



Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies



Future Systems Directorate

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CONTEMPORARY CONFLICT

[Israel/ Palestine/ Lebanon: Climbing Out of the Abyss](#)

International Crisis Group– 25 July 2006

The Middle East is immersed in its worst crisis in years following the capture of three Israeli soldiers by the Palestinian Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) and Lebanese Party of God (Hizbollah) in late June 2006 and early July, Israel's comprehensive offensive throughout the Gaza Strip and Lebanon, and the daily firing of rockets deep into Israel. And horrific as it is, the current toll of death and destruction could reach entirely different proportions should a new threshold be crossed – a Hizbollah rocket that strikes a chemical plant or a heavily populated area in Tel Aviv or Haifa, an Israeli bombing raid resulting in massive casualties, a major ground offensive, or the expansion of the war to Syria or Iran. A political solution to the twin crises of Lebanon and Palestine must be the international community's urgent priority. Waiting and hoping for military action to achieve its purported goals will have not only devastating humanitarian consequences: it will make it much harder to pick up the political pieces when the guns fall silent.

[How Iran Uses War to Divert Attention from Nuclear Program](#)

Christian Science Monitor– 21 July 2006

You don't hear much any more about "road maps," the "peace process," or "land for peace." The struggle for the Middle East has apparently entered a new phase in which Iran hijacks the Palestinian cause in order to establish its own influence in the region. In the year 2000, Israel exited from south Lebanon as a peaceful gesture. This past August, Israel left Gaza as a peaceful act. It appears now that these were taken by the jihadists not as gestures of peace, but of weakness. And it appears that the threat of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad that Israel would be wiped off the map was not just rhetoric. According to American intelligence, Hamas in Gaza and Hizbullah in Lebanon have an agreement for joint attacks on Israel.

[Time Won't Help Israel Disarm Hizbullah](#)

Christian Science Monitor– 27 July 2006

Israel's war with Hizbullah shows no sign of relenting, despite the extraordinary human and economic costs on both sides of the border. More than 400 Lebanese have been killed, at least 17 Israeli civilians have been felled by rockets that threaten the northern third of Israel, Lebanon's infrastructure has been decimated, and many poor Lebanese (mostly Shiite Muslims) are now homeless. Both belligerents are attacking indiscriminately. Hizbullah's weapons are notoriously inaccurate and more likely to kill innocent civilians than soldiers. And Israel has targeted noncombatants in southern Lebanon as though the area were a free-fire zone. Lt. Gen. Dan Halutz as much as admitted his contempt for noncombatant immunity when, according to Israeli army radio on July 24, he

ordered the destruction of 10 multistory buildings in the Shiite-inhabited suburbs of Beirut for every rocket hitting Haifa.

[A Widening Sectarian Rift Pushes Iraq to the Brink of Civil War](#)

Christian Science Monitor– 25 July 2006

While Israel's war in Lebanon dominates news headlines, Iraq is sinking deeper into sectarian strife. Hardly a day goes by without a massacre carried out by either a Shiite death squad or an extremist Sunni group. Iraq stands on the brink of all-out sectarian strife. The new Iraqi government is not functioning as effectively as it had been hoped, and most Iraqi politicians act more as functionaries for their sects and tribes than nationalist leaders. The American military presence is fueling a broadly based insurgency. Al Qaeda in Iraq is also pouring fuel on a raging sectarian fire.

[Iraq and the Kurds: The Brewing Battle Over Kirkuk](#)

International Crisis Group– 18 July 2006

As all eyes are turned toward efforts to stabilise Iraq, the conflict that has been percolating in Kirkuk remains dangerous and dangerously neglected. That struggle is equal parts street brawl over oil riches, ethnic competition over identity between Kurdish, Turkoman, Arab and Assyrian-Chaldean communities, and titanic clash between two nations, Arab and Kurd. Given the high stakes, the international community cannot afford to stand by, allowing the situation to slip into chaos by default. It needs to step in and propose a solution that addresses all sides' core concerns without crossing their existential red lines.

[Islamic Law and Criminal Justice in Aceh](#)

International Crisis Group– 31 July 2006

Aceh is the only part of Indonesia that has the legal right to apply Islamic law (*Shari'a*) in full. Since 1999, it has begun slowly to put in place an institutional framework for *Shari'a* enforcement. In the process, it is addressing hard questions: What aspects should be enforced first? Should existing police, prosecutors and courts be used or new entities created? How should violations be punished? Its efforts to find the answers are being watched closely by other local governments, some of which have enacted regulations inspired by or derived from *Shari'a*. These moves in turn are sparking a raging debate in Indonesia about what role government at any level should play in encouraging adherence to Islamic law and how far the Islamisation drive will or should be allowed to spread.

Crisis in the Middle East

Carnegie Endowment for International Peace – 20 July 2006

This is a dangerous moment for the Middle East, because the conflicts in Gaza and Lebanon could easily escalate to involve the broader region. Indeed, there are voices in the United States and Israel calling for a deliberate broadening of the conflict to Syria and Iran in an attempt to solve all the contentious issues of the region at once. We believe that this is an illusion. Any strategy to address the present crisis must deal with the realities of the Middle East as they are now, not try to leapfrog over them by seeking to impose a grand new vision. Such a vision would be bound to fail as it did in the case of Iraq.

COUNTER -TERRORISM

Terrorists: Recruiting and Operating Behind Bars

Federation of American Scientist – August 2002

A 2002 report prepared by the CIA Counterterrorist Center discusses how terrorists recruit members in prisons such as Guantanamo Bay. "Terrorists groups, including al-Qa'ida, use incarcerated members to recruit and train new members, and in some cases run terrorist organizations and manage or facilitate terrorist attacks."

DEFENCE INDUSTRY

A Question of Diversity

Jane's Defence Weekly – 28 July 2006

The past five years have been a good time to be a defence contractor. A growing US defence budget coupled with increased, if more modest, investment across the world has meant record growth and profits for the major players in the defence industry. Most companies and analysts recognised, even during the height of the defence spending boom, that such growth was unsustainable. It is now widely anticipated that military spending will slow down beyond 2008, growing by low single-digit numbers. So beyond exports, which Lockheed Martin has said are 'greatly overrated' and 'not the way to support the defence industrial base', where will the defence industry look to grow? An increasing number of defence contractors are venturing into the commercial sector, often utilising technologies originally developed for military applications.

USN Sets Five-Year Target to Develop Electromagnetic Gun

Jane's Defence Weekly – 20 July 2006

The US Navy (USN) has instituted a five-year timeline to crack a historically elusive breakthrough in the field of weapons technology - a tactically useful electromagnetic (EM) rail gun. The potential of electromagnetic power to shatter the speed and range limits of traditional artillery fired by exploding gas has captivated naval and land warfare visionaries for nearly a century, but the promise has always outpaced a number of stubborn technical obstacles. The development of conductive metals - for the rails, propelling armature and containment bore - strong enough to survive multiple firings is just one of the basic challenges. Controlling the projectile is another concern. The ballistic flightpath of the rail gun's 'bullet' would propel it into space, making re-entry into Earth's atmosphere a survivability issue. The round would be launched from the gun at a speed of M7.5 and speed at impact on a target 200 n miles away would be about M 5.0. Such speed and range are why some think of EM guns as ushering the next true revolution in weapon technology, with the capability to fire directly on enemy surface ships found within the horizon in six seconds and to fire indirectly on fixed and relocated targets up to 200 n miles away within six minutes.

DEFENCE STRATEGY

Iran and Syria Advance SIGINT Co-Operation

Jane's Defence Weekly – 13 July 2005

Following the signature and ratification of a joint strategic defence co-operation accord in November 2005, Syria and Iran have moved to consolidate their collaborative strategic signals intelligence (SIGINT) capabilities in the region. As part of this strategic co-operation, diplomatic sources told *Jane's*, two joint Iranian-Syrian SIGINT stations have been established in the Al-Jazirah region in northern Syria and on the Golan Heights and have been operating since early June. The sources added that "during the coming year and not later than January 2007", two additional SIGINT stations are expected to be added to those two already operating. Located in Bab Al-Hawa' in northern Syria (near the Turkish border) and in the region of AlbuKamal in north-eastern Syria, south of Al-Jazirah, these are still under construction.

DEFENCE TECHNOLOGY

[US Funds Body Armour Research](#)

Space War – 20 July 2005

The U.S. military is turning to the animal world in an effort to develop lighter, tougher and longer lasting body armor. A Massachusetts Institute of Technology engineering graduate student, Benjamin Bruet, is part of a U.S.-funded team that has tested horns, antlers, fish scales and other natural materials to study how animals shield themselves in the wild, National Geographic News reported. Bruet is optimistic his research will be successful. "Within 10 years, drastic improvements will have already been implemented that will revolutionize the battle suit," he told NGN.

[An Ultrasonic Tourniquet to Stop Battlefield Bleeding](#)

Technology Review – 27 July 2006

The U.S. military has begun developing an ultrasonic tourniquet in an effort to stop life-threatening bleeding during combat. Called the Deep Bleeder Acoustic Coagulation (DBAC) program, it aims to create a cuff-like device that wraps around a wounded limb. Rather than applying pressure to the wound to stem the flow of blood, the device would use focused beams of ultrasound (sound waves above the audible frequencies) to non-invasively clot vessels no matter how deep they are.

Energy Security

[It's an Ill Wind](#)

The Economist – 27 July 2006

EVER since oil was discovered in Red Fork, near Tulsa, in 1901, refineries have formed a proud part of the city's skyline. But the peak of the oil production that turned cowboys into millionaires, and a dusty desert town into a place almost as cosmopolitan as New York, occurred almost 80 years ago. In 1927, Oklahoma produced 278m barrels of crude oil. In contrast, last year, the state produced only 60.7m barrels—the lowest figure since 1912. The last boom in the roller-coaster that is the oil industry came in 1981, and six years later the bust was definitive. Between 1981 and 1995, eight refineries in Oklahoma closed and half the industry's workers left. Overnight, oilmen with mansions and private airstrips became paupers living in mobile homes. Since 1984, oil production has dropped every year.

MILITARY OPERATIONS

[US Expedites Munitions Shipment to Israel](#)

Jane's Defence Weekly – 28 July 2006

The US has expedited the urgent delivery of precision-guided munitions for the Israel Air Force (IAF) in response to an Israeli urgent requirement. With the Israeli government ordering the Israel Defence Force (IDF) to intensify aerial attacks on Hizbullah in Lebanon, several aircraft loaded with munitions for the IAF arrived in Israel, according to reports in the US and UK. The Israeli Ministry of Defence (MoD) would not specify the content of the shipments, but Jane's has learned that they include Joint Direct Attack Munition (JDAM) kits, AGM-114 Hellfire anti-armour missiles for the IAF's attack helicopters, as well as 100 units of the GBU-28/B laser-guided penetration bombs, known as 'bunker busters' for the IAF's F-15I strike aircraft.

[New X-Ray System Aids Postal Marines in Iraq](#)

Marine Corps News – 27 July 2006

If you're a Marine in Iraq, there's a new set of eyes scanning the mail you're sending home. Postal Marines operating at Al Asad Air Base and Camp Taqaddum – the two main Marine Corps air stations and central locations for mail delivery in western Iraq – are utilizing new X-ray machines recently installed here, part of a push to ensure mail routed through the country of Bahrain back to the United States is safe for air travel. There are eight sets of the system working in Iraq and Afghanistan, all operated by civilian contractors with the civilian mail carrier company DHL, Inc. The machines are used to scan all parcels leaving the respective countries for explosives and other prohibited or otherwise dangerous content and contraband.

[Lean Six Sigma Eases Fiscal Constraint Challenges](#)

Army News – 20 July 2006

As commanders throughout the Army look for ways to cut operating costs, business practices of Lean Six Sigma are reducing expenses and improving productivity throughout manufacturing, contracting, administrative services and even recruiting. "People will say: we're in the army; we're not a business," said Col. Mike Petrash, deputy commander for the 96th Regional Readiness Command in Utah. "I would counter that and say every time we do a transaction, every time we promote a Soldier, pay a Soldier, supply a Soldier or move that Soldier from point A to point B, that is a business transaction." Lean Six Sigma is a combination of two business-improvement systems, Lean and Six Sigma. Lean refers to the reduction of waste, or the elimination of unnecessary steps to increase speed and productivity. Six Sigma is the reduction of variance to improve system performance. Together, they free up resources and help ensure quality equipment and services are quickly provided to Soldiers.

NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION

[UK Nuclear Deterrent Remains Independent, Maintains MoD](#)

Jane's Defence Weekly - 27 July 2006

The UK Ministry of Defence (MoD) has defended the operational independence of the country's strategic nuclear deterrent. With the debate about a replacement to the current Trident system heating up, questions have been raised - most recently in a report by the House of Commons Defence Committee - about the UK's ability to operate the system independently of the US. In its response released on 26 July, the MoD argued that, despite the UK's dependence on the US for acquisition of some components, Trident remained a 'fully operationally independent' system.

[US Mulls Sanctions After North Korean Missile Test](#)

SpaceWar News – 31 July 2006

The US administration is looking at re-imposing broad economic sanctions on North Korea in response to the Stalinist state's recent missile test, an official said Monday. "It's one of the options that's on the table," said Molly Millerwise, a spokeswoman for Stuart Levey, the US Treasury Department's undersecretary for terrorism and financial intelligence. But Millerwise also stressed that nothing had been decided yet on the Treasury's response after North Korea sparked international condemnation by test-firing seven missiles on July 5.

[Pakistan Says New Nuclear Reactor Safe In Our Hands](#)

SpaceWar News – 31 July 2006

Pakistani Foreign Minister Khurshid Kasuri said a powerful new nuclear reactor under construction was "safe in our hands" and would not spark an arms race with rival India. The United States has urged Islamabad, its close ally in the "war on terror", not to use the reactor at the Khushab nuclear complex to bolster its atomic weapons capability. "It's nothing new, the world knows about it, the world knows that it's safe in our hands," Kasuri told AFP in an interview late Friday at a meeting of Asia's top security forum in Kuala Lumpur.