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*By **Emmanuel Wekem Kotia** and **Fiifi Edu-Afful***
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The Lebanon-Israel War of 2006: Global Effects and its Aftermath[i]

Emmanuel Wekem Kotia and Fiifi Edu-Afful

Introduction

The seventh anniversary of the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah conflict provides a critical opportunity to evaluate the global effect in a number of dimensions. Given the nature of the July 2006 war, the number of casualties reported and the number of infrastructure destroyed, a central issue for many of the countries within the region has been the use of brut disproportional force to achieve the desired goals. On the 12 of July 2006, a division of the militant group Hezbollah**[ii]** based in southern Lebanon crossed the blue line **[iii]** and attacked an Israeli army convoy patrolling the border, killing three Israeli soldiers instantly and capturing two others.

In the ensuing battle, an Israeli tank and platoon crossed into Lebanon with the aim of rescuing their captured colleagues, but this was met with some resistance; an exchange that led to the death of five more Israeli soldiers. Israel saw Hezbollah's action as an 'act of war'; an unpleasant incident that forced the Israeli army chief of staff, Dan Halutz, to declare that Israel would "turn back the clock in Lebanon by 20 years."**[iv]** The response from Israel was swift and top-heavy, and it was largely accused of displaying its military strength by destroying infrastructure, killing innocent civilian, arousing local political anger and shattering the growing Lebanese economy.**[v]**

The resultant tugs and pulls deteriorated into the 34-day fierce battle between Israeli Defense Force (IDF) and Hezbollah. For the first time, since the unilateral withdrawal of Israel from southern Lebanon in 2000, Israeli ground troops entered southern Lebanon and resumed large scale military operation in the very heart of Lebanon.

Consequently, the ensuing conflict resulted in the substantial loss of lives on both sides, reignited the possibility of a wider regional war (following incessant warning of possible attacks from Iran and Syria) and increased the volatility within the Lebanese territory.**[vi]** Unfortunately, at the end of the war in August 2006, nearly 1,200 Lebanese had lost their lives; over 4,000 wounded; about one million displaced and nearly 15,000 homes destroyed.**[vii]** Meanwhile, the Israelis also suffered some casualties with a reported death toll of 43 Israeli civilians in addition to 116 soldiers and the displacement of almost 300,000 Israelis, especially in the northern part of the country.**[viii]**

Events of 12th July, 2006 prepared the ground for yet another fierce battle between old foes, Israel, largely supported by the West and Hezbollah-led Lebanon that derives its strength from Syria and Iran. This war

defied a typical conventional warfare between states to exhibit a new prototype of asymmetrical war featuring a legitimate state of Israel on one hand and a militant, illegitimate, religious fundamentalist group Hezbollah on the other.**[ix]** This is a war that had many facets. For the very first time post the gulf war, the world media was embedded with both warring factions and carried the war live on television showing detailed movements of Israeli forces' advancement into Lebanon, the bombing of civilian positions and Hezbollah rocket hitting northern Israel and Haifa.**[x]** Effectively, the coming into effect of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1701 on August 14, 2006 brought the 34-day war to an end with the expectation that a permanent ceasefire agreement between Israel and Lebanon was in sight.

Concerns about the adverse global effects of the 2006 summer time conflict between Israel and Lebanon have scarcely been documented. The reality is that, the impact of the war went beyond the two countries to affect countries within the region and the world as a whole. There is a vast literature available that narrates the determinants of the 34-day standoff.**[xi]** However, most of these discussions have centred mainly on the precarious political situation in the Middle East, casualties of the conflict, ammunitions displayed by both sides, the guerrilla tactics adopted by Hezbollah and the disproportional retaliation from Israel.**[xii]** As argued later in this paper, events in the Middle East in the weeks leading to the conflict and the period during the conflict ignited a period of crises globally that continued throughout the financial year of 2006 and beyond. Thus, while the global effect is presented as one of the major unintended consequence of the 34-day conflict, there are also a number of many interrelated questions on the worse economic crises that followed the period after the conflict.

It is against this background that this paper traces and discusses the crises between Israel and Lebanon with timelines since 1967, and also highlights the immediate causes of the 34-day war in the summer of 2006. The article is organized as follows: first, it reviews the ongoing debate about the nature and background to the conflict between Israel and Lebanon which leads into the immediate causes of the 2006 conflict; second, it assesses Hezbollah militia weaponry and approach to the 2006 conflict in addition to Israeli attacks and tactics. Thirdly, the article analyses the effects of the 2006 crises between Israel and Lebanon on the global economic outlook. Finally, the article draws the major conclusions.

Background to the War

Several reasons have been assigned as the root cause of the conflict between Israel and Lebanon. While some have argued that this conflict is part of a wider disagreement in the Middle East in response to Israeli “occupation” of West Bank and Gaza, others have also argued that this conflict is as a result of the non-recognition of Palestine as a legitimate state.**[xiii]** Then again, others have argued that the unending proxy war being waged by countries such as Iran and Syria against the sovereignty of the Jewish state of Israel is the major reason underlining this conflict.**[xiv]** Arguably, the origin of the conflict involving Israel and Lebanon can be traced to the deep rooted regional mistrust between Arab states and Israel following the issue of acquisition of land.**[xv]** The unsuccessful invasion by five Arab countries into Israel in 1948 to prevent the Israelis from inhabiting lands that were considered Arab lands set the tone for an extensive and a larger conflict between Israel and Arab nations, including Lebanon.**[xvi]** These “occupied” lands and its inhabitants who were mostly Arabs were rechristened as Palestine (ians).**[xvii]** A number of armed groups from these Arab states emerged and amalgamated into one force to fight Israel in their claim for autonomy for Palestine. This state of affairs resulted in the eruption of war and the subsequent displacement of many Palestinians.

Consequently, persistent Palestinian attacks on Israeli targets provoked revenge attacks on Jordan and Lebanon; nations that played host to these Palestinian armed groups.**[xviii]** Moreover, the growth of Palestinian control and influence on Jordanian soil ruffled many feathers and resulted in the civil war of 1970 and the subsequent eviction of Palestinian forces from Jordan.**[xix]** Thus, the Palestinian Liberation

Organization (PLO) moved its base to Lebanon and stationed its headquarters in Beirut from where it continued to pound Israeli targets with rockets. Prior to the movement of PLO headquarters to Beirut, Palestinians had consistently used Lebanon as a base for attacking Israeli targets since 1967.**[xx]** These attacks and counter attacks from both actors resulted in the civil war of 1975 which lasted until 1989. Unfortunately, the first Lebanese war left behind a weak and disintegrated Lebanese army and the mushrooming of militia groups that battled against each other for control.**[xxi]** Syria intervened at the behest of the Lebanese authorities and occupied most parts of the country apart from the south between 1976 to 2005.**[xxii]**

As a response to the incessant raids into northern Israel by forces loyal to the PLO from their base in Southern Lebanon, Israel, in 1978, launched a major invasion into Southern Lebanon with the aim of driving away the PLO.**[xxiii]** The resultant effect of the 1978 invasion was the extension of the Israeli occupation of Lebanese lands as far as the Litani River.**[xxiv]** Furthermore, this invasion which was seen largely as unsuccessful resulted in the death of several Israelis, Lebanese and Palestinian, and displaced over 285,000 people.**[xxv]** After more than two decades of attacks and counter attacks, the United Nations Security Council by resolutions 425 and 426 called on Israel to withdraw from Lebanese territory and caused the establishment of the United National Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL).**[xxvi]** Accordingly, the mandate of UNIFIL was to oversee the withdrawal of Israeli Defence forces, to restore international peace and security, and to assist the Government of Lebanon in administering its effective authority over its boundaries. The Israelis in return withdrew just inside three months after the invasion. Interestingly, instead of them handing over the security of the area to UNIFIL, they handed it over to a Lebanese militia - the Southern Lebanese Army (SLA) - that operated under the command of Major Saad Haddad.**[xxvii]** The responsibility of the SLA was to serve as Israel's surrogate in Southern Lebanon, and to take the war to PLO on Lebanese soil.**[xxviii]**

On July 6, 1982, Israel began a major onslaught *Operation Peace for Galilee* in Lebanon following the assassination attempt on the Israeli Ambassador to United Kingdom and the bombing of a civilian bus in northern Israel.**[xxix]** Inasmuch as the invasion succeeded in driving away the PLO from Lebanon, events preceding this invasion resulted in the creation of yet another armed militia group by name Hezbollah. The sole aim of Hezbollah was to pursue Israel to totally withdraw from all occupied Lebanese territory. Regardless, Israeli forces stayed on and mostly controlled border areas within Southern Lebanon until 2000 when the troops withdrew in response to calls for an end to the guerrilla battle with Hezbollah.**[xxx]**

The Hezbollah Militia

The spin-off of the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon was the formation of Hezbollah, a Shi’a Muslim militant group modeled on the desire to seek some form of representation in the political sphere of Lebanese politics. Specifically, the arguments were made by Hezbollah that although Shi’a Muslim dominated in terms of population, they felt highly marginalized in the political representation structure in Lebanon.**[xxxi]** Moreover, at the time, their militant wing Amal was seen as weak and incapable of representing the interest of Shi’a Muslims. Hezbollah which was seen as the better option to Amal had largely been thought to be receiving support (training, ammunition and money) from Syria**[xxxii]** and Iran. These countries themselves had serious opposition to Israel “occupation” of lands perceived to be Arab lands.**[xxxiii]**

The reality is that Hezbollah is at the forefront and an important player in the perceived battle between Syria and Iran on one side and Israel on the other. Since its inception, Hezbollah has taken the fight to Israel, launching rocket attacks into Israeli territory at any given opportunity. The conflict between these two actors has been waged on two major fronts; the physical and the psychological. The physical combat is exemplified on both sides by rocket launches (mainly by Hezbollah) and counter attacks and invasion

by Israeli defense forces. Similarly, the psychological warfare which is mostly adopted by Hezbollah is pursued through the use of highly volatile inflammatory rhetoric.

Vituperative statements such as “Israel is a cancerous tumor that needs to be removed at its roots”; “could Israel be wiped out of existence? Yes and a thousand times yes”; “We are going to win because the Jews love life and we love death”; “Israel is our enemy and the enemy of our nation” are all rhetoric that have been used by the top brass of Hezbollah to illicit and incite hatred against Israel.**[xxxiv]** Even though Hezbollah was not the only militant group or organization or states challenging Israeli occupation of supposed lands belonging to Arabs, it has assumed the front position in the struggle against Israel for occupying parts of Southern Lebanon. Hezbollah attacks on Israeli targets have been growing by the years. Table 1 illustrates some of these activities:

Table 1: Hezbollah activity against Israel between 1990 to 1996.

Number	Year	Number of Hezbollah Attacks
1.	1990	19
2.	1991	52
3.	1992	63
4.	1993	158
5.	1994	187
6.	1995	344
7	1996	639

Source: Israel Foreign Ministry, Jerusalem, http://www.isreal-mfa.gov.il/news/lebanon/html.

Between 1996 and 2005 there were several instances of Hezbollah Katyusha rocket attacks and Sagger anti-tank missiles into Israeli territory. In response IDF conducted series of massive air and artillery attack on Hezbollah targets in Southern Lebanon. The Ta’if Accord of 1989 ended the decade-long Lebanese conflict and demanded the unconditional withdrawal of all foreign forces on Lebanese soil.**[xxxv]** As a result of the Ta’if Accord, the National Assembly of Lebanon in 1991 ordered the dissolution of all militias in the country. Yet, Hezbollah as well as the South Lebanese Army could not be disbanded and partly remain active. Although the Ta’if Accord was unsuccessful in forcing Hezbollah to lay down its arms, it managed to restructure the political system by expanding the Muslim base in parliament and persuaded Hezbollah to contest as a political party in the first post-civil war elections of 1992.

Notwithstanding the popularity of Hezbollah as demonstrated in the number of seats secured in the parliamentary elections, there were always pockets of public anger against them because their actions always resulted in Israeli retaliation attacks on civilian targets. The European Union, **United States**, **United** Nations and Russia in 2000 managed to secure a truce in which both Hezbollah and Palestinian armed groups agreed in principle not to attack civilian positions in Northern Israel.**[xxxvi]** In addition to the ceasefire agreement, these armed militias were to recognize Israel’s right to self defense and Hezbollah’s right to resist Israeli occupation. Consequently, Israel unilaterally withdrew in May 2000 as part of the roadmap to achieving peace in the region.**[xxxvii]**

Even though Israel’s withdrawal from Lebanon was acknowledged by the United Nations as being complete, there have been several disagreements over the 15-square mile border region known as Sheeba Farms. While Hezbollah considers the Sheeba Farms as being part of Lebanese lands, Israel and the United Nations on the other hand perceive the Sheeba Farms as being part of Golan Heights and under Syrian territory. Besides, Israel has since 1967 occupied those lands. Meanwhile, Hezbollah has argued that Israeli unconditional withdrawal from Sheeba Farms is the only universal remedy to the attainment of peace in the region.**[xxxviii]** Consistently, between 2000 to 2006, there were series of attacks and counter

attacks from both parties. As a shift from earlier positions, both sides had been measured on their attacks on civilian positions until the unfortunate incidence of 2006.

Map 1: The Position of Israel, Lebanon and Shebaa Farms

Source: Adopted from Global Intelligence, Stratfor dated 9 September 2006.

Immediate Causes of the 2006 War

Following the lack of an outright resolution on Sheeba farms, Hezbollah stepped up demands for Israel to withdraw. This in effect set up the basis for the second Lebanon war. The 2006 “July War” was launched when Hezbollah attacked Israeli settlements and military posts within the catchment areas near the Israel-Lebanon border. Two armoured vehicles belonging to the Israeli Defence Force was attacked near the border village of Zar'it. The attack led to the death of three Israeli soldiers and the capturing of two others. **[xxxix]** This particular raid that backfired was intended to grab Israeli captives as bait for prisoner exchange with Israel, a tactic that was frequently used by Hezbollah. Israel’s reaction to Hezbollah provocation in the past had received little attention as the Jewish state was more concerned with the growing threat of Iran in the Middle East and pockets of instability and violence in disputed territories. The summer 2006 abduction by Hezbollah was not the first time that Hezbollah had succeeded in abducting Israeli soldiers; there had been several incidents in the past where such incidence of abduction have led to third party mediation and an exchange of prisoners.**[xl]** A remarkable shift with this operation was first the diversionary tactics adopted by Hezbollah with it mortar shelling and rocket launches and secondly, the fact that this operation went well beyond the originally contested area of Sheeba farms.**[xli]**

Israel saw a window of opportunity to put an end to the growing influence of Hezbollah in the region and

also quell a terrorist group that was seen as a potential threat to the national security of Israel. In response to the attack, an Israeli tank commenced some restricted exercise within the border area where the soldiers were captured, but this incident led to the death of five more soldiers. Accordingly, the Israeli authorities under *Operation Change Direction* launched a complete assault on Lebanon on the 12 of July 2006. Israeli tanks and aircrafts bombed and destroyed several vital infrastructure and installations such as the runways of the Beirut International Airport in Southern Lebanon.**[xlii]** The intensity of the Israeli response was large and massive as it did not only attack Hezbollah positions but it went further to destroy key infrastructure in Beirut and Southern Lebanon. As a way of weakening the military firepower and deployment of Hezbollah fighters, Israel imposed land, air and sea blockade on Lebanon.**[xliii]** Once the conflict began, the collateral damage on Lebanese civilian for instance was inevitable as Hezbollah operated largely from civilian positions. As the war progressed, IDF initiated air, sea and ground attacks against Hezbollah targets across Lebanon. In return, Hezbollah launched an estimated 3,970 rockets, missiles and drone attack on some key Israeli installations as far as the city of Haifa.**[xliv]**

Attacks, Tactics and Weaponry

At the height of the war, Hezbollah's main tactic was survival. This was pursued by ensuring that Israel did not weaken its military capabilities, but instead they inflict misery and substantial casualty on the Israeli population. As quoted from the General Secretary of Hezbollah Hassan Nasrallah, "the victory we are talking about is when the resistance survives. When we are not defeated militarily then this is victory. When its will is not broken then this is victory…". However, on the Israeli front, their main goal all through the past had been disarming and destroying Hezbollah which they considered as a terrorist group. The nature of the 2006 conflict ensured that Israel redefined its position of disarming to include obliterating Hezbollah, taking away its military and missile capabilities and securing the return of its captured soldiers.**[xlv]**Additionally, Israel also needed to re-establish and display its hegemonic power in the region and to send a message to all would-be troublemakers that the country was capable of defending itself against any external aggressors.

Hezbollah tactics and weaponry for the 2006 conflict took everyone by surprise as they exhibited an improved weapon stockpile and strategies with the tacit help of Iran and Syria. Although Hezbollah was considered only as an armed militia, the display of their technical prowess and fighting capabilities took Israel by surprise with the intensity and range of missiles it had at its disposal.**[xlvi]** For the first time, Hezbollah missiles were able to cripple an Israeli naval ship and also sink a commercial ship off the Lebanese coast.**[xlvii]** Additionally, some of its long range missiles managed to land as far as the port city of Haifa and on civilian population centres.

Figure 1: Hezbollah Weaponry Arsenal

Source: https://www.google.com.gh/search?q=hezbollah+weaponry&sourc.defenseindustry.

Throughout the 34-day conflict, Hezbollah was successful in displaying its military might by dropping over 240 rockets daily on Israeli positions and preventing IDF from advancing beyond the Litani River. **[xlviii]** Table two below shows Hezbollah's rocket arsenal and potential range.

Table 2: Hezbollah's Rocket Arsenal and Possible Range

Type of Weapon	Name of Weapon	Calibre (Millimetres)	Maximum Range (Kilometres)
Surface-to-Surface Rockets	Katyusha	122	20-35
	Fajr-3	240	43
	Uragan	220	70
	Fajr-5	333	75
	Khaibar-1	302	100
	Zelzac-2	610	210
Shore-to-ship Missiles	C-701		15
	C-802 Noor		120
Drone	Mirsad-1		
Antitank Missiles	RPG-29	105	0.5
	AT-13 Metis-M	130	2
	AT-4 Spigot	120	2
	AT-3 Sagger	125	3
	TOW		3.75
	AT-5 Spandrel	135	4
	AT-14 Kornet-E		5

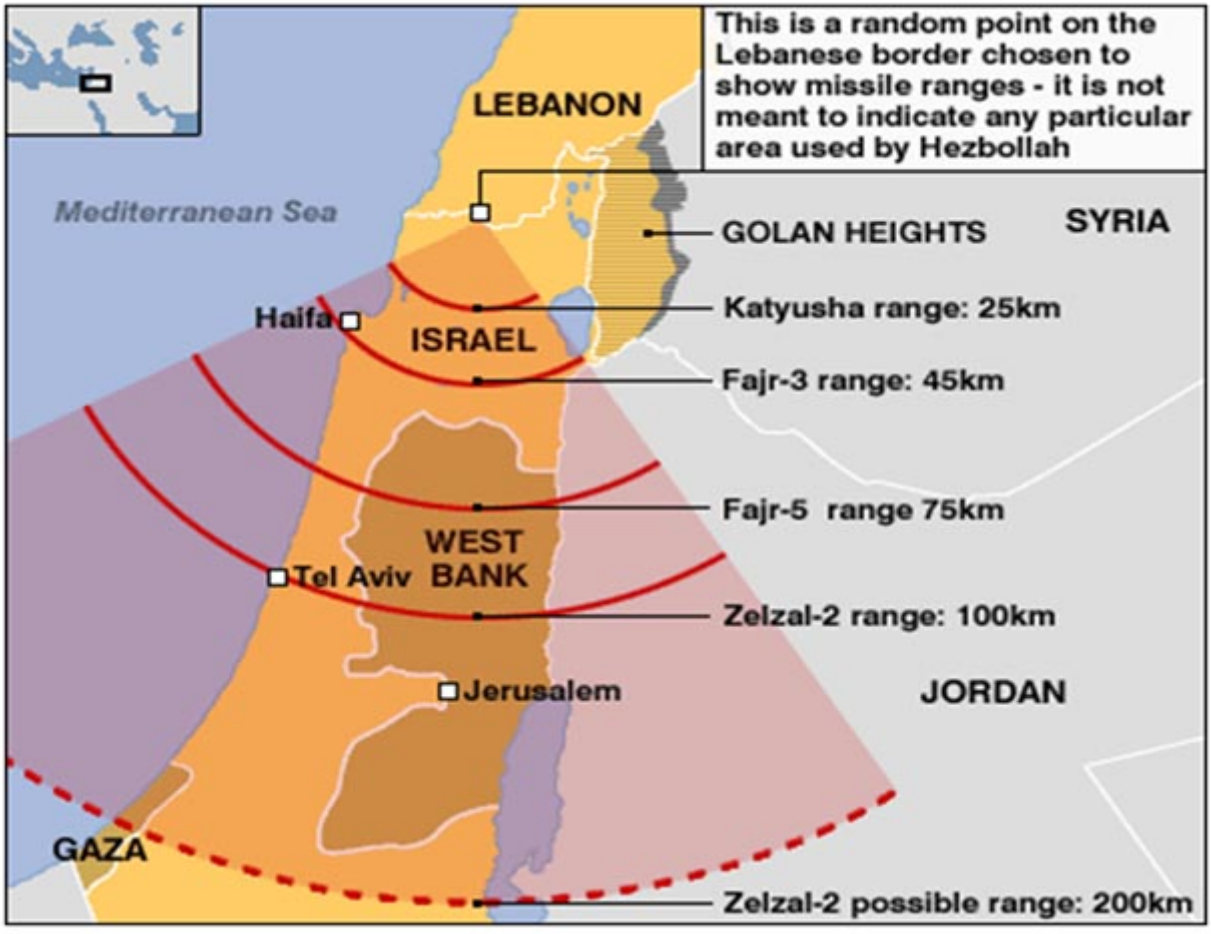
Source: Adapted from Andrew Exum, "Hezbollah at War: A Military Assessment" The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Policy focus No.63, 2006, Retrieved from www. washingtoninstitute.org/uploads/Documents/pubs/PolicyFocus63.pdf

Unlike Israel, Hezbollah seemed highly prepared for the war as it used a variety of weaponry to a greater effect.**[xlix]** This was exemplified not only in the weaponry, but also in the guerrilla tactics adapted during the period of the war. For instance, to contain Israeli airpower, Hezbollah, apart from setting up anti-aircraft launchers and robust communication units within densely populated areas such as residential facilities and schools, and also constructed a complicated bunker network to outwit IDF.**[l]** This technique inhibited the IDF from attacking most of the launch sites as the repercussion of bad press weighed heavily against Israel and directly in favour of Hezbollah which exploited the damage caused by these attacks to their advantage.

Israel's strategy was elaborate and tricky given that it had to contend with a powerful non-state actor that was well-established in another legitimate state. First, the major plan was to disable Hezbollah from receiving any form of support from its allies Syria and Iran who were cited for providing a bulk of the rockets and ammunitions used for the war. Second, was to strike and destroy Lebanese infrastructure as a way of causing public disaffection and weakening the support base of Hezbollah in Lebanon. Third and the most political of all the strategies was the attempted influence of the Lebanese government through the avalanche of high profile bombing to force them to call Hezbollah to order. Even though Israel succeeded in bombing some key installations in Lebanon, it could not achieve the ultimate aim of disabling Hezbollah and causing public disaffection against the militant group. Rather, most Lebanese (Muslims and Christians alike) showed their unflinching support for Hezbollah and accused Israel of deliberately targeting civilian positions as a way of punishing them for their support of the militia group.**[li]**

Militarily, although Israel's initial tactic was to sparingly use ground troops, which had to be aborted following Hezbollah's adopted tactics, Israel relied heavily on its airpower and artillery ammunitions to exact most of the damages.[lii]Even though Israel later resulted to massive military onslaught, their initial operations were measured mostly avoiding non-Shiite neighbourhood and key installations like telecommunications and energy. Besides, the Israeli authorities were well aware that any destruction of basic infrastructure was enough for the Lebanese people to throw their unflinching support behind Hezbollah. Aside these internal inhibitions there were other external pressures[liii] that inhibited the indiscriminate use of force against the people of Lebanon. Despite these pleadings, the Israelis succeeded in instituting a land, sea and air blockade in Lebanon to restrict the moments of Hezbollah fighters and the movement of weaponry. However, having failed to achieve the needed impact, Israel deployed a large ground force into southern Lebanon to take the fight to Hezbollah, destroy its rocket and communication lines.[liv] Hezbollah was resolute as its various units of command were able to effectively contain Israeli ground onslaught and cause them some considerable losses.

Figure 2: Hezbollah Potential Targets in Israel with various Weapon Ranges in 2006



Source: https://www.google.com.gh/search?q=hezbollah+weaponry&sourc.defenseindustry

The Global Effects of the War

Globally, implication of any conflict goes well beyond the geographical confines of the country or the actors in question. The Israeli and Lebanese conflict of 2006 is no exception. There was enormous anger and anguish against Israel's indiscriminate tactics against Hezbollah in the Arab/Muslim world, following

the massive destruction of infrastructure and the high rate of civilian casualties in Lebanon. The daily reported cases of innocent civilians ravaged by the war resonated across the Middle East and sparked violent protest in other areas of the Muslim world.**[lv]** Some of these demonstrations turned anti-western and anti-US as Israel was seen in the region as an ally to most of these western countries, particularly the United States of America. Already there was simmering political tension in the Middle East created as a result of the suspicion of Jewish influence on US foreign policy and the global war on terror. Crowds angry at Israel continued bombing of civilian positions and rioted violently burning effigies of renowned world leaders (such as President George Bush and Prime Minister Ehud Olmert) and flags of Israel and the United States. All through the region, security agencies struggled to contain the protestors; some even had to fire teargas to disperse the rampaging demonstrators.

International attention shifted swiftly to Lebanon and Israel at the expense of other major global conflicts. This is a war that created a lot of international media attention with embedded journalists reporting on prime time news with some promptness. At the time, there were many other ongoing conflicts such as those of Afghanistan and Iraq, Israel and Palestine that equally required some attention, but suffered low publicity and attention from international community. Even though the world's attention might have shifted from some of these other conflicts, many ordinary people continued to suffer from deprivation, pointless deaths and displacement. Frantic efforts were made by the United Nations and particularly other leaders from the global west to rein in the warring factions to ceasefire, and especially Israel to be measured in its attack of civilian targets. Consequently, the Israeli Defense Force attack on Qana (Lebanon) which resulted in the demolishing of a four storey residential facility and killed over 60 civilians majority of whom were school children received widespread condemnation.**[lvi]**

Another shared characteristic of the Israel-Hezbollah war of 2006 was its global economic implications. Even though the two countries in question are not oil producers, the conflict increased the geo-political concerns, tensions and uncertainty in the Middle East resulting in the increased price of crude oil. During the height of the conflict, oil prices climbed to a new record high of $78 USD per barrel.**[lvii]** This had serious implications on the prices of goods and services globally as the market indicators show that that was an upsurge in the prices of commodities. Equally affected was the global financial market. The Beirut Stock Exchange and the United States Bond market suffered a massive downtrend with reported downsizing of international trade.**[lviii]**

The environmental impact of the war went beyond the borders of the two conflicting countries to other surrounding environments. There were reported incidences of forest fires, air and sea pollution and the indiscriminate disposal waste (military residue and ordinance). For instance, the Israeli airstrikes into fuel tanks at the Jiyeh power station in Lebanon caused the spillage of over 15, 000 tons of oil into the Mediterranean Sea.**[lix]** The impact of this spillage was so severe that by the time it was controlled it had reached as far as the coastlines of Syria and Turkey. Besides, this spillage had repercussions for marine life, the livelihood of people living around the banks of the sea and the environment as a whole. In addition, dust and other gases such as methane and carbon monoxide engulfed the environment. The agriculture industry and the farming communities within the region were badly affected by this conflict. **[lx]** Moreover, the indiscriminate use of cluster bombs at the tail end of the conflict continues to hunt civilians within the catchment area of the conflict.**[lxi]**

Picture 1: Environmental Impact of the Coastline of Lebanon during the War

Source: Author's Pictures dated 25 July 2006

Among all of these global effects, the greatest hit was the economies of two countries in question (Lebanon and Israel). Between the two countries, Lebanon was worse off. The destruction of the Lebanese infrastructure, homes and industries by Israeli airstrikes disrupted the Lebanese economy, with the tourism industry being the worse hit.**[lxii]** Besides, the timing of the war had serious repercussions for the tourism industry in Lebanon and Israel because it was around the peak season where tourists around the world gather at their various tourist destinations- particularly the holy sites in Israel- for vacation.**[lxiii]** Similarly, the airline industry that feeds on the tourism sector was not left out of this downtrend as most of the major airlines suffered massive losses and some even had to suspend or reroute their flights from the Beirut airport following Israeli airstrikes. Also, the flights to Israel were seriously affected due to the panic created by Hezbollah sporadic rocket attacks on Israeli cities during the war.

Picture 2: Israeli Air Attacks on Beirut Airport

Source: Adopted from AFP.com.

A number of issues came out of the 34-day conflict that engaged the attention of international relations experts. First, was the mileage gained by the West in their re-engagement with players within the region. For the first time in so many years the European Union (EU) and the United Sates of America found a common ground to engage diplomatically with countries such as Syria, Iran and Lebanon. The end product was the unconditional support by EU countries particularly France to resolution 1701 and the United Nations peacekeeping mission in Lebanon. Second and the one that reverberated throughout the period of the second Lebanese conflict was the definition of "self defense" and "proportionality" as spelt out in international charters/conventions and protocols of armed conflict. The international community's response to the issue of proportionality vis-a-vis self defense raised a lot of serious but critical questions that needed answers. First, how does one determine proportionality in response to an attack when one is dealing with a militia group that has adopted guerrilla tactics or irregular warfare and not a recognized government or sovereign force? Second, how does one deal with a militia group whose long range weapons and modus operandi have psychological effect on innocent civilians? This war therefore drew the attention of international community to the debate of what really constitute proportionality as they had to deal with an unpredictable armed militia that consistently targeted civilian positions with rocket launches. Moving forward, a new dimension of proportionality and self defense needs to be reconstructed and redefined within the UN context and its Charter.

Conclusion: A New Peace Plan for Lebanon

As a consequence to these global effects, the United Nations Security Council came out with a new peace plan under resolution 1701. Basically, resolution 1701 called for the cessation of all hostilities, particularly Israeli military offensive and Hezbollah rocket strikes. To monitor the termination of hostilities, the resolution requested for an increase in the existing United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon from a total strength of 2,000 to 15,000. Furthermore, the improved numbers of UNIFIL was

tasked to deploy alongside the Lebanese Armed Forces to patrol, monitor and ensure the full withdrawal of Israel from Southern Lebanon. As a way of helping Lebanon to recover form the devastation of the conflict, the international community was urged to extend humanitarian and financial support to the Lebanese reconstruction process.

An additional responsibility was given to the Secretary General to fashion out proposals for the demarcation of the international boundaries of Lebanon, including the contested Sheeba Farms. The resolution also drew the attention of both parties to the murky issue of prisoners and the need to find a common ground in addressing that challenge. Consequently, UN Security Council Resolution 1701 opened the way for a series of particular projects of economic assistance to address the reconstruction process and assist the various humanitarian programmes. Extended assistance was offered to the civilian population and displaced persons who wanted voluntary and safe return to their communities. Nevertheless, the strategic endstate of UNIFIL's mandate first and foremost was the capacity of the Lebanese government to exercise its sovereign authority within its internationally recognized borders. Furthermore, the full implementation of the relevant portions of the provisions of the Ta'if Accord**[lxiv]** was to elicit the drawdown of UN military forces.

These activities paved the way for the effective attainment of the ceasefire between the warring factions. However, there were still a number of unaddressed issues. First, was the issue of disarming the militia group Hezbollah. Many have argued that the inability of Resolution 1701 to rack-in modalities of disarming Hezbollah has provided the opportunities that resulted in the conflict in the first place to still exist. Secondly, the inability of the United Nations to explicitly back the seven-point plan of action on Sheeba Farms has left wide open conditions that can still result in instability in the region. Thirdly, the continued instability within the region and the possibility of escalation of hostilities, particularly in the Gaza strip is still a concern. Fourthly, the continued violations of Lebanese air space by Israeli air flights even after the ceasefire is a major concern to the UN force in Lebanon.

There can be no doubt that the main global effects created by the Lebanese war of July 2006 between Israel and Hezbollah resulted in general economic devastation, humanitarian crises, political tensions within the middle east and anger in the Muslim world against US foreign policy. This was an asymmetrical warfare in which a non-state actor, mainly a militia group, adopted guerilla tactics against the force of a legitimate state. Throughout the course of the conflict, little action was taken on both sides to mitigate the devastation of the conflict on civilians and public infrastructure. The root cause of the conflict had been many and varied; but in the fray, has been the ranging issue of "occupied" lands and militia activities in and around Lebanon.

Overall, the 2006 conflict neither weaken the weaponry, the strength or the resolve of Hezbollah to consistently attack Israeli positions on the basis of disputed territories. Similarly Israel did not succeed in stamping its authority and protecting its citizenry against external aggressors. Instead, this war deepened the mistrust and went further to entrench the positions of key actors in an already polarized region.

End Notes

[i] This paper is based on the author's experience with the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) as a peacekeeper.

[ii] In this paper, Hezbollah, Hizballah, Hizbullah, or Hizb`allah is used interchangeably to refer to the Lebanese Shiite Muslim militant Group.

[iii] The blue line is a border demarcation between Lebanon and Israel, drawn in support of the Security Council Resolution 425 of 1978 which established Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon and ensured the establishment of United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNFIL) to patrol that border.

[iv] CNN, "Israeli Authorises Severe Response to Abductions,"12 July 2006, Retrieved from http://www.cnn.com/2006/WORLD/meast/07/12/mideast/index.html

[v] Marvin Kalb and Carol Saivetz, "The Isreali-Hezbollah war of 2006: The media as a weapon in Asymmetrical Conflict", A paper presented at the US-Islamic World Forum, Doha, 2007. p.4

[vi] See Ozlem Tur, The Lebanese War of 2006: Reasons and Consequences, *Perceptions*, 2007, pp. 109 - 122

[vii] Andriy Shevtsov, "Environmental Implications the 2006 Israel-Lebanon conflict" ICE Case Studies, No. 216, 2007, Retrieved from http://www1.american.edu/ted/ice/lebanon-war.htm

[viii] Ibid.,

[ix] See Kalb and Saivetz (n.4 above) p.3

[x] Ibid. pp.3-30

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[xxiii] David Pollock, “Israel Since the Lebanon War” in Robert O. Freeman (ed.) The Middle East After the Israel Invasion of Lebanon, 1986, pp.255-289

[xxiv] Ibid., p. 256

[xxv] Ibid.,

[xxvi] UN Security Council Resolution 425, S/RES/425 (19 March 1978)

[xxvii] Spencer Tucker and Mary Roberts Priscilla, “The Encyclopedia of the Arab-Israeli conflict: A Political, Social, and Military History”. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO,2008, p.629

[xxviii]The Economist, “**Israel's** forgotten war in south **Lebanon”**1995, Vol. 336, No. 7923, p27

[xxix] Gus Martin, “Understanding Terrorism: Challenges, Perspectives and Issues” Sage: California, 2006, p.481

[xxx] Simon Murden, “Understanding Israel’s Long Conflict in Lebanon: The Search for an Alternative Approach to Security during the Peace Process”. *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.27, No.1, 2000, pp.25-47

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[xxxii] The recent support of Hezbollah to beleaguered Syrian President Bashir Al-Assad in the ongoing Syrian conflict against rebels of the Free Syrian Movement lends credence to this assertion.

[xxxiii] For instance on the 4 of November 2009, the Israeli navy intercepted approximately 500 tons of weapons, rockets and missiles intended for Hezbollah that emanated from Iran en route to Syria. Similarly in may 2007 an Iranian train carrying mortar shell, light arms, rocket launchers and ammunitions meant for Hezbollah was intercepted in Turkey

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[xxxviii] Nicholas Blanford, "Hizbullah Hoist by its own Petard". *Middle East*. 2001, No. 311, p11.

[xxxix] The two Israeli soldiers abducted were identified as Ehud Goldwasser and Eldad Regev; Author's Field Notes, 12 July 2006.

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[l] Author's Field Notes, 25 November 2006.

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[lii] William M. Arkin, “Divining Victory: Airpower in the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah War. Maxwell Air Force Base AL: Air University Press, 2007

[liii] The United States for instance through its secretary of state Condoleezza Rice impressed upon the Israeli cabinet not to use excessive force against Lebanese civilians and their infrastructure as this was seen as a sure way of weakening the already vulnerable government of Siniora.

[liv] Ralph Shield, “Israel’s Second Lebanon War: A Failure of Afghan Model Warfare?” Newport: Joint Military Operations Department, 2007, pp.3-4

[lv] Author Field Notes, 2006;

[lvi] Martin Asser, “Qana Makes Grim History Again” BBC News,31 July 2006, Retrieved from www.news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/5228554.stm;

[lvii] BBC News, “ Why the oil price keeps rising” 2008, Retrieved from www.news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/7431805.stm#lebanon

[lviii] Business Monitor International, “Israeli Bombardment: Economic Implications”. *Middle East Monitor*, Vol.16, No.9,2006, pp.2-8

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[lx] See Oxfam, “Lebanese farmers in crisis after month of war, Oxfam International, 2006, Retrieved from http://www.oxfam.org/en/news/pressreleases2006/pr_060931_lebanon

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[lxiii]For example, tourist visits to Israeli holy sites were seriously affected.

[lxiv] The Ta’if Accord calls for the demilitarization of all militia in Lebanon and the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon.

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