

The Balance of Israel's National Security

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The Homefront Organization in the State of Israel

- Executive Summary -

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This document includes the findings and conclusions of the taskforce. It is a draft for discussion purposes and reflects the opinions of the taskforce members only.

The Home Front Organization in the State of Israel

Threats and Dangers to the Home Front: For the first time since 1948, the Home Front in the State of Israel is expected to be exposed to large-scale attack, simultaneously with fighting on the front lines. Even though the probability of use of biological and/or chemical (BCW) against Israel is low, a decision has been taken in principle to prepare for such an eventuality. Proper organization and operation of the Home Front systems is a necessary condition for securing its ability to withstand the pressures of such a scenario, and for an effective response to the anticipated results of an enemy attack on the Home front.

Deployment and Readiness of the Home Front Set-up: The Home Front Organization is, in general, deployed, prepared and drilled for a crisis situation and for conventional emergency incidents. There is an acceptable lack of bomb shelters and protective masks for chemical attack, which is not excessive. There is also a lack of technical-technological means for dealing with non-conventional NC incidents. At the level of the central government, there is no one agency with full responsibility and authority for overall preparation and operation of the Home Front systems, which can act with an integrated perspective on a national scale - both in times of crisis and during periods of routine normality. There is no "Home Front Law" or "State of Emergency Law" which would be able to define and facilitate preparation and operation of the various bodies within the Home Front framework

The Home Front Organization - A View to the Future: A number of issues were discussed regarding possible modifications in the deployment and organization of the Home Front in the future. These included: the status of local government authorities (municipalities, regional councils) in the Home Front Organization; the possibility for delegating responsibility and authority to mayors to manage emergency incidents within their jurisdictions in normal

times and in times of war, with the support of all the emergency and aid bodies; the transfer of responsibility for Home Front Defense to the Ministry of Internal Security (with emphasis on a Home Front Command and Crisis Economy Management Unit); legislation of a “Service for All” Act which will make it obligatory for every citizen to serve the country in either a military or civilian capacity. Civil/National Service is a crucial factor in the organization of Home Front Defense. A proposal to form a “national guard” – similar, but not identical to, the National Guard” in the United States. The “National Guard” would include all the elements which operate in the Home Front, including the National and Civil Service and would be a body unprecedented overall integrative authority.

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