STRATEGIC-LEVEL THIRD PARTY INTERVENTION
FOR A PERMANENT STATUS AGREEMENT

An operational assumption is currently being considered to delink the kind of international intervention for the variety of immediate transitional tasks to be conducted under a permanent status agreement within the West Bank and Gaza, and the longer-term strategic tasks of inter-state security on the eastern border of Palestine.

The concept for an International Monitoring and Implementation Mission (IMIM) has been designed and is being refined to accomplish integrated, multifunctional tasks in the short-term. The IMIM will be the kind of difficult and complex operation that the world has had great difficulty tackling in the last decade or so. It will need to have a pervasive deployment throughout the West Bank and Gaza, and confront an intensely precarious social environment by making a difference in the daily lives of the local population. The IMIM will need to translate a permanent status agreement into a new reality on the ground.

By contrast, international intervention to patrol an international boundary, like the one along the Jordan River Valley, has been a task familiar to traditional observers and peacekeepers since the 1940s. The world knows how to do this kind of thing, and international institutions are structured still (despite profound changes in the post-Cold War era) to attend to inter-state contingencies. Such a mission will not have to confront an extraordinarily dynamic environment on a daily basis. Furthermore, its deployment may not have the urgency of the IMIM following the conclusion of a permanent status agreement—depending upon the timetable for Israeli withdrawal agreed on.

Furthermore, Israel will not surrender control over determining its security destiny and rely on international forces to fill the vacuum of its withdrawal. It will account for its own long-term security in some other way.

Therefore, given the differences between the complex requirements of an IMIM and the blunt configuration of the strategic factors emerging from the direction of the Jordan River Valley, two separate missions can be clearly discerned. There may, of course, be connections: the IMIM may perform some preliminary tasks to be later assumed by the strategic mission; the IMIM may conduct some advance planning and preparation for the strategic mission; and there would need to be coordination between the two during an overlap period.

A. Jordan River Valley

1. Outcome Scenarios: There are three possible scenarios regarding Israeli withdrawal from the Jordan River Valley, each of which is defined by the size and composition of Israeli and Palestinian forces in the area.

> (i)   Israel manages to negotiate its preferred option of deploying and maintaining 2 armoured brigades in the area for 10 years. It is estimated that this strength is *more than double* the current strength.

The Israeli intention is to control the Palestinian population—which is expected to be sympathetic to and supportive of any military action from the east—until additional units can be deployed from Israel. The 2 brigades need to control the situation for 48 hours, the time expected for the additional deployments to reach the Jordan River Valley. Their presence avoids any delay in responding to threats from the east. In this scenario, a superficial role is defined for Palestinian and international forces.

(ii)   Palestinians are able to achieve a negotiated agreement in which Israel maintains smaller forces in the area for a shorter period of time. A meaningful role is defined for both Palestinian and international forces.

(iii)   Palestinians are able to achieve a negotiated agreement in which Israel withdraws totally from the area in a relatively short timeframe. Reliance is placed on Palestinian and international forces to fill the vacuum created.

It is also worth noting with regards to "emergency deployments", Israel does not need agreement on this right, or on the definition of "emergency" or the circumstances under which this right may be exercised. It perceives that the permanent status agreement only holds during peace time; in wartime, it will in effect suspend any agreement and respond to the threat as it perceives it. Israel will mobilize accordingly and deploy in the West Bank as it sees fit.

2. Operational Objectives: There are two principal objectives of an international mission in any of the three outcome scenarios.

(i)   To monitor and verify compliance with and implementation of the relevant provisions of the permanent status agreement.

(ii)   To serve as a trip-wire force, and act both as a deterrent to large-scale military action from the east and as a confidence-building measure between the parties.

3. Trip-Wire Options: It is unlikely that the international community will field assets that could serve Israel's defensive interests, nor would Israel expect it to. Therefore, an international strategic mission will at best be in some way symbolic and function really to trigger rapidly the intervention of major powers. There are a number of models to consider, including the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) in the Sinai and the UN Iraq-Kuwait Observer Mission (UNIKOM), which includes the five permanent members of the Security Council.

With regards to monitoring withdrawals of major conventional forces, it is worth noting that the real work is done by satellite technology. Entire missions are deployed with the mandate of monitoring such withdrawals, though the true monitoring is conducted in the capital cities of major powers. These missions, therefore, are actually confidence-building measures more than they are intended to achieve single-handedly their mandated objective. Both the withdrawals of Cuban troops from Angola and Soviet troops from Afghanistan were verified by US satellites, and not by UNAVEM

and UNGOMAP, respectively. But the two UN missions served the purpose of building confidence between the parties through a visible presence on the ground.

Either depending on or regardless of Israeli strengths on the ground, an international trip-wire mission could take several forms:

(i)   **Powerful.** An international force could be deployed with strengths comparable to the current Israeli deployment and with a similar range of information-gathering assets, or the force could be shaped according to the Israeli preferred option up to a strength of 2 brigades. Logically, the international force would deploy gradually as Israeli forces withdraw, in an ordered piece-by-piece transfer of control. A powerful international force of this kind is unrealistic, and it does not necessarily make sense as an option, since Israel will not be relying on it for its defences.

(ii)   **Visible.** An international force could be deployed with substantial assets, though not of the grade to strategically defend the Jordan River Valley from a major military action. Instead, the force would provide a visible presence on the ground and serve to build the confidence of the parties. The number of observers and/or troops would be measured in the thousands. The composition of the force would be key, relying on contributions from major powers who would be expected to act in the event of an attack or the threat of an attack.

(iii)   **Symbolic.** An international group of observers could be deployed with minimal assets that would be principally symbolic. Its composition would similarly need to trigger the action of major powers in the event of an emergency. The numbers of such a group would be measured in the hundreds.

The latter two options could be associated with a "demilitarization" concept along the eastern border.

B. Early Warning Stations

At present, Israel maintains 5 stations for strategic defence from the east. Only 3 are really early warning stations, in the Golan Heights, East Jerusalem and Ramallah. One in Nablus is a communications and intelligence facility with the capacity to detect large-scale military activity, Patriot missile batteries and surface-to-air launchers. One south of Hebron is empty, though zoned accordingly.

As part of permanent status negotiations, Israel wishes to maintain "early warning stations" at Nablus, Ramallah and south of Hebron. Since Jerusalem is being dealt with separately from this question, the presumption is that Israel will also keep the East Jerusalem site. The Golan Heights is, of course, a separate issue. The net result is that Israel intends to keep the current stations it is operating, without any reduction following an agreement.

An NSU internal assessment has concluded that Israel needs at most 1 site. This has been confirmed by Israeli military sources responsible for making the recommendation to their negotiating team at Camp David. The military recommendation was to argue for 1 site, if even that was needed. But the negotiating position was to argue for 3 sites.

Furthermore, Israel has argued that it needs to maintain the 3 sites for an indefinite period, until further notice following the agreement.

Should agreement be reached on 1 or more sites being maintained, an international strategic mission may be called on to perform the following functions:

(i)   Manning and operating the stations
(ii)   Periodic flash inspections of the stations
(iii)   Managing and controlling access to the stations
(iv)   Resolving disputes regarding the operation of and access to the stations
(v)   Managing the Israeli withdrawal
(vi)   Facilitating information sharing regarding strategic threats
(vii) Providing security around the perimeter of stations.

C. Multinational Force and/or Observers

Some of the tasks relating to early warning stations could be performed by IMIM staff in-transition. However, it is preferred not to separate the Jordan River Valley from early warning stations between two missions. Both the Jordan River Valley and early warning stations are strategic concerns and the expertise required to address the technical aspects of early warning and the Jordan River Valley defences should go hand-in-hand as part of a single mission. Furthermore, early warning is logically part of the kind of trip-wire possible for the Jordan River Valley.

To perform both early warning and trip-wire functions, a multinational force and/or observers would need to have the following elements:

(i)   *Size:* If the mission is a *visible* one, then it will require personnel measured in the thousands. If the mission is a purely *symbolic* one, then its strength will be measured in the hundreds.

(ii)   *Composition:* The mission needs to include major powers, that individually or in combination are more powerful than that potential sum of the combatants. The mission will have to constitute a credible deterrent, and in turn serve as a confidence-builder between the parties. This may require some or all of the permanent members of the UN Security Council to participate in the mission

(iii)   *Expertise:* The kind of commanders and troops necessary for deployment along the Jordan River Valley will need to understand the principles of a defensive screen. They will probably need to be a combination of regular infantry and conventional armour units. By contrast, the experts required for monitoring or manning the early warning stations will include electronic surveillance technical specialists and analysts.

(iv)   *Structure:* The structure of the mission will vary depending upon whether it is composed only of observers or it includes forces as well. Two options are appended below.

(v)   *Liaison:* All international functions will need to be performed either jointly with the parties or in close cooperation with the parties. The relative responsibilities will depend on agreements regarding Israeli withdrawal and Palestinian military strengths.

(vi)   *Dispute Resolution:* The structure of the mission will be such that it will include joint committees and a joint monitoring commission for resolving disputes, making decisions, interpreting the agreement and driving the process forward. These institutions will also constitute a channel for information-sharing.

(vii)   *Timeline:* The timeline for deployment of a multinational force and/or observers will depend on agreements reached for a framework agreement, an interim memorandum of understanding or the permanent status agreement. In principle, it will not be as urgent as the IMIM, which will have to address an intense daily dynamic immediately. However, an argument can be made for assuming as soon as possible some early warning tasks and accelerate Israeli withdrawal from the Jordan River Valley. The Clinton parameters argued for Israeli withdrawal over 36 months with their gradual replacement by international forces; and then a continued Israeli presence under an international umbrella for an additional 36 months. The Palestinian position has been to argue for total withdrawal in 18 months. In either scenario, there is time for the build-up of a mission following the signing of a permanent status agreement, though some advance planning officers could be included in the IMIM from the beginning.

D. Questions/Observations

There are a number of questions to be resolved and several pieces of information to be obtained:

- If 2 Israeli armoured brigades for 10 years on the Jordan River Valley are unacceptable to the Palestinians, then what level of Israeli presence is acceptable and for how long? Correspondingly, what are the Israeli red lines.
- It is only an assumption that the current Israeli presence in the Jordan River Valley is upwards of a singe brigade, with considerable early warning capacities. The actual current Israeli strengths, capacities and deployment—the order of battle in the Jordan River Valley—needs to be determined to the best possible degree. This will also require accurate maps and photographs. Satellite imagery may be investigated for this purpose.
- A paper was developed by Israeli Defence Forces in advance of Camp David, which outlined for Israeli negotiators the optimal military recommendations for the Jordan River Valley and early warning stations. It is understood that the Palestinian negotiating team "is aware" of the contents of this paper. A copy of this paper should be obtained.