The Six Day War: 50 Years On

BESA Center experts consider the war, its origin, historic impact, and lingering consequences. They see the jubilee as an opportunity for strategic retrospection and truth-telling, not hand-wringing and anguish.
BESA Center associates participated in numerous public forums and international media discussions surrounding the fiftieth anniversary in June of the Six Day War. They also penned a dozen critical examinations of the war and its legacy. They see the jubilee as an opportunity for strategic retrospection and truth-telling, not hand-wringing and self-flagellation.

Prof. Efraim Karsh, Dr. Gabriel Glickman, Prof. Efraim Inbar, Maj. Gen. (res.) Gershon Hacohen, Dr. Max Singer, and Maj. Gen. (res.) Yaakov Amidror have published a series of studies that rethink the Six Day War and its implications.

Prof. Efraim Karsh, director of the BESA Center and editor of the Middle East Quarterly, says that “it has long been conventional wisdom to view the June 1967 war as an accidental conflagration that neither Arabs nor Israelis desired, yet none were able to prevent. This could not be further from the truth. It was an inevitable conflict.”

While militant pan-Arabism is unlikely to regain its pre-1967 dominance in the foreseeable future due to the ravages of the recent Arab upheavals, Karsh warns that the advent of a new generation of Palestinians and Arabs for whom the 1967 defeat is but a dim memory – one more historical injustice that must be redressed by any means necessary – makes the prospects of Arab-Israeli reconciliation as remote as ever.

Dr. Gabriel Glickman, a California-based researcher, penned an essay which warns that the Arabs and their Western partisans have rewritten the conflict’s narrative, with the aggressors turned into hapless victims and defenders turned into aggressors. “This time,” he says, “the loser is writing the history.”

“The degree to which Western historiography has increasingly portrayed Israel’s preemptive strike against Egypt as an act of aggression rather than of self-defense leaves one wondering why Western scholars cannot accept that a proud and independent Arab leader (Nasser) was capable of making grand moves on the global stage… It is not the job of the historian to play the role of psychologist and attempt to substitute victimhood for malignant incompetence and shortsightedness.”

Prof. Efraim Inbar, writes about the relative costs and benefits to Israel of the war, taking a fifty-year retrospective. Specifically, he considers the pros and
cons of retaining the territories gained in the war. He concludes his detailed examination with the assertion that Israel’s control of the Golan Heights and the West Bank has many advantages that outweigh the attendant costs of holding onto these territories.

“While Israel can agree that the West Bank’s densely populated areas where most of the Palestinian population lives could become an independent political entity or be annexed to Jordan as part of a bilateral peace agreement, maintaining military control over the area west of the Jordan River is essential for its national security (and for Jordanian security for that matter). Unfortunately, there is no room for a territorial compromise on the Golan Heights. Losing this territory would entail grave security threats, and there is nothing Syria can offer to offset this loss”.

Countering this, General Hacohen asserts that the Six Day War was a one-time event with unique circumstances that will not recur. He details significant military-strategic changes that occurred in the region in the past 50 years, which make a re-conquering of the West Bank both extremely difficult and unlikely.

“If Israel leaves the West Bank, the area will turn into Gaza, and it will take years to re-establish control of Palestinian urban centers in the West Bank, not six days. The circumstances of the Six Day War are not applicable to 2017, and should not be viewed as such.”

The Palestinian community sees peace with Israel as defeat in their 100-year struggle, Singer explains. Continued Israeli occupation is one of the Palestinians’ best weapons against Israel, and they will not forgo this while their war to eliminate Israel continues.

Since the Palestinians are forcing Israel to continue with a long-term retention of the territories, Singer says that the Jewish state should act to reduce the moral and other costs of that occupation, and even more importantly, stop telling the world that it could choose to end the occupation! “The occupation, like the need for military strength and to absorb casualties, is apparently part of the price Israel must pay to live in the region. Maturity means being able to go forward with no solution in sight.”

Maj. Gen. (res.) Yaakov Amidror has penned a 50-page study which considers what he calls “Israel’s inelegant options in Judea and Samaria,” i.e., withdrawal, annexation, and conflict management. This study is detailed in the following article.
To mark the jubilee of the Six Day War, the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies published a major study by Maj. Gen. (res.) Yaakov Amidror that takes a fresh look at Israel's options in Judea and Samaria and seeks to chart a path forward that will secure its national security while leaving the door open to peace.

Amidror, who was national security advisor to Prime Minister Netanyahu and director of the Intelligence Analysis Division in Military Intelligence, is today the Anne and Greg Rosshandler Senior Fellow at the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies.

He examines the two basic approaches to resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict: Establishment of a Palestinian state alongside Israel, and application of Israeli sovereignty over the West Bank and the creation of a bi-national state (in practice). Amidror finds both approaches to be flawed, posing significant challenges to Israel's future.

“Alas, the political Right has no sound response to the demographic argument against annexation, while the Left has no serious solution to the security threat stemming from Palestinian statehood. Therefore, Israel must choose the lesser evil. Israel’s choices are not a matter of right or wrong, but of electing to assume one set of risks over the other.”

“The truth is that no good solutions exist. It is therefore critical that a significant majority of Israelis – as large a consensus as possible – unite behind whatever approach is opted for by Israel’s leadership, to prevent a schism in the country.”

The 50-page study by General Amidror, entitled “Israel’s Inelegant Options in Judea and Samaria: Withdrawal, Annexation, and Conflict Management” is available online in English, Hebrew and Arabic at www.besacenter.org

In June, the center held a symposium to discuss General Amidror’s study, with commentators from a range of perspectives, including the Minister of Jerusalem Affairs and Minister of Environmental Protection Zeev Elkin MK (Likud), former deputy foreign minister Dr. Yossi Beilin, (Labor), and human rights and law professor Ruth Gavison. The discussion was moderated by Ari Shavit, former Haaretz columnist.

Minister Elkin argued that the demographic challenges highlighted by General Amidror have led to a change in right-wing policy. “Even Bayit Yehudi leader Naftali Bennett isn’t advocating for the extension of full Israeli sovereignty over the entire Judea and Samaria territory,” he noted. “But the Israeli demand for rights in the historic Land of Israel means that there isn’t room for full-fledged Palestinian rights in this area. We are in a conflict of rights, and I want to win.”

Dr. Beilin spoke wistfully about the aborted London agreement between Shimon Peres and King Hussein of Jordan, which was scuttled by Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir. “That might have been a solution that didn’t involve total Palestinian statehood, and would have removed the demographic danger from Israel. It is this demographic danger that
is my main concern, not the moral issues of occupation,” Beilin said. “I want to leave a Jewish and democratic state for my grandchildren.”

Prof. Gavison decried the lack of leadership in the Palestinian Authority, and called for the building of a national consensus in Israel towards a long-term vision for resolving the conflict.

General Amidror echoed Gavison’s call for consensus-building in Israel. “Inevitably, this will mean the relinquishing by the Israeli right of some of its ideological-geographical dreams, and concessions from the Israeli left about the character of the Jewish state. Or, to put it another way: If the left wants the right to forgo some of the Land of Israel in order to protect the Jewish character of Israel, the left will also have to accept that the Jewish character of Israel is going to be more traditional. That is the double-edged sword of the ‘demographic’ argument.”

Amidror also argued that the conditions that pertain in the Middle East today militate against dramatic Israeli moves.

“The Arab world is in a state of violent chaos, which requires effective and complete Israeli control of the West Bank for what may be a very long time. At the same time, any move towards formal annexation will wreck the ability of Israel to improve relations with the important Sunni states, and might even lead to another bloody intifada.”

“Nevertheless, the principled question of how the Israeli-Palestinian conflict ought to be resolved should be discussed, to shape today’s policies in accordance with the preferred solution of the future.”

“Therefore, Palestinian statehood is not the real question currently before decision-makers. Rather, the question is whether Israel aspires to leave open the possibility of future negotiations towards a two-state solution, or whether it will act towards closing this option by whether expanding isolated settlements and entering an unstoppable process towards a bi-national state situation.”

Amidror argued that at the center of Jewish society in Israel there is a large majority, which desires a solution and is quite ready to compromise on its historic rights over vast areas of the Land of Israel. “But it will do so only in return for an agreement that will ensure the security and peace of the country; and in a situation where the Palestinian minority does not grow beyond its current share of the population.”

“The only politically feasible way to act on this readiness in the future – which is unrealistic at present – is by limiting Israeli building to the settlement blocs (or to the existing boundaries of settlements, as was recently agreed between Israel and the Trump administration), thus reserving the remaining area for discussion at a time when there might be a different Palestinian leadership.”

Amidror utterly rejects the suggestions that Israel undertake unilateral initiatives – whether unilateral annexation of all or part of the West Bank, or unilateral withdrawals from all or parts of the territory. Unilateral moves, he says, would entail a very high domestic price for Israel, while earning Israel very few gains in diplomatic and defense terms.

“Israel must not jeopardize its existence by embarking on rash unilateral initiatives that would radically worsen its security situation - just to please proponents of ‘forward progress’ at any cost. This risk is not worth taking.

“Israel should not make any unilateral moves at all, but rather manage the conflict until conditions improve for a renewed negotiating effort at an agreed-upon solution. When on the edge of the cliff, standing still is preferable to stepping forward.”
A team of Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies experts has spent the past year studying IDF fighting doctrine in situations of long-term grinding warfare against enemies embedded within civilian populations.

The project was led by Brig. Gen. (res.) Moni Chorev and Prof. Efraim Inbar, in cooperation with the IDF Military Doctrine Department. Participating were Dr. Eitan Shamir, Prof. Hillel Frisch, Col. (res.) Dr. Eran Lerman, Maj. Gen. (res.) Yaakov Amidror, Mr. Uzi Rubin, and Maj. Gen. (res.) Gershon Hacohen.

The deliberations involved many senior IDF officers including Maj. Gen. Nitzan Alon, head of the operations branch in the IDF General Staff.

This led to the publication in February of six essays in book form (BESA Middle East Security and Policy Studies No. 128, Hebrew) that argue for doctrinal changes in the IDF approach to fighting Hamas and Hezbollah, with an emphasis on attrition and the infliction of cost, not decisive warfare.
NEW BOOK BY DR. EITAN SHAMIR

**Insurgencies and Counterinsurgencies: National Styles and Strategic Cultures**

BESA Center research associate Dr. Eitan Shamir has co-edited a new book (with Beatrice Heuser, Cambridge University Press, 2017) which considers the extent to which national mentalities, or "ways of war", are responsible for "national styles" of insurgency and counterinsurgency.

The book is based on a conference held at the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies a few years ago.

Experts examine the ways of war of particular insurgent movements, and the standard operational procedures of states and occupation forces to suppress them. Through case studies ranging from British, American and French counterinsurgency to the IRA and the Taliban, they show how "national styles" evolve, influenced by transnational trends, ideas and practices. They examine whether we can identify a tendency to resort to a particular pattern of fighting and, if so, whether this is dictated by constants such as geography and climate, or by the available options, or else whether there exists a particular "strategic culture" or "national style". Their findings show that 'national style' is not eternal but can undergo fundamental transformations.

H.R. McMaster, national security advisor to US President Trump, wrote an introduction to Shamir’s book. “This is an important book at a critical time… Those charged with crafting strategic response to complex problems such as the political and humanitarian catastrophe in the Greater Middle East might start with the conclusions that Heuser and Shamir draw from these superb essays,” McMaster wrote.

Dr. Shamir is a lecturer in the political science department at Bar-Ilan University. Formerly, he was head of the national security doctrine department in the Israel Ministry of Strategic Affairs.

NEW BOOK BY DR. EFRAT AVIV

**Anti-Semitism and Anti-Zionism in Turkey: From Ottoman Rule to AKP**

BESA Center research associate Dr. Efrat Aviv has written a new book (Routledge 2017) that depicts the rise in anti-Semitism in Turkey. The book covers the history of anti-Semitism in Turkey from the Ottoman period to the recent strengthening of the AKP led by Recep Tayyip Erdogan. She finds that anti-Semitism is prevalent in all walks of Turkish society, whether among the nationalist Islamists or the extreme left. Dr. Aviv also analyzes Turkey’s criticism of Israel during IDF military operations and its influence on the rise of anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism from the Second Lebanon War in 2006 to Operation Protective Edge in 2014. The book also analyzes Turkish society’s attitude towards Jews in comparison to other minorities, and looks at how other minorities examine Jews according to the history of the Jewish community in Turkish society and government.

Dr. Aviv is a lecturer in the Department of Middle Eastern Studies at Bar-Ilan University, specializing in Turkish studies, Ottoman history, Turkish Jewry, Islam, Islamic movements in Turkey, Sufism and Turkish politics.
The nations of the Mediterranean and particularly its eastern basin, including Israel, are very much a focal point of current international tensions. They also represent a meeting point of civilizations, both historically and culturally. They sit astride some of the world’s most important trade routes and avenues of strategic access between Asia and the West. These nations continue to face dramatic challenges and dangers, as well as opportunities.

The international conference surveyed the ongoing chaotic conditions in collapsed and failed states in the region; the rise and fall of Islamist forces in littoral lands, specifically Syria and Libya; and the emergence of new alliances, bolstered – among other factors – by energy developments.

Participants examined the ever-changing landscape from several regional and external perspectives. They sought to chart options for cooperation and emphasize the need for a new, sophisticated, and multi-layered security architecture in the Mediterranean in which Israel can play an active role.

“We are thrilled to partner again on this conference with the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies,” said B’nai B’rith International President Gary P. Saltzman and B’nai B’rith International CEO Daniel S. Mariaschin. “The conference provides important insight into refugee issues, regional cooperation, Iranian expansionism and superpower competition, as well as the economic relationship between eastern Mediterranean countries.”

In partnership with B’nai B’rith International, the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies hosted in February the second annual international conference on Eastern Mediterranean Security and Cooperation.

Mr. Ditmir Bushati, Albanian Minister of Foreign Affairs (speaking) alongside Col. (res.) Dr. Eran Lerman of the BESA Center who was academic convener of the conference.

Mr. Ditmir Bushati, Albanian Minister of Foreign Affairs, described his country’s positive role in the eastern Mediterranean and as a NATO ally, as well as the growing friendship with Israel (and Albania’s historic attitude towards the Jewish people). He put a special emphasis on the common effort to combat terrorism at both the practical and ideological levels.

Mr. Gideon Sa’ar, former Israeli Minister of Education and Interior and a former member of the Security Cabinet (Likud), delivered the closing address on “Israel’s Challenges in the Regional Strategic Environment.” He laid out a strategy for Israel based on cooperation with key regional players, yet he expected these states to share the burden of dealing with such thorny problems as the need to find new paradigms to replace the increasingly problematic “two-state solution.”
He also joined the criticism aimed at President Erdoğan, questioning whether Turkey can be counted today as a democratic state.

In a keynote address, Dr. Daniel Pipes, president of the Middle East Forum, offered a comprehensive survey of political developments, largely related to the rise of the Islamist threat, in the eight Eastern Mediterranean countries: Greece, Cyprus, Israel, Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt and Libya. He also noted the rising involvement of Russia and China in the region. He sharply criticized the gap between President Erdoğan’s immense skill in domestic politics and his persistent misreading of the regional and international challenges; and gave Israel high marks as a master of its own fate.

In speaking about the ongoing Syrian tragedy, Prof. Eyal Zisser of Tel Aviv University gave an account of the “miracles” that saved the Assad regime and turned him into the “Aleppo Liberator”: Obama’s decision not to strike, the Russian intervention, and now (perhaps) the ascension of President Trump. He suggested three possible outcomes to the Syrian civil war: a Spanish outcome (total victory for one side), an Afghan one (continued insurgency in the periphery), and a Libyan result (chaos and disintegration).

Relating to the challenge posed by ISIS and Islamist terrorism, Prof. Boaz Ganor of the Interdisciplinary Center Herzliya sharply criticized President Obama’s ineffectual counter-ISIS strategies and surveyed possible options for President Trump. These include “more of the same,” Russian-style carpet bombing, boots on the ground, and the more likely “businesslike” strategy of letting the Russians handle the situation – at a cost to US regional standing. He suggested a fifth approach involving greater US firepower and “sandals” – special forces – on the ground.

Relating to the ongoing Libyan crisis, Prof. Yehudit Ronen of Bar-Ilan University gave a detailed and tragic description of the country’s disintegration since the overthrow of Qaddafi, emphasizing the lack of foresight by the intervening powers and the current struggle between the “legitimate” government and the forces of General Hiftar.

Prof. Efraim Inbar of the BESA Center reviewed the strategic landscape in the Eastern Mediterranean. The US has virtually disappeared, he said; Turkey is increasingly becoming a revisionist power; and Tehran’s regional presence is growing. It is not clear whether the Greek-Cypriot-Israeli alignment can counter the radical Islamist powers, and it remains to be seen whether Egypt is ready to join this alignment.

Konstantinos Bikas, the Ambassador of Greece to Israel, tried to explain the roots of policy disasters in the region – in Iraq, Syria and Libya – as emanating from a lack of understanding of local societies. He spoke of the importance of supporting the forces of stability – Egypt and Jordan – and the role of Greece and Cyprus, working together in five tripartite frameworks alongside Israel, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and the Palestinians.
Prof. Elena Suponina of the Russian Institute for Strategic Studies described Moscow’s role in Syria and Libya, and emphasized the high value that today’s Russia (unlike the USSR) accords to its relationship with Israel. She said that while Moscow was capable of saying “no” to Washington, it does not want to be drawn by some Arab players into a “cold war style” adversarial relationship with the US.

Brig. Gen. (res.) Shaul Chorev of Haifa University presented the findings of the Haifa University/Hudson Institute working group on Eastern Mediterranean security. He emphasized mutual interests (in energy and stability) that compel regional and international elements to cooperate.

Dr. Jonathan Spyer of the Interdisciplinary Center Herzliya presented the dramatic regional refugee situation. More than 4.8 million refugees and 6 million IDPs have been created, he said, and suggested that the Syrian Sunnis have lost the war.

Dr. Karin von Hippel, director of the Royal United Services Institute in London, discussed the impact of the Syrian war and refugee crisis on Europe.

Ambassador Ünal Çeviköz of Turkey spoke emphatically about Ankara’s long tradition of taking in refugees, both in the Ottoman era and in modern times (including millions of Turks uprooted in a population exchange with Greece in the 1920s). He described the government’s current efforts to care for the massive Syrian population in Turkey, including education. He also suggested that the achievements of Operation Euphrates Shield, in effectively creating a safe zone in northern Syria, should serve as a model for the future, arguing that the international community had not done enough to help.

Prof. David Ohana of Ben-Gurion University dedicated his presentation to the memory of Jacqueline Cahanoff on the centennial of her birth, and gave a deeply sympathetic survey of her life and her personal and intellectual role in laying the foundation, more than anyone else, for the present discourse on Israel’s Mediterranean identity.

Prof. Nissim Calderon of Ben-Gurion University spoke passionately and pointedly about Cahanoff’s legacy and her concept of a Levantine/Mediterranean identity, which was not a burden carried because of place or group of origin, but an opportunity for an enriched concept of identity.

Ambassador Aryeh Mekel of the BESA Center gave an insider’s informed (and at times, entertaining) view of the dramatic turn for the better in Israeli-Greek relations, at the governmental and popular levels, which persisted throughout a period of political turmoil and change as well as of great economic difficulties in Greece.

Prof. Hillel Frisch, Dr. Jonathan Spyer, Dr. Karin von Hippel and Ambassador Ünal Çeviköz.
NEW PUBLICATIONS

Rethinking the Six-Day War
Prof. Efraim Karsh, Dr. Gabriel Glickman and Prof. Efraim Inbar
June 2017

Saudi Arabia, the Gulf, and the New Regional Landscape
Prof. Joshua Teitelbaum (ed.)
May 2017

Are Lone Wolves Really Acting Alone?
The Wave of Terror 2008-2015
Shaul Bartal and Hillel Frisch
May 2017 (Hebrew)

Qatar: The Limits of Nouveau Riche Diplomacy
Dr. Gil Feiler and Hayim Zeev
April 2017

Israel’s Inelegant Options in Judea and Samaria: Withdrawal, Annexation, and Conflict Management
Maj. Gen. (res.) Yaakov Amidror
April 2017

The IDF’s Small Wars
Prof. Efraim Inbar (ed.)
February 2017 (Hebrew)

The Kurds in a Volatile Middle East
Prof. Ofra Bengio
February 2017

North Korea and the Middle East
Dr. Alon Levkowitz
January 2017

The Libyan Tragedy and Its Meaning: The Wages of Indecision
Col. (res.) Dr. Eran Lerman
January 2017
In May, the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies and the Menachem Begin Heritage Center in Jerusalem held a conference marking the fortieth anniversary of the Likud party’s rise to power in 1977.

The conference studied the implications of Likud’s historic ascension to government leadership, and the repercussions ever since in Israel’s public and media discourse, and social, foreign and defense policy.

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu delivered a keynote address on Israel’s current economic, security and technological strengths. These have led, he argued, to a highpoint in Israel’s diplomatic standing in the world. “Only the strong are respected, and Israel is strong in multiple ways. This strength, which brings us respect and draws-in many new friends, is also what will lead Israel to peace,” Netanyahu averred.

“Our adversaries will sue for peace on reasonable terms only when they know that Israel is undefeatable and they see us succeeding despite the conflict.”

Former foreign and justice minister Tzipi Livni MK of the Zionist Union (who started her political career in the Likud) and Yair Lapid MK, leader of the Yesh Atid party, also spoke at the conference.

They each sought to claim the mantle of the “real Likud” for themselves, arguing that today’s Likud party has slid away from the liberal national values (especially regarding civil and human rights, and socioeconomic policy) espoused by its founder and former prime minister Menachem Begin.

Other speakers at the conference included professors Eytan Gilboa and Udi Lebel of the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies; professors Gerald Steinberg, Asher Cohen, and Nissim Leon of Bar-Ilan University; and professors Uri Cohen, Rafi Mann, and Menachem Mautner of Tel Aviv, Haifa, and Ariel universities.

Prof. Efraim Karsh (BESA Center director) and Mr. Herzl Makov (Begin Heritage Center director) chaired the conference. Bar-Ilan University President Rabbi Prof. Daniel Herschkowitz introduced the Prime Minister.
The Trump Victory: Causes and Implications

Shortly after the US presidential elections last November, the BESA Center held a conference analyzing the causes and implications of Donald Trump’s surprise victory.

Participating in the “analysis” part of the conference was pollster Prof. Yitzhak Katz, journalists Ariella Ringel Hoffman of Yediot Ahronot and Boaz Bismuth of Israel Hayom newspapers, and Prof. Eytan Gilboa of the BESA Center.

Prof. Eytan Gilboa, one of the most prominent experts on American-Israeli relations, U.S. policy in the Middle East, and American politics, has written a series of articles charting Trump’s path since the elections. In December, he warned that Russia and Iran were likely to test Trump’s leadership and determination. “President-Elect Trump has serious decisions to make about the Middle East, including what to do about Syria, how to tackle the Islamic State, how to take on Iran, and, of course, how to handle the perennial Israeli-Palestinian problem.”

In April, Gilboa urged Trump to formulate a strategy for responding to the crises in Syria and North Korea.

“Trump must fight the forces of violence and terror in the world, joining forces with allies and using a variety of military and diplomatic measures.”

Following Trump’s visit in May to the Middle East, Gilboa determined that the President “had achieved most of his goals. Never has a US president been received with so much tribute, praise, appreciation, and admiration by both Muslim and Jewish leaders. Heads of the most important states in the Arab world lauded his friendship, qualities, and strategic aims. Trump completely reversed the attitude of Obama, which verged on hostility, towards both the pro-American Arab states and Israel.”
LECTURES

Prof. P. R. Kumaraswamy, of the Center for West Asian Studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi, lectured in June on “Indo-Israeli Ties: Future Trajectories.”

Prof. Steven David of Johns Hopkins University lectured in May on “Trump’s Foreign Policy: Why Israelis will soon be Missing Obama.”

Prof. Jerome A. Chanes, senior research fellow at the Center for Jewish Studies, CUNY Graduate Center, lectured in May on “The Other Arab-Israeli Conflict: Seventy Years of US-Israel Relations.”

Col. (res.) Jacques Neria, former diplomatic advisor to Prime Minister Rabin, lectured in April on “Rabin’s Route to Oslo.”

Dr. Meena Singh Roy, research fellow and coordinator of the West Asia Centre, Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA) in New Delhi, lectured in March on “India-Iran Relations in the 21st Century: Adapting to New Realities.”

Mr. Greg Sheridan, foreign editor of The Australian, lectured in February on “Australia: A Strategic Middle Power.”


Mr. Ilya Meyer, former deputy chair of the West Sweden branch of the Sweden-Israel Friendship Association, lectured in December on “Sweden-Israel Relations: Where Fiction Meets Reality.”

Prof. Pan Guang, Vice Chairman of the Shanghai Center for International Studies and Vice President of the Chinese Association of Middle East Studies, lectured in December on “China’s Rising Role in a Changing Middle East Since 2011.”
Prof. Andreas Theophanous, President of the Cyprus Center for European and International Affairs at the University of Nicosia (pictured), Mr. Nicholas Papadopoulos MP of the Cyprus Democratic Party, and Dr. Theodoros Tsakiris, advisor to the President of the Cyprus Democratic Party, lectured in January on “The Strategic Environment of Cyprus.”

Prof. Umet Uzer of Istanbul Technical University and Mr. Gareth Jenkins of the Silk Road Studies Program at Central Asia-Caucasus Institute lectured in January on “Whither Turkey?”

Dr. Umet Uzer and Mr. Gareth Jenkins

Dr. Shashi Jayakumar (Singapore and Its Security Future), Mr. Benjamin Ang (Cybersecurity Policy Issues of the Internet of Things in Smart Cities), Dr. Terri-Anne Teo (Multiculturalism and National Security), Dr. Bernard Loo (The Transformation of the National Security Landscape for Singapore), and Dr. Michael Raska (Military Innovation Trajectories: China, Russia, and the US), all of the Centre of Excellence for National Security (CENS), lectured in November on “The Strategic Environment of Singapore.”

Dr. Shashi Jayakumar

Dr. Shashi Jayakumar, Mr. Benjamin Ang, Dr. Terri-Anne Teo, Dr. Bernard Loo, Dr. Michael Raska

Dr. Max Singer, a senior research associate at the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies, lectured in November on “History’s March and Islamism’s Hopeless Goal.”

Dr. Max Singer

Dr. Max Singer

Strategic Consultation

Mr. Yair Lapid MK, leader of the Yesh Atid Party, met with BESA Center researchers in December, along with his colleague Yaakov Peri MK (former head of the GSS), for a three-hour discussion of Israel’s diplomatic challenges in the wake of UNSC 2334.

Mr. Yair Lapid MK

Yesh Atid Party leader Yair Lapid

BESA Center associates Frisch, Rubin, Shamir, Inbar, Gilboa, Rynhold, Hacohen, Teitelbaum, Lerman, and center vice chairman Saul Koschitzky, meet with MKs Lapid and Peri (who stand astride Prof. Inbar at center).
No. 515

**Modi’s Visit to Jerusalem**  
July 1, 2017 | Prof. Efraim Inbar  
The burgeoning India-Israel relationship is based on similar strategic agendas and is buttressed by extensive defense ties.

No. 514

**Shalom, Modi!**  
June 30, 2017 | Sarosh Bana  
Start-ups and defense are high on the Indian prime minister’s agenda as he visits Israel.

No. 513

**The Qatar Crisis and China**  
June 29, 2017 | Roie Yellinek  
China, the second-largest economy in the world, has an interest in the achievement of a resolution to the Gulf crisis between Qatar and other Sunni Muslim countries.

No. 512

**The Proposed Israeli Academic Code is a Mistake (Hebrew)**  
June 28, 2017 | Dr. Udi Lebel  
The code of academic ethics for Israeli universities proposed by the Ministry of Education suggests a right-wing inferiority complex. The path to overcoming the dominance of the political left in academia is establishment of new and more pluralistic institutions.

No. 511

**A Sad Decision That Might Haunt Us All**  
June 28, 2017 | Col. (res.) Dr. Eran Lerman  
Government decisions that snub the non-Orthodox denominations of the Jewish faith are not only a matter of identity and morality. They have a direct bearing on national security, since one of the foundational aspects of Israel’s strategy of survival in a hostile environment is the organized support of American Jewry.

No. 510

**On the Future of Jerusalem**  
June 27, 2017 | David M. Weinberg  
A close look at the situation in eastern Jerusalem reveals contradictory movements: radical Islamicization vs. closer integration with Jewish Jerusalem. Despite the complicated circumstances, united Jerusalem under exclusive Israeli sovereignty is the key, not an obstacle, to peace and security in the city.

No. 509

**From Osirak to Yongbyon**  
June 26, 2017 | Dr. Alon Levkowitz  
North Korea is moving forward with its development of an ICBM that can carry a nuclear warhead. Will Pyongyang test it, challenging Washington to strike its nuclear reactor in Yongbyon?

No. 508

**Pay for Gazan Electricity? Clarifying the “Israeli Interest”**  
Israel must keep Gaza stable and maintain the separation between the West Bank-based Palestinian Authority and Gaza-based Hamas. Time to put an end to the extortion the enemy practices.

No. 507

**Kurdistan: From Referendum to the Road to Independence**  
June 24, 2017 | Dr. Edy Cohen  
A September referendum will decide whether autonomous Kurdistan should disengage from Iraq and become an independent state or remain within the Iraqi state.

No. 506

**Decentralization: The Key to Indo-Israeli Ties**  
June 23, 2017 | Prof. P. R. Kumaraswamy  
By making the most of India’s federal structure, Israel has established a strong presence in various states in India and thereby moved bilateral relations from elite political discourse to the economic needs of India’s rural population.

No. 505

**The EastMed Pipeline Could Be a Giant Step towards Enhancing Regional Security**  
June 22, 2017 | George N. Tzogopoulos  
The would be expensive and difficult, but it is feasible. Easier and less expensive solutions are also being considered, but security considerations work in EastMed’s favor.

No. 504

**General John Allen’s Plan is Dangerous**  
The Allen Plan, an Obama-era proposal that calls for a Palestinian state on the 1967 borders with foreign forces guaranteeing security, is antithetical to the Israeli ethos of self-defense and self-preservation.

No. 503

**Gaza’s Humanitarian Crisis is Fake News**  
June 20, 2017 | Prof. Hillel Frisch  
Indicators such as life expectancy, growth in imports and demand for electricity suggest that the Gazan standard of living is rising, not declining. If a genuine humanitarian crisis were to loom, the solution would be simple: disarm Hamas and divert its considerable expenditures on terrorism for civilian purposes.

No. 502

**Hamas: Striking the Right Balance**  
June 19, 2017 | Maj. Gen. (res.) Yaakov Amidror  
It might be tempting for Israel to take advantage of economic pressures to compel Hamas to rein in its military expenditures – but the less Hamas feels it has to lose, the more combustible Gaza becomes.

No. 501

**Gaza in the Dark is Not So Terrible**  
June 18, 2017 | Prof. Efraim Inbar  
Hamas wants Israel to supply it with electricity “or else”, but there is no reason why Israel should submit to Hamas extortion. It is not Israel’s obligation to satisfy the needs of a population that continues, through its ongoing support of Hamas, to pursue Israel’s destruction.

No. 500

**The Emerging Trump Doctrine of Strategic Savvy**  
June 17, 2017 | Jiri Valenta and Leni Friedman Valenta  
A discussion of US leaders’ failed strategies in several wars, of Trump’s team of generals, and of the emerging Trump doctrine, which is here termed “strategic savvy”. 
No. 499
Turkey’s Failed Grand Design for the Middle East
June 16, 2017 | Burak Bekdil
The siege of Qatar is sending messages on many wavelengths, some intended for Turkey. Sadly, Erdoğan is too ideologically blind to see that Turkey is standing on the wrong corner at the wrong moment.

No. 498
When Palestinians are Hopeless, Terror Declines; When Hopeful, Terrorism Increases
June 15, 2017 | Prof. Hillel Frisch
The widespread belief that Palestinian hopelessness feeds terrorism and the prospects for peace decrease it has always been false. In fact, the opposite is true.

No. 497
The Qatar Crisis: Signs of Weakness
June 14, 2017 | Maj. Gen. (res.) Yaakov Amidror
The decision by some Persian Gulf and Arab nations to cut diplomatic ties with Qatar is indicative of the deep crisis brewing in the region over the lack of real Sunni leadership.

No. 496
China, Europe, and the US: Are Changes Coming to the World Order?
June 13, 2017 | Roie Yellinek
China has a vision of joining forces with Europe to counterbalance the US, and President Trump’s poor relations with Europe made this vision more plausible.

No. 495
The “Game of Camps” Revisited: Why Qatar? Why Now?
June 12, 2017 | Col. (res.) Dr. Eran Lerman
The Qatars have been playing a dangerous game for years. They have provocatively supported the Muslim Brotherhood and actively promoted the destabilization of existing regimes, using huge sums of money as well as the pernicious influence of Al Jazeera TV.

No. 494
Trump Diplomacy: Settling North Korea “With Gas and With Bomb”?
June 11, 2017 | Louis Rene Beres
Trump’s core task is to pursue “escalation dominance” without simultaneously exposing the US or its allies to grievous attack.

No. 493
Prospects for a Near East Treaty Organization
June 10, 2017 | Jose V. Cipriut
NETO could embrace the span between the Eastern Mediterranean (including Israel), the Red Sea, and the edge of the Indian Ocean, to confront radical Islam.

No. 492
The Green Line (Hebrew)
June 9, 2017 | Gershon Hacohen
The desire for “homelands” in Judea and Samaria goes far beyond Religious Zionism.

No. 491
Turkey: NATO’s Odd One Out
June 9, 2017 | Burak Bekdil
NATO’s deepening “Turkey problem” is contained in the country’s Islamist ideology, conspicuous “unlikemindedness”, and democratic anomalies.

No. 490
Israel Upgrades Its Asia Policy
June 8, 2017 | Dr. Alon Levkowitz
Israel is upgrading its economic relations with Asia by negotiating free trade agreements with China, South Korea, Vietnam, and India.

No. 489
Rewriting the Six Day War
June 6, 2017 | Dr. Gabriel Glickman
Descriptions of the Six Day War’s origin are often distorted and taken out of context by politicized historians and commentators to misrepresent Israel as the aggressor in the conflict.

No. 488
In the Aftermath of Trump’s Visit to the Middle East
June 6, 2017 | Prof. Eytan Gilboa
Never has a US president been received with so much tribute, praise, appreciation, and admiration by both Muslim and Jewish leaders. Trump completely reversed the attitude of Obama, which verged on hostility, towards both the pro-American Arab states and Israel.

No. 487
The Six Day War Was a One-Time Event
June 5, 2017 | Maj. Gen. (res.) Gershon Hacohen
The events of the Six-Day War of 1967 are often used by proponents of withdrawal from the West Bank as proof that Israel can defend itself from behind the “green line.” However, this argument ignores the military-strategic changes in the region over the past 50 years.

No. 486
The Summit for the Establishment of the Silk Road Forum
June 4, 2017 | Roie Yellinek
Israel was not included in the May summit on the Chinese initiative to connect Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and Asia, but is nevertheless very much in the picture.

No. 485
Assad Is Bad News
June 3, 2017 | Prof. Efraim Inbar
The survival of the Assad regime is a victory for Iran – the main source of trouble in the Middle East and Israel’s arch-enemy. Expressing support for the Assad regime is also morally reprehensible.

No. 484
The Farhoud Remembered
June 2, 2017 | Dr. Edy Cohen
Seventy-six years after the mass massacre of the Baghdad Jews, Palestinian leadership still supports an anti-Israel and anti-Jewish campaign of racial and political incitement.

No. 483
Trump’s Air Strike on al-Tanf: No to the Shiite Crescent
June 1, 2017 | Prof. Hillel Frisch
The US is signaling that it will not countenance the reemergence of an Iranian-controlled Shiite crescent from Teheran to Beirut.
**No. 482**
**Ehud Barak: Blatantly Ignoring Danger**
Former PM Ehud Barak's arguments in favor of withdrawal from Judea and Samaria undercut Israel's security and are a departure from the Oslo Accords’ security vision.

**No. 481**
**Donald Trump: The View from Jerusalem**
May 30, 2017 | Prof. Eytan Gilboa
Trump’s first 100 days have yet to provide a clear indication of US policy and how he believes he can achieve an Israel-Palestinian deal.

**No. 479**
**The Over-Dramatization of Israel’s “Dilemma”**
May 28, 2017 | Dr. Max Singer
The occupation, like the need for military strength and to absorb casualties, is part of the price Israel has to pay to live here. Maturity means being able to go forward with no solution in sight.

**No. 478**
**Turkey’s Indigenous Weapons Industry: A Rover with Rolls-Royce Ambitions**
May 27, 2017 | Burak Bekdil
Turkey seeks self-sufficiency in weapons technology in order to bolster its regional political clout, but there are technological, financial, and political challenges standing in the way.

**No. 477**
**A Border as a Dynamic Space**
May 26, 2017 | Maj. Gen. (res.) Gershon Hacohen
Nation, a homeland, a state, and permanent borders are not necessarily congruent. Israel should rethink the popular assumption that a homeland and political borders must be a perfect fit.

**No. 476**
**Assad’s Survival Is in Israel’s Best Interest**
May 25, 2017 | Dr. Edy Cohen
A strong Syrian president with firm control over the state is a vital interest for Israel.

**No. 475**
**Strategic Consensus: DOA in 1981; Resurrected in 2017?**
May 24, 2017 | Col. (res.) Dr. Eran Lerman
Key regional players are now more open than ever to an informal US-led alliance against their common enemies: Iran and radical Sunni versions of Islamist totalitarianism.

**No. 474**
**Turkey’s Rants, Raves, and Ramifications**
May 23, 2017 | Maj. Gen. (res.) Yaakov Amidror
Erdoğan attacks Israel as part of a Turkish effort to gain hearts and minds in Arab countries.

**No. 473**
**Macron’s Election and the Challenges He Faces**
May 22, 2017 | Dr. Tsilla Hershco
Macron will have to overcome huge challenges – and quickly – if he is to deliver on his promises of economic reform and his pledges to bridge the deep gaps in French society and politics.

**No. 472**
**Nasser’s Legacy on the 50th Anniversary of the 1967 War**
May 21, 2017 | Dr. Michael Sharnoff
Nasser’s Egypt showed how a developing country with a large population could persevere despite tremendous economic, political, and military challenges.

**No. 471**
**The World Did Not Agree to a Nuclear-Armed Iran – Not Even in 10 Years**
May 20, 2017 | Dr. Max Singer
The stated premise of the JCPOA was that Iran would never build or acquire nuclear weapons – ever.

**No. 470**
**The Six-Day War: An Inevitable Conflict**
May 19, 2017 | Prof. Efraim Karsh
The total Arab rejection of Jewish statehood made all-out Arab-Israeli war a foregone conclusion.

**No. 469**
**Why Should We Give Up Our Nuclear Weapons? Pyongyang’s Perspective**
May 18, 2017 | Dr. Alon Levkowitz
Pyongyang should take into account that Beijing might have to reevaluate its North Korean policy in order to prevent an escalation in the region under Trump’s new administration.

**No. 468**
**Vietnam, an Emerging Partner in Israel’s ‘Asia Pivot’ Policy**
May 17, 2017 | Alvite Ningthoujam
While cooperation between Israel and Vietnam is largely focused on civilian sectors, defense ties are also growing more robust, with Israel getting involved in upgrading aging Vietnamese weapons systems and collaborating on weapons development.

**No. 467**
**Why We Are Surprised by Surprises**
May 16, 2017 | Joshua Teicher
There is a structured, persistent failure in intelligence research that scholars have either not identified or underestimate: the assessment of long-term processes that develop separately from “objective” quantitative data.

**No. 466**
**Reparations for Jews from Arab Countries Should Be an Integral Part of Any Peace Agreement**
May 15, 2017 | Dr. Edy Cohen
No solution for the Palestinian refugee problem is possible so long as justice is not served for the Jewish refugees from the Arab countries.

**No. 465**
**Hamas: Another Failed Palestinian Organization**
May 14, 2017 | Prof. Hillel Frisch
Mounting evidence suggests that Hamas, viewed as either a terrorist movement or as a government, is one more failed Palestinian organization. It Israel should be patient, as time is on its side.
No. 464
For Hamas, Nothing Has Changed
May 11, 2017 | Maj. Gen. (res.) Gershon Hacohen
Westerners should resist the temptation to infer too much into recent moves by Hamas, including a revised charter and a change of leadership.

No. 463
The Meeting Between President Trump and President Xi Jinping
May 10, 2017 | Roie Yellinek
Both sides attempted to ease tensions and create a basis for healthy relations.

No. 462
The New Hamas Policy Document: Same Old Same Old (Mostly)
May 9, 2017 | Col. (res.) Dr. Eran Lerman
The new Hamas policy document makes clear that the Palestinian state – to be achieved piecemeal if necessary – is to be created at the expense of the very existence of the Jewish State.

No. 460
Turkey: Directionless and Friendless
May 7, 2017 | Burak Bekdil
Optimists thought Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's inflammatory, anti-Western pre-referendum rhetoric was just election talk that would disappear after the ballots were counted, but that was a vain hope.

No. 459
Israel Is Still at War
May 4, 2017 | Prof. Efraim Inbar
Israelis can be proud of their many impressive achievements, particularly the building of a very strong military. Yet acceptance by all its neighbors has not, unfortunately, been attained.

No. 458
Keeping All Cards Close to the Vest
May 1, 2017 | Maj. Gen. (res.) Yaakov Amidror
The US’s decision to strike Syria and the results of the referendum in Turkey will have a significant impact on Israel. It will not be easy to navigate between these conflicting forces and Middle East realities.

No. 457
A Holocaust Denier at the White House
April 30, 2017 | Dr. Edy Cohen
It is a historical irony that an unreconstructed Holocaust denier is being welcomed at the White House to promote a peace agreement with the very national movement that he has accused of culpability for the genocide.

No. 456
The Impact of the ISIS Terror Attacks on Europe
April 30, 2017 | Dr. Tsilla Hershco
The terrorist assaults have given rise to a discreet security cooperation between EU member states and Israel, but have not prompted the EU to change its critical position regarding Israel’s defensive measures against Palestinian terror.

No. 455
Mahmoud Abbas Goes to Washington: What Is at Stake?
April 27, 2017 | Col. (res.) Dr. Eran Lerman
There seems to be a better chance of drawing the PA into peace talks when it realizes that its traditional patrons in the Arab world, Egypt and Saudi Arabia, are once again basking in the sunshine of American strategic support.

No. 452
The Syrian Sarin Attacks of August 2013 and April 2017
April 26, 2017 | Lt. Col. (res.) Dr. Dany Shoham
The geopolitical shift suggested by the recent US military response in Syria marks a desirable turn with consequential implications regarding the ongoing relationships among the US, Syria, Russia, and Iran.

No. 451
President Trump: Formulating Strategy As He Goes Along
April 25, 2017 | Prof. Eytan Gilboa
Trump has decided to fight the forces of violence and terror in the world, joining forces with allies and using a variety of military and diplomatic measures. If his strategy succeeds, it could stabilize the world order and improve Israel’s strategic position.

No. 450
Trump and the Israelization of American Politics
April 24, 2017 | Dr. Alex Joffe
Without civic education and new, more centrist leaders, American politics will continue to resemble that of Israel, to the detriment of effective democracy.

No. 449
A Dangerous Malady: Islamophobia-phobia
April 23, 2017 | Dr. Max Singer
Avoiding prejudice against Muslims is a noble cause, but carried too far, the fear of Islamophobia prevents a realistic response to Islamism’s attacks on the West.

No. 448
The Turkish Referendum: A Turning Point?
April 20, 2017 | Prof. Efraim Inbar
Erdoğan may use his increased power to pursue an adventurer foreign policy rooted in his Islamist and neo-Ottoman impulses.

No. 447
The Korean Peninsula Is Waiting for Trump
April 19, 2017 | Dr. Alon Levkowitz
President Trump will need to consider not only the current North Korean crisis and the immediate military or diplomatic options available for confronting it, but also his long-term goals in the region.

No. 446
Turkey: Divided We Stand
April 18, 2017 | Burak Bekdil
Erdoğan’s longer-term game plan is to ensure that Turkey will continue to elect conservative, nationalist presidents and governments after his day is done.

No. 443
Turkey: Europe’s “Angry Bird”
April 7, 2017 | Burak Bekdil
Erdoğan continues to fan fears of real or fabricated enemies, with particular emphasis on “Christian crusaders.”
No. 442
West Bank Construction Can Help Solve the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict
April 6, 2017 | Col. (res.) Dr. Eran Lerman
A reasonable program of settlement construction is not the root of all evil in the region. In fact, a peace deal is more likely if space is given to the mainstream settler community.

No. 441
Israel’s Release of Second Ramallah Lynch Murderer Violates International Law
April 5, 2017 | Prof. Louis René Beres
The release of Hamas terrorist Haitham Muari is wrongly exculpatory, legally contrived, and nationally self-destructive.

No. 440
The Burden of the 1967 Victory
April 5, 2017 | Prof. Efraim Inbar
The only approach that can succeed in Israel’s current conflicts is a patient, attritional, repetitive use of force. Israelis should take comfort that time is on Israel’s side.

No. 439
The Fight for Zion
April 4, 2017 | Asaf Romirowsky
As the BDS movement grows in popularity and attracts more Jewish advocates, the gap is growing even wider between American Jewry and Israel.

No. 438
Europe: It’s Decision Time on Turkey
April 3, 2017 | Dr. Efrat Aviv
As the gaps widen between Turkey and Europe, it might be better for both sides if Europe made up its mind about Turkish admission to the EU.

No. 437
Arrow Intercepts a Syrian Missile: Technological, Operational, and Political Aspects
April 2, 2017 | Uzi Rubin
Israel’s missile shield has reaching maturity, as demonstrated by destruction of a target never envisaged during its design.

No. 436
The Inverted Ideological Pyramids of Anti-Zionist Jews: The Case of Moshe Zuckermann
March 30, 2017 | Evyatar Friesel
The central factor in Zuckermann’s thought is a visceral aversion to the Zionist idea and its realization.

No. 435
Hizb ut-Tahrir in Turkey Calls for Restoring the Caliphate
March 29, 2017 | Uzay Bulut
Violence is not the only means by which Islamist groups and individuals hope to expand Islamic influence, establish Islamic governments, and eventually restore the caliphate.

No. 434
Netanyahu’s China Visit
March 27, 2017 | Roie Yellinek
The visit presents an opportunity for Israel to play a more prominent role on the international scene.

No. 433
Palestinians and the Balfour Declaration at 100: Resisting the Past
March 26, 2017 | Dr. Alex Joffe
Honor, internationalization, symbolism, and playing on Western guilt shape the Palestinian culture of denial, which impedes progress towards either a stable Palestinian state or peace with Israel.

No. 432
Are Israeli Raids on Syrian Targets Legal?
March 23, 2017 | Prof. Louis René Beres
Given Syria’s active and unambiguous complicity with Hezbollah, Israel has an obligation to prevent and/or mitigate Syrian terrorist crimes.

No. 431
Turkey: A Sunni Iran in the Making?
March 22, 2017 | Burak Bekdil
The rising tide of an aggressive blend of nationalism and Islamism might be prompting Ankara to pursue its own WMDs, and its preference appears to be long-range missiles.

No. 430
President Trump Wants a Peace Process Too
March 21, 2017 | Prof. Efrain Inbar
President Trump’s eagerness might prove self-defeating.

No. 429
Should Turkey Officially Designate ISIS a Terrorist Organization?
March 20, 2017 | Uzay Bulut
ISIS has used Turkish territory as a transit route into Syria and Iraq and has placed sleeper cells in dozens of Turkish cities, so Ankara should designate the group a terrorist organization.

No. 428
Lessons of the 1967 Deterioration
March 19, 2017 | Maj. Gen. (res.) Gershon Hacohen
The escalation towards the Six Day War is a classic case of a limited campaign spinning out of control against expectations.

No. 427
President Trump, North Korea, and Israel’s Nuclear Strategy
March 16, 2017 | Prof. Louis René Beres
There are important spillover implications to be considered regarding a Trump confrontation with a nuclear North Korea, specifically with reference to the Middle East and Israel’s nuclear strategy.

No. 425
Becoming Part of Jordan and Egypt: A Palestinian Economic Imperative
March 15, 2017 | Prof. Hillel Frisch
A two-state solution would lead, not to an economy of peace, but to an economy of violence as lobby groups in both Israel and Jordan shut out the Palestinian state’s exports.

No. 424
Russian Air Defense Architecture … for NATO Member Turkey?
March 14, 2017 | Burak Bekdil
If the Turks place a Russian air defense system on their soil, they will no longer have access to the NATO satellite signals critical for that very defense system to be useful.
No. 423
Why Did Islamic State Choose to Threaten China at This Time?
March 12, 2017 | Roie Yellinek
IS claims to offer hope and refuge to the Uyghur Muslims, who are subject to a campaign by the central government in Beijing, and thereby to achieve two major goals: recruiting new volunteers and attracting further attention.

No. 422
Israel Must Choose: Enforce the Law or Lose the Negev?
March 9, 2017 | Ariel Ben Solomon
Radical Arab nationalists and the Islamic Movement are infiltrating and co-opting the Bedouin conflict as a tool against the state.

No. 421
Trade Insights, Not Barbs
March 8, 2017 | Maj. Gen. (res.) Yaakov Amidror
The failures in Operation Protective Edge in Gaza in 2014 illustrate that in war, nothing is as important as the proper division of roles. The IDF should stay out of politics, and the cabinet should refrain from tactical planning.

No. 420
The Centenary of the Balfour Declaration
March 7, 2017 | Maj. Gen. (res.) Gershon Hacohen
Israeli Jews should seek to return to the premises underlying the Declaration – premises that were taken for granted at the time by the international community, but that have since been obscured.

No. 419
War: The School of Life
March 7, 2017 | Maj. Gen. (res.) Gershon Hacohen
The potential for public panic over the tunnel threat is greater than we think. It is unreasonable to expect a perfect response for every threat during wartime.

No. 418
Decoding Flynn-gate: Russia, the Middle East, and the US Elections
March 6, 2017 | Jiri Valenta and Leni Friedman Valenta
The ongoing witch-hunt is emblematic of an unprecedented political power struggle in the US that reflects widely divergent policies toward Russia, the Middle East, and Ukraine.

No. 417
How Likely Is an Irrational US Presidential Order to Use Nuclear Weapons?
March 5, 2017 | Prof. Louis René Beres
President Trump could refuse to follow through on deterrent threats, thereby allowing assorted Russian aggressions – including those that might involve Israel.

No. 416
Myth: American Ties to Israel Harm US Interests in the Muslim Middle East
March 1, 2017 | Prof. Hillel Frisch
US exports to the region have grown, despite Israel’s “offenses” against Hezbollah and Hamas.

No. 415
Iran Is Progressing Towards Nuclear Weapons Via North Korea
February 28, 2017 | Lt. Col. (ret.) Dr. Refael Ofek and Lt. Col. (res.) Dr. Dany Shoham
North Korea is likely assisting in the upgrading of Iranian nuclear and strategic capacities.

No. 414
Tread Carefully with the New US Administration
February 16, 2017 | Maj. Gen. (res.) Yaakov Amidror
The Middle East is not Washington’s sole focus and Israel must preserve the bipartisan support it enjoys.

No. 413
Curb Your Enthusiasm About the Trump Administration
February 15, 2017 | Col. (res.) Dr. Eran Lerman
One cannot blame Israelis for their sense of euphoria following the change of government in the US, but it is Israel’s interest to approach the new administration with a degree of restraint.

No. 412
Trump Has Fans in Israel
February 13, 2017 | Prof. Efraim Inbar
After eight years of a frosty relationship with the US Commander in Chief, many Israelis cautiously welcome the advent of Donald Trump.

No. 411
Know Thine Enemy: From GWOT to CVE to DIT?
February 12, 2017 | Col. (res.) Dr. Eran Lerman
The Trump administration is reportedly planning to scrap the conceptual framework of Obama’s “CVE” – Countering Violent Extremism – and focus more explicitly on the Islamist threat, but it remains to be seen just how he defines that threat.

No. 410
Myth: Israel Is the Largest Beneficiary of US Military Aid
February 10, 2017 | Prof. Hillel Frisch
Israel receives only a small fraction of American military aid, and most of that was spent in the US to the benefit of the American economy.

No. 409
The Destruction of Amona: The Day After
February 9, 2017 | Maj. Gen. (res.) Gershon Hacohen
The State of Israel is approaching the crossroads of a crucial decision regarding its policy on the future of Judea, Samaria, and Jerusalem.

No. 408
Trump, China, and the Middle East
February 7, 2017 | Roie Yellinek
The Middle East, including Israel, could nevertheless be drawn into the conflict as a confrontation zone between the superpowers due to the region’s natural resources, intersecting sea routes, and overall geostrategic importance.
No. 407  
Trump, the Mideast Conflict, and the Jordanian Option  
February 6, 2017 | Prof. Hillel Frisch and Yitzhak Sokoloff

Instead of fixating on an independent Palestinian state, the new US administration should look east to the Hashemite Kingdom as a stabilizing influence on Palestinian politics.

No. 406  
War Is War  
February 2, 2017 | Maj. Gen. (res.) Gershon Hacohen

The prudence with which the 2014 Gaza campaign was waged deserves the public’s full confidence.

No. 405  
Cybersecurity: Recommendations for President Trump, Implications for Israel  
February 1, 2017 | Col. (res.) Shai Shabtai

Israel should consider a national program to strengthen identity authentication mechanisms, a nationwide “protective umbrella,” a national awareness campaign, and the transfer of government infrastructure to external cloud services.

No. 404  
The Wisdom of Hindsight  

The only advantage the state comptroller has over the subjects of his audits is the perspective gained by hindsight. This may prevent him from walking a real mile in decision-makers’ shoes.

No. 403  
A Truth-Telling Strategy to Advance Israeli-Palestinian Peace  
January 29, 2017 | Dr. Max Singer

Washington should move to a truth-telling strategy to dismantle the structure of false views that slander Israel and stand in the way of peace.

No. 402  
Should Israel Maintain Its Policy of Non-Intervention in Syria?  
January 26, 2017 | Prof. Hillel Frisch

The recent major changes in the balance of power in favor of Iran and its allies in Syria call for a more interventionist and publicly declared Israeli strategy in support of Syria’s rebels to balance against Iran and its allies. Moving the US embassy to Jerusalem will remove the air of delusional unreality surrounding all aspects of the Jerusalem question, and modify what the Palestinians should legitimately expect to achieve at the negotiating table.

No. 401  
A Two-State Solution? Just Not According to the Clinton Parameters  

It is time to reconsider Yitzhak Rabin’s approach, which stressed the importance of the preservation and development of Area C in Judea and Samaria under Israeli control as a prerequisite for defensible borders.

No. 400  
Guide for the Diplomatically Perplexed: Trump 1.0  
January 24, 2017 | Prof. Gerald M. Steinberg

Diplomatic deal-making requires mastery of four basic elements: integration of diplomacy with the credible threat of force; the rewarding of friends and the punishing of enemies; a diplomatic focus on interests rather than emotions; and a refusal to condescend to the citizens who will be affected.

No. 399  
Sanctioning the Syrians  
January 23, 2017 | Lt. Col. (res.) Dr. Dany Shoham

The recent US sanctions against 18 senior Syrian officers for chemical weapons (CW) employment seem to represent little more than a last-ditch compensation for the hands-off record of the outgoing Obama administration.

No. 398  
Jerusalem is the Center of Gravity  
January 19, 2017 | Prof. Efraim Inbar

Jerusalem carries great symbolic and strategic value for Israel, and Israeli control of the city must be protected.

No. 397  
How Moving the US Embassy to Jerusalem Can Improve Prospects for Peace  
January 18, 2017 | Col. (res.) Dr. Eran Lerman

No. 396  
The Two-State Solution: A Greater Threat to Palestinians than to Israel  
January 17, 2017 | Prof. Hillel Frisch

Leftists, right-wingers, conservatives and liberals all tend to assume that two states would naturally be in the Palestinians’ interest. Think again.

No. 395  
Out with the Old, In with the New  
January 16, 2017 | Maj. Gen. (res.) Yaakov Amidror

President Barack Obama has eroded the US’s superpower status and is leaving behind a far more dangerous world than the one he inherited. A Trump administration gives Israel reason to be optimistic.

No. 394  
France’s Counterproductive “Peace Initiative”  
January 13, 2017 | Dr. Tsilla Hershco

The French “peace initiative” is dangerous to both Israeli and Palestinian security, and conveys the harmful message that obstructionism, violence and incitement are effective policy tools.

No. 393  
A Soldier, Not a “Child”  
January 9, 2017 | Maj. Gen. (res.) Gershon Hacohen

When we ask young men and women to give everything they have and more for the sake of their country and their people, we cannot at the same time see them as kids.

No. 392  
Kerry’s Misreading of Reality  
January 6, 2017 | Maj. Gen. (res.) Yaakov Amidror

Kerry displayed his inability to assess the region correctly and to put the Palestinian issue into perspective.
Kerry made a vain attempt to deflect attention from the Obama administration’s failed foreign policy.

Events in Aleppo are playing an important role in Iran’s strategic plan to establish an overland corridor that would give it access to the Mediterranean coast.

No. 383
Implications of the Emergent Russian-Hezbollah Coordination in Syria
December 2, 2016 | Yossi Mansharof
A Russia-Iran-Hezbollah axis, aided by Iraqi, Afghan and Pakistani Shiite militias, seeks to establish facts on the ground that will scupper any plans of the new US administration to establish an offensive policy in Syria.

No. 382
Reassessing American Interests in the Middle East
December 1, 2016 | Prof. Eytan Gilboa
Russia and Iran are likely to test Trump’s leadership and determination in handling the situation in Syria and Iraq.

The dark strategic implications of the recent turn of events in Syria.

The Chinese “Belt and Road Initiative” including the Red-Med railway will strengthen the Middle East as a critical trade route between East and West.

A dangerous rift has developed in Saudi-Egyptian relations regarding the wars in Syria and Yemen.

After the war in Syria, Hezbollah may be equipped with CW.

The Chinese “Belt and Road Initiative” including the Red-Med railway will strengthen the Middle East as a critical trade route between East and West.

A new US strategy for pursuing Israeli-Palestinian peace: Telling the truth.

The Trump administration will have to work hard to gain public trust, and to restore America’s credibility as a superpower too – which was badly eroded during Obama’s presidency.

Israelis who cultivate the pipe dream of substituting Israel’s long-term bond with the US for an alliance with China and Russia should take a long, hard look at the votes of Moscow and Beijing at UNESCO, where they joined in denial of Jewish links to Jerusalem.

Can Russia acquiesce to a US-Israel military option and Putin on the Ukraine?

Australia and Israel should develop a more significant strategic partnership. They are each small countries that play important roles in their respective regions.

The Saudi-Egyptian rift serves Iran’s interests.

Russia’s acquiescence; resolving the human catastrophe in Syria in partnership with President Putin; and a Great Bargain with Putin on the Ukraine.

No. 381
Trump’s Ambivalence Towards NATO Could Backfire
November 29, 2016 | Dr. Tsilla Hershco
NATO provides security insurance not only to Europe but also to the US. Trump should be cautious about weakening its deterrence and power projection.

No. 380
America and Russia: Towards a New Partnership?
November 28, 2016 | Jiri Valenta and Leni Friedman Valenta
Trump will face three urgent foreign policy issues: renegotiating the Iran nuclear deal with a US-Israel military option and

The Trump administration will have to work hard to gain public trust, and to restore America’s credibility as a superpower too – which was badly eroded during Obama’s presidency.

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Israelis who cultivate the pipe dream of substituting Israel’s long-term bond with the US for an alliance with China and Russia should take a long, hard look at the votes of Moscow and Beijing at UNESCO, where they joined in denial of Jewish links to Jerusalem.
**CONFERENCES**

**Rethinking the War**

In May, the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies held a broad-ranging two-day conference, together with the Kinneret Academic College of the Galilee, which considered historical aspects of the Six Day War.

More than 30 scholars, military experts and diplomats delivered papers that reassessed the origin of the conflict, the IDF’s wartime performance (and how it has changed since then), civil-military relations, Russian, American, Egyptian, Syrian, Palestinian and Israeli Arab responses to the war, social and economic repercussions of the war, Israel’s diplomacy pre- and post-war, and more.

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The Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies at Bar-Ilan University seeks to contribute to the advancement of Middle East peace and security by conducting policy-relevant research on strategic subjects, particularly as they relate to the national security and foreign policy of Israel. Founded by Thomas O. Hecht, a Canadian Jewish community leader, the Center is a non-partisan and independent institute dedicated to the memory of the late Israeli prime minister Menachem Begin and the late Egyptian president Anwar Sadat.

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