

## The Operational Focus - Introduction

This book was born out of a professional frustration derived from our understanding that the world of war that we studied and discussed in the Israel Defence Forces (IDF), is vastly different from the way the State of Israel employs force and manages its wars. We were trained on the lessons of the two world wars and on the lessons of the major wars of the State of Israel (primarily the 1973 Yom Kippur War and the 1967 Six Days War) and their memory. However, in reality, the State of Israel employs force in a different manner: instead of an ethos based on the decisive military defeat of the enemy, force is employed using an approach of attrition, prevention and influence; instead of armoured divisions manoeuvring towards the enemy's centre of gravity deep in their territory, we strengthen our defensive actions on the ground, in the air, at sea and underground; and the almost unique role of ground operations and the ground headquarters as the centre of military action, has slowly been replaced by aerial, intelligence, cyber and IO operations.

This phenomenon is not unique to the IDF. During meetings with colleagues and other actors from the armies of other western and democratic states, we discovered similar problems and frustrations.

In the personal experience of the authors of this book, who served as commanders and staff officers in the IDF in a range of roles, this gap is revealed daily. We began our service in the 1980s and 1990s and at that time, the most significant and organized enemy facing the State of Israel was the Syrian army, which had embraced the orientation and armaments of the Soviet Union and after it, Russia. This army sat right on Israel's borders with a significant military presence, as agreed after the Yom Kippur War in the Separation of Forces Agreement. We were all educated about the danger of another ground invasion by this army, and about the large breach that had occurred when the previous invasion took place; we are all educated about the importance of the regular army engaging in defense, until reserve forces could be called up to counter-attack; we are all educated for maximum and ideal readiness to the point where we had learned off by heart all of the possible routes that the Syrian and Israeli forces could take before clashing; we were all very familiar with the Syrian presidential family and Chief of Staff; and we are all educated about the difference between the tactical aspects of combat – the meeting of the armies on the battlefield, and the strategic significance – one state fighting another. But more than anything, we all trained to prepare for the coming war, and it was clear to us what type of war this would be.

However, our daily practical reality lead us to a completely different type of battlefield. In Lebanon, we fought Fatah (during the first Lebanon War) and Hezbollah, terror and guerilla organizations that challenged the national security of the State of Israel, and constantly harmed the fabric of daily life for hundreds of thousands of residents of northern Israel. During periods of intense warfare, they even harmed the daily life of millions of additional civilians all over Israel. During the first Gulf War, when the United States led the coalition against the Iraqi regime, we found ourselves in a defensive posture and for the first time experienced the threat of missile attacks on the home front, right above our heads. The home front became the frontline, and the large IDF almost sat on the sidelines when, for the first time in our history, we were asked not to take offensive action to remove a threat to the State of Israel.

In Judea and Samaria, and even more so in the Gaza Strip, we found ourselves doing complex policing missions. These missions sometimes reached the level of a broad scale military operation within the Palestinian cities whose purpose was to suppress terror and return order. The complexity of these operations derived not only from the threats and the operational missions, but also from the agreements that were signed with the Palestinian Authority and which blurred the distinctions between enemy, adversary and partner.

Over the years, we were frequently tested, like other colleagues in the IDF and parallel organizations, by the complex 'inter-echelon' discourse that takes place between the IDF and the political echelon. This experience caused us to feel that something was missing. This something was reflected in the difficulties that statesman and army personnel experience when focusing professional military endeavors in a way that can serve diplomatic needs, with all the complexity that this involves. This deficiency is also reflected in the small vocabulary available to describe the tensions and difficulties in connecting between vastly different content worlds – the political-diplomatic world and the military world; as well as the sour feeling between the two echelons, that arose mainly after military operations, in which both sides of the matrix felt that 'they' did not understand 'us', and therefore what should have happened, didn't.

This is how we found ourselves asking these professional questions about force employment and generation: for what purpose are we educating and preparing our soldiers? What is our place within this change? We saw the IDF ethos – which was primarily built, educated and trained based on decisive maneuver by ground forces – change direction. Slowly, we saw intelligence, stand-off fire, ground and aerial defense, and home front rescue activities turn into the centers of military action. We saw the enormous investments directed there and at a later stage also to cyber activities.

We asked ourselves – what is the new ethos of the ground forces at this time? Is it only a tool of deterrence? What is the ground force's place among the military missions and national security? What should be changed so that the inter-echelon discourse can be more precise and to enable both sides to express their advantages and capabilities? And finally, how can we and our colleagues – who are experiencing this change and who serve in a very practical organization – translate this change into a practical theory that could lead to relevant and appropriate military action.

It should be emphasized that these difficult feelings about a mismatch are not derived from any criticism about the way force is being employed. In fact, the opposite. We feel that the way force is employed is appropriate to the strategic needs of the State of Israel (and to other states). The problem is not one or another criticism of the political echelon, or the way that it works or the quality of its decisions. The problem is in the mismatch between ethos and action, between the theoretical language and the real language, and the growing gap between expectations and reality.

These problems are not new and have been discussed in various fora. The advantage of this book lies in the perspective from which it is written – a professional-military perspective that sees the problem from the military side, and proposes military thinking and action, a kind of workable military reflection.

### **The Main Problem and a Proposal for a Solution**

The fundamental problem described in this book is the mismatch between the theoretical tools available for the phenomenon of war, those that are familiar and well known within the IDF, and the actual wars as managed by the IDF and the State of Israel. This problem causes difficulties in the conceptualization of war; a lack of theoretical and practical tools for describing military action; and difficulties in force generation planning, among others. Furthermore, the existing theoretical framework creates difficulties for the inter-echelon discourse, between the political echelon and the military echelon, as well as within the army between the senior and junior ranks.

This problem causes a range of genuine difficulties – within armies, who understand the need for change but struggle to explain what the change is, why it is happening and how to deal with it; in the

inter-echelon discourse, between military professionals and civilian political actors who encounter an incongruence between the strategic needs for force employment and the available military tools; and it can even cause paralysis of force employment.

This phenomenon, of difficulties in conceptualization, is also not new. In the past, history has seen periods of paralysis in force employment, whether reflected in an actual physical freezing of force employment, such as during the trench warfare during the First World War, or difficulty achieving a decisive victory, such as that which faced the armies dealing with guerrilla warfare in Vietnam and other places.

In our understanding, the significance of these difficulties lies in the damage to a state's capability to implement its national security policy using military means. As history has proven, the soft power of the state – political, economic or diplomatic, strong as it might be – is no replacement for military power. Military power still constitutes the peak of any state's capability to effect policy, even where other means are available to it. Furthermore, an analysis of changes in the environment and their significance is critical to maintaining a state's military power, as a part of the security concept defined by the political echelon.

The solution proposed in this book calls for a different conceptualization of the act of war, a conceptualization that enables an easier and precise inter-echelon discourse. Today, the discourse on war is mediated by an excess of levels and theoretical terms, which makes it difficult to explain in a simple manner what military action is required and for what purpose. At its core, we are proposing to speak at all levels – from the tactical commander to the political leader – in simple and clear language, about two issues and the connection between them. At every level, the two issues at the heart of the discourse should be the overall goals of the war and the objectives that the military force must achieve, and we will propose simple tools to connect between these two. We have called this the 'operational focus approach'.

### **Structure of the Book**

In order to explain the operational focus, we open with a theoretical section that will explain, in different ways, the problem and the military change that has taken place. Afterwards we will lay out the operational focus approach as a theoretical and practical tool to solve the problem. In the following paragraphs we will describe the fundamentals of the structure of the book, and the arguments made in each one of its chapters.

The arguments made in the book are built one upon another, but each chapter can be read separately and in a different order than the chapter order in the book. The description of the structure of the book below is intended to enable the reader to choose their own order of reading, which does not need to be from beginning to end.

The first section describes the fundamentals of the change that has taken place in the transition from combat focused on state armies that function in a regular manner and fight one another – a pattern that has existed for hundreds of years, and has been triggered time and again in Israel's wars: The 1948 War of Independence, the 1956 Sinai War, the Six-Day War and the Yom Kippur War (and to a certain extent also the 1982 First Lebanon War) – to varied behavioral patterns and combat types. These include combat between armies as well as combat against a range of organizations that act in different ways and generates different threats.

In practice, large battles of armored forces against one another, as took place in the Middle East during the Yom Kippur War and the ground action during Operation Desert Storm (the first Gulf War), were a last hurrah for this type of combat. The reason that battles of this type have not taken place is not due to the disappearance of conflict from the world, indeed violent conflicts continue to take place in all corners of the globe and the Middle East continues to sprout battlefields.

The reason that these battles don't take place is the changing nature of conflict, to a form of warfare that includes varied types of combat, in which regular state forces fight organizations, and the latter fight one another. The IDF's wars transformed from 'large' wars against regular armies alongside 'small' wars against terror organizations, to another type of war. In this type of war, combat takes place against multiple organizations alongside an ongoing need to be ready for warfare against armies. These organizations vary from militias armed with light weapons in border areas up to semi-state organizations that possess varied and powerful arsenals of weapons and armaments that threaten most of the territory of the State of Israel, and that can cause physical, cyber and psychological harm.

This phenomenon developed in the Middle East due to a range of reasons, and can be explained through many disciplines – social, economic, political and others. This book focuses on the military aspects of this phenomenon, and as such looks at military change as a result of state change and technological-industrial change. The description of this change will focus on two key aspects: the first is technological changes and their influence on warfare, and the second is political-diplomatic change in the Middle East, and its influence on modes of combat.

First, we will describe the technological changes and their impact on warfare. The technological change we describe views the Industrial Revolution not as one formative event, in which the world transformed rapidly from pre-industrial to industrial, but as a series of revolutions that began over 200 years ago, and that led to the industrial world as we know it today. When making observations from this perspective, it is customary to describe four sub-revolutions: the first revolution which maximized use of coal and steam; the second which developed electricity and the internal combustion engine; the third which developed the knowledge dimension with the transistor and the processor; and the fourth, which we are experiencing today, and which increasingly shapes our world into a digital one connected by communications and computer networks. This type of observation is not new, but a military perspective of these revolutions shows how these changes have influenced warfare itself.

In order to deepen our understanding of this, we will introduce a term that will accompany us throughout the book, the term 'combat dimensions'. Combat dimensions are a theoretical tool that assists us to describe and understand the phenomenon of war. They describe the primary spaces and environments in which warfare takes place in practice. It is customary to divide combat dimensions into the ground combat dimension – combat that takes place on the ground, underground, or in the airspace close to the ground, including ordinance that reach the ground from the air or sea. In this dimension, warfare has existed for eons, and even today this dimension is generally perceived as the primary space where warfare takes place. Two additional dimensions are the aerial combat dimension, and space combat (in the IDF, as in other armies, it is customary to connect these two, given the reciprocal linkages between them for force employment and generation). These dimensions describe combat in the air and space and the way that combat within them supports combat in other dimensions; a fourth dimension is the naval combat dimension, which includes combat taking place at sea and below the waterline, by a range of naval vessels and other means.

Another dimension is the information warfare dimension, which describes the warfare that takes place within the information medium – in fact all the warfare takes place to influence the knowledge that we consume. Within this are included intelligence, Information Operations (IO), lawfare, media and social networks and public affairs, etc. An additional dimension that is growing and developing rapidly, and is quickly turning into the focus of warfare, is the cyber dimension. This dimension describes warfare that takes place through various computer systems and influences the information that we consume, warfare that can also impact physical assets. In practice, wars take place in several dimensions at once that influence one another, such as for example, ground warfare assisted by the aerial and intelligence dimensions. The division into dimensions enables us to analyze the phenomenon of war, to understand its different parts and its totality, and as a result to better understand the great complexity of the phenomenon.

When evaluating the different Industrial Revolutions within the context of the combat dimensions, one can easily see a natural and obvious pattern, of the development of technological influences on warfare. At first, prototypes and weapon systems for initial experimental use are developed, based on the new technology – for example, manufacture of a limited numbers of tanks using the internal combustion engine at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century during the First World War, or the initial and experimental use of computers to control weapon systems. Only after the development of experience and knowledge, were the weapons mass produced, leading to an industrialization and mechanization of the technological improvement. That is, not just the use of a limited number of improved tools, but rather a significant increase in the number of tools based on the new technology and the systematization and regulation of the manufacture and use of the new weapons.

We call this stage the industrialization of warfare within the same dimension – for example, the use of a limited and experimental number of self-loading rifles, or later, a small number of machine guns. These were prototypes and represented the first use of these weapons and new technologies. These technological innovations influenced warfare and reshaped it only after their use became industrialized, that is, after the use of rifles and machine guns in massive quantities became standard in armies, and their manufacture, use and combat doctrine standardized based on the new technology.

On this basis, we can analyze the industrialization that led to the secondary revolutions of the Industrial Revolution. The first revolution, with the invention of the steam engine and the beginning of industrialization, enabled the mechanization, and later also the industrialization, of the ground and naval combat dimensions, leading to a standardization of weapons, transportation and logistics.

The second revolution, triggered by the internal combustion engine, advanced ground and naval industrialization, and even enabled the industrialization of aerial warfare, by enabling the mass production and use of airplanes.

The third revolution mechanized and industrialized technologies that enabled precision identification and striking of targets and added the space dimension to warfare. As a result, it dramatically increased the information about the enemy, about our own forces and the combat environment, and enabled the connection of capabilities from all the warfare dimensions, such that precision and significant support could be provided by the aerial, naval, ground and information forces to one another.

The fourth revolution, which is currently taking place, enables warfare in the information dimension, with an emphasis on targeting communications and C4I networks, to significantly influence the physical aspects of war. Cyber warfare takes advantage of the almost total dependence today on

information technology (IT) and operational technology (OT), to enable a series of actions that cause serious harm to the enemy. These actions range from single tactical acts up to massive standardized and planned actions – in practice, the industrialization of cyber warfare. Today, we are in an era where information tools can damage not just the information that we consume, but also real and physical assets such as automobile engines or an electricity network, and even lead to the broad paralysis or destruction of civilian infrastructure – even more so than through a conventional attack.

After the discussion of technology and its practical implementation in warfare, we discuss political/diplomatic change and military change. In the twentieth century, the face of the Middle East was shaped and organized into state-territorial units by the Western powers.

The Middle East was home to different and varied populations in terms of religion, ethnicity and tribal affiliation, etc. but it was divided artificially into organized 'state' spaces. In this way, Jordan, Iraq, Syria and other states were 'born', states that did not generally unite homogenous groups humanely, but rather the opposite – suppressed local ethnic and tribal networks and connections, most of which were cross-border. These states then built regular armies, armed with advanced weaponry, Eastern or Western, and worked on the basis of familiar military doctrines.

The relationships between these armies and their national regimes was complex. In certain cases, the minority or ethnic group that controlled the state, also controlled the army. Sometimes there were military coups, but in general the armies identified with the regime leadership. Nevertheless, the states themselves were mostly fragile and vulnerable, primarily because the human loyalties of their citizens were family or tribal based and local, and not to the state. Accordingly, whenever state control weakened and control of the civilians weakened (in some places in 2011 as a part of the events that have been called the "Arab Spring", and in some places even before then), or when economic or social crises were strong enough to overcome the uniting force of the state, together with the strengthening of radical and violent Islam – the existing state order was weakened.

As a result of this, the state-territorial order that had existed for a century in the Middle East was weakened, and in some of the states armed groups began to operate (in some cases these were forces that had previously been dormant or weak), who sometimes even fought one another and in most cases increased the range of threats facing Israel.

The military change was not only connected to the political-diplomatic change, but also to the combat concept of the Arab armies towards the State of Israel. The objective of the Arab states and their armies, at least as publicly stated, was the destruction of The State of Israel. The 'first-round' involved clashes between militias or armed groups with the Jews. This began at the beginning of the last century and became more forceful after the First World War and the Balfour Declaration - when the Zionist movement called for the creation of a national framework in the land of Israel - and ended with the conclusion of the War of Independence. In this 'round' the Arabs were prevented from achieving their objective but would begin to achieve some success in the future.

As a result of the 1948 War, the Arabs (in the military context) focused on strengthening both their rule and their armies as well as sponsoring Palestinian militias that acted against Israel, with their primary objective still being the destruction of the State of Israel. One of the military conclusions that was reached was that their armies needed to be much stronger to be ready for war. They began an arms and military buildup race, with the main leader being Egypt. The State of Israel identified this trend, and in cooperation with France and Britain launched the Sinai War. A war that did succeed in damaging and delaying the military buildup of Egypt.

However, the Sinai War did not suppress the Arab motivation to destroy Israel, and the Arab states continued to arm themselves and to plan for war with Israel. Most of the Arab effort to achieve readiness was devoted to their regular military forces, including large and strong maneuver forces, supported by aerial and naval forces. Most of these forces were built based on Soviet doctrine, whose objective was achieving a decisive military defeat on the battlefield. During the Six-Day War, Israel initiated a pre-emptive operation to prevent the Arab states from using their military power against it, an operation that succeeded in bestowing a stinging defeat on Israel's enemies.

However, this military operation did not quash, and even strengthened, the Arab motivation to build armies strong enough to destroy the State of Israel, or at least to deliver a harsh blow. To achieve this, there was one additional attempt, during the Yom Kippur War. Here too, despite the promising opening conditions for the Arabs, Israel came out on top. From a military perspective, the military losses in each of these rounds – The War of Independence, the Sinai War, the Six-Day War and the Yom Kippur War – led our enemies to an understanding that use of classic military force would not bring about the strategic goal of destroying the State of Israel.

The conclusion that began to germinate was that a different approach was required to damage the State of Israel, a military approach, but different from classic military doctrine. The solutions to this were varied, but primarily involved strengthening terror and standoff firepower capabilities, as a response to the superior aerial and ground forces of Israel. This Arab approach was also adopted in recent decades by Iran, which suffered a heavy national blow during the conventional war against Iraq in the 1980s. Furthermore, the basic revolutionary approach of the Iranian regime naturally adopted solutions that were not classic military solutions.

All these factors together – the fourth Industrial Revolution that changed warfare in the information dimension, and as a result all warfare; the breakup of Arab states that saw the decentralization of military capabilities and a change in the military threat; and the understanding that classic military warfare would not succeed in destroying the State of Israel and led to a strengthening of standoff fire, terror and lawfare, etc., all these transformations describe the change in the way that the State of Israel and other states engage force. It would seem that these trends will continue to shape force engagement in the coming years.

So far, we have described technological changes and political-diplomatic and military aspects. Now we turn to the second section of the book which describes the operational focus approach. This approach introduces a conceptual system and approach for dealing with the challenges facing armies. This section opens with a theoretical discussion of the actions of commanders and politicians at all the levels of war, and on the manner, in our opinion, that they think and make decisions.

In classical military thought, the different levels of war – that is the broad strategic level, in other words the political-diplomatic echelon; the military strategy level, in other words the senior command of the army; the systemic level that manages complex operations on the battlefield (when these take place); and the tactical level, which focuses on the encounter with the enemy and the combat itself – exist in a set hierarchical order, absolute and differentiated from one another.

From this perspective, a Prime Minister or Defense Minister think the same way, and at the other end of the chain of command, each tactical commander thinks the same way. Aside from this, each level deals with different issues. The political-diplomatic leaders think in an abstract and high-level manner about national security problems, they do not deal with – and maybe don't even understand – the tactical problems that exist on the battlefield. At the other end of the range, at the level of the tactical commander, the thinking is local and practical, focused on encountering the enemy and the

military mission, and in any case is not abstract and lacks a broad strategic context. Furthermore, not only are the different levels differentiated from one another, but the different levels do not understand the different languages, and translation mechanisms are required to enable the discourse between them.

This approach is correct in part, and in many cases, there is a differentiation between action and thought processes, but we would argue that every level in the chain of command has a role in each of the levels of war, but they should reflect this in different ways. Therefore, we argue that the strategic leader, who is mostly focused on the strategic and abstract issues of national security, is still active within the tactical context. That is, most of their focus is on political and diplomatic concepts, but their reference point is tactical action, and this creates the context. For example, a strategic leader dealing with a regular army threatening to invade their territory is not analogous to a parallel leader facing the threat of infiltration through tunnels or rocket fire on the home front. Even though both are dealing with national security, the tactical threat they face creates a completely different strategic context, which they need to relate to in their decision-making.

Similarly, a tactical commander who lives in the tactical world and whose primary focus is defeating the enemy in every encounter while fulfilling their mission, still understands the broader strategic context. Even if he is not able to influence it or explain it to the fullest, this broader context influences his decisions and actions. In this sense, the senior military command, that is the military strategic level, also creates connections that are unique to it, and it shapes and plans military action based on considerations that integrate abstract political-diplomatic strategic thought with tangible military thought.

One indication that these type of thought processes are not common within militaries is that in most armies, the operational orders, which formulate and reflect military thinking, are not based on this logic. In most armies, an operational order will describe the strategic context only in the most general of terms and will primarily focus on understanding the tactical context of military action. This is reflected in the fact that an order will usually focus at most on three levels: one level above the commander, the commander's own level and the subordinate level – the objective, which establishes the overall direction for force engagement, focuses on the level above the command level; the mission describes the commander's level's mission; and the definition of the forces and their missions defines the missions of the subordinate forces. This structure reflects hierarchical, differentiated thought, in which the military tactical level focuses only on tactics, and the operational order does not provide them with the information needed to understand the overall strategic context.

In the approach proposed here, the operational order needs to include the broader strategic context, not just as a brief mention within a 'general' section, but rather in a prominent manner that can direct the planning and implementation of the military action. In this sense, this approach realizes David Ben Gurion's demand that "each soldier needs to see themselves, in certain situations, as if the fate of the campaign depends on them and only them, and where they do not have clear orders, or the situation deteriorates, they must see themselves as the supreme military commander, as the planner and implementer, using their own intelligence, approach and initiative."<sup>1</sup> How can a commander know what the campaign is about, and how to use their intelligence, approach and

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<sup>1</sup> David Ben Gurion, *Yechud Ve'yeud* (Unique and with Purpose) – Discussion of Israeli Security, (ed. Gershon Rivlin), *Ma'arachot*, Defense Ministry Publications, Tel Aviv, 1971; 1998, pp. 167-168. [Hebrew]



initiative to achieve the supreme objectives, if it hasn't been made clear to them what the objective of the strategic action is?

An evaluation of the military chain of command from this perspective imparts an easier theoretical framework for force engagement in our current situation, as described in the first section of this book. This is because this framework strengthens the connection between the different levels as well as the inter-level discourse and the understanding of each level about the other. Improved understanding on its own can enable greater precision in force engagement. At the other end of the range, among the leaders, it enables them to more comfortably adjust their strategic aspirations to the tactical context, and to more precisely and easily direct the army. This approach fully implements Clausewitz's directive, according to which war is a continuation of politics by military means. This type of implementation involves an approach that strengthens the connections between the ranks and enables the army to more precisely realize the aspirations of the political leaders. This perspective is important for dealing with the challenges facing modern armies, given that it enables flexibility of thought for a range of objectives and a range of contexts, and not just for the industrial warfare of army against army.

We will continue from here to the core of our argument, which integrates military force engagement (combat worth) with the political objective (strategic value) through the operational focus approach: the combat worth is the overall capability of a military force to fulfil its operational mission; the strategic value defines the political benefit to be achieved by the military force engagement; the operational focus is the approach that enables the connection between the strategic value and the combat worth.

A commander who is using the operational focus approach works as if looking through a camera lens: at first the picture is blurry, and only by using the focus mechanism does the picture become clearer and sharper. The same is true of the operational focus: the combat picture will always be chaotic and unclear, the operational focus assists the commander and their staff to sharpen and focus the picture, and in the end to translate it into action with a high combat worth. The same is true for the aperture (the diameter of the lens in a camera or a binoculars that affects the depth of field), that is whether the perspective is broad or narrow: the operational focus helps the commander choose what to look at, and to define the size of the area that they want to cover.

The operational focus makes available a joint language and varied actions to enable the adaption of strategic-military tools and tactical tools to any political directive, especially to the complex reality in which we live. The operational focus requires commanders to constantly ask what the strategic needs are, and as a result, how to fulfill them through action.

Below we will explain how to implement the approach. Part of this approach derives from the way a commander learns his/her mission and translates it into combat action. To do so we need to build this capability among our commanders already during the force generation stage. But the commander is not enough. Alongside the commander, a professional and skilled staff system is required to assist him/her in this complex mission. Military headquarters can conceal a great blessing, given that correct management can provide a commander with appropriate combat staffing, including experts from different fields. These experts can assist the commander to successfully plan the full realization of the combat worth and ensure its connection to the strategic needs. This staff should not only include intelligence experts, but also strategic affairs experts who can assist the commander to interpret reality and to plan the required action. Likewise, they should include guest experts on civilian or professional issues, based on what is needed to fulfil the mission. Within this framework we propose to differentiate between the headquarters planning staff and the

command and control staff, and as such to better organize the headquarters internally, and to improve inter-level connections from the senior military level to the junior tactical level.

To complete our discussion about the military forces, we will also discuss issues related to joint force generation, and we will propose a vision for joint force generation that will enable a strengthening of military action in any context.

In the book's conclusion we have included a chapter that looks towards the future and tries, we hope with appropriate modesty and humility, to sketch out the characteristics of the State of Israel's future conflicts, in light of the trends that are developing and evolving around us, including: a lengthening of conflicts, the emergence of an industrialized cyber dimension in warfare, the connection between the civilian and military worlds, and we even suggest several proposals to deal with these problems and challenges.

### **About the Book and the Authors**

The ideas in this book were formulated during a dialogue between four officers, each with broad personal experience during military action, in force employment and generation, as commanders and as staff officers. This dialogue took place based on our familiarity with the military system, from several different perspectives that were developed over dozens of years; while dealing with the theory of military action; and while evaluating existing problems from a professional military perspective of military force employment in the State of Israel.

The first officer is Major General Yacov Bengo – a field officer who served in a wide range of senior command and staff roles: as a brigade, division and corps commander and key staff positions in the IDF general headquarters, including as the Head of the Doctrine and Training Division; The second is the late Brigadier General Giora Segal (of blessed memory) - a field officer who commanded an armored brigade, who from the moment of his retirement from the IDF until his last day on earth dealt with military thought from the regional command to the general headquarters levels, and who provided advice on varied issues to the senior levels of the IDF; the third is Colonel (res.) Shay Shabtai – an intelligence and strategic planning officer, who headed the Strategic Planning Department of the general HQ and now researches the strategic aspects of national security; and the fourth, Lieutenant Colonel Matania Tzachi – an officer who for over a decade has dealt with issues related to force engagement and employment in the General Staff, and has led the formulation and writing of doctrine and concepts at the General Staff level.

The knowledge base for this article, aside from the personal experiences and military knowledge of the authors, is based on a wide range of sources: on military thought – from Sun Tzu to Clausewitz, and included in part, military writings from the armies of the world and the IDF; on familiarity with the history of the world of warfare in previous generations – from the great industrial wars of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, that significantly shaped military thought to this day; on the study of the military conflicts of Israel and its wars during the hundred years of Zionism; on personal experience during combat at different ranks in Lebanon, in Judy and Samaria and in Gaza, and in limited operations that took place in recent decades; and on the study – from reading and meetings with officers from other armies – of combat in many places around the world in recent years (Chechnya, Afghanistan, Iraq and Africa). As such, the authors' knowledge base, together with their military experience, provided them a unique perspective on the phenomenon of war and on its complexity with an emphasis on the inter-level problems.

While every man of action and thought is rooted in their own environment, during their lifetimes the authors did not neglect to learn from their overseas colleagues, evaluating the larger world and the

different challenges faced by Israel's allies. As such, the examples that were included were chosen to improve the theoretical vision presented here, and not necessarily as a survey of every possible example. Finally, first and foremost, as befits soldiers, we tried to act as role models by engaging in personal introspection as an example for the Israeli and IDF system.

It is clear to the authors that their professional backgrounds and experiences during the service are not sufficient to propose a complete and comprehensive theory for national security, for military organizations and for the complex system of relations between armies and the political-diplomatic echelons. The authors hope that by raising these issues in writing as military thought and by expanding the historical, political-diplomatic and military literature, they could enrich the internal Israeli national security discourse, and possibly even broader than that: from the most senior national level down to the commander and soldier at the operational end of the chain of command, on whose shoulders the fate of the nation rests. The authors modestly see this book as the externalization of professional military issues, and an invitation to continue the discussion on force employment started here. This is based on an understanding that discussions of force employment are the blood and soul of every free nation. Avoiding engaging in these discussions risks intellectual and practical stasis, which would lead to difficulty defending ourselves, as a Jewish democratic state and as a Western nation.

This book amalgamates the primary thought and study of the subjects discussed and as understood by the authors. This book is not the product of academic research, and therefore it does not attempt to survey all the existing knowledge in the field, and it does not quote many other research volumes. The book analyses reality and interprets it as the authors understood it and as they learnt from their commanders and their colleagues – in the army and outside. It integrates historical knowledge, military theory and issues of significance for the IDF and the State of Israel.

Some of the chapters were written as separate articles by the authors listed above, and this amalgamated version was written by Yacov Bengo and Matania Tzachi.