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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
 REVIEW AUTHORITY: SHARON E AHMAD  
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E.O. 13526: N/A

TAGS: OPRC, KMDR, IS

SUBJECT: ISRAEL MEDIA REACTION

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE TEL AVIV

MEDIA REACTION REPORT

Wednesday, January 12, 2011

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SUBJECTS COVERED IN THIS REPORT:  
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1. Mideast
  2. Iran
  3. Sudan
  4. U.S.-Israel Relations
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Key stories in the media:  
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The Jerusalem Post and other media reported that on Tuesday, during the Prime Minister's annual press conference with the foreign press, Benjamin Netanyahu stepped back on Tuesday from former Mossad head Meir Dagan's appraisal that Iran will not get nuclear weapons until the middle of the decade. These were "only" intelligence assessments and should be seen as such, he said. Netanyahu made clear that he believed the Iranian threat had not in any way become less acute, and reiterated what he said two months ago in New Orleans -- and for which he was chastised publicly by U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates -- that sanctions needed to be backed up by a viable and serious military option. Since the U.S.-led sanctions against Iran were aimed at changing the Iranian government's determination to obtain nuclear arms, "those sanctions have not yet achieved their objective," the Prime Minister said. "I think they [the sanctions] should be strictly enforced and materially strengthened." Regarding the recent escalation in Gaza, Netanyahu said that Hamas and the other organizations there "shelling and rocketing Israel" will "make a terrible mistake to test our will to defend our people; I think they will make a terrible, terrible mistake." Turning to the diplomatic process with the Palestinians, he said that 2011 would reveal "who is seriously interested in peace in the region." The PM was quoted as saying that the reason an additional freeze on settlement construction did not go into effect was not because there was no agreement with the U.S., but because the U.S. decided that the additional freeze would do nothing to move the process forward.

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"What is preventing the advent of peace negotiations is that the Palestinians are doing everything in their power to avoid them," he said. "This is the simple truth." Only his government would "be trusted by the public" to deliver a peace agreement that would ensure security and Palestinian recognition of Israel, and the Palestinians were making a mistake walking away from talks with him, he said. As far as the Syrian track was concerned, Netanyahu

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said that the peace agreement with Egypt was reached only after Anwar Sadat took Egypt out of the Soviet camp. A similar break from Iran would be necessary for Syrian President Bashar Assad to make peace with Israel, Netanyahu said, adding that he did not see "any clear willingness" on the part of Damascus to change its relationship with Tehran.

Intelligence and Atomic Energy Minister Dan Meridor, a Likud moderate, was quoted as saying in an interview with Ha'aretz, that the Knesset plan to probe left-wing NGOs is dangerous.

Israel Hayom and Israel Radio reported that the police have apprehended a suspect in the Internet-based death threats against Deputy State Prosecutor Shay Nitzan. The police were quoted as saying that he is a resident of the Sharon area who used to be a member of right-wing groups.

The media reported that on Tuesday, the IDF killed Mohammed al-Najar, 25, a key member of Islamic Jihad near the city of Khan Yunis in southern Gaza Strip. In a combined operation with the Shin Bet security service, he was targeted by a missile fired from an aircraft. Military sources were quoted as saying that he was preparing bombing attacks inside Israel and in recent weeks had been involved in the intensified rocket attacks against Israeli communities bordering Gaza.

Ha'aretz quoted Colonel Adam Zussman, commander of the Dan region (central Israel) in the IDF Home Front Command, as saying that "danger has returned to Tel Aviv. Under any war scenario, it will be hit by a large number of missiles, missiles that are precise and lethal. However, our preparedness to deal with such missiles has also improved." Ha'aretz says that Col. Zussman's willingness to be interviewed about threats posed to the region under his command underscores IDF concerns about possible war scenarios.

Maariv reported that on Saturday night the Left is expected to hold a mass rally in Tel Aviv to protest against Yisrael Beiteinu's recent moves, under the slogan: "Fighting for Democracy." Israel Hayom reported that in a conversation Netanyahu held with FM Avigdor Lieberman, he attacked Lieberman's proposals that Knesset members could probe left-wing groups. Israel Hayom quoted the PM as saying that it is important in a democracy to maintain a plurality of views. The Jerusalem Post quoted opposition leader Tzipi Livni as saying in a fiery speech at Bar-Ilan University on Tuesday that Netanyahu should have reprimanded Lieberman for calling left-wing organizations accomplices to terror.

Maariv and other media reported that former Knesset Speaker and

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former Jewish Agency Chairman Avraham Burg, together with Hadash (Communist) Knesset Member and former Meretz Knesset Member Mossi Raz, is setting up a new left-wing movement -- "The Democratic Camp."

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Israel Radio reported that the IDF's Civil Administration and the Israeli defense establishment have destroyed four illegal structures near the settlement of Shiloh.

Leading media quoted Palestinian media outlets as saying that on Monday IDF troops arrested a top Hamas figure in the northern West Bank, Dr. Omar Abdel Razek. The leading online news site Ynet quoted IDF sources as saying he is being questioned for suspicion of involvement in terrorist activity. Abdel Razek is a Hamas Member of Parliament and served in the past as the Palestinian Finance Minister.

The Jerusalem Post cited an announcement by the State that the government will dramatically ease up on military regulations, determining the amount of time that a West Bank Palestinian may be held without custody without being brought before a judge.

The Jerusalem Post quoted Gabriel Zaliasnik, the President of the Jewish community in Chile, as saying that Israel's Foreign Ministry is making a big mistake by viewing Chile's recognition of a Palestinian state as a defeat for Israel.

Maariv reported that the Mavi Marmara ship will soon lead a new flotilla to Gaza.

Channel 2-TV and The Jerusalem Post quoted the watchdog group Palestinian Media Watch as saying that the Spanish government has sponsored an ad on Spanish television supporting the boycott of Israeli products.

Leading media reported that on Tuesday Iranian intelligence presented to the public material evidence that allegedly was in the possession of ten people suspected of collaborating with Mossad and of eliminating Iranian scientists. Maariv quoted Israeli experts as saying that some of the seized equipment is sophisticated, but that the rest is antiquated and ludicrous.

Ha'aretz reported that South Korea has expressed interest in substantially expanding defense-related deals with Israel and that it is interested in procuring advanced weapons systems and technology, in view of its deteriorating relations with North Korea.

Leading electronic media reported that former George Shultz, who served as Secretary of State in the Reagan administration, which imprisoned Jonathan Pollard on Israel's behalf, wrote to President Obama that Pollard had paid a great price and should be released. IDF Radio quoted Shultz as saying: "I have received the impression that people who are intimately familiar with the classified information he relayed, including the former CIA director, support his release from prison."

Maariv reported that Meretz and Yisrael Beiteinu are cooperating in a campaign against draft dodging.

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Major media reported that two Al Jazeera-TV reporters who refused

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to remove their bras during a security screening were not allowed to interview PM Netanyahu.

Leading media reported that on Monday the Foreign Ministry workers' committee announced that all Israeli embassies will stop providing security and trade assistance to Israeli companies abroad, thus halting all defense related exports. In an unprecedented move on Tuesday, the committee ordered employees in missions abroad to cease offering assistance to Israelis in distress, in an upgrading of the labor sanctions that Israeli diplomats have been engaged in for several weeks.

Yediot and Maariv highlighted the planned extradition to the U.S. today of the criminal brothers Abergil.

Leading media reported on the passing in Tel Aviv on Tuesday of Professor Ze'ev Segal, Ha'aretz's longtime legal correspondent. He was just shy of his 64th birthday.

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1. Mideast:  
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Block Quotes:  
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I. "It Will End in Murder"

The independent, left-leaning Ha'aretz editorialized (1/12):

"Calling for the murder of a lawman who decided to try to stop the incitement against Israel's Arab citizens violently crosses the line that separates freedom of expression from freedom of incitement. Public figures on the right have dismissed the issue with the tired claim that those responsible are 'wild weeds.' But nowadays, these 'weeds' are in fact sprouting in the garden of the cabinet and being enthusiastically cultivated by the Knesset.... As Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said in response to [Foreign Minister and Yisrael Beiteinu leader Avigdor] Lieberman's assault on Likud members who object to persecuting human rights organizations, 'in a democratic country, it's important to maintain a spectrum of opinion.' But the unbridled incitement by his senior coalition partner against Israeli citizens is outside the legitimate spectrum of opinion. It's a pity that Netanyahu does not see fit to get rid of his Foreign Minister. But at the very least, the Prime Minister, like the Justice Minister and the Attorney General, must denounce his inflammatory statements loudly and clearly."

II. "Are We More Racist than in the Past?"

Former (Labor Party) cabinet minister and liberal contributor Uzi Baram wrote in the independent Israel Hayom (1/12): "The ideas of [the slain far-right leader Meir] Kahane, which were rejected [by the Israeli body politic] 25 years ago are becoming more acceptable and understood.... [Knesset Member] Michael Ben Ari [of the extreme

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right National Union party] is not a lone rider in the Israeli Knesset.... All of them have a common denominator. The guilt feeling and the deep commitment to democracy have been lost. The entire campaign against human rights groups and other organizations is an attempt to modify Israel's values and to turn it into a provincial state devoid of the moral message embraced by David Ben-Gurion until his last breath. Ben Ari does not represent an isolated phenomenon. He is the litmus test of a change we have undergone -- a change that obligates reflection and the presentation of a public alternative - on the Right and Left --, a change that must eliminate such phenomena from our midst."

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III. "Perils of the Geneva Initiative"

Adam Raz of the Labor Party-oriented Yigal Allon Educational Center wrote in the popular, pluralist Maariv (1/12): "[According to the Geneva Initiative,] the number of refugees who enter Israel will conform to the number that it will submit to an international commission [set up by the Initiative]. The number does not depend on its free will, as might be understood from the phrase 'Israel's sovereign discretion,' but rather the basis for its calculation will be the average of the total numbers that the third parties (not Israel or Palestine) will submit to the commission. In practice, the ambiguity enables both sides to take pride in an achievement: the Palestinians say that the document contains recognition of the right of return, and the Israelis say that since the number of refugees who will return is subject to their decision, [the document] forgoes the right of return. The publicity surrounding the initiative states that there is recognition of the State of Israel as the state of the Jewish people, but this is not mentioned in the document itself, and it can be said that Israel is the 'state of all its citizens'.... On the issue of Jerusalem, too, the division of sovereignty is a recipe for disputes.... Israel Harel, the former Chairman of the Council of Jewish Settlements in the Territories, said about the initiative that it was acceptable to him with minor revisions, because in practice it prevents the Palestinians from achieving territorial contiguity and extends the Israeli borders. Therefore, when we hear from the Geneva initiative members recently that a large part of the right wing has consented to the initiative, we should ask why. The Geneva initiative constitutes an obstacle to future negotiations due to the unrealistic conditions it poses. It is not a basis for a responsible peace, but rather a delusional and dangerous plan for no more than a cease-fire."

2. Iran:

Block Quotes:

"The Effective Iranian Deterrent"

Diplomatic correspondent Aluf Benn wrote in the independent,

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left-leaning Ha'aretz (1/12): "2010 went by without a war with Iran. In the winter no one goes to war because the clouds limit air force operations. But in 2011, a conflict is brewing. The new Mossad head, Tamir Pardo, like his predecessor, prefers economy of force. But his standing in these matters is one of adviser.... The Iranian nuclear program continues despite the sanctions. And in Israel the debate continues, as the heads of the defense establishment remind us. What is clear is that to date Iran has managed to deter Israel against military action, through its rockets and missiles deployed in places outside its borders. In that way, the enemy achieved strategic balance without a single nuclear bomb."

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3. Sudan:

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"The Possible Influence on Israel of a Sudanese Secession"  
Yoel Gozansky, a researcher at Tel Aviv University's Institute for National Security Studies, maintains in the independent Israel Hayom (1/10): "Israel might create formal diplomatic ties with southern Sudan: this is not an insignificant issue (over the past year, senior officials in Juba -- the capital of southern Sudan -- have expressed their willingness for this). Israel might also secure the southern Sudanese market for its businessmen -- beyond defense exports. An orderly return of infiltrators to the south would also be possible. Despite those advantages, the flood of refugees and infiltrators through the gaping Egypt-Israel border could increase should violence return [to Sudan]."

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4. U.S.-Israel Relations:

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Block Quotes:

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"After Arizona: Israelis and Americans Must Make Democracy Work"  
Contributor Gil Troy, a professor of history at McGill University and a research fellow at the Shalom Hartman Institute in Jerusalem, wrote in the conservative, independent Jerusalem Post (1/12): "In Israel, leftists and rightists are capable of demagoguery, demonization and incitement to violence, yet each camp only sees the other's guilt. And while America's most extreme voices usually fester on the margins, tempered by the civility of the McCains and Obamas, too many shrill voices emanate from the Knesset. Israeli

politicians seem to scream 'die traitor' as often as Arizonans say 'howdy pardner'.... No one needs a rampaging maniac to deliver a wake-up call. We can see it night after night on the news; we must judge it and change it day by day by ourselves. Israelis, too, know how to rally together, when necessary.... Americans and Israelis should cultivate a politics of civility, not because of

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the insane murderer but because we all want to show 'how democracy works,' in Christina [Taylor Green]'s memory, to honor Giffords' lifework and for our common good."

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E.O. 13526: N/A  
TAGS: OPRC, KMDR, IS  
SUBJECT: ISRAEL MEDIA REACTION

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE TEL AVIV

MEDIA REACTION REPORT

Sunday-Monday, April 3-4, 2011

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SUBJECTS COVERED IN THIS REPORT:

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- 1. Justice Goldstones Recantation
- 2. Mideast

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Key stories in the media:

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Over the weekend, all media underscored an article published on Friday in The Washington Post by Justice Richard Goldstone, in which he backed away from many of the allegations that appeared in the Goldstone Report, which was written in the aftermath of Operation Cast Lead. Most importantly, Goldstone shied away from the allegations that appeared in his original report as if Israel prima facie had committed war crimes and crimes against humanity in its

2008-2009 operation in Gaza. Goldstone conceded in his article that UN-validated investigations had established that civilians were not intentionally targeted as a matter of policy by the IDF. Goldstone commended the thorough investigations that the Israeli authorities have completed into the apparent violations his committee found and

faulted Hamas for failing to act in kind. He further contrasted Hamas to Israel by noting that Hamas had pursued a policy of deliberately targeting civilians. However, Goldstone deplored Israel's lack of cooperation with his commission. Maariv noted that Goldstone has for a long time decried the political use of the U.N. Human Rights Commission has made of his report. The media reported that the U.N. is not expected to change its stance on Operation Cast Lead. Yediot quoted a source associated with Goldstone that he at first turned to The New York Times, which refused to publish his article. Yediot quoted The New York Times as saying that it does not intervene in the editing process. The media reported that on Saturday PM Benjamin Netanyahu called on the U.N. to disavow the Goldstone Report, which he said belongs in the dustbin of history. The media reported that Israel will embark on a diplomatic and public relations campaign in the coming days seeking to leverage Goldstone's article. Reactions in the Israeli media are divided. On Sunday, while the pundits in Yediot took a more conciliatory tone with Goldstone and Aluf Benn of Haaretz talked about a PR coup for Israel, the front page of Maariv was filled with indignant and unforgiving wrath. On the other hand, Haaretz and its commentator Akiva Eldar today played down Goldstone's reservations.

Makor Rishon-Hatzofe quoted senior Israeli cabinet ministers as saying privately that President Obama is unleashing Europe against Israel.

All media reported that early on Saturday, the Israel Air Force, in conjunction with Shin Bet, attacked a Hamas unit in Gaza, killing three of its members, including a senior Hamas military leader. The Hamas unit was allegedly on its way to the Sinai, where members had planned to abduct Israelis during the upcoming Passover holiday. The media cited Israel's expectation of violent actions from Hamas in the near future.

Haaretz and Yediot reported that the Jerusalem Planning and Building Committee will today discuss construction of 942 housing units in the Gilo neighborhood in the south of the city, beyond the Green Line. The plan has already been approved at the district level. If it is confirmed by the local committee, the public will be invited to voice objections to it. The plan sees the Gilo neighborhood expanding southwest, onto land currently owned by the Jewish National Fund and private individuals. In addition to the residential units, commercial and public buildings, roads and more are slated for the area. The construction is expected to be followed by further expansion of Gilo in a northwest direction, with another 850 housing units. Haaretz notes that the White House had publicly criticized the plan in November 2009. The leading online news service Ynet reported that on Sunday, in what seems to be a move inspired by right-wing pressure, PM Netanyahu and DM Ehud Barak agreed on a new zoning plan for the West Bank settlement of Nofim. The rare move

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effectively enables further developments of the settlement.

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Maariv reported that today the IDF will set up an Iron Dome battery in Ashkelon.

The Jerusalem Post reported that the Arab world sees Adel Safar, the new Syrian PM, as powerless to deal with unrest. The daily notes that as agriculture minister, Safar caused Syria, an erstwhile breadbasket, to turn into a net grain importer.

Haaretz reported that Israeli security officials and the Foreign Ministry have started preparing feverishly for the expected arrival of another Gaza flotilla in late May. More than 1,000 leftists and pro-Palestinian activists are expected to take part in the flotilla, which sources say will include more than 20 vessels of various sizes.

The media reported that on Sunday President Shimon Peres called for Israel to set regulations determining whether and when politicians may accept flights paid for by private donors, to avoid personal attacks on public figures and their families similar to what he described as the recent "character assassination" of PM Benjamin

Netanyahu.

Israel Hayom reported that Ehud Baraks Atzmaut (Independence) faction will become a party next month.

The Jerusalem Post, Yediot, and Israel Hayom reported that Israeli and Iranian rescue teams are working together in northeastern Japan. Yediot also mentioned that Israel has set up an ER operation in Haiti.

Citing a report published in the Turkish newspaper Zaman on Sunday, Maariv reported that there is one realm in which relations between Israel and Turkey are flourishing: the volume of bilateral trade surged to a new record high in 2010. The past year was the best year in trade relations between the two countries ever since they formed diplomatic relations in 1949. According to Turkish Trade Ministry data, the volume of trade between the two countries has grown at a dizzying pace in the past decade. In 2001 trade between Israel and Turkey amounted to \$1.3 billion only; the volume of trade between the two countries in 2010 was \$3.5 billion. The trend has continued into 2011 as well: the volume of Turkish imports to Israel in January 2011 was \$166 million, which is a 20.1 percent rise over January 2010. Alternately, Israeli exports to Turkey dropped by 15 percent in 2010 to \$77 million.

Leading media reported that Esther Pollard has pled with President Peres to raise her husband Jonathans fate with President Obama during his upcoming visit to Washington.

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Today, the media highlighted a strike of physicians in the public sector, which is slated for Tuesday and Wednesday.

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1. Justice Goldstones Recantation:

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Block Quotes:

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I. Goldstone Confesses and Renounces

Senior columnist Nahum Barnea wrote on page one of the mass-circulation, pluralist Yediot Aharonot (4/3): It was a mistake to boycott the Goldstone commission.... But the report that [Justice Richard Goldstone] submitted was a biased and misguided document, a document that wasnt worthy of even the paper upon which it was printed. And he caused Israel a tremendous amount of damage that it did not deserve.... The lesson for the Israeli government is not to rush to boycott. The United States, China or Russia can afford to boycott international investigations. When they refuse to cooperate, the investigation gets shut down. Israel does not have that standing. A boycott by it does nothing to undermine the legitimacy of international commissions of inquiry. It only worsens its own situation.

II. Undeserving of Forgiveness

Diplomatic correspondent and television anchor Ben Caspit wrote on page one of the popular, pluralist Maariv (4/3): Richard Goldstone is undeserving of either forgiveness or mercy.... So now, when the veil has been lifted off the face of the Human Rights Council, with Libya, an important member of this council, massacring its own civilians and NATO bombing other civilians in order to protect them (and the oil wells), with Assad counting his final days in office, with Saudi troops entering Bahrain in order to fire on its civilians, with the

entire Muslim world in flames and redefining the proportions of the international communitys hypocrisy, you have remembered, Mr. Goldstone, to say that you were wrong.

III. Israels PR Coup

Diplomatic correspondent Aluf Benn wrote in the independent, left-leaning Haaretz (4/3): Israel achieved a major public relations coup this weekend, comparable to the United Nations rescission of its

notorious resolution equating Zionism with racism. South African Judge Richard Goldstone, who came to symbolize more than anyone else the efforts to delegitimize Israel as a civilized and law-abiding country, has now retracted his allegations that Israel had committed war crimes and crimes against humanity during Operation Cast Lead.... The new Goldstone captures the change in how the West relates to Israel against the backdrop of the turmoil in the Arab world. Israel may be aggressive sometimes, but there is no other country in the Middle East whose stability is assured and which isnt threatened by a popular uprising. Israel isnt perfect, but its much closer to Western standards than its enemies. UNCLASSIFIED

#### IV. A Small Victory

Eytan Haber, veteran op-ed writer and assistant to the late Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, opined on page one of Yediot Aharonot (4/3): For Israel [Justice Goldstones recantation] is a small victory, since it claimed from the outset that [his] report was untruthful and had done it a terrible injustice. The fact that a Jew and even a Zionist had headed the committee that put us up against the wall upset even more people in Israel. We couldnt even say that he was an anti-Semite. Official Israel yesterday once again penned in a big red X on Goldstone and his report, and stepped outside for a moment for a breath of fresh air. But the air is already beginning to fill with Grad and Qassam rockets that are hurtling toward their next targets.

#### V. Goldstone Regrets

Haaretz editorialized (4/4): As in other cases involving water under the bridge, there is little weight given to [Justice Richard Goldstones] regrets after time has elapsed or circumstances have changed.... Israel does not need a comparison with Hamas, whose members launch rockets at civilian sites in order to exculpate themselves. Its internal, moral obligation -- and not just for reasons of international utility -- is to do everything in its power to avoid harming the innocent. A certain amount of regret on Goldstone's part must not cause Israel to regret the limitations it has imposed on its army.

#### VI. Goldstone Report: the Judges Credibility

Former Meretz leader, former Justice Minister, and chief Israeli promoter of the Geneva Initiative, Yossi Beilin, wrote in the independent Israel Hayom (4/4): Why didnt we allow the [Goldstone] Commission to visit Israel and the territories? Why did we let it rely solely on material from non-governmental organizations? Did any of us really think that if Israel did not cooperate with the commission, it would lose its international legitimacy? Have we become that naive? Israels personal attack on Goldstone was also a

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mistake. It was all right for us to attack the report, but not the credibility of this fair and important judge. Now, after Goldstone has learned what he learned, mainly in the wake of the Israeli investigations versus Hamas indifference, he took action and wrote an article that was not easy for him to write. But how can we use such an important article for PR purposes after having done everything to undermine the credibility of its writer?

#### VI. A Cast-Lead Alliance

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Senior op-ed writer Akiva Eldar commented in Ha'aretz (4/4):

Operation Cast Lead 1, manufactured by Kadima, constitutes an Israeli and international license for Cast Lead 2.... The elected officials of Kadima have stood out more for defending the settlement policy and attacking democracy than for criticizing the suspension of peace talks or protesting the damage done to the weaker segments of the population.... Thank you, Judge Goldstone. Thank you for reminding us what the real face of the alternative actually looks like.

#### VII. Goldstones Example

The conservative, independent Jerusalem Post editorialized (4/4): The single most damning, and specious, allegation made by Richard Goldstone in the infamous report that bears his name was intentionality -- the claim that during its military operation in Gaza between December 2008 and January 2009, known as Operation Cast Lead, the IDF purposely killed Palestinian civilians. It is precisely this claim which Goldstone, 18 months late, has now retracted.... Unfortunately, the damage has been done.... Goldstones decision to break with the tendency of Jewish self-hatred is worthy of respect and reflects a high level of honesty and integrity, two truly Jewish traits. But it is too little, too late. In the present atmosphere so conducive to Israel-bashing, Goldstones note of contrition will enjoy none of the fanfare received by his report.... It is unfortunate that Israel has come to regard so many international and domestic watch-dog groups as skewed, misrepresentative, and disposed to leap to the worst conclusions about Israel. But the Goldstone Report exemplified the reasons for that attitude. Goldstones reversal needs to mark the beginning of a more fair-minded approach to Israel, which in turn would, of course, produce a changed Israeli mindset in response.

#### VIII. Sorry We Killed

Senior columnist Nahum Barnea wrote in Yediot Aharonot (4/4): There is quite a bit of similarity between the flotilla affair and the Goldstone affair.... It would not be a bad thing if, as a lesson from

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the Goldstone affair, the Israeli government would invite the Turkish team to come to Israel.... I am not convinced that much will be detracted from Israels honor if it were to pay compensation to the families of the dead. There is no room for an apology about the very decision to overpower the boat, but a little creativity should be enough to find the words to express regret about the results. When the IDF accidentally kills civilians in Gaza it knows how to express regret. While it is true that the people who were killed on board the Mavi Marmara do not belong to the same category [as the Gazan dead], it isnt always smart to be right. Sometimes the smart thing to do is to be smart.

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2. Mideast:  
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Block Quotes:  
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#### I. Peres Has Been Called to Help

Senior columnist, veteran journalist, and television anchor Dan Margalit wrote in the independent Israel Hayom (4/4): The quiet preceding the Obama-Peres meeting hints that they will be discussing something new. Over the past few days, Netanyahu has indicated that he hasnt acceded to pressure to make the Judea and Samaria [i.e. West Bank] settlers uncomfortable, but he reiterated the fact that the must bring an international claim to account moving towards the Palestinian Authority. Something is happening. If it isnt, something is in the making anyway. The details of this move will become clear in a weeks time.

#### II. Troubling Voices from Cairo

Arab affairs correspondent Smadar Perry wrote in the mass-circulation, pluralist Yediot Aharonot (4/4): On one hand, [incoming Egyptian Foreign Minister Nabil] Elaraby announces that Egypt is committed to the peace agreement with Israel.... The truth? Egypt has no reason to cancel the agreement. In the new situation, they need every cent of the \$2 billion of annual U.S. aid. On the other hand, the same Elaraby takes care to clarify that his hands are clean, since he personally was not a partner to drafting the peace agreement, and everything is open now.... We are [also] facing a bad combination: the young people of the [Egyptian] revolution were born into a state of peace with us, but without being educated to peace. Only few, if any, have ever met Israelis. The decision-makers know us mainly from the negative aspect. They now have endless problems,

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challenges, plans and dreams. We are of little concern to them.  
GOLDBERGER

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ACTION NEA-00

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
 REVIEW AUTHORITY: SHARON E AHMAD  
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E.O. 13526: N/A  
TAGS: OPRC, KMDR, IS  
SUBJECT: ISRAEL MEDIA REACTION

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE TEL AVIV

MEDIA REACTION REPORT

Thursday, June 30, 2011

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SUBJECTS COVERED IN THIS REPORT:  
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1. Mideast
2. Trafficking in Persons

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Key stories in the media:  
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Yediot reported that PM Benjamin Netanyahu has asked Greek PM Georgios Papandreou to prevent the departure of Gaza-bound flotilla ships. Israel Radio cited a claim by the organizers of the flotilla that Israel has also sabotaged the Irish yacht that is supposed to participate in the operation. Four of the 10 ships are presently stranded due either to bureaucracy or alleged sabotage. The media say that the general strike in Greece has also delayed

the flotilla's sailing. The Jerusalem Post quoted an Israeli official as saying that the more the "organizers and participants have to run in place in Athens," the better it is for Israel. Maariv cites an official U.N. report that says that Turkey is more

to blame than Israel for the harsh consequences of last year's flotilla. The report will be presented next week to Netanyahu and Turkish PM Recep Tayyip Erdogan before being released to the public.

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The media reported that the British authorities intend to deport Sheikh Raed Salah, the leader of the northern branch of Israel's Islamic Movement. The Jerusalem Post quoted U.K. Home Office Minister Theresa May as saying that he was excluded for his anti-Semitic views. His supporters will hold a demonstration in front of the British Embassy in Tel Aviv today.

Maariv cited U.S. media, in particular Politico, as saying that President Obama is losing the Jewish vote.

Ha'aretz reported that on Wednesday, Internal Security Minister Yitzhak Aharonovitch told the Knesset that Kiryat Arba Chief Rabbi Dov Lior was detained earlier this week because he was suspected of inciting to violence and racism and not because of his opinions on the interpretation of Jewish religious law. Israel Radio reported that Justice Minister Yaakov Ne'eman, an Orthodox Jew who maintained this week that the rule of law should be upheld, was attacked when praying at Hebron's Cave of the Patriarchs. Ha'aretz reported that in an interview with the nationalist newsletter Eretz Yisrael Shelanu (Our Land of Israel), Knesset Member Yaakov Katz, chairman of the far-Right National Union party, threatened to take revenge against those responsible for the arrest. "We will get back at whoever is responsible for Rabbi Lior's arrest," he said. Katz told the publication that he believes PM Netanyahu is personally responsible for Lior's arrest. "Netanyahu and those under his command will be remembered forever in disgrace for the arrest of this genius of Israel," Katz said, adding that Lior's only crime was what he has written and his endorsement of a book of halakha (Jewish religious law), adding that this was a "direct extension" of arrests of Jews made by

communist authorities dating as far back to the time of the second century figure Rabbi Akiva. Referring to Lior's arrest as "this crime," Katz said it would not "pass quietly, and the time will come when we get back at them." He added: "All those who speak morning and night about the destruction of the State of Israel, informing on our soldiers to the United Nations and to our enemies, extremist left-wing writers who say explicitly that the settlers must be harmed, they have immunity. The prosecutor's office would never issue an arrest warrant against them. "I say that it will ultimately even be clear to [Deputy State Prosecutor] Shai Nitzan that the strong people of all the generations are the loyal Maccabees of God and Torah and we will win, big time. All of those committing those criminal acts ostensibly in the name of the law will be brought to justice." Ha'aretz reported that Religious

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Services Minister Yaakov Margi of Shas joined critics of his own government.

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Leading media reported that on Wednesday the U.S. Senate approved a bill Wednesday that calls for suspension of American aid to the Palestinian Authority if it insists on carrying out a plan to gain U.N. recognition for its statehood declaration in September. The bill was approved by all 89 senators present. Its initiators are the Jewish and Democratic Senator Ben Cardin of Maryland and Republican Senator Susan Collins of Maine. It stipulates that the Senate opposes "any attempt to establish or seek recognition of a Palestinian state outside of an agreement negotiated between leaders in Israel and the Palestinians." The Jerusalem Post Nimer Hammad, an adviser to P.A. President Mahmoud Abbas, as saying on Wednesday that the Senate resolution will not deter the Palestinian Authority from proceeding with plans to ask the U.N. in September. Hammad said that the Senate's threat to cut off financial aid won't stop the P.A. from doing something it considers to be in the interest of the Palestinians. Hammad said that instead of threatening the Palestinians, the U.S. should have forced Israel to freeze settlement construction and launch peace talks on the basis of the June 4, 1967, lines.

On Wednesday, Jewish-American tycoon and leader Ron Lauder repeated his critique of PM Netanyahu in an interview with Channel 2-TV. Asked about Channel 10-TV's investigation reports of Netanyahu, Lauder said he was prohibited from interfering in such broadcasts

(he is a major shareholder in Channel 10-TV).

Israel Radio says that "almost the entire U.S. administration" is involved in efforts to make Egypt release Ilan Grapel, the Israeli-American "spy for Mossad."

Makor Rishon-Hatzofe cites the anger of Netanyahu's office over what it says is the politically-tainted campaign for the release of Gilad Shalit.

Israel Radio reported that the police have asked the government for 200 million shekels (around \$58.5 million) to recruit staff and procure equipment ahead of expected disturbances in September.

The Jerusalem Post reported that PM Netanyahu is starting to prepare for U.S. help in purchasing Iron Dome anti-missile batteries, bring the issue up on Wednesday, during a meeting with three Democratic congressmen - Gary Ackerman and Nita Lowey of New York, and Henry Waxman of California.

The Jerusalem Post reported that activists on behalf of Jonathan Pollard rule out provocations at the U.S Embassy's Fourth of July

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celebrations.

Labor Party leadership contender Amram Mitzna was quoted as saying in an interview with Ha'aretz that his party's primaries are a corrupting influence.

Maariv reported that the Association for Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI) is sharing the 2011 Gruber Prize with two other international organizations and two American human rights lawyers.

The prize is awarded annually by the Peter and Patricia Gruber Foundation to "those who, often at great personal risk, fight for the Rule of Law." The only Israeli to receive the prize until now has been the president (ret.) of the Israeli Supreme Court, Aharon Barak, in 2006..

Maariv reported that a mosque was built illegally in proximity to the grave of former PM Menachem Begin on the Mount of Olives.

Yediot reported that for the first time an Israeli Arab was made a Brigadier General in the Israel Police.

The Jerusalem Post reported that Knesset members are discussing the feasibility of an aerial tram to Jerusalem's Old City.

Media reported that the planes that Israel acquired after last year's Carmel Range fire are not suited for their task.

All major Hebrew-language media banner the milk industry's "surrender" to a public campaign: the consumer price of cottage cheese will come down. Media now focus on an upcoming hike in the price of electricity.

Yediot reported that the Knesset is holding talks with Australian representatives to check into the possible integration of migrants from Sudan in Australia.

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1. Mideast:

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Block Quotes:

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I. "A Spin against the Israeli Public"

Intelligence affairs writer and television anchor Ronen Bergman

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opined in the mass-circulation pluralist Yediot Aharonot (6/30): "The best part of the [Israeli government's] media endeavor [regarding the Gaza-bound flotilla] is nothing but a spin made at the expense of all Israelis. This campaign has no bearing for the future; it is meant to explain that everything was all right last time, too. It is directed at the ears of the State Comptroller, who has just started distributing the draft of his relevant report [that apparently damages the reputation of outgoing IDF Intelligence chief Amos Yadlin].... This is not just about Yadlin, but about senior officials, too, who are trying to convince the Comptroller and the general public of an alternative reality they have created for themselves. Too bad they didn't invest those efforts before they let the naval commandoes climb down towards the angry crowd on board the Mavi Marmara."

## II. "No Consensus on Shalit"

Liberal contributor Alon Idan wrote in the independent, left-leaning Ha'aretz (6/30): "The reason Gilad Shalit is not being freed is that the consensus in his case is no consensus. Gilad Shalit has been in prison for five years because between the big words uttered about him and the emotional readiness to pay the required price lies a big gap, to which we are not prepared to admit. Shalit will not be freed because, contrary to conventional wisdom, the push for his release is not nonpartisan; it is part of a struggle that falls along classic political lines. It is

noteworthy that the recent host of gimmicks and gestures related to Shalit's release, including Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's announcement that he plans to worsen the conditions of Hamas militants held in Israel, were intended to commemorate Shalit's fifth anniversary in prison. In other words, the interest these acts generate is tied to a trigger, a symbolic moment -- the five-year anniversary. All was quiet again a few days later.... Treating Shalit's tragedy as an event corresponds with the duplicity characterizing large swaths of the Israeli public. On the one hand, people feel a natural need to display empathy. On the other hand, deep inside they refuse to pay the price. Treating the Shalit issue as an event solves the dilemma. An event is something that happens and then fades away. It enables people to express some emotion without having to accompany those feelings with significant action once the ceremony ends."

## III. "Israel's Violent Discourse"

Far left columnist Gideon Levy wrote in Ha'aretz (6/30): "The attitude toward the flotilla is a continuation of the same behavior. The campaign of scare tactics and demonization is what contributes to the violent rhetoric that is taking over the entire public discourse. For what will Israelis think about when they are

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spoon-fed scary stories about the flotilla, if not about the use of force? Those activists want to kill Israel Defense Forces soldiers? We'll arise and kill them first. Now the politicians, the generals and the commentators are competing with one another over who can provide the most frightening description of the flotilla, who can most inflame the public, who can best praise the soldiers who will save us, and who can deliver the most pompous rhetoric of the kind one would expect before a war. One important commentator, Dan Margalit, has already waxed poetic in his newspaper column [in Israel Hayom on 6/29]: 'Blessed are the hands,' he wrote of the hands that sabotaged one of the ships meant to take part in the flotilla. That's another thuggish and illegal action, one that wins immediate applause here, without anyone asking: By what right?... But the truth is the real humiliation lies in the fact that naval commandos were deployed to intercept the ships in the first place, and that is something that reflects on us all: how we have become a society whose language is violence, a country that seeks to resolve nearly everything by force, and

only by force."

#### IV. "A Flotilla for the Syrian Refugees"

Liberal columnist Linda Menuchin, formerly Mideast correspondent of Israel TV's Arabic program, wrote in the popular, pluralist Maariv (6/30): "The flotilla's organizers may still shirk off their provocation and refrain from sailing to Gaza. Should they direct their assistance to people who really need it, such as the homeless, food- and medicine-deprived Syrian refugees whom Turkey has taken in, they would certainly gain all-encompassing support from the Western world. Reports have recently surfaced of children rummaging for food through garbage in Iraq. If the assistance [offered to Gaza] is really based on humanitarian motives, the flotilla's organizers had better apply it to other areas in the Middle East, where the population lives in much harsher conditions -- there are plenty of those."

#### V. "With September Looming, Jewish Unity Cannot Wait"

Visiting U.S. Congressman Gary Ackerman (D-New York), President-Emeritus of the International Council of Jewish Parliamentarians of the World Jewish Congress, which convened in Jerusalem this week, wrote in the conservative, independent Jerusalem Post (6/30): "Our gathering is focused on the twin challenges of delegitimization and regional change. Despite the rhetoric, I don't believe that increasing attacks on Israel's right to exist and efforts to label its acts of self-defense 'war crimes' or even 'crimes against humanity' are actually rooted in a belief in international law, or a principled evaluation of Israeli military operations. What I believe is really driving most of

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these claims is a deep-seated and stubborn refusal to see Jews as a people.... The Palestinian plan to take their case for statehood to the U.N. General Assembly poses great danger for Israel. If this initiative were to succeed- or worse, to slip out of control, the results could be devastating. Israel could be exposed to sanctions and pressures beyond the wildest hopes of its worst enemies. But

in addition to these external challenges, we face a more intimate one that we share with the entire Jewish people. How do those of us who are representatives from all over the world and every part of the political spectrum come together to protect and advance our common interests?"

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2. Trafficking in Persons:  
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"Trafficking in Human Beings"

The independent, left-leaning Ha'aretz editorialized (6/30): "A U.S. State Department report released this week found that Israel is not complying with U.S. standards for combating human trafficking.... This is a shameful testimony to Israel's deterioration in the realm of human rights in general and the rights of aliens and labor migrants in particular.... Israeli society grew indifferent to the ongoing occupation and the abuse of tens of thousands of cheap, unprotected Palestinian laborers. When they disappeared, for what was termed reasons of security, new workers were found -- transparent, frightened aliens, deprived of their rights. The indifference turned into obtuseness. This ugly anomaly will not change overnight, but Israel must adopt the report's recommendations to increase supervision and enforcement and revoke the law binding labor migrants to employers. This is the least it can do as a first step toward ending Israel's dubious status as a paradise for human trafficking."

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**From:** Konstantyn, Michel  
**Sent:** 10/15/2010 4:37:55 AM  
**To:** SMART Core  
**Subject:** MORNING MEDIA REVIEW, Friday, October 15, 2010

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**MRN:** 10 MDA 72372  
**Date/DTG:** Oct 15, 2010 / 150837Z OCT 10  
**From:** Konstantyn, Michel  
**Action:**  
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**Subject:** MORNING MEDIA REVIEW, Friday, October 15, 2010

**EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES TEL AVIV  
 PUBLIC AFFAIRS SECTION  
 MORNING MEDIA REVIEW**

**Friday, October 15, 2010**

## TOP STORIES:

- Iranian President Ahmadinejad's visit to South Lebanon; PM Netanyahu says that the Iranian leader's comments are a tragedy to Lebanon and that Israel knows how to defend itself
- The GOI will build 240 housing units in East Jerusalem

**Iranian President Ahmadinejad's visit to South Lebanon; PM Netanyahu says that the Iranian leader's comments are a tragedy to Lebanon and that Israel knows how to defend itself.** All media highlighted Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's visit to southern Lebanon on Thursday. The media noted that Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah "stayed hidden in his bunker." During a mass rally in Bint Jbeil, the Iranian leader proclaimed the nearing end of Zionism. **Israel Radio** reported that Ahmadinejad told Lebanese PM Rafiq Hariri that if all Arab states united against Israel, it would be possible to defeat it. PM Benjamin Netanyahu was quoted as saying that Lebanon is turning into an annex of Iran, which made it a tragedy for Lebanon, but that Israel knows how to defend itself. **Israel Radio** quoted Assistant Secretary of State Philip J. Crowley as saying that Ahmadinejad's "travel to southern Lebanon is solely to rally Hezbollah, which continues to serve as Iran's

proxy in Lebanon. So his presence there we think is a provocation. It continues to undermine the sovereignty of Lebanon and the security of the region.'

**The GOI will build 240 housing units in East Jerusalem.** Leading media reported that on Thursday, the Construction and Housing Ministry and the Israel Lands Administration issued tenders for 240 housing units in the East Jerusalem neighborhoods of Ramot and Pisgat Zeev.

**OTHER STORIES:**

**The Jerusalem Post** quoted diplomatic officials in Jerusalem as saying on Thursday that Israel is not concerned by the State Department's stuttering over the "Jewish state" Issue. The daily reported that sources close to PM Netanyahu noted that President Obama told the U.N. that "Israel is a sovereign state, and the historic homeland of the Jewish people.

**The Jerusalem Post** quoted P.A. President Mahmoud Abbas as saying on Thursday that it was none of the Palestinians' business if Israel wanted to call itself a Jewish state, or anything else.

**Maariv** reported that U.S. Secretary Hillary Clinton has been invited to speak at Tel Aviv's Rabin Square during the 15<sup>th</sup> annual memorial ceremony for the late PM Yitzhak Rabin.

**Maariv** reported that Morocco's King Mohammed VI as invited President Shimon Peres to visit him in ten days' time.

**The Jerusalem Post** reported that former IDF Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Dan Halutz told the newspaper that the fact that PM Netanyahu angers President Obama harms the effort against the Iranian nuclear program. **The Jerusalem Post** quoted Secretary Clinton as saying in Brussels on Thursday that there is mounting evidence that sanctions against Iran are working. The Secretary also said that Netanyahu and Abbas want to be leaders who resolve the conflict.

**Ha'aretz** and **Israel Radio** reported that right-wing activist Aryeh King announced on Thursday that he intends to settle 10 new Jewish families in the East Jerusalem neighborhood of Sheikh Jarrah, offering compensation to the Palestinian families who will subsequently be evicted. King spoke at a press conference called to discuss a recent Supreme Court ruling which determined that several Palestinian homes in Sheikh Jarrah belonged to the heirs of the Jews who built the neighborhood in the late 19th century.

The media reported that on Thursday Welfare and Social Services Minister Yitzhak Herzog announced his candidacy for the post of Labor Party chairman. Media noted that he would have had more chances to win the party leadership if he had resigned from the Government.

**Ha'aretz** reported that while the Turkel Commission continues its investigation of the Gaza flotilla affair, the Israel Navy has already drawn operational conclusions from the altercation at sea last May and is mulling how to avoid the same pitfalls. One change being considered by the navy is to purchase equipment that will help it board vessels while minimizing harm to soldiers. **The Jerusalem Post** and **Makor Rishon-Hatzofe** reported that former Justice Yaakov Turkel again summoned IDF Chief-of-Staff Lt. Gen. Gabi Ashkenazi to appear before his commission. The leading online news service **Ynet** reported that in a complaint filed with the International Criminal Court (ICC), Turkey accuses Israel of war crimes including torture, inhuman treatment during the IDF raid on the flotilla. **Ynet** says that the ICC's jurisdiction is unclear.

Labor Party Chairman and Defense Minister Ehud Barak was quoted as saying in an interview with **Israel Hayom** is the delegitimization campaign against it. In another matter, **Ha'aretz** recalls that over a quarter of a century before Barak proposed that non-Jews seeking citizenship should pledge allegiance to the Declaration of Independence, the late extremist Rabbi Meir Kahane did the same in the political platform of his Kach party in 1984. Kahane was elected to the Knesset in 1984, but his party was disqualified for being racist when it sought to run again in 1988.

**Ha'aretz** published an interview with former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, who expressed his dismay at the standstill in the peace process and said that he was the only one who ever delivered a letter from Gilad Shalit and from him. Carter said that he will be meeting Hamas in Syria and that "we will probably talk about it."

Leading media reported that on Thursday Israel and Greece completed a joint aerial exercise.

**Israel Radio** quoted former Pensioners' Affairs Minister Rafi Eitan as saying that the U.S. wronged convicted spy Jonathan Pollard, in particular regarding the exposure of U.S. agents in the USSR. Eitan said that it has been proven that Pollard did not commit that offence.

**The Jerusalem Post** quoted the relief organization Oxfam as saying that the P.A. and the IDF could help Palestinian farmers double their crop.

**Ha'aretz (English Ed.)** reported that a nonprofit dedicated to preserving the memory of murdered American-Jewish journalist Daniel Pearl through music staged its festival in Israel this week. Founded in 2005 by a former friend and fellow band member of Pearl's FODfest – which stands for Friends of Daniel Pearl Festival – consisted of several free community concerts, school visits, impromptu jam sessions, and street performances throughout Israel and the West Bank, aiming to spread an apolitical message of coexistence.

**Ha'aretz** reported that three Israeli hospitals joined forces this week in an effort to teach doctors from eastern and southern Africa how to deal with the AIDS virus that is ravaging the continent. The hospitals involved are Sheba Medical Center in Tel Hashomer, Hadassah University Hospital in Jerusalem, and Ichilov Hospital in Tel Aviv. The project, called the Israeli Consortium on AIDS Medicine in Africa, has trained 105 physicians from Ethiopia over the past five years. But this week, it entered a new phase, expanding to six other countries.

**Ha'aretz** reported that Attorney General Yehuda Weinstein's decision this week to close the investigation over suspicions that DM Ehud Barak's wife, Nili Priel, hired an illegal foreign worker to do housekeeping at the couple's Tel Aviv apartment continues to make waves. It has become apparent that, in their hunt for the worker, authorities were looking for a woman named Virginia, while her original name was something entirely different. The case raises the prospect that a wide discrepancy exists between the values that Barak should represent and his personal reality. *Israel Radio's* Carmela Menashe broke the story last December.

**Yediot** reported that the Israeli Zeev Levy is on the 10 "most wanted" list of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the Immigration and Naturalization Service. He is suspected of having sheltered illegal immigrants to the U.S., providing them with fake visas and false identities.

**Yediot, Maariv, and Makor Rishon-Hatzofe** reported that on Wednesday Eric Bellucci, an American citizen from New York, allegedly stabbed and killed his parents and fled to Tel Aviv, where he is staying at a friend's in Tel Aviv. The newspaper quoted Israeli police as saying that they are unable to arrest him, because U.S. authorities have not yet issued an international warrant.

#### POLLS:

**Yediot** printed the results of a Mina Zernach/Dahaf poll that found that

- 64 percent of Israelis are worried by the possibility of fascism in Israel; 34 percent said that they are not concerned.

- 63 percent of respondents believe that Israeli Arabs have the right to vote (72 percent among secular Jews; 42 percent among religious Jews, 32 percent among ultra-Orthodox Jews; and 62 percent among Jews altogether).

#### EDITORIAL PAGES:

In **Israel Hayom**, Uzi Dayan, President of the Israeli National Security Council, writes that Ahmadinejad's visit to Lebanon may be a milestone on the road to the next war.

Amos Harel and Avi Issacharoff of **Ha'aretz** say that Hizbullah is removing its fake moderate mask.

Caroline B. Glick of **The Jerusalem Post** contends that in his relations with the U.S., Netanyahu "should do what is best for Israel, not what is best for Israel's Left."

Yossi Verter of **Ha'aretz** remarks that even party colleagues are now publicly taking shots at PM Netanyahu.

Ben Caspit of **Maariv** believes that former Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz, a Kadima Knesset member, is trying to make Netanyahu a partner in his diplomatic plan, independently of Kadima leader Tzipi Livni.

In **Ha'aretz**, Professor Zeev Sternhell opines that the "Right needs perpetual war."

Ben-Dror Yemini of **Maariv** casts aspersions on the integrity of left-wing Ha'aretz journalist Gideon Levy.

Reflecting on the rescue of the Chilean miners, **Ha'aretz** maintains that the "human spirit has prevailed." **The Jerusalem Post** reaches the same conclusion.

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<b>Approved By:</b>	DoS GOV:Olsin-Windecker, Hilary S
<b>Released By:</b>	TEL AVIV:Konstantyn, Michel
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June 16, 2010

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**ACTION MEMO FOR THE SECRETARY**

**FROM:** NEA--Ronald Schlicher, Acting

**SUBJECT:** Response to H.E. Ahmed Aboul Gheit, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Arab Republic of Egypt

**Recommendation**

That you approve the attached cable to Foreign Minister Aboul Gheit responding to his request that we support an investigation into the May 31 Gaza flotilla incident that meets with international standards.

Approve  Disapprove \_\_\_\_\_

**Background**

Foreign Minister Aboul Gheit sent a letter to you dated June 7, 2010, requesting that an international, independent investigation be conducted on the 'Free Gaza' flotilla incident. Aboul Gheit asserted that an Israeli investigation with an international component would not meet the standard of being credible and independent. Your response notes that we support the June 1 United Nations Security Council Presidential Statement call for a prompt, impartial, credible and transparent investigation that meets international standards. The response further affirms that we expect Israel to conduct an investigation conforming to international standards.

Attachments:

- Tab 1--Proposed Response
- Tab 2--Incoming Correspondence

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 SOURCE: DISKETTE.070933  
 DRAFTED BY: NEA/IPA:ISISO -- 06/10/2010 X79582  
 APPROVED BY: S:THE SECRETARY  
 NEA:AA/S RSCHLICHER -  
 NEA: JWALLES -  
 NEA/IPA:THOLMSTROM -  
 NEA/FO: JWALLES -  
 NEA/IPA: THOLMSTROM -OK  
 D(S): MHAYES - PROVISIONAL  
 S/P: DRAND - OK  
 P: ECATALANO - OK  
 S/SEMEP: PKNOPF -OK  
 NEA/ELA: BSTRUWE -OK  
 IO: AMORRISON -OK  
 IO/HR: AOSTERMEIER - OK  
 S/ES-CR:BHAMBRICK  
 S/ES:KZARESKI  
 S/ES-O:CTCROSBY

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 TO AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE  
 INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE  
 AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS STATE 063556

E.O. 12958: N/A  
 TAGS: OPDC, PGOV, PREL, PHUM, KPAL, EG, IS, XF  
 SUBJECT: REPLY FROM THE SECRETARY TO AHMED ABOUL GHEIT,  
 MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE ARAB REPUBLIC OF  
 EGYPT (S/ES 201010695)

1. PLEASE DELIVER THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE FROM SECRETARY  
 CLINTON TO FOREIGN MINISTER AHMED ABOUL GHEIT. THE  
 DEPARTMENT DOES NOT PLAN TO RELEASE THE TEXT OF THE  
 SECRETARY'S MESSAGE. THERE WILL BE NO SIGNED ORIGINAL.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
 REVIEW AUTHORITY: SHARON E AHMAD  
 DATE/CASE ID: 01 FEB 2012 201004163

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2. BEGIN TEXT:

UNCLASSIFIED

Dear Mr. Minister:

Thank you for your letter of June 7 regarding the importance of investigating the May 31 Gaza flotilla incident.

We fully support the June 1 UN Security Council Presidential Statement in condemning those acts which led to nine fatalities and many injuries on board the flotilla, and supporting a prompt, impartial, credible, and transparent investigation. It is our belief that Israel took an important step forward in proposing an independent public commission with international observers to investigate the flotilla incident. We believe the proposed investigation can be conducted seriously and with credibility, as Israel's military justice system meets international standards. However, the United States will not prejudge the process or its outcome, and we will await the findings of the investigation before reaching further conclusions. The Gaza flotilla incident underscores the need to move ahead quickly with negotiations leading to a comprehensive peace in the region based on the establishment of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza. The United States is deeply committed to working with its partners in the region to advance this objective.

Sincerely yours,  
Hillary Rodham Clinton

End Text.  
CLINTON

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S/ES S/ES

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NEA/IPA:ISISO  
06/10/2010 x79582  
S:THE SECRETARY

NEA:AA/S RSCHLICHER -  
NEA: JWALLES -  
NEA/IPA:THOLMSTROM - +

IMMEDIATE CAIRO

IMMEDIATE TEL AVIV, JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: OPDC, PGOV, PREL, PHUM, KPAL, EG, IS, XF

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DATE/CASE ID: 01 FEB 2012 201004163

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The Gaza flotilla incident underscores the need to move ahead quickly with negotiations leading to a comprehensive peace in the region based on the establishment of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza. The United States is deeply committed to working with its partners in the region to advance this objective.

Sincerely yours,

Hillary Rodham Clinton

End Text.

YY

NEA/FO: JWalles -  
NEA/IPA: THolmstrom -OK  
D(S): MHayes - Provisional  
S/P: DRand - OK  
P: ECatalano - OK  
S/SEMEP: PKnopf -OK  
NEA/ELA: BStruwe -OK  
IO: AMorrison -OK  
IO/HR: AOstermeier - OK  
S/ES-CR: BHambrick  
S/ES: KZARESKI  
S/ES-O: PSLATTERY

Y

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**EMBASSY OF THE ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT**  
 3521 INTERNATIONAL COURT, N.W.  
 WASHINGTON, D.C. 20008  
 TELEPHONE: (202) 955-5400 \* FAX: (202) 244-4319/5121

**URGENT**

The Embassy of the Arab Republic of Egypt presents its compliments to the Office of the Honorable Secretary of State, and has the honour to attach herewith a verbal message from H.E. Ahmed Aboul Gheit, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Arab Republic of Egypt, addressed to the Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton, Secretary of State of the United States, regarding the Israeli attack on the Freedom convoy.

The Embassy of the Arab Republic of Egypt avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the Honorable Secretary of State, the assurances of its highest consideration.

June 7, 2010  
 Washington, D.C.



Office of the Secretary of State  
 Department of State  
 United States of America  
 Fax 202 647 8947

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
 REVIEW AUTHORITY: SHARON E AHMAD  
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**Verbal Message**

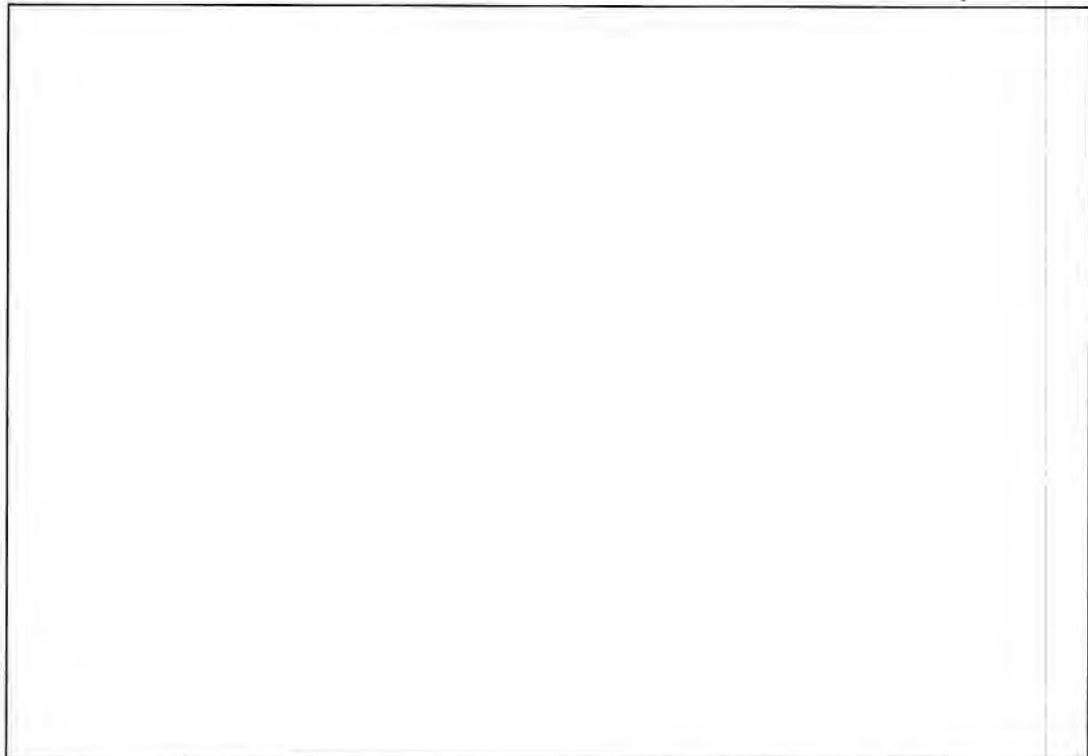
- 1- We have followed up with great concern the developments of the Israeli attack on the Freedom convoy. We have also followed closely international calls to carry out an international investigation related to the attack. We support that an international investigation be conducted and consider it a fundamental step to guaranteeing that Israel, as the occupying power of the Palestinian territories including Gaza, undertakes its legal and humanitarian responsibilities.
- 2- An international, independent, credible and transparent investigation as called for by the Human Rights Council remains, from our perspective, the only credible response for the international community to the Israeli attack. Other ideas, such as carrying an Israeli investigation with an international component will not meet the credible and independent minimum requirement.
- 3- Given the high moral authority of the UN Secretary General, we stress the necessity that he should promptly form an international investigation committee to carry out an independent and credible investigation on the Israeli attack on the Freedom convoy.

**Options Paper for an Investigation of the Flotilla Incident**

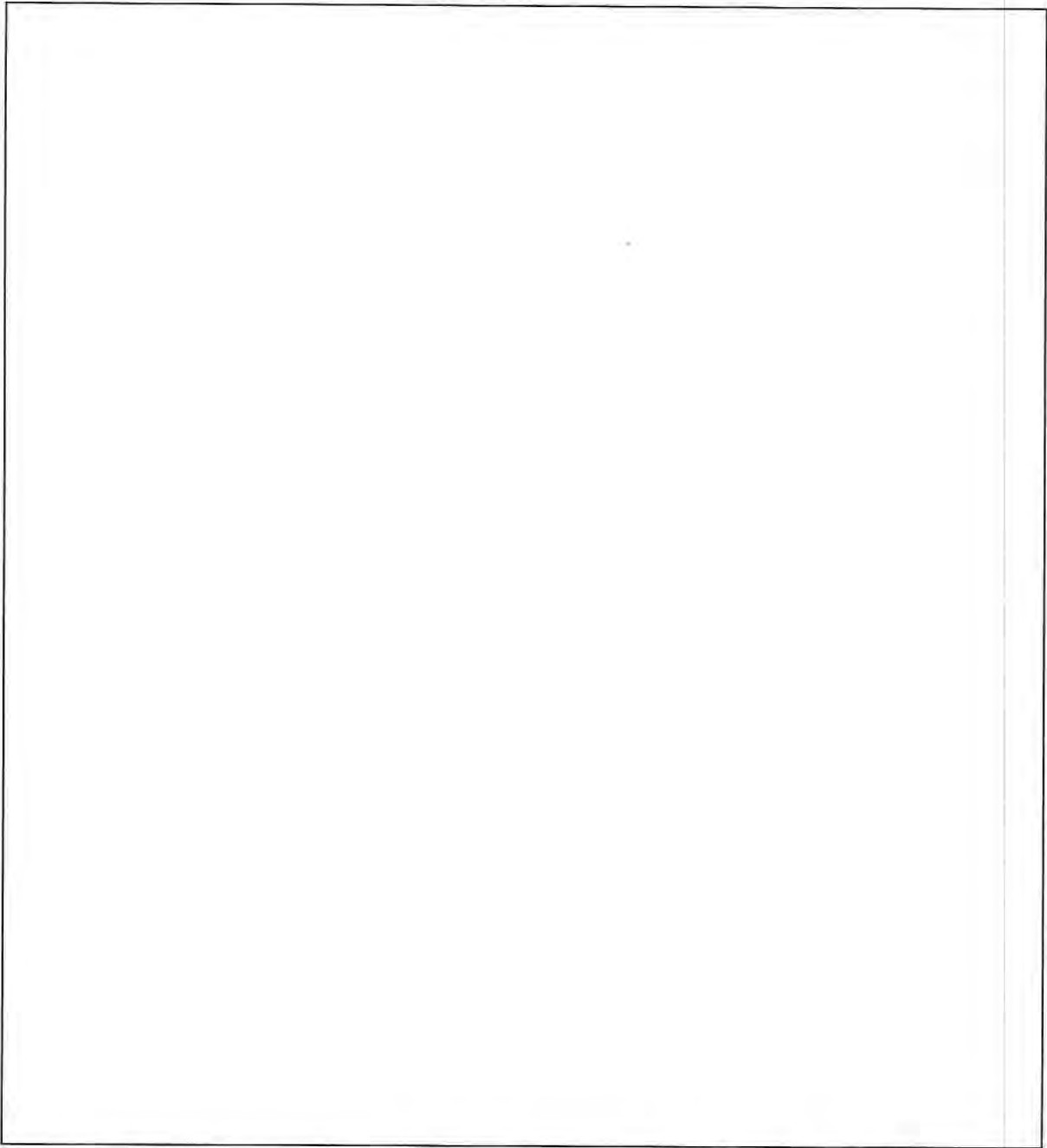
On June 1, Secretary of State Clinton said, "We support in the strongest terms the Security Council's call for a prompt, impartial, credible, and transparent investigation. We support an Israeli investigation that meets those criteria. We are open to different ways of assuring a credible investigation, including international participation, and we will continue to discuss these ideas with the Israelis and our international partners in the days ahead." There are two aspects to an investigation of the flotilla incident – ascertainment of the facts on the ground and evaluation of whether Israel complied with international law with respect to the blockade. (Israel already has prepared and made public its legal justification for establishment and maintenance of the naval blockade under the law of armed conflict and will likely resist a review, even internally, of the legality of the naval blockade. Israel is currently investigating the facts on the ground and reviewing its recent actions in enforcing the blockade.)

**Here are some possible models for an Israeli investigation with international participation:**

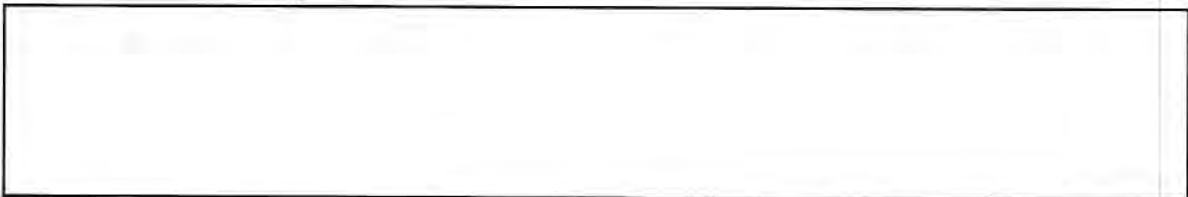
1. Technical Assistance by Third States to Determine the Facts. Given the plethora of conflicting videos as to the facts and general international disinclination to accept the current Israeli version of events, it may be useful for Israel to include international, technical experts in the conduct or evaluation of its investigation.
  - A. International experts could participate in the investigation.



B5



**If Israel were to proceed without international involvement, several options are available:**



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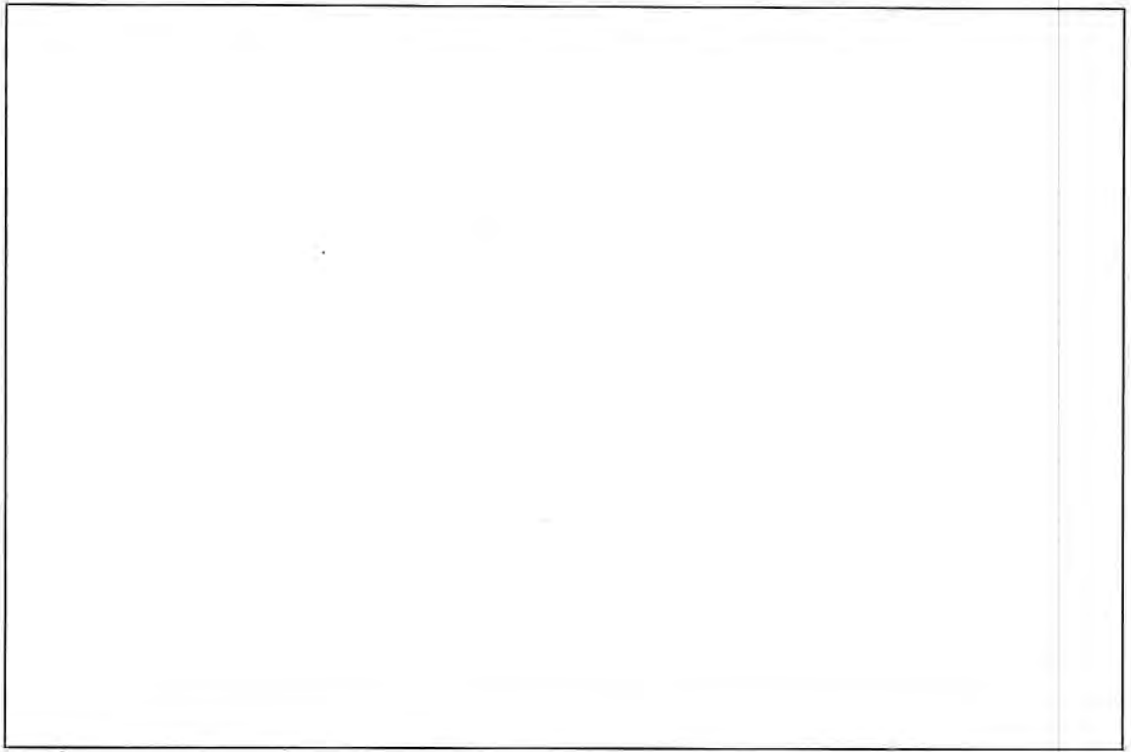
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6/4/2010

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UNCLASSIFIED 6/4/10

June 4, 2010

**NOTE FOR THE SECRETARY**

FROM: PA - Philip J. Crowley

SUBJECT: Public Reaction to the Gaza Flotilla Attack

The office of Public Liaison in the Bureau of Public Affairs received 535 email messages about the Free Gaza Flotilla attack by the close of business on Wednesday June 2. Of the messages, 446 pushed for Secretary Clinton and the Department to condemn Israel and to cut all aid until the Gaza blockade is lifted. Some of the messages expressed the sentiment that the Secretary did not take a strong stance against Israel in her statement on June 1, and that the United States should support an independent investigation of the incident. Approximately 89 messages urged the United States to continue support for Israel, characterizing Israel's action as justifiable defense of its territory.

The Office of Public Liaison also received 331 phone messages on the issue. Approximately 307 callers urged Secretary Clinton to condemn Israel and to advocate for an end to the Gaza Blockade. The other 24 messages urged the United States to continue support of Israel.

Public Affairs will continue to monitor and update as appropriate.

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Approved: PA/FO: PJ Crowley

Drafted: PA/FO – Cheryl Benton, ext. 7-6088

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201010079

United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

June 4, 2010



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W/6/10



**INFORMATION MEMO FOR THE SECRETARY**

FROM: NEA – Jeffrey Feltman *myf*

SUBJECT: Middle Eastern Media Reaction to Flotilla Incident

Reaction to the Israeli raid of an international, Turkish-led aid flotilla has dominated the Pan-Arab and Israeli media. Arab reaction resoundingly denounces Israel for constantly resorting to violence and the narrative is becoming increasingly critical of U.S. "support" for Israel's actions. Meanwhile, Israeli media has called into question the logic behind the raid, but remains squarely supportive of the Israel Defense Forces and the Gaza blockade. Key media trends include:

- **Pan-Arab media, dominated by coverage of "Israeli Aggression," becoming increasingly critical of the United States:** Coverage of the flotilla incident has dominated the Pan-Arab media since Monday. It has been the top news story on all the 24-hour pan-Arab news networks, and international reaction has been front page news in papers across the region. Turkey's standing in the Arab world has reached new heights, with headlines across the region echoing *Al-Quds Al-Arabi's* coverage of the "the Turkish heroes" and "Martyr's funerals." Commentators on *Al-Jazeera* and other Pan-Arab satellite channels have praised Turkey's bravery in trying to "save Gaza" and many see it as a welcome change from Iran being the major voice and supporter of resistance in the region.
- **Turkey up, moderate Arab regimes down:** While praise for Turkey increases, the rhetoric in the media is squarely against moderate Arab governments. Even though all Arab governments denounced the raid, and Egypt reopened the Rafah crossing, a common theme has been their impotence or even collusion in the face of Israeli aggression. Criticism against the United States is on the rise for "watering down the UN Security Council statement," supporting piracy on the high seas, and, as reported in pan-Arab *Al-Hayat* newspaper, for shielding Israel from the consequences of "international crimes and terrorism."

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- 2 -

- **Flotilla response called latest in string of U.S. policy failures:** A key theme on pan-Arab television is disappointment with the tepid U.S. response and customary support for Israel's security. Commentators remark that the U.S. response is the latest in a long catalogue of U.S. foreign policy failures, demonstrating just how under the thumb of Israel is the United States. A Turkish commentator, writing in the pan-Arab *As-Sharq Al-Awsat* newspaper, noted that Turkey is closely monitoring the U.S. response to "determine what sort of Middle East it will be dealing with in the future by its response to Israel's actions."
- **Israeli media coverage of incident dominates, with public reaction squarely behind Israel Defense Forces (IDF) actions and little apparent introspection from Israeli commentators:** Public opinion remains squarely behind the IDF and its "heroes," though some left-leaning commentators have called into question the tactics used in the raid. The liberal *Haaretz* newspaper connected the incident to U.S. efforts to increase sanctions on Iran at the U.N. noting that the "lethal operation is making it difficult for the U.S. administration to rally a majority in the Security Council." The majority of coverage is supportive of the IDF and newspapers and commentators across the country picked up on PM Netanyahu's comment that the flotilla "was not a love boat."

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Approved: NEA/FO – Jeffrey Feltman  
Drafted: NEA/PPD – John Sullivan, ext. 7-9454  
NEA/PPD – Erin Pelton, ext 7-4148

Cleared:  
NEA/FO – M Connelly ok  
D(S) – G Rana ok  
D(L) – J Butte-Dahl info by request  
P – E Catalano ok  
S/P – D Ranz ok  
NEA/IPA – J Giauque ok  
SEMEP – P Knopf ok  
PA/FO – GDuguid ok  
NEA/PPD – M Ratney ok  
R - A Somerset ok

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**EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT**  
*Operations Center*

***Overnight Brief***

Monday, July 12, 2010  
0530 EDT



NR

**ISRAELI REPORT TO FAULT NAVY OVER FLOTILLA RAID**

(SBU) A committee chaired by retired general Eiland will release a report July 12 saying the Israeli navy was unprepared for the flotilla participants' use of force and criticizing military and government actions, media report. Embassy Tel Aviv notes the Eiland committee submitted its findings to the Israeli Defense Force Chief of Staff July 11.

*(Ops/Embassy Tel Aviv e-mail, Haaretz)*



Please see our classified website at <http://ses.state.sgov.gov/>

Drafted: AChakravorty

Approved: PMBeekman

Dist: State (all bureaus), NSS, OSD, NMCC, JCS, CIA, OSC, NCTC, DHS, DNI

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