

Note de recherche stratégique n°7

How the evolving political landscape in the Middle East affects Israeli strategic thinking

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Today, more than ever before, Israeli strategic thinking is engaged in a tug-of-war between the pragmatic, realist vision of military strategists who have long been entrusted with this task, and an ideological vision that reflects the discourse of a political class that has gradually superseded the military institution. Neither the media nor the academic worlds are capable of imposing an alternative strategy for the time being. No White Paper exists to lay the foundations. With this dual context, Israeli strategists – whether from political or military backgrounds – remain attached to the concept of the ratio of forces, certain that in order to command respect in the Middle East, they must not hesitate to show their power and use it. Taking an extremely Clausewitzian approach, they consider war and military operations to be merely the pursuit of politics by other means. Afraid of losing control of the situation, they maintain the status quo, as can be seen in the Palestinian, Syrian and Iranian cases. This paradoxical lack of foresight pushes them to opt for an ambivalent strategy that is offensive, even pre-emptive, at the tactical level and defensive at the strategic level. As a result, we have an increasingly prevalent “citadel under siege” syndrome that the recent geopolitical developments in the Middle East have merely worsened (Arab uprisings, multiplication of no-go areas near Israel’s borders, worsening of the Syrian civil war, change in U.S. attitude in the Middle East, Iran’s re-entry into the regional interplay). In this uncertain climate, Israel's leaders are striving to ensure their courses of action remain unpredictable in order to strengthen the credibility of their general deterrence strategy.

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1. Greater Isolation, Requiring a Return to the Basics

Following Operation Cast Lead against Hamas in Gaza (winter 2008-2009), the Israeli government felt it was in a highly stable strategic position and believed it had restored its deterrence posture (which had grown weaker in 2006), even though not all the objectives of the operation were achieved². This was before the outbreak of the Arab uprisings that took the Israeli leaders by surprise, causing them to question their security paradigms³.

For three years, Israeli strategists feared the clock had been turned back forty years to a time when there was a threat on every front, in particular the Egyptian one. The Muslim Brotherhood's accession to power in Cairo was a source of serious concern. Since then, the return of the Egyptian generals to power provided some reassurance, along with the covert elbow-nudging from Saudi Arabia, furious that the White House had changed its Middle East policy, but mostly by the dismantling of Syria's arsenal of chemical weapons, which until then had been one of their main concerns. Today, Defence Minister Moshe Ya'alon and the Chief of General Staff of the IDF, Benny Gantz, affirm that they still need to establish a comprehensive defence strategy: Israeli defence must include strategies to deal with Iran, who it accuses of challenging its nuclear monopoly in the Middle East; with Hezbollah hidden in South Lebanon; with jihadist combatants present in Syria, Iraq and the Sinai peninsula; with Lebanon and Jordan which could be next to fall into chaos; with Hamas who dream of rallying the Palestinian people once more and with Iraq, which now has the capacity to rebuild its military power. The Israeli government has as such shifted from a manageable situation where Hezbollah, Hamas and Iran were the only potential threats, to one where various threats could arise from anywhere. For now, the threats come from its immediate environment (the Palestinian Territories, the Golan Heights, the Sinai Peninsula and Arab neighbours) which takes the full attention of Israel's

² Anthony Cordesman, “The Gaza War: A Strategic Analysis”, CSIS, Washington, February 2009 ; Pierre Razoux, « Une armée en pleine mutation » in *Tsahal - L’armée israélienne aujourd’hui*, DSI hors-série n° 9, 2010.

³ The author came to this realisation upon conducting a series of interviews with Israeli security officials at the NATO Defense College in Rome, in spring 2011 and in Israel the following autumn and spring 2012.

strategists, much more than the hypothetical threat – highly exploited⁴ – of an Iran that seeks to emerge from isolation and reintegrate the international community.

As it is impossible to foresee the developments in the regional geopolitical landscape or the shape the next war will take, the Israeli military needs to think in terms of an all-out war and prepare for all types of fighting: deep raids, counter-insurgency warfare, urban warfare, high intensity conventional warfare, missile interception, and naval action. Tackling these numerous challenges, requiring radically varied armaments and expertise, is what the IDF strategists hope to achieve by returning to the fundamentals that guaranteed the initial success of Israel's weapons: strike hard, deep, first and by surprise, rapidly mobilise troops, take the fight to enemy territory, divide its enemies, conduct a fast war, safeguard the Israeli territory and punish the adversary to discourage any renewed attempts⁵. In operations, these principles necessitate several imperatives: rediscovering self-confidence and trust in their officers through leadership and demanding training based on the principle of being prepared for every eventuality; reacquiring infantry fighting and urban warfare skills; rediscovering the synergy between combined arms and joint warfare and strengthening very long distance strike capabilities. A particular effort has been made in the past few years in the C4I field in order to better synchronize personnel manoeuvres that are small in size but have greater fire power.

Strategically speaking, the application of these principles primarily falls to the special forces⁶ and army aviation, which operate both on Israeli territory and the territories administered by the Palestinian Authority, as well as beyond its borders. The practice of deep raids is evidence of a return to basics in Israeli doctrine. The raids against the Syrian nuclear site at Al Kibar (September 2007)⁷; a truck convoy carrying weapons for Hamas in Sudan (January 2009); an armaments factory in Khartoum (24 October 2012) and recently against arms convoys in Syria are all reminders that the Israeli government believes it is entitled to act where it pleases to prevent its adversaries from growing stronger. The message is evidently addressed to Iran also, but not only Iran. All of these raids now take place at night and are joint operations.

⁴ Conclusion drawn by the author following interviews held in Israel from 20-26 April 2013 followed by telephone interviews conducted in November 2013.

⁵ Pierre Razoux, "Les déterminants de la pensée stratégique d'Israël", *La Revue Internationale et Stratégique* no. 82, summer 2011, IRIS, pp. 143-145.

⁶ The special forces today is comprised of 8 units (*sayerot*) specialised in combating terrorism, reconnaissance and deep theatre operations: **Shaldag** (under army aviation, specialising in CSAR missions), **Shayetet 13** (13th flotilla of marine commandos), **Egoz** (North Front), **Duvdevan** (Central Front), **Rotem** (South Front), **Tzanhanim** (parachutists), **Yahalom** (sabotage and demolition) and the **Maatkal sayeret**, under control of the commander in chief of the IDF for high-risk or high-level missions.

⁷ Pierre Razoux, "Israël frappe la Syrie : un raid mystérieux", *Politique Etrangère* no. 1 :2008, IFRI, pp. 9-22.

2. “Fencing in” and Deterrence: A Dual Strategy

While waiting for the geopolitical situation to settle down, Israel’s government passes the time by accelerating the construction or renovation of its protective fences. In the south, the new security fence that separates Israel from Egypt is intended to stop terrorists from infiltrating the Negev desert and limit trafficking (including of illegal immigrants) from Sinai. Along the Mediterranean, the iron curtain that isolates the Gaza Strip remains under strict control, even if this does not prevent missiles from being launched towards Israel, as Hamas showed during Operation Pillar of Defense (14-21 November 2012) and more recently during Operation Protective Edge (July-August 2014). In the centre, the wall separating Israelis from Palestinians is currently being extended. By limiting and strictly controlling the movements of Palestinians inside Israel, this wall, despite much objection, drastically reduced the number of attacks in Israel while simultaneously setting out new lines which may one day be the borders between the two states. In the north, the security fence along the Syrian border is being reinforced and modernised. It is systematically reinforced with wire mesh, raised and equipped with sophisticated sensors. Israel’s leaders consider that the jihadists present on the outskirts of the Golan Heights are a direct threat to its security. The border fence separating Israel from Lebanon, meanwhile, is constantly monitored and repaired to prevent any infiltration into Israel. This fencing programme, which receives priority financing directly from the land force budget, is on the verge of being completed.

To further this “bunker” policy, the Israeli government constantly attempts to make its deterrence strategy credible; this strategy is constructed comprehensively, as the totality of the actions and assets that aim to convince potential adversaries of the futility of launching hostilities against Israel. From a conventional perspective, this is without any doubt the reasoning behind Operations Cast Lead and Pillar of Defense against Hamas, similar to the threats brandished at the Lebanese government in the event that Hezbollah decide to launch a new campaign against Israel. General Eizenkot, Vice Chief of Staff, is one of the figures behind the “Dahiya Doctrine” developed at the end of the 2006 war, taking its name from a neighbourhood in Beirut, a Hezbollah stronghold that was ravaged by Israeli bombing during the conflict. The message was simple then, and remains so today: since Hezbollah is an integral part of the Lebanese government, the whole state of Lebanon would potentially be targeted by Israeli strikes if the Shiite militia reopened hostilities against Israel⁸. This was also the reasoning behind the repeated air strikes on Syria (29 January, 3-5 May and 31 October 2013) to prevent chemical weapons or other sophisticated arms (ballistic, antitank, air defence or anti-ship missiles) from falling into the hands of Hezbollah. From a less conventional perspective, this is the reasoning behind former president Shimon Peres’ cryptic declarations, when he issued the following warning: “I would advise our enemies not to underestimate our abilities, both overt

⁸ See Jean-Loup Samaan, “The Dahya Concept and Israeli Military Posture vis-a-vis Hezbollah since 2006”, *Comparative Strategy*, no. 32:2, April 2013, pp. 146-159.

and other”⁹. His words are even more weighted since they are uttered by the father of the Israeli military nuclear programme, and one who believes that Israel would gain in credibility by openly assuming its status as a nuclear power¹⁰. According to information revealed by the Israeli site *I24News*, Israel allegedly possesses 80 atomic warheads, but froze its nuclear production in 2004. However, it could quickly double this arsenal thanks to its fissile stocks¹¹. This is the first time that the Israeli authorities leaked such information, evidence of the conflict between those who believe Israel would benefit from assuming its status as a Nuclear Weapon State, and those who think it would be better to maintain an ambiguous stance. Several Israeli experts are in fact worried that the international community may impose nuclear disarmament on Israel, in a context where Iran has declared it does not wish to possess atomic bombs and Syria has accepted to destroy its chemical weapons arsenal.

3. Safeguarding the Israeli Territory

One of the paradoxes that the Israeli government must tackle is the fact that its armed forces have never been as powerful and technologically advanced; nonetheless, it is increasingly difficult to ensure that Israel’s cities remain safe, as they are vulnerable to rocket and missile strikes, as Hezbollah and Hamas have proven in 2006, 2008, 2012 and 2014. The Israeli people have difficulty understanding why the IDF is incapable of intercepting rudimentary rockets and mortars, while the very concept of safeguarding is one of the mainstays of Israeli strategic thinking; during Israeli-Arab wars, not a single bomb fell on a major Israeli city or town¹². Nor do they understand why its security and intelligence services, which possess the most sophisticated equipment, cannot stop suicide attacks, when even at the height of the combat against the PLO, no fedayeen became kamikazes. Put simply, they cannot understand that the context has

⁹ *Guysen Israel News*, 4 September 2012.

¹⁰ Israel’s strategic forces are said to be comprised of three mobile surface-to-surface ballistic missile squadrons, likely totalling 50 Jericho 2, 2B and 3 with an average range of 1,400, 2,000 and 7,000 kilometres (Jean-Louis Promé, “*Une dissuasion nucléaire fonctionnant sans arsenal nucléaire ?*” in *Tsahal - L’armée israélienne aujourd’hui*, DSI HS no. 9, 2010, pp. 42-47 ; Philippe Wodka-Gallien, *Dictionnaire de la dissuasion*, Marines éditions, 2011, pp. 195-196). An improved version of Jericho 3, with a range exceeding 10,000 km, is currently being developed (Anshel Pfeffer, “IDF test-fires ballistic missile in central Israel”, *Haaretz*, 2 November, 2011). As well as its ballistic missiles, Israel has its army aviation to make use of its nuclear arsenal (in particular its F-15I squadrons) and locally designed Delilah and Popeye Turbo cruise missiles (Washington still refuses to provide it with Tomahawk missiles) which could be mounted on the three (soon to be four) air-independent propulsion equipped submarines (type 802) supplied by Germany (*Military Balance 2012*, IISS, London, Routledge, pp. p 328-331). If we are to believe the well-informed Federation of American Scientists website, a modified Popeye Turbo launched by an Israeli submarine cruising in the Indian Ocean reached a target located 1,500 km away in May 2000 (www.fas.org/nuke/guide/israel/missile/popeye-t.htm).

¹¹ Agence *I24News*, 13 septembre 2013 (<http://www.i24news.tv/fr/actu/israel/diplomatie-defense/130915-israel-aurait-gele-la-production-d-ogives-nucleaires-en-2004>).

¹² With the exception of the Iraqi Scud missiles launched against Israel during the Second Gulf War of 1990-1991.

changed and that the Israeli population now represents a much more attractive and vulnerable target than any of its military units. The paradigm has been reversed. Israel's enemies no longer need to shoot down a plane or destroy a tank to put pressure on public opinion and gain international recognition at the negotiations table. All they need to do is harass the Israeli population.

To counter this asymmetric logic, the Israeli government has developed a strategy that is both political and technological. On the one hand, it has begun to push for more settlements in the West Bank in order to reassure the radical Israeli branches and show Palestinian activists that their rocket fire is counterproductive. On the other, it is also accelerating the installation of a multi-tier antimissile defence system, intended to protect the urban population from all types of projectiles. At the tactical level, this is mainly ensured by the "Iron Dome" system, which can intercept medium range rockets and missiles launched from the Gaza Strip, South Lebanon or any territory controlled by a terrorist organization. This system gained its notoriety during Operation Pillar of Defense, when figures were released stating it destroyed 35% of projectiles launched against Israel and 85% of projectiles that targeted large urban centres¹³. The system functions with six batteries with launchers distributed in such a way as to provide maximum protection for key urban sites. Aside from its relative efficiency, the system's disadvantage is its high operating cost: each missile costs approximately \$40,000 and several are needed to destroy a volley of rockets worth a few hundred dollars. At this cost, munitions reserves may be rapidly depleted.

On the front, six improved Hawk missile batteries and four others equipped with Patriot PAC 2 missiles provide theatre air defence of the Israeli territory. Each of these batteries is made up of several firing units. These aging missiles will gradually be replaced by twelve batteries in the new "David's Sling" system, from 2014¹⁴. This was tested with success during Operation Pillar of Defense, and also during a final test launch on 1 January 2014¹⁵. At the strategic level, three batteries of Arrow 2 missiles capable of destroying a target at a distance of 150 km protect Israel from long range ballistic missiles that could be launched from Iran, Syria or Saudi Arabia.

This shield completes Israel's nuclear deterrence strategy, in particular from countries such as Iran. It is not infallible, however, as Hezbollah proved by sending a UAV in close proximity to the Dimona nuclear station on 6 October 2012 (on the anniversary of the surprise Arab attack during the Yom Kippur war), before being shot down by an Israeli F-16 fighter jet.

¹³ *Reuters*, 19 November 2012. The Iron Dome's effectiveness improved in the summer of 2014 during Operation Protective Edge.

¹⁴ State-of-the-art autonomous surface-to-air missiles jointly designed by Israeli Rafael and American Raytheon, capable of intercepting any hostile aircraft up to 250 km away.

¹⁵ *I24News*, 2 January 2014.

Today, the Eilat region is the Achilles heel of Israel's missile defence system. This seaside resort on the Red Sea is a highly symbolic target (due to the presence of tourists bringing foreign currency and contributing to the image of security that the Israeli government wants to project abroad). There are, however, technical, legal and political constraints that prevent it from being fully protected. Firstly, the unique geographical situation of the narrow Eilat strip, surrounded by mountains that partially hide the trajectory of the rockets fired by the jihadists, thereby reducing the Iron Dome's interception time. The terms of the Camp David accords do not authorise the deployment of missiles (even defensive) in proximity to Eilat, a zone bordering Egypt that is supposed to be demilitarised. Lastly, the Israeli authorities have shown great restraint and wish to avoid needlessly provoking Egypt, as the missiles launched by the Iron Dome would explode in Egyptian territory. To avoid any misunderstanding, the Israeli and Egyptian military intelligence services work together when handling border incidents as soon as they arise¹⁶.

4. Prioritising Cyber Defence

As the Israeli authorities have confirmed, cyber war continues to intensify¹⁷. They admit to being targeted by 44 million cyber attacks during Operation Pillar of Defense¹⁸. Even during periods of calm, the number of attacks remains high, justifying the installation of a "digital Iron Dome" to combat hacker attacks¹⁹. This new system, for which very limited information is available, is supposed to function as both a defence and an attack system piloted by Unit 8200 of the military intelligence service, in close coordination with the Lotem Unit of the General Staff's Computer Service Directorate. The Israeli government appears especially concerned by this new threat as it engages in cyber war itself, in particular to slow down the Iranian nuclear programme²⁰. Defence Minister Moshe Ya'alon clearly declared that "cyber war is a fifth dimension in itself, parallel to the land, air, sea and domestic security elements (...). The aim, by spreading computer viruses and worms, is to cause as much damage to the enemy – if not more – than a conventional bomb (...). This is why we assign specific priority to the recruitment of young, highly skilled I.T. engineers"²¹.

This awareness of the importance of cyber defence also involves the offensive use of social media, as Israeli generals demonstrated during Pillar of Defense, by announcing its immediate launch via the Twitter network and by showing the elimination of Ahmad Jaabari, Hamas' military chief, practically live on YouTube. By taking this course of action, Israel's strategists sent

¹⁶ As told to the author by several Egyptian and Israeli security officials.

¹⁷ Amir Rapaport, "The Cyber War is intensifying", *Defense News* no. 13, April 2013, p. 81.

¹⁸ *Guysen Israel News*, 19 November 2012.

¹⁹ *Guysen Israel News*, 16 October 2012.

²⁰ Israel is suspected of creating the computer viruses Stuxnet and Flame which infected the Iranian nuclear programme (*Le Monde*, 20 June 2012).

²¹ *Israel Defense* no. 13, April 2013, p. 11.

a message of deterrence to the Palestinian combatants by showing them that the IDF's offense capabilities would be merciless, while preventing Hamas from misinforming the population and denying the elimination of its military leader. It is evident that Israel's leaders are attempting to reach out to a new, younger audience who are less ideologically formatted, and influence them by inundating them with information and images. To do so, it has set up a "new media" unit under the auspices of IDF's Spokesperson's Unit. Staffed by around thirty service members trained in new technologies, this unit is responsible for the various IDF Twitter accounts and feeds the other social networks with carefully selected images. This media strategy evidently raises questions of an ethical nature (uploading of violent or cruel images on communication media mainly used by teenagers) that do not appear to have been dealt with at government level, with no approval from the Supreme Court.

5. The Growing Role of UAVs

Another field which has developed is that of UAVs. Four squadrons (161st, 166th, 200th and 210th) based in Palmachim and Tel Nof are equipped with 8 Heron MALE UAVs, 2 Hermes 900 HALEs, 20 Hermes 450 each armed with two Hellfire antitank missiles and at least 4 Heron TPs (Eitan) capable of long distance strikes. These UAVs, remotely piloted by young pilots in training, increase the number of surveillance as well as combat missions. The missions have become mostly automated as the take-off, transit and landing phases are computer-assisted and the two operators simply control the operational phase. In order to keep this type of mission at the human level and avoid replicating a "video game" scenario, each mission is closely monitored by a controller who ensures procedures are respected and the combatant practices good ethics. While the UAV's attack methods are limited, their endurance (which often can surpass 48 hours) and their low vulnerability (due to their small size) considerably increases the tension of those on the ground trying to escape their high-performance sensors.

For Israel's strategies, UAVs – particularly armed UAVs – are the future and it is clear that their role will continue to grow within the air forces. This vision meets the demands of efficiency, cost, independence and political constraints. Given the constraints of the Israeli territory and its proximity to the different fronts, UAVs are particularly useful for surveillance missions and occasional strikes. Though they are equipped with the latest technology and armed with sophisticated projectiles (missiles, laser-guided bombs), they are a lot less costly than a fighter jet, especially in terms of maintenance, fuel and the investment in the pilot's training. Israel is a world leader in the field, and ensures greater strategic independence by investing in machines that it designs and builds itself. Finally, using UAVs avoids exposing its pilots to risk. The concern is not the possible loss of a service member – this risk has always been assumed – but rather the risk of having them captured by the adversary and turned into bargaining chips and used to put pressure on the government. The Ron Arad example (a pilot who ejected in South Lebanon and has been missing for thirty years), or more recently Gilad Shalit, is a source of trauma to public opinion and political leaders who fear seeing Israeli pilots shown in Damascus or Teheran before

being publicly executed or exchanged for a hundred fighters. This fear reaches such an extent that young IDF officers do not hesitate to sign petitions requesting that they not be exchanged in the event of capture, indicating that they will not be taken alive. In this context and at odds with the emerging debate in the west, philosophical issues related to whether the use of UAVs is morally right or just simply are not heard in Israel.

Eventually, close air support will be carried out by UAVs and attack helicopters exclusively. Operation Pillar of Defense heralded this new arrangement, as the staff did not hesitate to employ twenty UAVs above the Gaza Strip, supported by approximately 15 attack helicopters. Over time, even long distance strike missions could be conducted by Eitan-type armed UAVs, if heavy assets are not required. This appreciation of UAVs can also be seen in the navy. Surveillance of the coasts and sea avenues is increasingly carried out by naval UAVs (in particular the Orbiter)²². IDF leaders have shown that a single UAV operator is more efficient and cost-effective than a naval patrol crew. According to retired General Iftach Spector, who directed the Israeli Air Force's planning and strategy divisions, between now and 2030 the Air Force will be reduced to only five squadrons of fighter jets (two air superiority squadrons, ideally equipped with F-22s and three deep attack squadrons equipped with F-35s) supported by a larger number of utility and attack helicopters, but most importantly a swarm of UAVs (probably over a hundred), most of which will be armed²³. The aim is to respect the following ratio: one third fighter planes, one third helicopters and one third UAVs.

Conclusion

Given its increasing isolation and the shift in the geopolitical climate occurring in the Middle East, Israel knows that it must, above all, maintain its privileged relationship with Washington and Berlin. The United States and Germany remain its most loyal diplomatic supporters and guarantee Israel vital military assistance. However, tension-provoking issues are not lacking, whether in relation to the Israeli government's unyielding posture on the Palestine issue (as evidenced by the continued colonisation of the West Bank and the failure of John Kerry's shuttle diplomacy in January 2014) or the Iran issue, with Benjamin Netanyahu remaining stoically opposed to any reintegration attempts by Iran into the community of nations. With pressure coming from Washington, Berlin and Moscow (Israel and Russia having become objective allies on several important issues, notably Syria), the Israeli prime minister cannot maintain this rigid position indefinitely against both the Palestinians and the Iranians. He will undoubtedly have to make concessions and accept a compromise for one or the other. As it is highly unlikely that he will yield to the Palestine issue, the odds are high that he or his successor will be obliged to adopt a less negative attitude towards Iran²⁴, thereby satisfying American, German and Russian

²² "The Israeli Navy is expanding its use of the Orbiter UAV", *Israel Defense* no. 13, April 2013, p. 60.

²³ Interview with the author on 5 July 2012 in Tel Aviv.

²⁴ Unlike the Israeli falcons who, such as Efraim Inbar, consider that "Washington must Strike Iran, not Bargain with it", BESA Center Paper no. 217, 31 October 2013.

interests. Israel's former president Shimon Peres has already taken a step in this direction by declaring on 8 December 2013 that "neither Iran, nor its president Hassan Rouhani were enemies of Israel"²⁵. Didn't Ariel Sharon in his time convince Menahem Begin to support Ayatollah Khomeiny's Iran in order to weaken the power of Saddam Hussein? He had then applied one of the everlasting principles of Israeli strategic thinking: "my enemy's enemies are my friends".

For further reading

Guermantes LAILARI, *HOMA: Israel's National Missile Defense Strategy*, Biblioscholar, 2012, 120 p, which analyses the key aspects of Israel's antimissile strategy.

Thomas NEWDICK & Ofer ZIDON, *Modern Israeli Air Power*, Harpia Publishing, 2013, 253 p, which gives a comprehensive overview of Israeli air power today, its structure, missions and assets.

Pierre RAZOUX, "The IDF on All Fronts – Dealing with Israeli Strategic Uncertainty", *FOCUS stratégique* n° 45, July 2013, 47 pages, available for download in French and English on the IFRI website (www.ifri.org). For an exhaustive analysis of the restructuring of the Israeli armed forces and the operational and conceptual challenges they face.

Jean-Loup SAMAAN, "The Dahya Concept and Israeli Military Posture vis-a-vis Hezbollah since 2006", *Comparative Strategy*, no. 32:2, April 2013, pp. 146-159, which analyses the Israel's new deterrence policy towards Lebanon and Hezbollah.

Gabriel SHEFFER & Oren BARAK, *Israel's Security Networks: a Theoretical and Comparative Perspective*, Cambridge University Press, 2013, 184 p, which seeks to explain the influence of security networks in Israel and their impact on society.

"Israël après les élections": Issue no.1: 2013 of the *Politique étrangère* review published by IFRI, which gives a comprehensive overview of the political, military, economical and strategic issues that affect Israeli strategic thinking.

The monthly review, *Israel Defense*, published in Israel by Arrowmedia Ltd, accessible online at www.israeldefense.com, which regularly features original analyses of Israeli strategic thinking and closely follows the Israel Defense Forces' activities.

²⁵ *I24 News*, 8 December 2013 – A statement that was then reissued by the main media agencies.