as well as the trends and tensions that characterize the arena), whereas the lower echelon focuses on the operational outcomes of behavior within an arena. While the upper Systems produce strategic assessments and the lower Systems produce operational and tactical understandings and warnings, in practice, the two work closely together. For instance, issues relating to Iranian terrorism would entail the Iranian System (upper echelon) and the Terrorism System (lower echelon) working together. Analysts devoted to the Iranian System would focus on the intentions of all elements within the Iranian arena, whereas analysts devoted to the Terrorism System would analyze Iran's capabilities. In many cases, the number of personnel within a lower echelon System is greater than the number of personnel within a higher echelon System since lower echelon personnel work across multiple Systems.

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<sup>8</sup> In 1998, the Director of Military Intelligence, Major General Moshe "Boogie" Ya'alon, was appointed Commander of the IDF's Central Command and I was appointed as the Command's intelligence officer. Major General Ya'alon and I quickly realized that the intelligence tools available to us regarding situation assessment were inadequate and Command's intelligence priorities did not accurately reflect existing threats.

The main threat to Israel was not from the formal forces of countries such as Jordan, Iraq, or Syria. Rather, it emanated from the West Bank, a complex and multi-layered environment within which multiple groups were operating. Although the situation was basically calm—Palestinian violence amounted mainly to stone-throwing, and Israel was able to contain most Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad cells—and there were no signs pointing to a radical change of the *status quo*, we felt that we were unable to perceive a complete picture of the situation.

We decided to employ the analytical approach of Systemic Thinking, which allowed us to draw conclusions from what would have previously been viewed as a minor incident. On December 4, 1998, in the northern entrance to the Palestinian city of Ramallah, a group of Fatah-affiliated students protested Israel's refusal to release Palestinian prisoners by throwing stones at passing cars. The students also wounded an Israeli soldier who was in the area and stole his weapon. Throughout the protests, the Palestinian security forces did not intervene and refused to arrest the protesters or salvage the stolen weapon for return to the IDF. While the incident itself was minor, the behavior of the Fatah activists and the reaction of Palestinian security forces telegraphed the possibility of greater danger in the future. Using Systemic Thinking, Central Command prepared memos that pointed to September 2000 as a probable date for an outbreak of violence by the Palestinians. The documents outlined the way in which the violence would unfold and indicated a high probability for chaos within the Palestinian Authority. The memos also presented strategies for Israel and Central Command to implement as preparation for the likely outbreak as well as strategies to employ once the violence occurred. Based on the conflict scenario we anticipated, we designed appropriate intelligence collection tools and devised operational response plans.

<sup>9</sup> If a new threat emerges, a new System can easily be established to address the new threat.

Each System is overseen by a Head of Intelligence System (HIS) who is responsible for shaping the intelligence campaign within his or her System. This includes the collection policy, the intelligence activities that are meant to expose the enemy's narrative and deeds (that the enemy often tries to conceal), and the intelligence support for military and diplomatic campaigns and operations. The benefit of granting new collection and operation authority to the HIS (he or she is involved with any operational activity in the System under his or her purview, some of which he or she may command) is that it has forced a much closer relationship between the analysts, collectors, and operators. It also provides better synchronization between the effects that Israel tries to achieve through its military, diplomatic, and intelligence campaigns and operations and the intelligence understandings. It has also reduced the likelihood that information or issues will be overlooked. For example, previously a unit head was mainly interested in information about the specific country under his or her purview. Now, the HIS understands that to analyze an arena effectively, information is needed about countries and regional trends that may not have been included previously. While intelligence reform in Israel charged the HIS with overseeing analysis, it also gave the HIS responsibility for presenting intelligence assessments directly to decision makers whenever possible. The rationale for this is that the HIS is the most capable person to present the systemic analysis and have the full scope of the caveats attached to it. At the same time, the HIS may benefit from knowledge a decision maker might have and can gain a better understanding of the decision makers' priorities.

In order to improve cooperation between the analysis and collection units, AMAN undertook two major steps. First, it established forums in which the HIS and their analysts meet with the heads of collection units and the collectors. These face-to-face forums have improved information sharing and have enabled analysts to tap the knowledge of collectors. Second, AMAN established virtual "chat" forums between collectors and analysts on the intranet pages of each System. Establishing both real and virtual forums has ensured a

high level of collaboration throughout the intelligence process. As a result, various components of the intelligence community actively work together to implement specific projects and policies.

The idea of creating separate centers for counterterrorism and counterproliferation was rejected in Israel. The reason was that the intelligence community did not want a gap between those analysts focused on the logic and rationale of a certain arena and those analysts focused on operational activities relevant to a given arena. The interplay between these analysts, and their close communication, is vital to the production of a strong intelligence product. However, at the same time, full integration was rejected because of the unique nature of intelligence analysis within each arena. In Israel, collaboration was not only about information sharing and joint operations, but about analytical cooperation.

#### DEFINING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DECISION MAKERS AND INTELLIGENCE

A key goal of the reform of AMAN was to establish the dialogue it had with the decision makers as a deep and open mutual learning process. This meant that intelligence should become a full-fledged partner in the decision-making process and that the decision makers should become partners in the intelligence process.

As a result of this, intelligence officers have been in a better position to produce relevant and timely analysis that decision makers are likely to use when formulating policy options for a given situation. In addition, the intelligence community has not only assessed the possible strategic and security repercussions of policies under consideration, but is able to offer options that may better serve the strategic interests of the state (as defined by the decision maker). While in the past the Director of Intelligence could offer recommendations, the offering of recommendations was not seen as part of the intelligence community's core mission. Following the reforms, the Director and intelligence officers understand that offering policy recommendations is a component of their mission.

While the improved discourse between decision makers and intelligence personnel provides the intelligence community with greater potential to engage the policy arena, it also enables the decision makers to have a better understanding of and influence on the intelligence community's campaigns, though of course not on the intelligence messages and products. Increasing the role of the decision maker in intelligence grew from the belief that since decision makers have purview over intelligence priorities, they should have a better understanding of the way in which intelligence operates (in much the same way that decision makers should understand the workings of the military because they have ultimate authority over military-related matters). In practice, the reforms gave decision makers greater impact on the priorities of intelligence gathering and on the focus of the analysis. The strength of establishing a close working relationship between decision makers and intelligence analysts rests on the fact that the decision makers are also contributors to the intelligence learning process, since as mentioned above, they have their point of view about the situation and widespread contact with numerous individuals and can therefore offer unique information or opinions to the intelligence analysts.

A close relationship between intelligence officers and decision makers enables the intelligence community to fulfill one of its primary responsibilities: ensuring that decision makers take intelligence understandings and warnings very seriously. The Israeli intelligence community views itself as more than a messenger of critical information; it must make certain that its assessments are considered when policies are implemented. Many countries limit the role of their intelligence officers to that of a mere messenger, a model ironically set forth by the ancient Israelites. In the Book of Ezekiel, Chapter 33, Ezekiel says that when a watchman sees danger approaching, the watchman should blow his horn, the *shofar*. If the watchman does so, but the people do not heed his warning, he is not considered responsible for the subsequent casualties. In modern-day Israel, blowing the horn is not enough. The intelligence community must not only blow the horn extremely loudly, it must take steps to ensure that policymakers take into

consideration the assessments it provides. There is a benefit to this practice that extends beyond constructing strong policies: intelligence personnel are careful to avoid mistakes when they have a close relationship with those who use their information.

The strengthened relationship between the decision-making and intelligence communities does not mean that authority has been blurred. While the Director of Intelligence and the analysis division should take into account the decision maker's inputs, it is the intelligence officer who is responsible for the final intelligence product. Similarly, in deciding on policy, the decision maker can ultimately accept or reject the analysis and the recommendations of the intelligence community, and is responsible for policies that stem from the intelligence. Therefore, although there is a two-way street between the intelligence community and decision-making community, the decision maker has of course full control over policy.

The new relationship between the intelligence community and the decision makers went well with the adoption of new doctrines in the military that were focused on using Systemic Thinking for military planning and on implementing the idea of "jointness" as a method not only on the operational level, but mainly for generating systemic knowledge. In Israel, "jointness" was a process focused on facilitating the generation of knowledge on areas that needed the thinking of a variety of elements. "Jointness" in Israel therefore was not only about information-sharing and joint-operations, but also about analytical cooperation. As such, it was a catalyst for Systemic Thinking in the intelligence community, which is expected to provide the rationale of foreign elements to the discussion about the way the System should be shaped.

### A NEW WAY TO CONCEPTUALIZE INTELLIGENCE PRODUCTS

In strengthening the relationship between the decision-making and intelligence communities, the Israeli reforms had to ensure that communication between



the two functioned efficiently and was mutually beneficial. As a result, the intelligence community defined, in clear terms, the type of intelligence assessments it would produce and bring to the table in its discussions with decision makers. The intelligence community divided these assessments into three categories:

- 1) **Relevant National Intelligence (RNI)**: This category refers to the intelligence needed for shaping and executing national policy. Such intelligence includes warnings about threats and notifications of opportunities. RNI connects the intelligence assessments with the capabilities of the state to make progress toward fulfilling national security priorities. This intelligence also keeps an eye on marginal issues to prevent strategic surprises from threatening the state.
- 2) **Strategic Intelligence Superiority (SIS)**: This category refers to the need to have a better understanding than one's opponent of a specific situation or environment. In practice, SIS often deals with abstract understandings and not necessarily with hard information, but it plays a critical role in the success of military or diplomatic campaigns.
- 3) **Operational and Tactical Intelligence Dominance (OTID)**: This category refers to the intelligence needed for operational and tactical activities. Intelligence officials must be able to provide precise and timely information about the physical aspects of an enemy so that the military can undertake swift action if needed. Often, this intelligence will provide information on targets and an assessment of whether striking specific targets would fulfill a given mission.

These three concepts became the compass according to which the activities of Israel's entire intelligence community were designed. Within each of AMAN's intelligence Systems, an evaluation was made according to the three strategic categories regarding the needed level of intelligence. Then, collection organizations clarified how their products would contribute to each

of the three compartments. This enabled the collection organizations to be much more focused on providing what was really needed for the analysts to perform their duties.

## NEW TOOLS FOR DISSEMINATION

A key element of Israel's intelligence reform was the introduction of an electronic tool to assist the intelligence community in briefing decision makers. The closer relationship between decision makers and intelligence officers, coupled with new threats requiring swift communication between intelligence and decision-making personnel, made it necessary to upgrade traditional communication channels. As a result, AMAN developed an electronic system, called Shofar, that has enabled it to disseminate to decision makers brief analytical reports and updates in almost real time, as well as its daily summaries, other more elaborate reports, and raw multimedia intelligence material.

Shofar's greatest achievement is that it has helped make intelligence more accessible and desirable to decision makers. Through Shofar, AMAN is able to compete with popular news sources that had previously dominated the attention of decision makers.

Although decision makers still use public news sources that cover topics aside from intelligence, they are more inclined to use the intelligence technology to garner required information. The upgraded technology has also allowed decision makers to communicate easily and rapidly with analysts. As such, analysts can better determine decision makers' priorities and, using the Shofar software, tailor information accordingly.

With the introduction of Shofar, there has been less of a need for a special intelligence unit devoted to briefing decision makers. Shofar allows the analysts themselves to brief decision makers from their own offices. Not only does this allow for rapid communication, it links the decision makers with the intelligence experts, thus getting rid of any middlemen who may not know the details of a given situation as well as the analysts.

## CREATING OPERATION-LEVEL INTELLIGENCE

AMAN introduced new measures to account for the emergence of unconventional threats (such as weapons of mass destruction and terrorism) over traditional military threats. In the past, intelligence focused on monitoring the movements of elements within a conventional army. Soldiers and weapons were readily identifiable, and it was relatively straightforward to notice when they were shifted, thus indicating a possible threat. However, these old techniques were ill-suited to protecting Israel from new unconventional threats.

AMAN instituted a two-step process to deal with large-scale, abstract threats by first identifying the threat and then breaking it down into tangible pieces. Special intelligence teams with functional expertise on a defined aspect of the threat are formed and tasked with offering recommendations regarding how to cope with that aspect of the threat. Once the strategies are presented, special operational teams are formed and manned by analysts together with collection and operation experts to implement the strategy. Throughout this process, close collaboration among collectors, analysts, and operational people is critical to bring together all relevant knowledge and minimize the time that elapses between the emergence of a threat and the opportunity to thwart it. An example of this was the response to Qassam rockets being fired from Palestinian territories. First, Qassam rockets were identified as a significant threat to Israel's security. Then, a team of analysts, supported by collection processors, was established. The team broke down the threat into components (the materials that go into constructing the Qassam rocket, how the rockets are assembled, how the rockets are launched, etc.). Then, special teams were formed to develop expertise on each component and present recommendations for combating that specific component of the threat.

## STRENGTHENED RELATIONS WITH FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE AGENCIES

The new nature of global threats has emphasized the importance of international cooperation in the sphere

of intelligence since it has created a situation in which “our side” is not only Israel. Therefore, it is in the interest of Israeli intelligence to share its information and analysis with other allies that participate in the war against extremist groups. As a result, AMAN instituted structural and cultural reforms. Structurally, AMAN created a new department for international intelligence cooperation. Culturally, AMAN moved beyond the viewpoint that international cooperation is only meant to close intelligence gaps about remote areas that Israeli intelligence cannot afford to cover. AMAN instituted an understanding among its personnel that international cooperation is a major force multiplier and has a direct impact on strengthening intelligence assessments.

Because the United States is the leader in the war against extremist groups, Israeli intelligence has given strong attention to collecting and analyzing intelligence whose main beneficiary is the United States. In so doing, AMAN has instilled in its officers the understanding that when sharing information and analysis with foreign agencies, it is of utmost importance to do no harm to the reputation of the Israeli intelligence community. In international intelligence cooperation, one's reputation is an invaluable asset, and analysts take steps to closely verify the data they share. Israeli intelligence officers have developed an understanding that foreign decision makers, most notably American leaders, are almost as much their clients as are Israeli policymakers.

## FOCUS ON THE HUMAN FACTOR

In conjunction with introducing new analytical methodologies, priorities, and partnerships, AMAN redefined the characteristics it looks for in intelligence officers. Reforms were made in the recruitment and training processes to find and hone officers who fit AMAN's new vision of intellectual strength, creativity, and diversity. In the past, AMAN recruited individuals who were leaders in scientific or technical fields. Now, AMAN tries to attract individuals who are also leaders in the arts, history, and literature.

AMAN's strengthened relationship with the decision-making community also assisted it in recruiting strong intelligence officers. Because decision makers now have more insight into the intelligence community, they understand that recruiting the right people for intelligence work can strengthen national security. Support from decision makers has enabled the intelligence community to have first choice from the military's applicant pool and be able to choose three times the number of people from this pool than it had in the past.

Regarding training, AMAN instituted modified programs for new and existing officers alike. One new preparatory program that was established was an academic-based system geared toward university students. Instead of enrolling in a standard university program, these students (chosen through a rigorous process) study for three years in a university program overseen by AMAN in which they take part in AMAN-led classes on intelligence.

Intelligence reform in Israel did not only address new officers, it also targeted existing officers. The reforms pressed officers to adjust to a new spirit within the organization, one which values cooperation and "jointness." Even though there was no major organizational change, officers are expected to see themselves as both members of a certain unit (such as a collection unit), as well as part of a specific System. To ensure that long-standing officers would feel a sense of "buy in" to the reforms, the changes were implemented gradually and there were opportunities for discussion.

One of the biggest priorities of the reforms was to instill in analysts a sense of leadership. Arguably, HIS personnel faced the greatest challenge because they had been trained as analysts and had few prior managerial responsibilities. The new definition of their responsibilities forced them to devote much more time and

attention to collection planning, operational activities, as well as management of the System under their purview. Through additional training, specially designed courses, and numerous workshops in which notions of leadership were discussed, AMAN made great efforts to prepare intelligence officers to become leaders. AMAN also reevaluated its own definition of leadership and changed the criteria for choosing leaders to reflect the new paradigm. Although AMAN has devoted significant resources to leadership development, it will likely take time for all the benefits to materialize.

### **CONTINUING THE REFORM EFFORTS: LEARNING ABOUT LEARNING**

The overall concept of AMAN's reforms was to view the improvements as an ongoing process. Although the reforms have been implemented, the measures described above are neither sacrosanct nor immune to change. Instead, steps were taken to ensure that there is a continual process of self-examination and learning. In this context, AMAN established the Institute for Systemic Studies of Intelligence (ISSI), which is manned by some of the individuals who were deeply involved in initiating the reform. These individuals have expertise in examining and learning about the practices of intelligence. But they also hold regular in-depth dialogues with practitioners to continue examining the way in which Israel's intelligence is functioning.

The notion that intelligence reform is an ongoing process is critical. There is a tendency to think that intelligence agencies can be perfect and make no mistakes. This, of course, is an illusion. But if this fictitious notion prevails, it eventually becomes paralyzing to the ability to think creatively. Analysts who focus on not making mistakes, rather than on conducting creative assessments, will fall prey to risk aversion and group think.

## BATTLING FOR HEARTS AND MINDS

Another new mission of the intelligence community stemmed from the new perception of the relationship between intelligence and reality. The intelligence community realized that on top of its responsibility to lead a campaign for getting the necessary access to opponents, it could also play a major operational role in some of the new campaigns that emerged as a result of the change in the nature of warfare. For example, intelligence can be used to erode an enemy's legitimacy and/or influence its actions by exposing the enemy's deeds.

AMAN understood the importance of the battle over the consciousness, namely the hearts and minds of relevant populations. While psychological operations (PSYOPS) and information warfare were a tool in this respect for a long time, the new nature of conflicts—specifically, the increasing importance of winning legitimacy—led, among other structural

and operational changes, to the formation of a specialized unit that would deal with this issue in a continuous and more advanced manner.

During the 2006 war between Israel and Hizballah, there was large-scale asymmetry in the amount of information flowing from both sides. Whereas Israel provided detailed information about casualties it sustained, Hizballah made efforts to conceal the number of its casualties (in an attempt to create a narrative of invincibility). To respond, rather than bombing Hizballah's television station, Al-Manar, Israel overtook the transmission and broadcast details of the casualties that Hizballah had sustained. To ensure that Lebanese civilians believed the reports, Israel's intelligence team broadcast the information in a manner that made it seem like Al-Manar was issuing the broadcast.

## CRITICISMS OF THE REFORMS

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Reforms are always subject to criticism and the intelligence reform in Israel was no exception. Disapproval came from a number of groups, including both current and veteran intelligence officers and, to a lesser extent, decision makers. Some veterans of the intelligence community questioned the necessity of changing long-standing practices that they viewed as effective. In their memory, the classic intelligence paradigm gave sufficient tools for analyzing security challenges. Because these officers were no longer active, they were not in a position to experience the limitations of the old system within the new security environment.<sup>10</sup>

There have been other criticisms that warrant expanded discussion. Specifically, some critics have argued that the reforms inadequately addressed the issue of bias, placed intelligence officers too close to decision makers, and set forth hiring criteria that are impossible to fulfill.

### THE DANGER OF BIASED INTELLIGENCE

Some critics have argued that despite the reforms in Israel, there is still a danger that intelligence officers will

produce biased assessments, meaning that the assessments will be (unintentionally) skewed. Strengthening the relationship between decision makers and intelligence officers, these critics argue, may only add to this potential for bias.

To be sure, Israeli intelligence personnel are not angels and the way they view the world is always affected by numerous variables, many of which are subjective. For instance, there is a danger that a conclusion reached by an intelligence officer will affect the way he or she will address future information and issues.<sup>11</sup> This is true with or without the reforms, and is not dependent on the intelligence officer's proximity to the decision-making process. Yet, intelligence bias is a concern for any intelligence agency. The problem of dogmatic conception is considered the main reason for the 1973 Yom Kippur intelligence failure.

There is no way to overcome fully the problem of bias, but there are ways to minimize the risk of its prevalence within assessments. While there are tools that can be used to help people realize that their assessment may be biased or ill-founded, the most important way

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<sup>10</sup> In addition, some of these critics argued that the terminology used to explain the reforms and articulate the new analytical methodologies was too complicated. In response, AMAN took steps to simplify terminology and avoid ambiguity caused by unclear terms.

<sup>11</sup> Israeli intelligence training includes an exercise in which officers are asked to express their opinion on a current intelligence problem. After that, they are given twenty pieces of information relating to the original problem. They are then asked if they have changed their mind after reading the pieces of information, some of which support their original claims and others that refute it. Very seldom does anybody change their mind, and when asked to rate the pieces of information, they rate as most reliable those pieces of information that support their original position. Information that contradicts their original opinion is deemed to be of minimal relevance or unreliable.

to deal with bias is to train intelligence officers to be aware of this risk. Officers should be taught to always question themselves, asking whether their opinions are affected by previous assessments or by their involvement in the decision-making process. Being vigilant against bias is essentially a state of mind and requires maturity. Managers must be able to identify this maturity to question oneself when selecting people to serve in intelligence agencies, especially in the analysis divisions.

When biases do emerge, it is challenging to prevent them from skewing the implementation of operations. It is human nature to believe that one's efforts are successful, or at least making progress, and to identify strongly with a mission. Therefore, it is difficult to admit that a mission has malfunctioned or is failing. For this reason, checks and balances should be implemented and, as far as possible, the intelligence element involved with a specific operation should be separate from the analytical unit. If such a separation is impossible, an independent assessment of the results of the operation should be employed.

### THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DECISION MAKERS AND THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY

Much has been written about the way in which the decision makers and intelligence officials should interact. Within Israel, some have considered the intelligence community a tutor of decision makers, enriching them with information on issues about which they lack knowledge or expertise.<sup>12</sup> Others believe that intelligence officers should refrain from expressing their views to decision makers about the meaning of facts or the intentions of the enemy. This view holds that it is the responsibility of the decision maker to assess the intentions of the enemy, and not the responsibility of the intelligence community.<sup>13</sup>

As discussed, Israel made the calculated decision that a close relationship between the intelligence community and decision makers and the involvement of intelligence personnel in policymaking would generate a net benefit. Still, being well aware of the potential pitfalls of this close relationship, a number of guidelines ought to be pursued so that the bond with decision makers can be strengthened while protecting the integrity of the intelligence product:

- **Professionalism.** The intelligence community must conduct its collection, analysis, and dissemination in a superior manner. When it does not know the answer to a question, it should clearly say so. This honesty, admitting that there may be information gaps at times, will build the decision maker's long-term confidence in the intelligence community.
- **Creativity.** The intelligence community must embrace creativity, namely the ability to grasp situations with all their subtleties, and offer rich analysis. This will make the decision maker realize that there is a clear benefit in engaging the intelligence community in the decision-making process.
- **Courage.** Intelligence officers must be prepared to articulate views that may not be popular, and, if necessary, fight to ensure these viewpoints are considered in the decision-making process. This is also an indication that the information and analysis presented lacks any political agenda.
- **Integrity.** Intelligence officers cannot be afraid to change assessments or recommendations if a new situation or the acquisition of new information warrants. The intelligence community should, of course, amend its analysis only if relevant information calls for it, and not because of political pressure.

<sup>12</sup> Amos Yadlin, Yechezkel Dror, et al, *Leaders and Intelligence* (Israel: Ministry of Defense, 2004) (in Hebrew).

<sup>13</sup> This was the view of the Director of Military Intelligence during the Yom Kippur War.

- **Relevancy.** Intelligence leaders should know the security and foreign policy concerns of the decision makers but also draw attention to other issues, if necessary. By taking an active role, and not just waiting to answer questions, the intelligence community will maintain its independence and show its partnership with policymakers.
- **Confidentiality.** Intelligence officers must make clear they will hold all discussions with the decision makers in confidence. The decision maker must feel comfortable to discuss openly his or her own perception of a situation, and to present questions, ambiguities, and lack of understanding without fearing that this will be leaked.

If intelligence personnel have the above virtues, they will be in a better position to contribute to the decision-making process and avoid bias and politicization.

### CRITICISM REGARDING THE PERSONALITY OF INTELLIGENCE OFFICERS

Intelligence is primarily about people, and the success of intelligence depends on the individuals within the intelligence community. Many critics of Israel's reform have claimed that it is extremely difficult, and maybe even impossible, to find people who have the characteristics necessary to be optimal intelligence officers, as defined by the new reforms. These critics argue that it is especially difficult to find individuals qualified to fill senior level roles in the intelligence community—people who can be both good analysts (are curious, creative, professional, courageous, etc.) and at the same time possess the capabilities of a planner, manager, and operational leader.

AMAN has addressed the challenge of finding qualified individuals by first acknowledging that certain characteristics cannot be taught, and are instead innate. Therefore, AMAN's recruitment process has been

designed to locate individuals who possess the desired characteristics. However, some virtues can be acquired through training and AMAN has therefore invested many resources into forming special courses that address key components of intelligence leadership.

### CONCLUSION

It is too early to assess the extent to which Israel's intelligence reforms have been successful. Some point to the 2006 war between Israel and Hizballah and argue that Israel's performance in the war should be used to judge the intelligence community's reforms. The war caught the intelligence community at the beginning of a large staff turnover, and it is thus difficult to determine whether the achievements and shortcomings in the war are truly reflective of the reforms. Staff turnover points to another challenge—as the people who led the reform process are replaced by leaders who are not necessarily committed personally to the reforms, this process will face its most critical challenge.

Overall, there was skepticism about the prospects of convincing branches of the intelligence organization to commit themselves to changing the way they do business. Agencies have long-held tendencies, desires, and aspirations that often lead to persistent power struggles with other branches. This mindset is perhaps the biggest challenge to developing true partnerships across agencies and departments. Success will require a long-term process of building a consciousness and culture of “jointness.” This can be achieved when there is mutual confidence and respect between organizations, real readiness to accept the new rules of the game, and open and continuous communications inside and between the organizations. For this situation to prevail, intelligence leadership is necessary. The ability to mobilize a group of sophisticated yet skeptical individuals (primary characteristics of intelligence personnel) to support the reform is critical.

## POSSIBLE LESSONS FOR THE AMERICAN INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY

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The collapse of the Soviet Union and the Eastern Bloc spurred many changes and reforms within the American intelligence community, which included the shifting of priorities from the Soviet threat to the new problems of rogue and failing states, international terrorism, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). While changes within the main American agencies enabled the intelligence community to analyze better the new threats, they did not prevent the failures relating to 9/11, the inability to substantiate that Iraq maintained WMD assets, or the inability of decision makers to understand what would occur in Iraq after the collapse of Saddam Hussein's regime. While there were some warnings by the intelligence community prior to 9/11 regarding an al-Qaeda attack on the United States and there were assessments regarding the likelihood of unrest in Iraq should the United States invade, there was a failure within the system as a whole that precluded any appropriate action being taken as a result of these warnings.<sup>14</sup>

Regarding the failures prior to 9/11, some have pointed to a combination of factors, including structural problems, misplaced priorities, and a lack of data that led to failures. One main problem that prevented the American intelligence community from thwarting the 9/11 attacks was the lack of relevant data that would have enabled the intelligence community to know about the specific plot (most warnings suggested attacks would be targeted against U.S. interests abroad). In addition, the United States was hampered by institutional separation; specifically, before 9/11 there was limited cooperation among the relevant agencies—the CIA, which deals with terrorism abroad, the FBI, which is responsible for thwarting domestic terror threats, the FAA, which is in charge of air traffic security, and the immigration authorities that are tasked with preventing the entry of terrorists into the United States.<sup>15</sup>

Regarding the war in Iraq, some former officials have argued that the main failure was in the relationship

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<sup>14</sup> Douglas Jehl and David E. Sanger, "Secret Briefing Said that Qaeda was Active in U.S.," *The New York Times*, April 11, 2004; Douglas Jehl and David E. Sanger, "Prewar Assessment on Iraq Saw Chance of Strong Divisions," *The New York Times*, September 28, 2004. On August 6, 2001, the CIA titled the President's Daily Brief, "Bin Laden Determined to Strike in U.S." that gave an overview of Bin Laden's intentions, although it did not forecast the use of airplanes as weapons. In January 2003, the National Intelligence Council delivered two reports to the Bush Administration that warned of the likelihood of violent unrest should the United States invade Iraq. The committees that were formed to investigate the 9/11 and the Iraq failures, as well as the debate within the intelligence, policymaking and academic communities, pointed to a variety of problems inherent in the American intelligence system that allegedly led to the intelligence failures. The questions and concerns ultimately led to passage of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act, which was signed by President George W. Bush on December 17, 2004. Although it followed the broad recommendations of the 9/11 Commission, the Act toned down many of the specific measures.

<sup>15</sup> Thomas H. Kean and Lee H. Hamilton, *The 9/11 Commission Report: Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office), 262-3, 80-6.



between policymakers and the intelligence community. Paul Pillar, the former Deputy Director of the CIA's Counterterrorist Center, and later the National Intelligence Officer for the Near East and South Asia, said the shortcomings of the Iraq intelligence were not within the intelligence assessments, but in the path between the intelligence community and policymakers. The intelligence was present, Pillar argued, but the cautions found in the reports were not heeded by policymakers. Pillar believes that many policymakers had already reached a conclusion before they considered the intelligence assessments.<sup>16</sup> Some have argued that pressures from decision makers led to an intelligence environment in which challenging conventional wisdom was impossible.<sup>17</sup>

This relationship between intelligence officers and policymakers is arguably the greatest problem within the intelligence system in the United States. The idea that there should be a clear line separating intelligence personnel from the decision-making process is widely supported in the United States. Although this line is not always strictly respected, for the most part it has a strong presence in the American system. Yet, there are examples of drawbacks to the American approach—intelligence operations aimed at responding to the 1998 bombings at the American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania were hampered by policymakers. Given the magnitude of the threat that Osama bin Laden posed to American interests, intelligence officers should have vocalized strongly their opinion that operations designed to kill bin Laden were preferable to operations aimed at kidnapping him, as policymakers preferred. Similarly, the American intelligence community did not seem to try hard enough to convey the message to policymakers that Iraq did not constitute an immediate threat to the United States. Nor does it seem that

intelligence officers were aggressive in articulating the view that Saddam was not involved in supporting al-Qaeda and that once Saddam was toppled, the security situation in Iraq would likely deteriorate. Pillar argues that the intelligence community in fact did articulate these views, but latent politicization of intelligence muted the message.<sup>18</sup>

Should the line between intelligence officials and decision makers stay in place, or should the American intelligence community develop a more integrated relationship with decision makers, be more vocal about policy options, and make policy recommendations? One might argue that the President's National Security Council (NSC) or the Policy Planning Staff within the State Department integrate intelligence assessments with policy development. However, while these units produce policy options, they lack the unique position of the intelligence community, which has access to distinct information sources and thus expertise in analyzing threats and opportunities. The answer, then, may be for the intelligence community to gain a larger role in the decision-making process. Having someone akin to the HIS be the individual responsible for presenting the assessment to the decision makers may improve the quality of the dialogue between intelligence personnel and decision makers, and the understanding on both sides of each other's thought processes and concerns.

Regarding the methodology of intelligence analysis, the idea of using Systemic Thinking may provide a tool that would enable the American intelligence community to cope with the problem of "failure of imagination," as well as gain a holistic picture of relevant arenas, analyze the tensions and conflicts that characterize them, and produce options that address American interests within them.

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<sup>16</sup> Paul Pillar, in discussion with the author, Washington, DC, November 9, 2006.

<sup>17</sup> Walter Pincus and Peter Baker, "Data on Iraqi Arms Flawed, Panel Says; Intelligence Commission Outlines 74 Fixes for Bureaucracy," *The Washington Post*, April 1, 2005.

<sup>18</sup> Paul Pillar, in discussion with the author, Washington, DC, November 9, 2006.

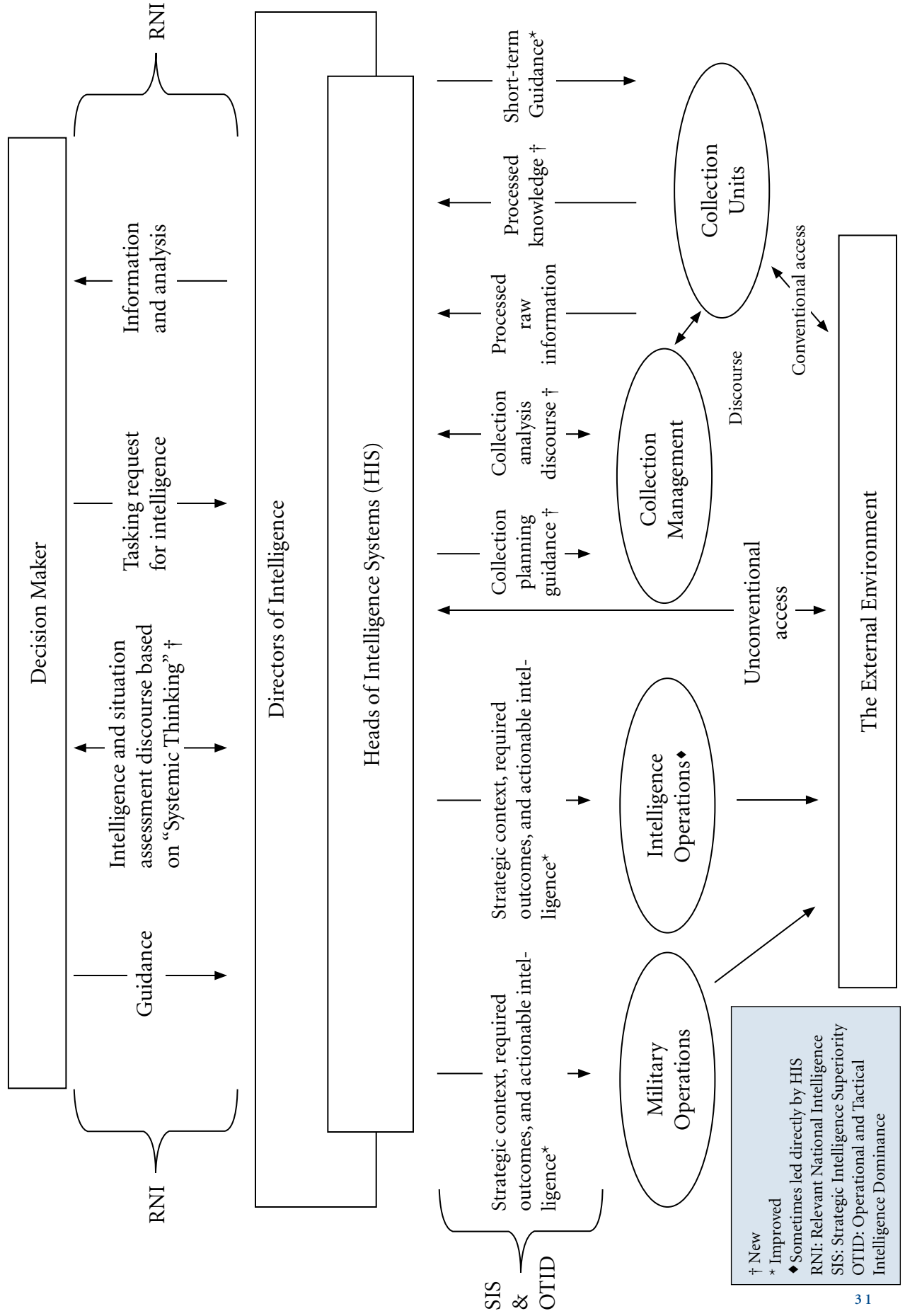
The structure of Systems that creates a different kind of relationship between intelligence analysis, collection, and operations and gives the Head of the Intelligence System the responsibility for the analysis and functioning of the System may be considered an option for coping with the existence of the many centers in the American intelligence system that deal with similar issues. Even after the creation of the National Counterproliferation Center (NCPC) and National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC), these organizations have only a partial view of the issues for which they are responsible. For example, much of the counterterrorism analysis still takes place within the CIA's Counterterrorist Center, despite the creation of the NCTC. The same is true for counter-proliferation analysis. Furthermore, the creation of these centers distances the people that are responsible for the intelligence campaigns on terrorism and counter-proliferation from the people that are responsible for analyzing the logic from which terror activities and proliferation efforts are derived. The structure of Israel's intelligence system, with its use of Systems, is one way to overcome this problem and create a real one-stop-shop. This also improves the connectivity and the integration between the various elements that comprise the intelligence system and helps in overcoming turf problems.

The Israeli experience can offer some other ideas that are not necessarily related to the reforms. For instance, the employment of a devil's advocate was discussed in the framework of the recommendations given by the 9/11 Commission, but was not eventually adopted. Israel's experience with this function is relatively posi-

tive. It has enriched the analysis and forced the analysts to think better. There is a legitimate concern that such a function will cause analysts to stick harder to their original analysis. Despite this, it is advisable that decision makers hear more than one intelligence perspective, and it is their responsibility to participate in the final stages of the analysis process and to attribute the proper importance to the analysis given by the intelligence organization.

If such an approach is adopted, the issue of intelligence leadership and intelligence professionalism will emerge. In the American system, the managers of intelligence units, including the managers of analysis units, focus on management functions and do not consider themselves (nor are they considered by decision makers) as the main experts on a given issue. The system is one where promotions move the most talented people out of the area in which they are experts. Talented analysts move up the ranks and become managers, no longer focusing on analysis. As a result, the period of time that analysts deal with a specific subject is relatively short and they do it when they are relatively young and new to the field of analysis. In Israel, the responsibilities of the intelligence managers are different. With a few exceptions within the collection units, the manager is also the best professional in his given task. An analysis manager, therefore, is supposed to be the best analyst and continues to practice analysis. This convergence and the adding of more managerial and operational functions to the HIS require a profound system of recruitment and training so that the managers of intelligence will also be highly professional and able to exercise leadership.

# APPENDIX: AMAN'S INTELLIGENCE PROCESS



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## THE SABAN CENTER FOR MIDDLE EAST POLICY

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The Saban Center for Middle East Policy was established on May 13, 2002 with an inaugural address by His Majesty King Abdullah II of Jordan. The creation of the Saban Center reflects the Brookings Institution's commitment to expand dramatically its research and analysis of Middle East policy issues at a time when the region has come to dominate the U.S. foreign policy agenda.

The Saban Center provides Washington policymakers with balanced, objective, in-depth and timely research and policy analysis from experienced and knowledgeable scholars who can bring fresh perspectives to bear on the critical problems of the Middle East. The center upholds the Brookings tradition of being open to a broad range of views. The Saban Center's central objective is to advance understanding of developments in the Middle East through policy-relevant scholarship and debate.

The center's foundation was made possible by a generous grant from Haim and Cheryl Saban of Los Angeles. Ambassador Martin S. Indyk, Senior Fellow in Foreign Policy Studies, is the Director of the Saban Center. Kenneth M. Pollack is the center's Director of Research. Joining them is a core group of Middle East experts who conduct original research and develop innovative programs to promote a better understanding of the policy choices facing American decision makers in the Middle East. They include Tamara Cofman Wittes, a specialist on political reform in the Arab world who directs the Middle East Democracy and Development Project; Bruce Riedel, who served as a senior advisor to three Presidents on the Middle East and South Asia at the National Security Council during a twenty-nine year career in the CIA, a specialist on counterterrorism; Suzanne Maloney, a former senior State Department official who focuses on Iran and economic

development; Shibley Telhami, who holds the Sadat Chair at the University of Maryland; and Daniel Byman, a Middle East terrorism expert from Georgetown University. The center is located in the Foreign Policy Studies Program at Brookings, led by Brookings Vice President Carlos Pascual.

The Saban Center is undertaking path breaking research in five areas: the implications of regime change in Iraq, including post-war nation-building and Persian Gulf security; the dynamics of Iranian domestic politics and the threat of nuclear proliferation; mechanisms and requirements for a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; policy for the war against terrorism, including the continuing challenge of state-sponsorship of terrorism; and political and economic change in the Arab world, and the methods required to promote democratization.

The Saban Center also houses the Brookings Project on U.S. Relations with the Islamic World, which is directed by Stephen Grand, a Fellow in Foreign Policy Studies. The project focuses on analyzing the problems in the relationship between the United States and Muslim states and communities around the globe, with the objective of developing effective policy responses. The project's activities include: the Doha Forum, an annual global conference bringing together American and Muslim world leaders; a Ford Foundation Visiting Fellows program for specialists from the Muslim world; initiatives in science and the arts; and a monograph and book series. Under the directorship of Hady Amr, a Fellow in Foreign Policy Studies, the Saban Center is opening the Brookings-Doha Center in Qatar, which will extend the Brookings tradition of independent, in-depth research and quality public policy programs to Doha, and the broader Muslim world.



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