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Prof. Ephraim Yaar and Prof. Tamar Hermann

● Consensus: Even today, a month since Operation Protective Edge began, and after the IDF ground forces’ withdrawal from the Gaza Strip, there is a broad consensus in the Jewish public (92%) that the operation was justified. This is so despite the uncertainty about how the operation will culminate as well as the domestic debates on how Israel should handle the indirect talks with Hamas and on whether the campaign was conducted appropriately on the operational and humanitarian levels. A segmentation of the Jewish interviewees’ answers to this question by self-placement on the political right-left spectrum showed a majority in all camps for believers in the justness of the operation, though this majority differed in size and perhaps was affected by each camp’s retrospective view of the operation’s achievements. This may be why the rate of justification of the operation on the moderate right (97%), in the center (92.5%), and on the moderate left (95%) was higher than on the right (89%), which was more critical of the conduct and results of the campaign. As expected, the lowest rate of justification (67%) is on the left. A consensus emerged in the Arab public as well, but in the opposite direction: a solid majority of two-thirds think Operation Protective Edge was not justified.

● The goals of the operation: The Jewish public is divided between those who think the government had clear or moderately clear goals before launching the operation (51%) and those who think it did not have clear goals (47%). In the Arab public a certain majority (53%) thinks the government did not have clear goals for the campaign. A high rate (17%) of the Arab interviewees did not have a clear opinion or declined to answer the question (as on not a few other questions in this survey).

● Achievements: Among the Jewish interviewees who thought the government had goals of some sort, even if not entirely clear, only a tiny minority (2%) thinks all of the goals were achieved. Some 42.5% believe most of the goals were achieved, while the majority (53%) considers that only a small part of the goals the government set for the operation were achieved or that they were not achieved at all. As for the Arabs, 8% think all of the goals were achieved, 5% say most were achieved, while 77.5% believe that only a small part of the goals the government set for the operation were achieved or that the goals were not achieved at all (a perception that, of course, affirms Hamas’s resilience in facing the IDF).

1 The distribution along the spectrum among the Jewish Interviewees was very uneven, and this time the rightward trend is sharper than in the past: right 34%, moderate right 28%, center 21.5%, moderate left 9%, left 3%.
• **The degree of use of firepower during the operation:** Only 6% of the entire Jewish public sees the IDF as having used too much firepower during the operation. The rest of those with an opinion on the matter are almost evenly split between 48% who regard the use of firepower as appropriate and 45% who think the IDF made too little use of it. Political positions are, not surprisingly, essential on this issue: among those who located themselves on the left, the lowest rate – exactly half – said that the IDF made excessive use of firepower (23% of the moderate left thought so). Among those who situated themselves on the right, 56% saw too little use of firepower (on the moderate right 50%). As for those defining themselves as belonging to the center, the highest rate was for those who perceived an appropriate use of IDF firepower (63%). In the Arab public, the majority opinion (62%) is that the IDF made too much use of firepower.

• **Satisfaction with the operation:** On a five-point scale, with a grade of 1 meaning very disappointed and 5 meaning very satisfied, the most common grade for the Jewish public (41%) was 3, that is, almost midway between the disappointed and the satisfied (3 was also the average grade among the Jewish public). Thirty-two percent are very satisfied or moderately satisfied with the operation (grades of 4 or 5); slightly fewer (27%) are very disappointed or moderately disappointed (grades of 1 or 2). In other words, the prevailing attitude is not one of either great satisfaction or great disappointment, perhaps indicating confusion about the situation at the time of the survey, with no agreement yet having been reached between Israel and Hamas. In the Arab public the picture is much clearer: with an average grade of 1.7, it is evident that the majority (64%) is very disappointed or moderately disappointed with the operation’s results. It should be noted that most likely the satisfaction or, alternatively, disappointment of the Jewish public and of the Arab public do not relate to the same elements of reality, given the deep disparities between the two populations, as noted above, regarding the operation as a whole.

• **And what happens now?:** A large majority of the Jewish public (71%) sees a low chance that Operation Protective Edge will bring about a complete cessation of rocket fire from Gaza for at least three years from the moment it ends. In the Arab public, 48.5% are of the view that the quiet will not be long-lasting, but more than one-third think – or maybe hope – it is possible that the quiet will last three years or more. At the same time, a clear majority (65%) of the Jewish interviewees are very or moderately optimistic about the future of the country. A segmentation by self-placement on the right-left spectrum showed that such a majority exists in all of the camps, though its size is variable (right 71%, moderate right 67%, center 69%, moderate left 61%, left 54%). The Arab public is divided between 40% who are optimistic about the country’s future and 47% who are pessimistic about it.
Israel’s response to Hamas’s demands: The majority of the Jewish public (58%) thinks that Israel should not respond to any of Hamas’s demands and instead should continue the campaign until it surrenders, but a substantial minority (41%) says Israel should consider these demands on their merits and respond positively to those that are reasonable from the standpoint of its national security. Another possibility that was presented to the interviewees – that Israel should accept all of Hamas’s demands so that the rocket fire will cease – did not receive any support. As could have been expected, there is a large overlap between those who think the goals of the operation were not achieved and the chances of long-term quiet are low, and those who think Israel should continue the campaign. In the Arab public the majority’s preference (54%) is that Israel consider the demands on their merits and respond positively to those that are reasonable from the standpoint of its national security. Thirty-two percent favor accepting all of Hamas’s demands so that the rocket fire will end.

The best way for Israel to deal with the challenge of Hamas: A clear majority (66%) of the Jewish public favors a combination of two approaches – the military and the political-diplomatic. Twenty-six percent prefer only the military approach, and 7% opt only for the political-diplomatic channel. This distribution of answers indicates that even among those who think Israel should continue the fighting until Hamas surrenders, not a few support the combined military and political-diplomatic approaches. In the Arab public, a clear-cut majority (72%) sees the preferable approach to the problem of Hamas as the political-diplomatic one.

The performance of the state bodies: We again looked into the public’s assessment of the IDF’s and the national-political echelon’s performance. Although both bodies receive more positive than negative evaluations, there are wide disparities. In the Jewish public there is unanimity (97%) that the IDF’s performance was very good or moderately good, with a slight advantage for the very-good grade. However, only 61% think the political level performed very well or moderately well with a clear advantage for the moderately-good grade. The lower assessment of the political level’s performance could be explainable in terms of the considerable minority (42%) who expressed agreement with some government ministers’ criticism of Prime Minister Netanyahu for, in their view, conducting the campaign too hesitantly and moderately (the majority – 54% – do not agree with this criticism).

The performance of the media: Another institution that has been emphatically present during the operation is the media. Hence we asked, “Taking into account the variety of commentators and positions, what grade from 1 to 10 would you give the Israeli television networks’ coverage of Operation Protective Edge so far, with 1 meaning a very low professional level and 10 meaning a very high professional level?” The average grade given by the Jewish interviewees – 6.8 (between
“sufficient” and “almost good”) – shows that satisfaction with the media’s performance was not high. The average grade that the Arab interviewees gave the performance of Israeli television during the operation was much lower (4.3).

- **Maintaining freedom of speech:** On the question: “In your opinion, to what extent was the principle of freedom of expression upheld or not upheld in Israel during Operation Protective Edge, with 1 meaning it was upheld to a very low degree and 10 meaning it was upheld to a very high degree?,” the average grade (7.6) obtained from the Jewish interviewees reveals that a considerable number of Jews are indeed unsatisfied with the degree to which freedom of expression was maintained during the operation (the left because of what is saw as the “silencing” of people and the right because of what it viewed as unrestrained criticism). The majority, however, does not find fault with the degree to which freedom of expression was maintained. Moreover, the criticism implied by this grade does not necessarily stem from concern about upholding one of the central values of Israeli democracy. This is evident from the distribution of responses to the question of whether, during a military operation, one should or should not limit freedom of expression in the country as far as expressing criticism of the campaign is concerned (not with regard to the illegal disclosure of military secrets). Here a majority (58%) of the Jewish public favors limiting freedom of expression under such circumstances while only 39% think freedom of expression should not be limited. The average grade obtained from the Arab interviewees’ answers to the question of the extent to which freedom of expression was maintained during the operation was, as expected, low (4.3). On the question of the degree to which freedom of expression ought to be limited in wartime, this population was divided between supporters and opponents.

- **National fortitude:** As in previous surveys we conducted during Operation Protective Edge that addressed this issue, this time as well we found the Jewish interviewees giving a very high assessment of the resilience and unity of the Jewish public (an average grade of 9.0 on a scale of 1 to 10). The Arab interviewees, however, gave a low grade (4.3) to the resilience and unity of the Jewish public.

- **Civic responsibility:** We asked: “What grade from 1 to 10 would you give the degree of civic responsibility shown by the Israeli Arab population during Operation Protective Edge so far, with 1 meaning very low civic responsibility and 10 meaning very high civic responsibility?” Here the findings were interesting. The Jewish public gave the Arabs a low grade for civic responsibility during the war (an average of 4.4), which is similar to the previous poor evaluations that the Jewish interviewees assigned to the behavior of the Israeli Arabs during the operation. Surprisingly, however, the Arab interviewees themselves gave their own community almost as low
a grade on this question (4.6). Many interpretations are possible; since we do not have additional data (for example, regarding the interviewees’ precise understanding of the term “civic responsibility”) with which to consider the interpretational alternatives, we will leave this without an answer at this point.

- **Is the whole world against us?** In this survey as well, a notable majority of the Jewish public (63%) thought that “The whole world is against us,” with only about one-third dissenting from this attitude. Here too the gaps according to self-affiliation with a political camp are large: on the right 69% assess that “The whole world is against us,” on the moderate right 60%, in the center 66%, on the moderate left 52%, and on the left only a minority of 31% feel this way.

- **Egypt’s performance as a fair mediator:** Somewhat ironically, despite the fact that the majority of the Jewish public thinks “The whole world is against us,” a majority of the Jewish public (60%) trusts Egypt under President Sissi to serve as a fair mediator between Israel and Hamas. However, in the Arab public a similar majority (55%) does not trust Egypt under Sissi to be a fair mediator in this regard.

*The Peace Index is a project of the Evens Program for Mediation and Conflict Resolution at Tel Aviv University and the Israel Democracy Institute. This month's survey was conducted by telephone on August 11-12, 2014, by the Midgam Research Institute. The survey included 600 respondents, who constitute a representative national sample of the whole Israeli adult population aged 18 and over. The maximum measurement error for the whole sample is ±4.1% at a confidence level of 95%. Statistical processing was done by Ms. Yasmin Alkalay.*

**Graph of the month: How would you characterize the IDF’s use so far of its firepower in Gaza? (%)**