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Operation Al-Aqsa Flood and the Future of the Occupying State of Israel

Introduction:

Most political and strategic studies and research, both within and outside Israel, have focused on analyzing the impacts of Operation Al-Aqsa Flood on the present and future of the Israeli occupation state. This analysis considers the profound internal effects on Israel and the numerous political, strategic, and economic repercussions it has triggered. It is also linked to Israel's ability to comprehend and respond to what occurred, not only within its regional and international surroundings but also in its neighboring states. Furthermore, it involves addressing the upcoming challenges and threats that could strike at the core and pillars of the state's existence. The event is not merely viewed as a limited conflict but rather as a true existential struggle affecting the state's medium- and long-term future, with implications that extend beyond the operation itself.

Main Objective of the Study:

To observe and analyze the set of emergent and new variables that have arisen in Israel following Operation Al-Aqsa Flood, which will undoubtedly influence the political, strategic, and economic trajectories of the situation in Israel. These changes will also be connected directly or indirectly to the future of the Israeli state within its current and anticipated regional environment.

Study Methodology:

The descriptive approach is considered one of the most prominent and important methods in scientific research. It is used to study and analyze descriptive issues and topics that involve non-numerical data. This method is commonly applied in social research. Its steps include identifying the

research problem, collecting as much information as possible, formulating hypotheses or questions based on the data, providing explanations, and drawing conclusions.

Contents of the Study:

1. The conceptual framework of the study.
2. The primary objectives of the occupation state during the present and future periods.
3. Future trajectories.
4. Current and anticipated stage dynamics.

First: The Conceptual Framework of the Study

1. Pillars of Israel's Security Doctrine:

- A. Strengthening deterrence capabilities.



- B. Shifting the battle to the enemy's territory and concluding it swiftly.
- C. Destroying the enemy's military forces and equipment.
- D. Adopting a strategy of preemptive strikes and preventive blitz wars ⁽¹⁾.

2- The most important principles of Israel's national security theory:

- A- Relying on a defensive security strategy aimed at ensuring Israel's existence, establishing effective deterrence, reducing threats when necessary, and delaying confrontations at times to address these threats.
- B- Adopting an offensive military doctrine to impose the will on the targeted enemy.
- C- Necessitating the transfer of the battle to the other party's areas in all its aspects land, air, sea, and cyber and managing the battle externally. This is evident in Israel's practices on the Syrian and Lebanese fronts.
- D- Enhancing Israel's strategy aimed at developing the strategic conditions for the future battle, disrupting the adversary's conditions, influencing the regional balance of power, and achieving the desired security reality through military superiority ⁽²⁾.
- E- Possessing nuclear weapons and the ability to use them as a last resort.

3- The decline in Israeli strategic assessments, regarding the long-term strategic vision, is linked to Israel being a state without a future political vision. Thus, the military-security mentality remains dominant, inherently dealing with military strategies on a limited scale. It is noticeable that intelligence assessments do not differentiate between a strategic threat and a tactical threat, between permanent and temporary threats, between influential and less influential ones, and between a threat that can be contained and another that cannot be resolved within the framework of a prolonged and extended conflict.

4- Israel is keen to demonstrate its responsiveness to these threats, including expanding the army's capabilities, increasing investment in research and development, establishing defensible borders, forming new regional alliances to reduce its regional isolation, and maintaining its distinctive strategic relationship with the United States, despite the existing tug-of-war in handling security and political arrangements.

5- There is a shift in the prevailing strategic equation in recent years, where the Israeli-Palestinian issue was once considered manageable but unsolvable. It may become unmanageable in the upcoming stage, being unsolvable according to the proposals of the components of the ruling coalition in Israel ⁽³⁾.

6- There are no military capabilities to confront an intensive attack on the strategic depth from more than one direction for Israel due to the inability of air defenses to absorb decisive strikes to the strategic depth from a technical standpoint, and due to the unbearable cost of addressing the matter. This contributes to the continued state of mutual deterrence, which led Israel to adopt the "Campaign Between Wars" strategy as a framework to deal with emerging regional threats.

Second: The Main Objectives of the Occupying State in the Current and Future Periods

- 1- The state, with all its institutions and apparatuses, seeks to overcome the factors of failure and setbacks it has faced and continues to face, even before the war comes to an end or it addresses them with a strategic and tactical vision far from the use of brute military force. The attempt to adopt an excessive force approach is evident not only in the Gaza Strip but has also clearly extended to the West Bank. Efforts are being made to entrench the strategy of imposing the status quo and calling for operations to displace and evacuate Palestinian residents from the West Bank. This indicates that the state of failure is not limited to past events but will also extend to dealing with future developments, with the possibility of repetition on the West Bank or northern front. This explains the occupying state's interest in working across all current tracks.
- 2- Israel, as a state, faces risks from seven fronts. Thus, Israeli concerns are not only about confronting what has occurred but also about addressing what might happen. This requires Israel to prevent such risks or current threats and confront them now through extended long-term measures rather than immediate ones. This explains why the Israeli government is adopting more unilateral measures, such as appointing a civilian governor to manage the situation in the Gaza Strip. This comes

alongside the increased use of force and other methods to exclude the other side and push it to the brink, a process that is ongoing before the next day begins in Gaza. This is done through a series of measures and procedures being proposed to find a solution for Gaza and govern the strip in the upcoming period. This leads to additional measures already in place, as evidenced by the presentation and recycling of certain projects being discussed politically and strategically, highlighting how Israel is thinking about the future.

- 3- The goal of ensuring the state's survival remains at the top of Israel's priorities, especially amid fears of not remaining in the region despite its real capabilities militarily, scientifically, technologically, and security-wise. However, the Zionist doctrine fears a scenario where it exits the region and fails to reach the centennial of the Hebrew state's existence. This could lead to multiple consequences and real dangers with profound effects amid the erosion, decline, and marginalization of Israeli presence. This is especially true with the growing capabilities of non-state actors and the increasing risks from fronts that have remained dormant for years, such as the Egyptian front. This poses a real challenge for Israel, which fears that its (smart, hard, and soft) power will become ineffective, potentially leading to further negative impacts on Israel's domestic situation ⁽⁴⁾.
- 4- There is a state of despair, frustration, and failure among the Israeli public, which once believed in the great power of the state's regional dominance. The "Al-Aqsa Flood" operation changed the rules of engagement and the reality on the ground, signaling a great deception suffered by the Israeli citizen, who now doubts the capabilities of politicians and the military. The public now perceives only failed military confrontations against multiple militias on different fronts, not regular armies. Questions have arisen regarding Israel's ability to conduct military operations on more than one front, confirming that Israel no longer possesses great capabilities. This is evidenced by its pursuit of advanced armament and obtaining more F-15 and F-35 aircraft as well as high-capacity, destructive projectiles and munitions. This acknowledges Israel's need to review its main positions and reorganize its options, which will affect its scientific and military status in weapon manufacturing, exporting, and promotion in international markets, among other major implications ⁽⁵⁾.
- 5- The lack of trust among the Israeli public in politicians and the military stems from the falsified political and media discourse that lacks specific facts. It has become clear that there is a state of political and military division among political and military elites. There is also growing skepticism about the current choices, especially since all attempts to establish calm, reach a political horizon, and achieve national consensus have failed due to the intransigence of Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu in facilitating negotiation rounds. This is despite repeated amendments to the American proposal and the failure of Israeli President Isaac Herzog to implement a roadmap for national reconciliation. Additionally, the national dialogue failed due to the ruling coalition, led by Netanyahu, lacking the desire to enter into even a societal partnership, let alone a political one. This confirms that all factors resulting from the "Al-Aqsa Flood" operation persist and will not change, requiring years to resolve in the short and medium terms. Regardless of what is expected in terms of security and strategic arrangements, these will not be limited to the Gaza Strip but will also extend to the West Bank as part of a comprehensive plan aimed at liquidating the Palestinian cause and resolving the conflict after years of international and Arab attempts to manage it. This means that the "Al-Aqsa Flood" operation and its implications have led to significant and important repercussions within the framework of these relationships, alongside the promotion of generals' plans for security management in both the West Bank and Gaza and the liquidation of the Palestinian cause ⁽⁶⁾.
- 6- Israel's plan in the Gaza Strip is governed and regulated within the framework of extensive military and security ground operations. Now that Israeli confronting forces are present on the ground, this will undoubtedly be costly for Hamas, which will face obligations concerning its role in the upcoming equation. This is contingent on the war's outcomes in Gaza, the continuation of occupation, and the reorganization of security and strategic conditions. These developments necessitate



transitioning to a new phase, which will include Hamas until the release of Israeli prisoners. This strongly explains why Hamas will maneuver to maintain its political and security positions, regardless of ongoing attempts for understanding or pursuing transitional political options or partial agreements. These considerations are being addressed within current regional and international mediations, promoted by European countries such as Britain or the European Union, and directly concerned states like Egypt ⁽⁷⁾.

- 7- The current situation and its gradual developments will depend on Israel's ability to operate and prioritize tasks regarding Hamas. This includes the eventual outcomes for Hamas in the Gaza Strip, aside from suggestions that its leaders might leave the Strip as part of a solution. Despite all that is happening, Israel will likely accept temporary options to secure its prisoners and calm public opinion initially. Subsequently, it will move to reorganize political and strategic priorities as a first task in the post-ceasefire period, though this may be postponed to a later time depending on potential changes such as a possible shift in the White House. This explains why Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu is adopting a time-buying strategy to reach a long-term interim solution while pursuing an extended strategy.

Third: Future Trajectories

1. The legitimate question remains:

What is the impact of the recent confrontation with the "Al-Aqsa Flood" on the future of the Zionist state in the region, now that Israel is genuinely threatened on seven comprehensive fronts? Hence, what future awaits Israel in the medium and long term a state that has yet to complete a hundred years and now views the situation as one of existence rather than merely one of borders? ⁽⁸⁾.

2. The scenario remains between two positions:

- **First:** Emphasizing Israel's ability to endure further confrontations or wars on multiple fronts simultaneously. This would lead to further military mobilization and large-scale operations, initiating confrontations and security and strategic arrangements, similar to what is currently happening with Gaza. Alternatively, it may shift towards increased armament and the development of advanced defense systems like the "Red Sky" system, "Laser" technology, and "David's Sling,"

alongside upgrading the current capabilities of the Iron Dome system with U.S. support. Such measures and advanced tactics would require additional strategic and political steps, leading to significant losses in a financial budget already facing crises and heavily reliant on external support, particularly American aid and voluntary organizations that inject funds outside the annual approval process passing through Congress. This is despite the recently allocated budget items addressing the events in Gaza and the broader region.

- **Second:** The belief that the current confrontation primarily revolves around a critical and central issue: the existence of the Zionist state within its regional environment. It faces a pivotal moment in its history, aimed at ending Israel's existence or, at the very least, confronting it with force, as demonstrated by Hamas's swift attack, which could potentially be replicated in the north by the formidable Hezbollah forces.

3. The Israeli narrative and traditional security doctrine which underscored Israel's qualitative superiority, its ability to wage wars beyond its borders, and its deterrent strategic arms have revealed new developments concerning Israel's security theory and its foundations. Consequently, the prevailing opinion favors continued confrontation. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and several former generals in the General Staff moved to assert the state's power, resulting in the decision to form a War Council and adopt an extended and long-term strategy. This decision was later returned to the Security Cabinet, known as the "Cabinet," with a focus on restoring deterrence to counter ongoing developments and rejecting calls since day one for a truce or, at least, negotiation efforts to release hostages still held by Hamas. Despite deploying elite forces such as the "Golani Brigade" and the "Kfir Brigade" into the field and involving U.S. Delta Forces and specialized British intelligence units in the search for hostages ⁽⁹⁾, many captives continue to be killed in the latest confrontations. This has significantly stirred Israeli public opinion, leading the Histadrut to announce a general strike, potentially paralyzing the state entirely, a scenario that could recur periodically.

Fourth: Current and Future Context

1. Israel is facing pivotal moments in its history as it strives for existence as a state for the Jews in the region. Without this, risks will continue to renew and diversify. The next confrontation

with Hezbollah and various factions in Iraq, Yemen, and Syria, which have initiated multi-pronged efforts to exhaust Israeli capabilities and attempt to plunge them into a real void, requires an open confrontation. Ignoring past strategies necessitates the methodical use of military force ⁽¹⁰⁾.

2. It is evident that Israel both its government and military establishment will likely continue along the path of open confrontations, leveraging state resources to impose a new status quo in Gaza and counter proxy groups affiliated with Iran. These groups are pursuing innovative strategies to reach Israel and target strategic ports, installations, and interests in Bab al-Mandeb and international and Arab waterways. Israel will work comprehensively to counter these before moving toward any ceasefire.
3. The current situation whether in Gaza and the West Bank or regarding fears of a delayed confrontation with Hezbollah requires reevaluating the existing security doctrine and building a new national security theory. This entails reforms and developments within the Israeli army through proactive plans, despite prior efforts aimed at forming a modern military aligned with the latest models in military and strategic confrontations. This confirms that future developments in Israel are intrinsically tied to its desire to remain a significant power capable of deterrence, confrontation, and action within the region. Achieving this requires comprehensive, integrated solutions rather than adhering to unrealistic theoretical plans in light of evolving threat landscapes ⁽¹¹⁾. It also necessitates a reevaluation of the entire Zionist project.
4. Thus, Israel will inevitably accept casualties and bear substantial economic costs to achieve deterrence and plan for the future without making concessions amid ongoing challenges and threats. The systematic use of force in operations in Gaza and the West Bank will dictate Israel's new regional strategy, affirming its capability to confront any challenges or dangers to its national security in the foreseeable future. It also requires safeguarding against expected developments from regional factions and militias, which have proven capable of operational engagements. Consequently, there is a need to continuously update defensive systems, develop intelligence and information-gathering capabilities, and engage in the strategic depths of expected operational theaters ⁽¹²⁾.
5. Israel's future in the region is fraught with numerous concerns and dilemmas. Many academics, politicians, and former military personnel argue that Israel must abandon territorial expansion, recognize the existence of the "other," and relinquish its approach of superiority and exclusion. This necessitates genuine acceptance of a Palestinian state, a notion resisted by the Israeli right from its inception. In general, despite navigating a vicious cycle, Israel may, under U.S. international pressure, particularly from the Democrats, and regardless of the continued dominance of right-wing parties, adopt a new approach. However, it is unlikely to abandon the core tenets of its combat doctrine or Israel's grand regional interests. The possibility of establishing a Palestinian state remains theoretically on the table without any tangible achievements, despite statements by Arab nations, the Democratic U.S. administration, and the Euro-pean Union aiming for regional stability. The alternative a scenario strongly predicted to manifest would involve escalating tensions, conflicts, and instability throughout the region, undermining entrenched interests of major powers and producing adverse economic, strategic, and political repercussions ⁽¹³⁾.
6. Research and academic circles increasingly suggest that Israel faces a decisive moment in its regional existence. Without genuine measures and preparations, the situation will worsen. By prioritizing the use of force, embracing exclusionary strategies, and pursuing zero-sum approaches to affirm its military might a force that has suffered unprecedented challenges Israel and its military establishment may adopt a strategy of overwhelming force across all scenarios, avoiding any truce. Leveraging its abundance of military strength, Israel could utilize this power to confront and manage all surrounding risks and challenges. Israel's acceptance or rejection as a regional state will depend on tangible components and realities, rather than merely achieving peace treaties tested in the past, which have proven fragile amid Israel's unprecedented steps and actions. This is particularly evident in the ongoing war



in Gaza and the West Bank, which appears poised to persist given the current security arrangements.

7. In this context, former state leaders some of whom held high-ranking intelligence positions have expressed concerns about the Zionist state's fate and its acceptance as a legitimate entity. They argue that preserving the state's existence requires moving beyond mere peace agreements with Palestinians or acknowledging their right to an independent state. Instead, Israel must consider alternative options concerning Hezbollah's threats, silencing guns in the West Bank, decisively resolving the Gaza front, and shielding the state and its regional interests from genuine threats and direct targeting. Evidence suggests Israel

struggles to maintain a sustainable presence in the region or to bear the cost of proposed peace, particularly amid the evolving internal and external dynamics.

8. Despite internal Israeli discussions emphasizing the state's survival in the region, the core issue lies in embracing the proposed changes within a society inherently fragmented and functioning in isolated cantons. Despite shared foundational elements that foster integration and collaboration among the Israeli public, this requires reassessment in light of calls to alter the current Zionist project, political system, and national priorities. Building new national resilience is essential amid ongoing regional changes and potential threats to Israeli national security.

Conclusion:

According to an objective perspective discussed within credible academic circles in Israel, the pressing and significant question currently being raised is: Does Israel have a future in the Middle East? Or will the state of Israel lose its role or presence, facing escalating risks and challenges in the coming period, which will further weaken Israel and exhaust its political and economic capabilities due to the adversarial fronts targeting it? Despite ongoing developments concerning Gaza and the search for a new formula to manage and confront the current and potential evolutions, Israel's existence, even reaching its centenary, is fraught with considerable caution and genuine concerns about the "day after." Israel's capabilities may transform into a sterile force rather than a smart or hard power, alongside its possession of soft power globally that can influence and convince the world of the state of Israel's strength in its current regional environment. This environment includes nations that remain adversarial despite peace agreements with Egypt and Jordan, as well as with the UAE, Bahrain, Morocco, and Sudan. However, this peace, according to an Israeli perspective, requires reassessment and alignment with what is being proposed within the framework of the Arab Peace Initiative. This initiative engages all Arab countries collectively with Israel, rather than individually⁽¹⁴⁾. Notably, Israel faces genuinely difficult choices that extend far beyond the current measures being taken for unilateral security arrangements in Gaza and efforts to confront significant transformations occurring in the West Bank. These transformations have necessitated more incursions and direct confrontations with Palestinian resistance organizations, escalating into larger and more significant issues related to anticipating the challenges and risks Israel faces within its Arab and regional environment.

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Abstract:

The state, with all its institutions, seeks to overcome the factors of failure and failure that it faced, and is still facing, even before the war ends, or to deal with it with a strategic and tactical vision far from the use of brutal military force, and an attempt to follow the approach of excessive force in the West Bank and not only in the Gaza Strip, while devoting the strategy of the fait accompli and demanding the transfer of the Palestinian population from the West Bank, which indicates that the state of failure is not limited to what happened, but will extend to confronting what is happening in the future, which is a matter that needs to be reviewed in light of the call to change the foundations of the current Zionist project and even the Israeli political system and formulating an integrated project, which indicates that Israel faces real difficult choices that go far beyond what is happening regarding making security arrangements in Gaza, while working to confront the real transformations taking place in the West Bank, which required Israel to continue to modernize defense systems and develop intelligence capabilities.

Keywords: The Zionist Project, National Security Theory, 7 October, Future of the Hebrew State

عملية طوفان الأقصى ومستقبل دولة الاحتلال الإسرائيلي

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المستخلص:

تسعى حكومة الاحتلال الإسرائيلي بكل مؤسساتها للقفز على عوامل الفشل والإخفاق التي واجهتها، ولا تزال حتى قبل أن تضع الحرب أوزارها أو أن تتعامل معها برؤية استراتيجية وتكتيكية بعيدا عن استخدامات القوة العسكرية الغاشمة، ومحاولة اتباع نهج القوة المفرطة في الضفة الغربية وليس فقط في قطاع غزة مع تكريس استراتيجية الأمر الواقع والمطالبة بإجراء عمليات ترحيل للسكان الفلسطينيين من الضفة ما يشير إلى أن حالة الإخفاق ليست مقتصرة على ما جرى، وإنما سيمتد إلى مواجهة ما يجري في المستقبل، وهو أمر يحتاج إلى مراجعة في ظل بعض الدعاوى الإسرائيلية لتغيير أسس المشروع الصهيوني الراهن بل والنظام السياسي الإسرائيلي لصياغة مشروع متكامل، ما يشير إلى أن إسرائيل تواجه خيارات صعبة حقيقية تتجاوز بكثير ما يجري بشأن إجراء الترتيبات الأمنية في غزة مع العمل على مواجهة ما يجري في الضفة الغربية من تحولات حقيقية، الأمر الذي دفع إسرائيل للعمل على تحديث منظومات الدفاع، وتطوير القدرات الاستخباراتية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: المشروع الصهيوني، نظرية الأمن القومي، أحداث ٧ أكتوبر، مستقبل الدولة العبرية.