

Point of View No. 42

## International Involvement Predicament (1) - Scope of the Mandate

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PM Olmert and Secretary of State Rice discussed this week the prospects of the establishment of an international force that would prepare the ground for the Lebanese army to deploy along that country's southern border (**Haaretz**, 7/30). **The Re'ut Institute contends** that the dilemma Israel is facing tips the scales between:

- **A battle** over the force's mandate, which is likely to be involved with an ongoing Israeli presence in Lebanon and a possible failure of the force's deployment.
- **A compromise** over the force's mandate that is likely to ease both its deployment and an Israeli withdrawal.

### Background

- As clashes between Israel and Hizbullah took place, Israel posed three demands: the immediate release of the kidnapped soldiers, the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1559 and the disarmament of Hizbullah and the deployment of the Lebanese army at the country's southern border.
- Later, Israel demanded an international force will be established, so it would replace UNIFIL and prepare the ground for the Lebanese Army to deploy and implement Resolution 1559.
- Hizbullah resists the deployment of international force in this format (see interview with member of Lebanese Parliament in **Al-Jazeera**, 7/24), though it agrees to the presence of international force with a limited scope (Bar'el, **Haaretz**, 7/30).

### Battle over the Mandate = Ongoing Israeli Presence in Lebanon

- The more Israel insists on the expansion of the powers and authorities of the international force, thus the potential of the international force to dismantle the Hizbullah military branch and to alienate the organization from the border with Israel will be increased;
- Yet, in light of Hizbullah's opposition, the probability of the establishment of an international force and an Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon is decreasing.

### Compromise over the Mandate = Withdrawal from Lebanon

- The more Israel compromises on the powers and authorities of the international force, thus the potential of the international force to enforce Resolution 1559 decreases;
- Yet, the probability of an Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon, followed by a tacit or implicit consent by Hizbullah to an international intervention in Lebanon, increases.

End.