

Concept

The Dahiyah Doctrine

Definition

The concept Dahiyah Doctrine refers to an IDF military strategy developed in the aftermath of the Second Lebanon war that focuses on using disproportionate air power and artillery against a seemingly new type of fighting model of non-state terrorist and guerilla organizations.

Background

The Dahiyah Doctrine arose in the aftermath of the Second Lebanon War and the perceived failure of the IDF to utilize its military advantage against heavily armed non-state members of the Resistance Network (primarily Hizbullah and Hamas.)

The IDF's traditional 'use of force' doctrine was perceived to have been unsuccessful in preventing rocket fire on Israeli civilian areas as well as resulting in IDF casualties.¹

The Dahiyah Doctrine developed out of the realization that the IDF was fighting against a new type of enemy which required new tactics. In this context, the heavy bombardment inflicted on the South-Beirut Dahiyah neighborhood during the Second Lebanon war seen as a relevant model for fighting against non-state terror or guerilla organizations.

Doctrine Characteristics

According to the Doctrine, the targets against which the IDF should focus disproportionate force may vary between villages from which rockets are fired,² the political, social or religious strongholds of the Resistance Network,³ or the civilian infrastructure of the political entity within which the Resistance Network operates.⁴

Moreover, the military response envisaged by the Dahiyah Doctrine marks a departure from previous military IDF strategy.

- Rather than use of firepower and quick maneuverability on the ground, the Doctrine adopts a strategy of massive firepower, primarily from the air.
- Rather than hunting down individual missile launchers, the Doctrine focuses on punitively destroying the entire area from which rockets are fired.

¹ The traditional 'use of force' doctrine focused on firepower and the quick maneuverability of infantry and tanks coupled with tactics of 'hunting down and destroying' individual missile launchers .

Some military experts argue that the perceived failure in Lebanon emanates not from the failure of the traditional use of force military doctrine but from its partial (at best) implementation. See Yehuda Wegman, [YNET](#), 1/2/09.

² Interview with Gaddy Eisenkott, [YNET](#), 10/03/08.

³ Gabriel Siboni, [INSS Paper](#): Disproportionate Force: Israel's Concept of Response in Light of the Second Lebanon War, 10/2008.

⁴ Giora Eiland, [INSS Strategic Assessment](#) Target: Lebanon 11/2008; Gabriel Siboni, [INSS Paper](#): Disproportionate Force: Israel's Concept of Response in Light of the Second Lebanon War, 10/2008.

- Rather than seeking to achieve decisive victory, the Doctrine focuses on deterring the enemy via considerations of cost effectiveness, and hopes the threat of massive economic and physical destruction to infrastructure will drive a wedge between members of the Resistance Network and the local population.

Sources:

Interview with Gadi Eisenkot, [YNET](#), 10/03/08.

Amos Harel, [Ha'aretz](#), 10/05/2008

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