

**AMERICAN PUBLIC UNIVERSITY SYSTEM**

**AMERICAN MILITARY UNIVERSITY**

## **TEARS ON THE LITANI?**

**THE POTENTIAL FOR A RESUMPTION OF THE 2006 LEBANON WAR**

**A predictive analysis research study conducted for**

**INTL 504 Analytics I Spring 2010**

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## **Introduction**

The summer of 2006 was the dawn of a revolution in asymmetrical warfare. The world had become accustomed to guerilla warfare, featuring irregular militias equipped with small arms, RPGs, and IEDs. These militias could be dangerous, but for the most part their reach was short and their operations were restricted to their immediate territory. Lebanese Hezbollah (LH) smashed these assumptions in 2006. A large mobile artillery force projected LH's power into Israel, and posed a targeting nightmare for the Israeli Defense Force (IDF). Rockets and missiles launched from Lebanon caused nearly a hundred military and civilian deaths, along with more than a thousand wounded. Israeli retaliatory airstrikes and the ground offensive inflicted several hundred losses on LH, while killing over a thousand Lebanese civilians. After 34 days of fighting, the IDF had defeated LH in every force-on-force encounter, however they failed to eliminate LH's key leadership and left much of the militia's structure intact. The 2006 war ended without a decisive victory by either side. LH Secretary-General Hassan Nasrallah was lauded as a hero by many in the Arab world, and he declared his organization's intent to recover and rearm.

The 2006 conflict between Israel and Lebanese Hezbollah is interesting from a predictive analysis standpoint because it came as a surprise to both parties. Neither side anticipated how quickly a spark could lead to a wildfire. Hezbollah grossly underestimated the Israeli response to their provocations (Salem 2006, 14). Israeli intelligence underestimated both the size and capabilities of LH's rocket arsenal. The leaders of both parties failed to correctly gauge the intent and capabilities of the other, with disastrous consequences.

The intelligence gaps make predictive assessment a challenge, but the stakes are high. Lebanese Hezbollah is rearming. Secretary-General Nasrallah publicly stated that LH has 30,000 rockets. While that number is difficult to verify, what is more alarming is that both Israel and the United States have stated that LH has likely acquired SCUD Short Range Ballistic Missiles (BBC 2010). The SCUD variants have a range of 112-310 miles, which would allow LH to target Tel Aviv. The situation along the border remains volatile, needing just a spark to reignite the conflict. This tense cross-border staring contest is the context in which this study is rooted. It will attempt to answer the question: Will armed conflict occur between Israel and Lebanese Hezbollah in 2010?

### **Literature Review**

Four years after the ceasefire was brokered, most of the literature available on the 2006 war and the potential for the resumption of violence comes from articles in professional journals, newspapers, and other media reports. Although this is a predictive study, literature focusing on the 2006 conflict is of use because of the value of historical comparison and the unresolved nature of the war. The way that the 2006 conflict developed and concluded impacts the analysis of the actors involved in a potential future conflict.

The 2006 conflict was remarkable for the speed with which the situation moved from calm to war. Israel's northern border with Lebanon had been mostly quiet since the withdrawal of the IDF from southern Lebanon in 2000. Hezbollah forces had crossed the border several times in 2005 and 2006 to attempt to kidnap

Israeli soldiers to use as bargaining chips for the release of high-profile prisoners. Unbeknownst to LH leadership, the Israeli government had drawn up plans for large-scale military retaliation in the event of a successful kidnapping (Lipshitz 2008, 24). Such an event occurred on 12 July, when Hezbollah forces crossed the border and ambushed an Israeli patrol, killing five soldiers. The ambushers took two bodies back to Lebanon with them. Hezbollah never released information on the status of the soldiers, so the Israeli government operated on the assumption that the two captives were alive. A hastily thrown-together Israeli rescue team was drawn into an ambush in Lebanon, incurring five additional losses.

Tel Aviv essentially fought two wars: the war against Hezbollah, and a war of pressure against the Lebanese government. Part of the Israeli plan to fight Hezbollah was to pressure Beirut to distance itself from Hezbollah and to take efforts to contain them. Israeli strikes initially targeted a number of high-profile national infrastructure targets such as Rafic Hariri International Airport, petroleum reserves, and power stations (Arkin 2007, 15). The main roads out of Beirut were bombed, and a naval blockade was put into effect. The Israeli strategy was to make association with Hezbollah a painful proposition, and to use the destruction of national assets to turn the population against Hezbollah. This strategy was arguably counterproductive, ignoring the hard-earned lessons of strategic bombing from World War Two and Vietnam. A study conducted post-WWII of German families who suffered the loss of their homes in Allied bombing raids found that the experience actually made most victims more nationalistic and supportive of their government (D'Olier 1945, 108). Public opinion is a difficult thing to target,

especially through the use of bombs. The Lebanese government protested the Israeli strikes through diplomatic channels, particularly with the Arab League and the United Nations. The Lebanese military did not fight the IDF or Hezbollah during the war, aside from occasional anti-aircraft fire at low-flying Israeli aircraft.

Following the retaliatory airstrikes, the situation along the border quickly escalated into full-scale war. Although Hezbollah had fired multiple missiles into Israel prior to the strikes, the attacks on Beirut, along with Israeli airstrikes on Hezbollah administration buildings, preceded a barrage of missile fire into Israeli population centers. The northern city of Haifa, the third largest city in Israel, was struck repeatedly by Hezbollah's longer-range missiles. The day after the Beirut strikes, the Israeli corvette *Hanit* was struck by a Chinese or Iranian-manufactured anti-ship cruise missile, killing four sailors (Erlanger 2006, 3).

A week after the initial ambush, the IDF began a ground offensive to secure missile launch sites and strategic villages. This was the beginning of roughly three weeks of a cat-and-mouse guerilla war between Hezbollah fighters and the IDF. Although Israeli ground forces were able to seize several key villages in southern Lebanon, Hezbollah missile fire continued right up until the ceasefire took effect (Feldman 2006, 3.) When the UN-brokered ceasefire took effect on 14 August, Hezbollah missile barrages and well-entrenched guerilla fighters had inflicted more than a hundred military and civilian Israeli casualties, while the IDF inflicted several hundred losses on Hezbollah and about a thousand civilian deaths.

Table 1

Lebanese Hezbollah Missile Arsenal

Name	Caliber	Range (miles)	Warhead (lbs)	Fired (2006)
Fajr 1	107 mm	4-5.5	11-15.5	Few
Falaq	240 mm	6-7	245-265	<10
Uragan	220 mm	6-22	615	200-300
Katyusha	122 mm	7-25	20-65	~3800
Fajr-3	240 mm	10.5-28	100	Dozens
WS-1	302 mm	25-68	220-330	25-100
Fajr-5	333 mm	46.5	200	Dozens
Zelzal-2	610 mm	125	1320	None
SCUD	880 mm	112-310	1320-2170	None

(Data in table provided by Arkin 2007, 32)

Following the ceasefire, Lebanese troops deployed to southern Lebanon to create a buffer between Israel and Hezbollah. Hezbollah almost certainly still operates in the region, but aside from the occasional missile launch, it has not picked a fight with either Israel or the Lebanese army since the deployment began. In February 2008 a car bomb in Damascus killed Imad Mugniyah, the military commander of Hezbollah (Francona 2008). Nasrallah vowed revenge against Israel for the assassination. Later in 2008 a prisoner exchange resulted in Israel handing over four high-profile prisoners for the bodies of its two captured soldiers. In 2009 the Israeli navy intercepted the container ship *MV Francop* carrying 320 tons of munitions intended for Hezbollah. Hezbollah has been rearming, and recently both Israel and the United States accused Syria of providing SCUDs to the militia.

The outcome of the 2006 war is debatable. Several former high-ranking members of the IDF described it as a loss. Many Arab media outlets and heads of state regarded the war as a Hezbollah victory, if only because Hezbollah was not destroyed by Israel (Cordesman 2006, 8). Still other commentators regard the war as an Israeli military victory that inflicted costly damage upon Hezbollah. What is for certain is that Hezbollah lost a considerable number of fighters and armament, yet they remained a coherent fighting force at the time of the ceasefire. Nasrallah was hailed as a hero throughout the Middle East, and he stated his intention to rearm Hezbollah. Israel did not suffer a significant amount of damage to its military capabilities or infrastructure. Lebanon however, was temporarily crippled by the damage to its airport, ports, roads, and electrical system.

This study will utilize the Lockwood Analytical Method of Prediction (LAMP) to predict each actor's actions in relation to the potential for another summer war. The LAMP technique establishes a 12 step logical framework to generate alternate futures and key indicators for the most likely futures (Lockwood and Lockwood 1993, 27-28). As an analytical technique, it is fairly robust at limiting opportunities for bias. Some of the analytical biases that may have influenced this study include mirror imaging and oversimplification. Mirror imaging is the tendency of an analyst to frame an actor's perception and response to a question in the same way that he himself would. Because this study revolves around multiple countries with multiple cultures, religions, and political attitudes, mirror imaging is a potential danger. Occurrences of mirror imaging will be mitigated through the use of redundant

sources for key assumptions, as well as by using diverse sources from different parts of the world.

Oversimplification is a necessary evil considering the length and timeframe of this study. There are only three actors under consideration in this LAMP process. Realistically, the number could be much higher, and include secondary actors like the US, UN, Syria, and Iran. Likewise the courses of action available to each actor are limited to two broad options (fight or do not fight). Each option could be broken down into more specific COAs. The reason for this simplification is that the process of generating alternate futures and performing pairwise analysis grows increasingly complex with each actor and COA added. The number of actors and COAs has been simplified for the sake of the timeframe available to conduct this study. Each step of the LAMP process is laid out in detail below.

**Step 1. Define the issue for which the most likely future will be determined.**

Will armed conflict occur between Israel and Lebanese Hezbollah (LH) in 2010?

**Step 2. Specify the actors involved in the issue.**

The primary actors in this issue are Israel, Lebanese Hezbollah, and the state of Lebanon. Israel and LH are the primary antagonists. Lebanon is the context in which the scenario plays out, an actor that may exercise influence over LH, and a potential target of Israeli military action. Israel and Lebanon are unitary actors, with a government and a definite chain of command. Lebanese Hezbollah is a well-organized militia with an organized chain of command. The extent of control that



Nasrallah has over LH's actions is debatable, but certainly it is significant. For the purposes of this study, Lebanese Hezbollah will be considered a unitary actor.

### **Step 3. Perform an in-depth study of how each actor perceives the issue.**

It is important to understand the military capabilities and national objectives of the primary actors in this study—Israel, Lebanese Hezbollah, and the state of Lebanon. The capabilities and intent of each actor can be gleaned from a variety of open-source journals and articles.

#### **Israel**

Israel has more than 170,000 active duty soldiers, with another 480,000 in reserve (World Factbook 2010). The Israeli Air Force has 400 combat aircraft, and a growing Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) force. The Israeli forces most involved in the war on LH were F-16s employed in the interdiction role, UAVs conducting surveillance and strike missions, and mechanized infantry used in the COIN role during the ground offensive (accompanied by Apache helicopter gunships and special forces). From an air defense standpoint, the IDF has a variety of operational anti-missile systems, including the Patriot and Arrow II surface-to-air missile systems. The Patriot and Arrow systems are designed to intercept ballistic missiles such as the SCUD series as well as longer-range systems. The Iron Dome system will become operational in summer 2010, and is intended to intercept the smaller shorter-range missiles that were the bulk of Hezbollah's missile arsenal in 2006 (Harel 2010). Although all of these systems have successfully intercepted missiles in testing, critics have questioned the ability of Israeli missile defense to intercept a large quantity of missiles fired from across the Lebanese border.

The national objectives of the state of Israel can be simplified into stability, security, and regional dominance. Generally speaking, a country in a dominant position in a region has an interest in preserving the status quo. Israel likes its neighbors to be stable but militarily nonthreatening (Cordesman 2006, 8). Lebanon with Hezbollah as an influential actor is neither. Israel is constantly urging Beirut to rein in Hezbollah. With the Lebanese army officially acting as a buffer in southern Lebanon, Israel may hold Lebanon responsible for any future Hezbollah actions. Some “red lines” that may lead to Israel fighting Hezbollah include Hezbollah taking control of the Lebanese government (whether through the ballot or a coup), a resumption of missile barrages, successful kidnapping operations, or the acquisition of mass casualty weapons like SRBMs or chemical warheads (Haaretz 2010).

### **Lebanese Hezbollah**

Lebanese Hezbollah has several thousand fighters and tens of thousands of sympathizers who may be willing to take up arms. Their arsenal includes small arms, MANPADS, a variety of anti-tank and anti-ship missiles, and a sizeable missile force. The anti-tank missiles were put to effective use in the 2006 conflict, disabling Israeli armor and collapsing buildings on Israeli soldiers. LH inflicted several casualties on an Israeli patrol boat with an anti-ship missile during the conflict (leading to retaliatory Israeli strikes against Lebanese coastal radars). Hezbollah’s missile force is at the core of their strategy. The bulk of their missile arsenal is composed of thousands of small rockets like the Katyusha series, with a range inside of 20 miles. LH has also acquired a much smaller (tens to lower hundreds) number of medium-range missiles, such as the Fajr-5 and the Zelzal-2. Many of these

missiles have been modified with ball bearings and scrap metal around the warhead. They were put to devastating use during the war, where flying shrapnel killed dozens of Israelis. Hezbollah has reportedly strengthened its missile force since the 2006 war, and likely has a larger arsenal with more medium to long-range missiles than before the conflict. Recently, Israel and the United States have accused Syria of providing SCUD SRBMs to LH.

The primary objectives of Lebanese Hezbollah are power, challenging Israeli dominance, and the promotion of a Shia/Iranian agenda. LH is both a militia and a major political force in Lebanon. Hezbollah is represented in the Lebanese Parliament and is one of the primary factions representing the country's Shia population. Hezbollah leadership is adept at influencing popular opinion through the media. Media coverage of rocket strikes and defiant displays by LH leadership gave many viewers the impression that Hezbollah emerged victorious in the summer of 2006 (Kalb 2007, 44). Much like the 1973 war, Israel was caught off-guard and had initial difficulties countering the enemy, leading to the perception of an Israeli defeat in spite of later gains. The media war is significant because it establishes that military victory may not be a primary goal of LH. This is problematic from an analytical viewpoint, because LH's leadership may decide to fight or not to fight based upon propaganda considerations rather than strictly military considerations. Hezbollah's intent to resume a war with Israel is difficult to assess. On one hand they are rearming and preparing for such a war. The perception of victory and the eventual prisoner exchange in 2008 could encourage Hezbollah to fight again (Kershner 2008). But the level of destruction that was

inflicted on Lebanon during the last war could give Hezbollah pause, as they may lose popular support if they incite another war.

## **Lebanon**

The Lebanese military is undermanned and underequipped. The Lebanese Army has 70,000 soldiers, equipped mainly with Cold War vintage arms (World Factbook 2010). Talks to acquire the modern T-90 main battle tank are currently underway. The Lebanese Air Force consists mainly of transport and attack helicopters. A Russian offer to finance a squadron of MiG-29s was declined in favor of the much more practical Mil-24 (Halpin 2008). They have also appealed to the US for help establishing a better COIN capability. The LAF is unable to defend its territory from either Israel or Hezbollah. The only combat incidents involving the LAF during the 2006 conflict were isolated instances of Lebanese AAA firing on overflying Israeli aircraft, with no losses incurred on either side. The LAF did not resist Israeli ground forces. The LAF did not attempt to suppress or disarm Hezbollah during the war (Cordesman 2006, 10), and they have not attempted to do so since then.

The national objectives of Lebanon are stability and sovereignty. Beirut is eager to stabilize the country and recover from the scars of conflict, both recent and old. The state of Lebanon itself suffered heavily from the Israeli offensive in 2006. Lebanon's national infrastructure, particularly airports, ports, roads, bridges, and electrical power stations, were hit hard by airstrikes. Much of the money being used to repair the country comes from foreign sources such as Saudi Arabia or Iran, each with their own agenda. Political stability is a key objective of Beirut as well.

Lebanon's government is composed of dozens of political parties, most allied with one of two major political blocs. These parties are frequently unable to agree on anything, leading to deadlock and protests. Tensions have been mounting between Hezbollah supporters and opponents, and religious tensions are emerging over Lebanon's quota system of representation for each religious group. The traditional elites in Beirut are deeply concerned about Lebanese sovereignty, both from internal threats like Hezbollah, and external threats like Israel (Feldman 2006, 3). Faced with the prospect of another cross-border war, Beirut will most likely want to avoid the fighting altogether, in order to avoid further economic damage and loss of sovereignty from Israeli incursions and potential Hezbollah power gains.

**Step 4. Specify all possible courses of action for each actor.**

Broadly speaking, each actor has two courses of action available: Conflict or No Conflict. Conflict covers the possibilities of both a limited war (guerilla tactics and periodic missile strikes,) and a full-scale conflict (offensive with armor/maneuver units and missile strikes against major urban centers.) The No Conflict COA covers the possibility of continuing with the status quo (tense but mostly bloodless standoff,) or peace negotiations.

**Step 5. Determine the major scenarios within which alternative futures will be compared.**

Scenario I: Limited conflict erupts (guerrilla tactics, short range LH missiles, IAF airstrikes)

Scenario II: Full-scale conflict erupts (long-range missile strikes on Israeli urban centers, major IDF ground offensive)

Scenario III: No conflict/status quo (no violence or very low-grade guerilla action)

Scenario IV: Peaceful resolution (successful peace negotiations)

**Step 6. Calculate the total number of permutations of alternative futures for each scenario.**

The LAMP method utilizes the formula  $X^Y = Z$ , where X equals the number of courses of action available to each actor. In this study, X is 2 (Conflict or No Conflict). Y is the number of actors, which is 3. Z is the total number of alternative futures that will be compared. This formula ( $2^3 = 8$ ) yields eight alternative futures that must be compared.

Table 2

Possible Permutations

(C = Conflict, NC = No Conflict)

Alternate Future #	Israel	LH	Lebanon
1	NC	NC	NC
2	NC	C	NC
3	NC	C	C
4	NC	NC	C
5	C	NC	C
6	C	C	NC
7	C	NC	NC
8	C	C	C

**Step 7: Perform a pair wise comparison of all alternate futures to determine their relative possibility.**

In order to complete this pair wise comparison, each alternate future must be compared to the others. Whichever future is more likely to occur is awarded one “vote.” The total number of comparisons (and votes) is determined by the formula  $V = n(n-1)/2$ , where n equals the total number of alternate futures (Lockwood and Lockwood 1993, 40). In this case the formula results in  $V = 8(8-1)/2 = 28$  votes. This distribution of votes through the pair wise comparison method is listed below.

Table 3

Alternate Futures and Pair Wise Comparison Votes

Alternate Future #	Israel	LH	Lebanon	Votes
1	NC	NC	NC	6
2	NC	C	NC	1
3	NC	C	C	4
4	NC	NC	C	1
5	C	NC	C	2
6	C	C	NC	7
7	C	NC	NC	2
8	C	C	C	5

**Step 8. Rank order the alternate futures for each scenario from highest relative probability to the lowest based on the number of “votes” received.**

Table 4

Alternate Futures Ranked By Votes

Alternate Future #	Israel	LH	Lebanon	Votes
6	C	C	NC	7
1	NC	NC	NC	6
8	C	C	C	5
3	NC	C	C	4
7	C	NC	NC	2
5	C	NC	C	2
2	NC	C	NC	1
4	NC	NC	C	1

**Step 9: Assuming that each scenario occurs, analyze the possible futures with the highest relative probabilities in terms of their consequences for the issue in question.**

The LAMP method stresses that most consumers are interested only in the top three to five most likely futures. Based on vote distribution, this study will consider the top four futures (alternative future numbers 6, 1, 8, and 3.) These alternate futures will be analyzed in detail to shed light on the consequences inherent in each.

Alternate Future #6 (7 votes) Israel and Lebanese Hezbollah choose to fight each other while Lebanon itself stays out of the war.

This scenario is essentially a repeat of the 2006 war. Something will spark a war between Israel and Lebanese Hezbollah (possibly another kidnapping operation, missile fire, or a preemptive Israeli airstrike.) Thousands of missiles will rain down on Israeli territory, saturating the limited deployment of missile defense systems. Israeli airstrikes will target launch sites, caches, and Hezbollah leadership targets. While the two antagonists are slugging it out, the state of Lebanon will try to stay out of the fight. The Lebanese Armed Forces will be unwilling to defend their territory against the IDF and reluctant to challenge Hezbollah. Mindful of the damage that Lebanon suffered in the 2006 war, Beirut will vigorously push for a ceasefire through diplomatic and political channels.

Because this scenario is a repeat of the courses of action taken during the 2006 war, the consequences may be similar. If Israel does not manage to decisively defeat Hezbollah, popular opinion in the Middle East will regard it as another Arab



victory. Casualties will likely run in the hundreds to thousands for each side, mostly involving civilian losses. If Hezbollah is not quickly defeated, Israeli strikes will likely target Lebanese infrastructure again, setting back the country's economy and inflaming popular sentiment. There are a few potentially explosive consequences of this scenario coming to fruition. If LH fires a SCUD or uses chemical warheads, Israel would likely retaliate with a great deal of force, potentially even against Iran or Syria. If Hezbollah's missile barrages cause substantial Israeli casualties, Israel may retaliate against Iran or Syria anyway for providing support to the militia.

Alternate Future #1 (6 votes) All actors choose not to fight.

This scenario is a continuation of the status quo. Although both Israel and Lebanese Hezbollah are rearming and staring at each other across the border, neither side will choose to initiate a conflict. The state of Lebanon will continue to resist calls from Israel and the west to disarm Lebanese Hezbollah, and the sectarian nature of Lebanese government and society will persist.

The consequences of this scenario are mixed. On one hand, if the ceasefire holds, all of the parties will have time to prepare for a larger fight that may happen later on. Hezbollah will attempt to get more missiles with longer ranges and larger payloads, while Israel deploys more anti-missile systems. The Lebanese Armed Forces may strengthen themselves to the point where they could attempt to disarm Hezbollah, but it seems unlikely that the political will to confront them exists. On the other hand, the ceasefire may lead to a genuine peace. If Lebanese Hezbollah can commit themselves to a primarily political role in Lebanon and try to

consolidate power without attacking Israel, tensions may deescalate along the border. Of course this depends on Israel not attacking LH and Lebanon not erupting into a civil war between Hezbollah and other Lebanese factions.

Alternate Future #8 (5 votes) All actors choose to fight.

The most likely way that this scenario would play out is if Israel and Lebanese Hezbollah fight each other (like in Alternate Future #6) except this time Lebanon gets pulled into the fight. There are two ways this could happen. The first is if Beirut decides to fight Israeli violations of its territory. That is not terribly likely, because the amount of damage that the IDF can inflict on Lebanon is far greater than what little ability the Lebanese military has to challenge the IDF. What is more likely is that Lebanon will fight Hezbollah. An internal political struggle or pressure from Israeli strikes could lead Beirut to confront Hezbollah militarily.

The consequences of this scenario are mixed. With every actor involved in the fight, the potential for casualties and damage are immense. One possible outcome is that Hezbollah is significantly weakened by facing both Israeli action and military force from Beirut. The Lebanese government would be gambling by taking on Hezbollah while Israel is attacking the country though. If Beirut is seen as acting on Israel's behalf, it could drastically undermine the already tenuous legitimacy of the government in the eyes of its citizens. This scenario is a best case scenario of sorts for Israel, due to the Lebanese government fighting Hezbollah in-country while the IDF attacks them from the outside.

Alternate Future #3 (4 votes) Lebanese Hezbollah and Lebanon choose to fight each other while Israel stays out of the war.

This scenario involves a Lebanese civil war, with Beirut and Hezbollah fighting for control of the country. Israel will largely stay out of the war, in order to avoid generating sympathy for Hezbollah. This scenario could come around as a result of international pressure on Beirut to rein in Hezbollah. Given that the Lebanese government has resisted that pressure so far, it is more likely that a war between Beirut and Hezbollah would be sparked by an internal political squabble over political representation and domestic power.

The consequences of civil strife are serious. Lebanon is still recovering from the scars of wars old and recent. Although Beirut and the Lebanese military have a great deal of popular support, it is doubtful that they could win a military triumph over Hezbollah without outside support. As Secretary of Defense Gates has noted, Lebanese Hezbollah is better armed than many small nations are (BBC 2010). If Beirut manages to gain the upper hand over Hezbollah, the militia could be severely undermined. If most of the population turns on Hezbollah that could certainly be the outcome. If the government cannot beat Hezbollah though, the militia's influence on the country will increase, and perhaps even lead to a Hezbollah-led government. It is doubtful that Israel would stay out of the conflict for long following a Hezbollah coup.

**Step 10: Determine the focal events that must occur in the present in order to bring about a given alternate future.**

A focal event in LAMP analysis is a significant occurrence that influences the relative probability of the alternate futures. The focal events that must occur to bring about each alternate future are listed below.

Alternate Future #6 Israel and Lebanese Hezbollah choose to fight each other while Lebanon itself stays out of the war.

Lebanon is content with the status quo, and will make every effort to stay out of a conflict in order to avoid further damage (No Conflict). Either Israel or Hezbollah will have to commit a major provocation (Conflict), such as a missile barrage, kidnapping attempt, assassination, or preemptive attack. The provocation must lead to retaliation by the opposing party, and escalation from there.

Alternate Future #1 All actors choose not to fight.

This is the status quo scenario. Lebanon certainly does not want to be dragged into another war, and Beirut will continue to ignore Hezbollah and Israeli violations of state sovereignty (No Conflict). Hezbollah will continue to rearm and bask in the glow of their perceived victory in 2006, without desiring to spark another costly war with Israel (No Conflict). Israel will continue the development and deployment of anti-missile systems but will be constrained from fighting Hezbollah for fear of more missile strikes and international condemnation (No Conflict). No major provocations can occur between Israel and Hezbollah for this scenario to play out.

Alternate Future #8 All actors choose to fight.

The focal events for this alternate future are similar to those for the scenario

listed above, except this time the Lebanese government must get involved. Because the Lebanese military has practically no ability to fight the IDF, they will instead be drawn into a conflict against Hezbollah (Conflict). This will likely be the result of an internal political conflict with Hezbollah, but could also be the result of Israeli pressure to confront the militia.

Alternate Future #3 Lebanese Hezbollah and Lebanon choose to fight each other while Israel stays out of the war.

A conflict between Beirut and Hezbollah would occur due to internal power struggles, whether at the ballot box or in the villages. Because the Lebanese government has historically been reluctant to use force to restrain Hezbollah, the militia will be the likely aggressor (Conflict). Israel will choose to stay out of the conflict if it assesses that the Lebanese government is likely to win or that intervening on behalf of Beirut would be counterproductive (No Conflict).

### **Step 11: Develop indicators (measures) for the focal events.**

Each focal event has a number of key indicators that an analyst could use to predict the relative probability of an alternate future occurring. These indicators foretell the actor's decisions.

#### Alternate Future#6

- Lebanon stays out of the war (No Conflict)
  - No mobilization of Lebanese forces
  - International aid requests are economic/political, not military
  - No threatening statements towards other actors
- Major provocative event occurs between Israel and Hezbollah (Conflict)

- Mobilization of Israeli or Hezbollah forces
- Missile dispersal/survivability activity
- Border incursions and surveillance
- Disruptions in training cycles
- Sharp upturn in official rhetoric

#### Alternate Future#1

- Lebanon is content with status quo (NC) (see Alternate Future#6 above)
- Hezbollah is content with status quo (NC)
  - Centralized command and control, non-dispersed assets
  - No mobilization of forces
  - Leadership maintains high public profile
  - Normal training and recruitment cycles
- Israel is content with status quo (NC)
  - Normal training cycles
  - No mobilization of forces
  - Normal deployment schedule for anti-missile systems
  - Normal munitions requests from US suppliers (Cloud 2006)

#### Alternate Future#8

- Lebanon fights Hezbollah (C)
  - Sharp downturn in Lebanese-Hezbollah relations
  - Growth in Hezbollah's in-country influence
  - Lebanese requests for armament and munitions
  - Mobilization of forces

--Disruption in training cycle

-Israel and Hezbollah fight (C) (see Alternate Future#6 above)

### Alternate Future#3

-Lebanon fights Hezbollah (C) (see Alternate Future#8 above)

-Israel stays out of the war (NC) (see Alternate Future#1 above)

### **Step 12: State the potential of a given alternate future to “transpose” into another alternate future.**

Each alternate future is a combination of decisions made by actors. In a given future, if an actor changes its course of action, the future could “transpose” into a different alternate future. This final step assesses the likelihood of this occurrence.

Given that Alternate Future#1 (all actors choose No Conflict) is essentially the status quo today, it could quickly transpose into any of the other futures with little warning. Alternate Future#3 (Lebanon and Hezbollah choose Conflict) could transpose into Alternate Future#8 (all actors choose Conflict) if the Lebanese government appears to be on the brink of collapse. Israel is willing to intervene in Lebanon to prevent instability and the rise of an Islamic regime, as was demonstrated in the 1982 Lebanon War (BBC 1982).

### **Conclusion**

The situation today in Lebanon is much like the situation prior to the 2006 war—only more dangerous. The Lebanese government has deployed peacekeeping

troops to the south of the country, but it is unlikely that they will intervene to prevent Hezbollah operations. Numerous unconfirmed reports state that Hezbollah has rearmed, possibly with SCUDs and chemical weapons. Although the border is calm for now, the region's history has shown that a comparatively small provocation can spark a full-scale war.

This study suggests that a conflict of some sort is likely break out between Israel and Hezbollah sometime in the summer of 2010. It may be a large scale war or it may be a limited cross-border conflict. Beirut may get involved or sit on the sidelines. Only one of the top four alternative scenarios suggested that the peaceful status quo would continue. The other three scenarios involved a Lebanese civil war or a war between Israel and Hezbollah. Analysts and observers of the region would do well to pay close attention to the most valuable product of the LAMP process: the key indicators that give insight as to what alternate future the actors are progressing towards. Armed with this information, an analyst can hope to avoid strategic surprise and be prepared for what could be a long summer.



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