

The Israeli Home Front: From Civil Defense to Societal Resilience

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Main Arguments

- Approach to emergency management dominated by security orientation
- “All hazard” concept mostly lip service
- Slow realization of the terrorist threat
- From “Rear” to “Civilian Front”
- From physical defense to social response

Historical Perspective

- 1948 – War of Independence
- 1956-1982 – Symmetric military conflicts
- 1992 – The 1st Gulf War: Turning Point 1
- 2000-2004 - Second Intifada
- 2006 – Second Lebanon War: Turning Point 2
- 2008-9 – Cast Lead (Gaza)

Prevailing concept (?)

- “The Fourth Pillar”: Defensive Posture
- Military / Civil Defense
- Active / Passive Defense
- Minimum investment in physical sheltering
- Growing role for social resilience

Societal Resilience

“The capacity of the public and the civilian organizations and institutions to successfully cross crisis situations by preserving the functional sustainability, the social cohesiveness, and the legitimacy of the government, in order to mitigate the damage and to bring about the fastest recovery”

MG Yair Golan, Home Front Commander, March 2010

Main Components of Societal Resilience

- Social capacity to contain major traumas with flexibility and versatility [and to react according to their magnitude]
- Collective ability to bounce back quickly
- Return to (enhanced?) systemic functioning

How to Enhance Social Resilience

- Promotion of effective capacity of first responders (cooperation, C&C)
- Activate the public's preparedness by:
 - Education & awareness
 - Exercises
 - Involvement
 - Connectivity
- Credibility of national and local leadership

Resilience Programs

- Focus on the community level
- Priority to threatened communities
- Local formal and informal leadership
- Integration of NGOs & PPP
- Preparedness of the education, welfare, and public health systems
- Voluntary civil resilience network

Future Challenges

- Conceptual adaptation: balance the security doctrine; promote scope of defense
- Expand role of civilian authorities
- Non military hazards
- More actions; fewer words and intentions
- Cooperation, accountability, responsibility
- Leadership = Credibility = Confidence