

UNIVERSITY OF TARTU

Faculty of Social Sciences

Johan Skytte Institute of Political Studies

Mahmoud Ahmed Elgindy

**Deterrence-terrorism: The use of strategic terrorism as the basis of deterrence in
theory and in the case of Hezbollah-Israel, 2006-2020**

MA thesis

Supervisor: Thomas Linsenmeier

Co-supervisor: Dr. Asta Maskaliūnaitė

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I have written this Master's thesis independently. All viewpoints of other authors, literary sources and data from elsewhere used for writing this paper have been referenced.

.....Mahmoud Elgindy..... / signature of author /

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Abstract

This thesis seeks to examine the dynamics of strategic terrorism when implemented in the pursuit of deterrent, rather than compellent effects. In doing so, it addresses a gap in the theoretical literature concerning terrorism as a coercive strategy. The focus of existing studies on compellent terrorism, to the neglect of its potential for deterrence, results in an inability to understand how terrorism may be used to sustain the status-quo. This theoretical consideration is reflected in an empirical case of deterrence, as identified in inductive studies. The study of Hezbollah's strategy of deterrence vis-à-vis Israel in the years since 2006 features both threats of terrorist violence by Hezbollah, and military restraint on part of Israel. Against this background, the aims of this thesis are twofold; theoretically, to examine if threats of terrorism can be used to pursue deterrent effects. In other words, to conceptually distinguish the novel subtype *deterrence-terrorism*, to stand alongside existing nuclear and conventional deterrence. To assess the analytical utility of the concept, this study seeks to examine if deterrence-terrorism can explain the deterrent dynamic between Hezbollah and Israel from 2006-2020.

This thesis seeks to solve the question of terrorism's deterrent potential through theory building in the form of deductive reasoning. Herein a novel concept; deterrence-terrorism is proposed to clarify the implications of existing theory in cases where threats are formed through terrorism. In this study, terrorism, defined here as violent, extra-normal and symbolic actions, was applied to the abstract framework of deterrence in accepted theory. Empirically and in pursuit of confirming utility, this concept of deterrence-terrorism was then applied in a theory driven plausibility probe, examining if deterrence-terrorism by Hezbollah has caused military restraint by Israel. This thesis found that the influence of threats through terrorism on the general deterrence practices of forming a credible threat

and signalling are sufficient bases for the consideration of deterrence through terrorism as unique type, alongside existing nuclear and conventional archetypes. In the case of Hezbollah and Israel from 2006-2020, empirical analysis suggests necessary evidence is present that deterrence-terrorism has caused military restraint in the studied period. As a result, the analytical utility of deterrence-terrorism is confirmed.

Keywords: *deterrence, strategic terrorism, coercion, Hezbollah, Israel, deductive theory building*

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Introduction

The division of coercive force in International Relations into compellence and deterrence is a well-established feature of strategic theory. Where compellent strategies seek to alter adversary behaviour, deterrent strategies seek to maintain the status-quo.¹ This conceptual framework, first espoused by Schelling, has provided significant insight into fundamental mechanics of strategic bargaining, and is now a well attested reference point in the study of strategy, including the practice of deterrence.² In this framework modes of force, be they nuclear, conventional or unconventional are not inherently compellent or deterrent, but become so through their strategic application.³ Here arises the theoretical puzzle at the heart of this study. Placing terrorism in this framework of coercion has been problematised by its close association, or exclusive status in some interpretations, as a compellent strategy.⁴ More fundamentally as it has been noted, "...terrorism in the current era has traditionally [been] seen to reside outside the mainstream of established strategic concerns."⁵

Considering this theoretical gap, the concepts of deterrence and terrorism occupy a curiously intersecting position in the study of strategy. At a certain level of abstraction, the fundamental idea at the heart of each concept merges; the influencing of adversary decision making through fear. This is perhaps unsurprising given the close linguistic origins of the terms in their more general use.⁶ In more academic studies of strategy, this overlap has also been noted. As Schelling put it: 'The concept of "massive retaliation" is terrorist'.⁷ This overlap however, is not sustained when terrorism is more thoroughly

¹ Schelling, Thomas. C., *Arms and Influence*, (Yale University press, 1966), pp.69-71.

² Levy, Jack S., 'Deterrence and Coercive Diplomacy: The Contributions of Alexander George', *Political Psychology*, 29.4 (2008), 537–52, pp.539-540.

³ Schelling, Thomas. C., *Arms and Influence*, p.70.

⁴ This assertion is principally manifest in the general assumption that terrorist seek to alter the status quo, for illustrative examples of this see: Neumann, Peter. R. and Smith. M. L. R., *The Strategy of Terrorism*, (Routledge, 2008), p.79; Pisoiu, Daniela. and Hain, Sandra, *Theories of Terrorism: An Introduction*, (Routledge, 2018); pp.110-111; Greene, Alan, 'DEFINING TERRORISM: ONE SIZE FITS ALL?', *International and Comparative Law Quarterly*, 66.2 (2017), 411–40, p.25; Richards, Anthony, Marsden, Sarah. V., Schmid, Alex. P. 'Typologies of terrorism and political violence,' in: Schmid. Alex. P., ed., *The Routledge Handbook of Terrorism Research*, (Oxford University Press, 2015), p.56.

⁵ Neumann, Peter. R. and Smith. M. L. R., *The Strategy of Terrorism*, p.77.

⁶ Quinlan, Michael, 'Deterrence and Deterrability', *Contemporary Security Policy*, 25.1 (2004), 11–17 p.13.

⁷ Schelling, Thomas. C., *Choice and Consequence*. (Harvard University Press, 1984), p.315.

conceptualised in relation to strategic theory. In this respect this study follows the insights gained by Neumann and Smith, who envisage terrorism as occupying a position within coercive strategies where the fear created by *symbolic* (i.e. materially irrelevant) violence elicits an alteration of adversary behaviour.⁸ As they pertain to strategy, deterrence and terrorism are then closely related practices, impinging upon one another but neither definitively subsumable entirely within the other. It would be expected therefore that terrorism and deterrence, these conceptual cousins, intersect in their collective study. We might, as it has been asked, question how actors using terrorism may be deterred?⁹ We would also expect that theories have emerged as to how those actors who seek implement terrorism could leverage their strategy for deterrent effects. To ask how the threat of symbolic violence might deter as it might compel, as is the case for threats that inflict material costs. This study seeks to address this latter, neglected quandary through an exercise of deductive theory building, in which the potential use of terrorism as means of deterrence will be examined.

The unsolved nexus of deterrence and terrorism is not purely a question of theory, and is reflected in extent empirical puzzles. Analysis arising from inductive studies of certain terrorist actors further suggest the possibility of such a phenomenon, and the necessity of situating terrorism in the study of deterrence. Hezbollah, a non-state actor famed for its persistent and widespread use of terrorism has been identified as pursuing a deterrent effect against Israel.¹⁰ The basis on which this deterrence constituted has however, only begun to be examined with reference to deterrence theory. The work of Sobelman is pioneering in this regard, which concludes that within power asymmetries: “states may deter violent non-state actors; this, however, does not preclude the latter from deterring a

⁸ Ibid. p.8.

⁹ For a non-exhaustive list of examples see: Wenger, Andreas and Wilner, Alex, *Deterring terrorism: Theory and Practice*, (Stanford University Press, 2012); Wilner, Alex S., ‘Deterring the Undeterrable: Coercion, Denial, and Delegitimization in Counterterrorism’, *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 34.1 (2011), 3–37; Kilcullen, David J., ‘Countering Global Insurgency’, *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 28.4 (2005), 597–617; Sandler, Todd, and Kevin Siqueira, ‘Global Terrorism: Deterrence versus Pre-Emption’, *Canadian Journal of Economics/Revue Canadienne d’économique*, 39.4 (2006), 1370–87; Miller, Gregory D., ‘Terrorist Decision Making and the Deterrence Problem’, *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 36.2 (2013), 132–51.

¹⁰ Examples include: Sobelman, Daniel, ‘Learning to Deter: Deterrence Failure and Success in the Israel-Hezbollah Conflict, 2006–16’, *International Security*, 41.3 (2017), 151–96; Valensi, Carmit, and Yoram Schweitzer. ‘Hezbollah’s Concept of Deterrence Vis-à-Vis Israel According to Nasrallah: From the Second Lebanon War to the Present’, in: Dekel. Udi, Siboni. Gabi, Einav. Omar. (eds) *The Quiet Decade: The Aftermath of the Second Lebanon War, 2006-2016*, INSS, Memorandum no.167. (July 2017).

militarily superior state.”¹¹ Sobelman has also posited that denying Israeli military advantages is a key feature of Hezbollah’s overall strategy.¹² Such conclusions are upheld here, but considered incomplete in explaining how Hezbollah deters Israeli action beyond ground invasions. This study seeks to go further and examine the exact mechanism by which Hezbollah deters Israel across the spectrum of its interests. Hezbollah is not alone in its pursuit of the status-quo among actors who employ terror. Status-quo maintenance has been identified as an objective of (albeit few) actors that employ terrorism is prominent large-N studies of terrorism.¹³ Without an understand of how terrorism may be used to pursue the status-quo, that is to say how terrorism may be used to deter, such cases cannot benefit from the predictive and explanatory power of strategic theory predicated on the concept of coercion.

The question of if a deterrent effect can be achieved through a threat based on terrorist attacks is particularly salient in the contemporary international environment. Almost a decade into the renewed interest in the study of terrorism that has followed 9/11, there exists burgeoning contemporary theoretical analysis of armed conflict outside the confines of conventional warfare, in which deterrence too is being reevaluated.¹⁴ The trickling down of once exclusive military technologies increasingly affords actors of smaller economic and military stature the means of inflicting significant costs upon their adversaries. The proliferation of precision guided munitions (PGMS) and drone technology are posed to significantly augment the arsenals of actors who employ terrorism. Examining then, how terrorist threats operate in all aspects of coercion (including deterrence) promises to shed light on potential strategic calculations and aims of actors who employ terrorism neglected in the current academic landscape. It is here argued, that not only is deterrence predicated on the threat of terrorist attacks possible, but that is a practice distinct enough to warrant the introduction of a new concept; deterrence-terrorism, to stand alongside the robust and well attested nuclear and

¹¹ Lieberman, Elli., ed., *Detering Terrorism: A Model for Strategic Deterrence*, (Routledge, 2019), p.78.

¹² Sobelman, Daniel. ‘Learning to Deter: Deterrence Failure and Success in the Israel-Hezbollah Conflict, 2006–16’. p.190.

¹³ Abrahms, Max, ‘Why Terrorism Does Not Work’, *International Security*, 31.2 (2006), 42–78, p.47; Kydd, Andrew H., and Barbara F. Walter, ‘The Strategies of Terrorism’, *International Security*, 31.1 (2006), 49–80, p.54.

¹⁴ Lowther, Adam B. *Deterrence: Rising Powers, Rogue Regimes and Terrorism in the Twenty-first Century*, (Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), pp.xi-xiii.

conventional types. Herein, it is expected the peculiarities of constituting and signalling a terrorist threat sufficiently costly to alter adversary cost/benefit calculations without having said threat nullified by countermeasures distorts the general requirements of deterrence such that expectations of both aggressor and defender behaviour are altered, and with them the conditions of success and failure.

The aims of this study are twofold. First to apply the concept of strategic terrorism as espoused by Neuman and Smith to the canon of deterrence theory in abstract, such that the feasibility of a novel concept; deterrence-terrorism may be established through deductive reasoning. Second to conduct a plausibility probe, assessing whether or not deterrence-terrorism may be responsible for the deterrence dynamic between Hezbollah and Israel since 2006 recognised in inductive studies of the that conflict. The hypothesis that has been formed to this end is simple: *Where a terrorist threat fulfils the requirements of deterrence, then military restraint follows*. As such, this study is divided in two parts, one theoretical and one empirical. Concerning theory, terrorism, conceptualised as a form of strategy, will be applied to the fundamental requirements of deterrence identifiable in established theory. Based on the expectations gained through such deductive reasoning, the emerging form of deterrence; deterrence-terrorism will be presented, and its conceptual distinction from existing types outlined. Following this, an empirical single-case study will seek to establish the plausibility of the novel concept's operation in a contemporary conflict. By examining the plausibility of deterrence-terrorism having caused the deterrence dynamic present between Hezbollah and Israel since 2006, a foundation is sought from which further study might progress. This study is then an exercise in theory building and conceptual innovation, guided both by an extent puzzle; the means by which Hezbollah deters Israel, and a theoretical quandary; whether the threat of terrorism may be used to establish a deterrence dynamic.

1 Deterrence-terrorism: Theoretical presupposition and conceptual implications

This theoretical chapter seeks to demonstrate the deductive formation of a novel species of the existing concept deterrence; deterrence-terrorism. This will be achieved in four stages. Firstly, the conceptualisation of terrorism will be presented. Secondly, a more detailed overview of terrorism's treatment in deterrence literature will be provided. Thirdly, the presupposition of deterrence-terrorism in the existing canon of deterrence theory will be established by examining compatibility of terrorism as a basis of threat for deterrence in abstract. Fourthly, a model of deterrence-terrorism will be proposed; outlining its fundamental working mechanisms such that it may be applied in empirical testing, and differentiating it from existing subtypes of the concept.

1.1 Defining terrorism

In any treatment of a subject as broad and multifaceted as terrorism, it is pertinent to outline the particular conception that will be employed, and where it stands in relation to alternative interpretations. Of the two fundamental concepts that are drawn together by the argument below, terrorism is by far the more troubled in terms of academic consensus. Even prior to the War on Terror, terrorism was described as 'a fad word used promiscuously.'²⁷ Academic use too suffers from this pluralistic trend in meaning with over 250 overlapping iterations produced to date by a plethora of authors, institutions and organisations.²⁸ A full treatment of this landscape is evidently far beyond the scope of this work. Needless to say, the conception employed in pursuit of the question at hand; establishing terrorism's relationship with the dynamics of deterrence theory, will not be a final word in any sense. Nor will the definition have chosen necessarily to be most suited to all applications. Rather, what is sought is a conception reconciled with the existing body of strategic theory, as a subset of the field of International Relations.

²⁷ Jenkins, Brian. Michael, *The Study of Terrorism: Definitional Problems*, (RAND, 1980). p.1

²⁸ Schmid. Alex. P., ed., *The Routledge Handbook of Terrorism Research*, (Routledge, 2013), p.39.

The approach employed here is guided by two principles; inclusivity and abstraction. This is at odds with strong voices in the field of terrorism studies, policy makers and legislators, who move beyond merely calling for a working definition of terrorism, to advocating one that is as precise and restrictive as possible.³² However, the broad use that will be employed here is warranted by the purpose of the study; the onus of strategic theory is to produce generally applicable conclusions free from subjective value judgements.³⁴ A strategic theory derives its utility from its generalisability, and thus should be as little encumbered by caveats as possible. As such, a minimalist definition of terrorism will be sought.³⁵ Further, to facilitate the pursuit of both these principles, ethical and moral judgment-based approaches to conceptualising terrorism will be avoided. An absolute minimal definition of terrorism might be situated in the notion of creating fear. This simple definition is grounded in the etymological and historical connection of terrorism and terror.³⁶ However, the sheer breath of such a definition if employed, goes far beyond politically motivated conduct and could include any number of crimes, legitimate state practices (including for example deterrence), and even interpersonal behaviour. In seeking a suitable definition to contribute to strategic theory, more must be done to disaggregate terrorism as an object of study from other human behaviours which produce fear in other humans. Possible approaches to this vary, but with the principles above in mind, several of these may be eliminated immediately.

The first of these approaches is action/actor-based definitions. By conceptualising terrorism as ‘the actions of terrorists’ one risks over-categorising behaviours which fall into existing concepts and are subject to other mechanics. Further it presupposes some knowledge of what terrorism is, effectively transforming the qualitative consideration at hand to ‘which actions constitute terrorism?’ This actor/action nexus is a persistent model of definitions in counterterrorism studies. Such typologies have been considered collectively as ‘list’ based definitions, and when considered collectively are marked by a significant degree of ambiguity as to what requirements are included as indicators of terrorism and how many need be fulfilled for a certain actor or event to be included as

³² Richards, Anthony, *Conceptualizing Terrorism*, pp.5-6.

³⁴ Ibid. p.7.

³⁵ Osinga, Francis P. B., *Science, Strategy and War: The Strategic Theory of John Boyd*, (Routledge, 2007), p.11.

³⁶ Pisoiu, Daniela. and Hain, Sandra, *Theories of Terrorism: An Introduction*, pp.27-28.

terrorist.³⁷ Ultimately, while such an approach could be employed in the study of terrorism as a means of deterrence, it would suffer the disadvantage of being an inclusive rather than exclusive definition, reducing applicability in novel circumstances.

In light of the subject area, a second approach might be to approach terrorism in terms of methods, in keeping with technological boundaries that often separate concepts in military theory.³⁹ However while we may identify the improvised explosive device or the suicide vest as means of inflicting violence with a close affinity to terrorism as it is commonly understood, the physical means by which fear may be created are limited only by the human imagination.⁴⁰ As a consequence of the state oriented nature of counterterrorism studies, the use of such militarily aberrant methods might be tempting as a hard indicator of terrorism as a phenomenon.⁴¹ However, in categorising violent interactions with another a state, a given state is more likely to employ the lens of military strategy, war, and other concepts distinct from terrorism, even if action in question is intended to alter behaviour through the creation of fear. Deterrence itself is a prime example of such behaviour. Further, in inflicting fear banal objects such as vehicles and knives may, in the moment of their misuse, become the means of inflicting terror. An attempt to identify the methods of inflicting violence that are terrorist would therefore lose out on the fundamental idea of creating fear, as any method-based approach belays this formative aspect of intent. In terms of defining terror as a strategic instrument then, suffice is to say that any method of inflicting violence may potentially be an implement of terrorism, and by extension deterrence based on terrorism, but no method of violence can definitively be taken as an indicator of it.

As alluded in the analysis above, a vital component in the identification of terrorism is the desire to create fear. This naturally drives a suitable definition towards a third cluster of conceptualisations; intent based definitions. Given the tendency to discount actor

³⁷ Ibid. p.26.

³⁹ Consider for instance the broad separation of land, air and naval warfare, combined arms as opposed to early mechanisation, armoured warfare as opposed to infantry tactics, network centric warfare and indeed nuclear and conventional deterrence. Here sub concepts in theory are all differentiated by particular technologies that influence the conduct of warfare.

⁴⁰ More on the matter of separating terrorism and deterrence will be said in subsection 1.4.1., in relation to conceptual utility.

⁴¹ Richards, Anthony, *Conceptualizing Terrorism*, p.70.

motivation in the study of International Relations,⁴³ and given the difficulties in assigning true motives to an actor while maintaining a positivist standpoint, intent based definitions of terrorism are not as straightforward as they may first appear. The confines of strategic theorising are however more forgiving. It is inherently assumed in the study of strategy that actors are cogent, and despite the numerous restrictions imposed on them by the realities of conflict, they seek to 'win' by deliberately pursuing policies that bring about such a condition.⁴⁴ This is not without shortcomings. The assumption of rationality among actors is itself a deeply contested matter, not least in situations that involve terrorism. Nevertheless in strategic theory this desire to pursue optimal outcomes, a minimalist understanding of rationality, is a long-standing tradition and is nearly inevitably encountered in conceptions of deterrence.⁴⁵ In attempting to reconcile the two concepts it is prudent therefore to approach terrorism as a form of coercive strategy. In doing so terrorism takes its place within a spectrum of political violence and is differentiated from other usage of armed force by certain tendencies, rather than categorical divisions. This focus on actor objectives; the employment of terrorism as a strategy pursue a political win-state is of a shared nature with intentionalist studies of terrorism, insofar as rationality and actor agency feature as lynchpins of explaining actor behaviour.⁴⁶

In terms of understanding terrorism as a strategy, the approach employed is not novel and follows the work of Neumann and Smith, who in turn derive their conception from that of Thornton, which highlights the value of considering terrorism as a 'value-neutral practice involving the creation of fear.'⁴⁷ Their proposed definition, which will be adopted is: "the deliberate creation of a sense of fear, usually by the use of threat of symbolic acts of physical violence, to influence the political behaviour of a target group."⁴⁸ In defining the strategy of terrorism, and separating it from the likes of guerrilla warfare, three key tendencies are identified;

⁴³ Bellamy, Alex. J. 'Motives, outcomes, intent and the legitimacy of humanitarian intervention', *Journal of Military Ethics*, 3:3, (2004) 216-232, p.221; p.227.

⁴⁴ Schelling, Thomas. C., *The Strategy of Conflict*, (Harvard University Press, 1980), p.1.

⁴⁵ Zagare, Frank C., 'Rationality and Deterrence', *World Politics*, 42.2 (1990), 238-60, p.239.

⁴⁶ Psoiu, Daniela., Hain, Sandra. (2018), *Theories of Terrorism: An Introduction*, Routledge, pp.44-45.

⁴⁷ Neumann, Peter. R., Smith. M. L. R. (2008), *The Strategy of Terrorism*, Routledge, p.8.

⁴⁸ Ibid.p.8

1. Violence of action;
2. The 'extra-normal' nature of this violence;
3. The symbolic nature of the violent act.⁴⁹

To surmise, when understood as a strategy terrorism is a *form of political violence, wherein the violent actions committed surpass in some manner the accepted behaviours of the political framework, and are conducted with the psychological effect of the violence upon the adversary as the foremost motivation*. Certainly, the delineation here between terrorism and conventional warfare is not a matter of clinical, categorical precision.⁵⁰ In such a conception we may appreciate a certain element of terrorism in any military action where a demoralising effect is sought. Nevertheless, such a definition is sufficient to identify terrorism, as a node in a spectrum of political violence. By virtue of their greater or lesser fulfilment of these three identifiers, actions (legal or otherwise) may be more or less 'terroristic,' a notion present within approaches to the study of terrorism that include state-terrorism.⁵¹ Ultimately, inclusion or exclusion of a given action will involve a degree of subjectivity, following the qualitative assessment of these criteria. When taken collectively, a violent act undertaken or threatened will bear a predominantly extra-normal and symbolic nature, thus be an example of a terrorist strategy, or remain within the accepted bounds of a political framework and have a primarily material effect, thus being an example of different strategy.

1.2 Terrorism in deterrence literature

In sharp contrast to treatment of terrorism in this paper, existing deterrence theory that concerns terrorism is focused on deterring terrorism. Interest in terrorism within the study of deterrence was largely a result of the September 11th attacks and the shift in perceptions of state security that followed.⁵² Prior to this, the question of preventing terrorism was approached more practically as a facet of executing a counterinsurgency strategy.⁵³ As

⁴⁹ Adapted from: Neumann, Peter. R., Smith. M. L. R. (2008), *The Strategy of Terrorism*, Routledge, pp.8-9.

⁵⁰ This issue will be revisited in much greater detail subsection 1.4.1.

⁵¹ Richards, Anthony, *Conceptualizing Terrorism*, p.115.

⁵² Wenger, Andreas and Wilner, Alex, *Deterring terrorism: Theory and Practice*, (Stanford University Press, 2012), p.3.

⁵³ Ibid. p.21.

the War on Terror burgeoned greater attention was paid to the threat, then considered emergent in its newfound scale and globalised nature. As such efforts to formally reapply the logic of deterrence in dissuading terrorism proliferated.⁵⁴ Numerous volumes have been devoted to the momentous task of providing an overview of this research, but what is necessary to extract here is the *unidirectional* focus of these academic endeavours when applied to deterrence. This is to say academic and professional attention has doggedly sought to answer the two questions; can terrorists be deterred, and if so how? Here attention has been fixated largely on the question of rationality. Scepticism towards a coherent degree of rationality among actors who employ terrorism has been raised on numerous grounds, ranging from proclivities to risk taking, the distorting effects of fundamentalist theologies, or incomprehensible value systems.⁵⁵ To carry this view to its most extreme iterations, actors who employ terrorism are deemed wholly irrational. That is to say, effectively random actors who cannot be deterred, whether they are a single terrorist, an irregular armed force or a state.⁵⁶ This is simply by virtue of the fact an irrational actor does not possess fixed and transitive preferences, and as such no threat leveraged against them can have a calculable cost. Such a charge has in effect been levelled against terrorists. In the wake of the September 11th attacks, it was asserted the perpetrators were ‘wholly indifferent to consequences,’ and conducted the attack with ‘no rational military purpose.’⁵⁷ Without a cost to inflict upon an adversary in the event of undesired action or series of actions, the mechanism of deterrence breaks down even in a simplistic single play scenario. This is to say nothing of the teleological functioning environment of deterrence; a long-term predicable and stable dynamic. If such views are

⁵⁴ See footnote 9.

⁵⁵ Wilner, Alex S., ‘Deterring the Undeterrable: Coercion, Denial, and Delegitimization in Counterterrorism’, *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 34.1 (2011), 3–37, pp.3-4.

⁵⁶ The precise relationship between rationality and deterrence is complex and contingent on as of yet unresolved social science quandaries as to the nature of rationality and irrationality. What is understood by ‘irrational’ in this brief summary is the (not here accepted) assertion that some actors are so divorced from the manner of human cognition that has produced the field of International Relations and strategic studies, that no insight into their decision making can be inferred with reference to these fields. Less absolute definitions of irrationality have been reconciled with deterrence, as have significant degrees of uncertainty as to adversary intentions. As Jervis notes; ‘prevalent irrationalities can produce strong and simple patterns.’ As the argument to hand rejects assertion that terrorists cannot be deterred because they are irrational, this matter will not be investigated further. For further reference see: Jervis, Robert. ‘Rational Deterrence: Theory and Evidence’. *World Politics* 41, no. 2 (January 1989): 183–207, p.186; ‘III: Strategy with a random element,’ in: Schelling, Thomas. C., *The Strategy of Conflict*.

⁵⁷ Neumann, Peter. R., Smith. M. L. R. (2008), *The Strategy of Terrorism*, Routledge, pp.2-3.

accepted and actors who employ terrorism deemed wholly irrational, not only is deterring terrorism impossible, but so too is deterrence through terrorism.

While much vitriol has been expended in the highly politicised discourse concerning terrorism and terrorists, the overwhelming opinion in the relevant literature is that despite the shocking nature of terrorism to the majority of society, terrorists can be and often are rational.⁵⁸ Even when considering suicide bombers, rationality has been identified through consideration of groups of individuals as the relevant unit of analysis, and the preferences of their cause as such, over the individual human in question.⁵⁹ Far from being aberrant, irrational and unpredictable adversaries subject to no discernible governing dynamics, those who employ terrorism have been brought under the lens of social science as unusual, but not exceptional actors. Having concluded that terrorists can be deterred, the answer to how this might be achieved has emerged in close concert with nuclear and conventional deterrence. Instrumentalists such as Crenshaw postulate that terrorism, like other unwanted behaviours like conventional war, may be deterred through denial or through retaliation, and that facing increased costs terrorists will rationally divert their efforts into other forms of political activity.⁶⁰

In either such analysis terrorists perform the same manner of rational cost calculations as players in conventional or nuclear deterrence games. Finding space for terrorism within deterrence theory is however more than a simple admission of some degree of rationality. Given the disparate nature of such organisations, the notion of deterring terrorism called for a fundamental reappraisal of the state centric nature of previous thinking; wherein countervalue targeting was a central aspect of forming an unacceptable cost to an adversary. With what was often described as ‘no return address,’ terrorists have and continue to prove elusive subjects of threat.⁶² Here, novel instruments of punishment have

⁵⁸ For an overview of the landscape of terrorism studies, including approaches to the question of rationality see: Psoiu, Daniela., Hain, Sandra, *Theories of Terrorism: An Introduction*, pp.41-47.

⁵⁹ Pape, Robert A., ‘The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism’, *American Political Science Review*, 97.03 (2003), p. 13; Eriksson, Lina, *Rational Choice Theory: Potential and Limits*, (Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp.111-114.

⁶⁰ McAllister, B. Schmid, A.P. “Theories of Terrorism” in: Schmid, Alex. P., ed., *The Routledge Handbook of Terrorism Research*, p.256.

⁶² Wilner, Alex S., ‘Deterring the Undeterrable: Coercion, Denial, and Delegitimization in Counterterrorism’. p.4.

been sought, as have methods of expanding and reinforcing the credibility of responses. For all the elegance of these theoretical propositions the minutiae of employing such methods are themselves areas of vast research tangential to the matter at hand. What is pertinent to highlight for the purposes of the present argument is the fundamentals of deterrence been considered to remain intact and applicable in cases involving terrorism, albeit in a unidirectional fashion. It is the task of this paper to explore the gap in literature presented by the reverse dynamic; to ask if terrorism can serve as the basis of a deterrent threat.

The furthest extent to which this unidirectional focus has been reversed; to ask if terrorism can serve as a deterrent, is found in the study of asymmetrical deterrence. A central facet of the ‘fourth wave’ of deterrence research,⁶³ which includes the study of terrorism outlined above, research on asymmetrical deterrence has sought fresh insight by challenging frameworks dependent on mutual response and military parity. This is in light of a post-Cold War international environment where the US and its allies enjoy significant advantages in virtually all aspects of military and economic power.⁶⁴ Accepting much of the criticism of the third wave which highlighted the limitations of deterrence, contemporary fourth wave research notes the increased unreliability of such a strategy when leveraged against, or indeed by, actors at the lower end of a stark power differential.⁶⁵ Far from dismissing such a prospect however, asymmetrical deterrence has been conceptualised as a difficult but not impossible strategy where the weak may deter a superior power; their success contingent on high cost perception in the would be aggressor’s society.⁶⁶ The persistence of the *possibility* of success in deterring an actor at an asymmetrical disadvantage, or of the disadvantaged party deterring a superior adversary is a key point of departure in forming the proposed concept of deterrence-

⁶³ Wilner, Alex S. ‘Contemporary Deterrence Theory and Counterterrorism: A Bridge Too Far’, *New York University Journal of International Law and Politics* 47.2 (2015) 439-462, p.439.

⁶⁴ Knopf, Jeffrey W., ‘The Fourth Wave in Deterrence Research’, *Contemporary Security Policy*, 31.1 (2010), 1–33, p.3.

⁶⁵ Ibid. p.6.

⁶⁶ See: Malka, Amos, ‘Israel and Asymmetrical Deterrence’, *Comparative Strategy*, 27.1 (2008), 1–19. Note the term asymmetric deterrence has been used in more classical deterrence theory to refer to unrelated situations where one party seeks to instigate a challenge to the status-quo, and the other seeks to construct a threat to prevent this. See: Morgan, Patrick M., *Deterrence: A Conceptual Analysis*, (Sage Publications, 1977); Zagare, Frank C., and D. Marc Kilgour, ‘Asymmetric Deterrence’, *International Studies Quarterly*, 37.1 (1993).

terrorism. To surmise, the current position of terrorism in deterrence literature is not one of neglect. Rather, essential groundwork towards the study of terrorism as a potential means of deterrence has been undertaken. Research in this direction has been hampered, largely, by policy and context driven investigation of the subject, which naturally produces bias towards a unidirectional focus on deterring terrorism.⁶⁷ This struggle with true neutrality in strategic analysis is not a particular fault of the study of deterrence and is something of a general challenge in the study of strategy we may surmise from Schelling.⁶⁸

1.3 Deterrence in abstract: key concepts and their relation to terrorism as a strategy

To establish the presupposition of terrorism as a means of deterrence in existing deterrence theory, we must first consider deterrence in abstract. Here, an important distinction must be made between deterrence itself, and nuclear deterrence. Due to their formative role in establishing the early canon of deterrence, nuclear weapons and their function in a deterrence dynamic are often conflated with the deterrence in an entirely abstract form.⁶⁹ This however is somewhat misleading. Herein arises, to a large degree, expectations of certainty in terms of threat and inflicted cost, signalling and parity as requirement of stability; in short, a state centric milieu that obfuscates approaching terrorism as a means of pursuing a deterrence dynamic.⁷⁰ As will be expounded below, when approached from the generally accepted tenets that underpin the deterrence theory, the potential use of terrorism for deterrence; deterrence-terrorism, is possible, and is as capable of meeting the requirements of a deterrence dynamic as more familiar types of armed force such as conventional arms or nuclear weapons.

As a point of departure, the first point to raise is one made by Schelling, and later reiterated by numerous scholars. This is that deterrence is one of two subtypes of

⁶⁷ Neumann, Peter. R., Smith. M. L. R., *The Strategy of Terrorism*, p.5, p.7.

⁶⁸ Schelling, Thomas. C., *Choice and Consequence*, pp.198-199.

⁶⁹ Zagare, Frank C., and D. Marc Kilgour, *Perfect Deterrence*, Cambridge Studies in International Relations (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp.4-5; Brodie, Bernard, *Anatomy of Deterrence*, (RAND, 1958), pp.3-4; Shimshoni, Jonathan, *Israel and Conventional Deterrence*, p.1.

⁷⁰ Shimshoni, Jonathan, *Israel and Conventional Deterrence*, p.8.

coercion, the other being compellence.⁷¹ The critical difference here is mechanistic; the manner in which a threat is leveraged to achieve the desired result, and is best elucidated by examining hypothetical self-contained, or single play scenarios. In a single play compellence game, an action unwanted by an adversary (i.e. a means of inflicting costs) is threatened with the intention of forcing or convincing that adversary to act in some predetermined fashion. In a single play deterrence game, the threat of an action unwanted by an adversary is communicated, such that it will be enacted *if* the adversary pursues a certain course of action. With compellence – action. With deterrence – inaction. From this single distinction emanates the vast and storied web of distinctions, qualifications and sub-concepts that form the body of deterrence theory as a whole.

Verbose definitions of deterrence have been forthcoming in the relevant literature and are in the main non-conflicting. To provide an illustrative example from Williams;

*“In its simplest form, deterrence...is basically an attempt by party A to prevent party B from undertaking a course of action A regards as undesirable, by threatening to inflict unacceptable costs upon B in the event the action is taken.”*⁷²

This has been distilled further by from the formulaic work of Snyder, into the conditional proposition “If you do... I will...”⁷³ As in often the case, abstraction to such a degree does much to belay the complexity of real-world cases. Nevertheless, conceptualising deterrence-terrorism may progress with reference to relatively short list of requirements that stem from this initial abstract analysis. The purpose of this is not to provide a full description of the existing theoretical literature on each of these requirements, but rather to outline the basic mechanics of each requirement and illustrate how it would apply to terrorism should it be employed as a means of deterrence. According to deterrence literature there are four key requirements for deterrence, but their articulation varies. They are:

⁷¹ Schelling, Thomas. C., *Arms and Influence*, pp.69-71.

⁷² Williams, Phil. (1975), *Crisis Management* cited in: Zagare, Frank. C., *Dynamics of Deterrence*, (University of Chicago Press, 1987), p.7.

⁷³ Snyder, Glen. (1961), *Deterrence and Defense*, Princeton University Press, cited in: Shimshoni, Jonathan, *Israel and Conventional Deterrence*, p.6.

1. The need for clearly defined circumstances in which a threat will be carried out;
2. The need to have communicated and publicised these circumstances
3. The need for a credible deterrent threat;
4. The need to have demonstrated the resolve to follow through with it.⁷⁴

Requirements 1, 2 and 4 have in some analysis been approached collectively, as the practice of *signalling*.⁷⁵ Given the communicative nature of these three requirements, this is understandable. The following analysis will conform to this collective approach to a large extent but will pay select attention to a certain aspect of deterrence that remains unspoken in requirement 1; *status-quo maintenance*. For reasons that will be elucidated below, the implicit need to maintain the status-quo in a deterrence game has certain ramifications that prevent a deterrence strategy having any utility to the majority of actors who would employ terrorism to pursue their strategic goals. To this set of requirements we may also add consideration of ‘aggressor motivation,’ or ‘intent.’⁷⁶ The presence or absence of this factor is certainly a key question policy makers seeking to employ deterrence must ask themselves, or even the most important question in the eyes of Morgan.⁷⁷ This is due to the fact that as a sufficiently motivated aggressor cannot be deterred by any means, as the value their taking a certain action may eclipse any consequences (i.e. costs) that might follow. Thus, aggressor motivation is an immediate scope condition, separating in effect all cases where a deterrence strategy, and thus deterrence theory, is not applicable. As such we may set aside full consideration of this factor in the following discussion. While this question will be revisited as an aspect of case selection and in relation to the empirical case, it does not bear immediate relevance here.

⁷⁴ Adapted from: ‘Deterrence: A Political and Psychological Critique,’ in: Lebow, Richard Ned., ed., *Richard Ned Lebow: Key Texts in Political Psychology and International Relations Theory*, 4:3–24. (Springer International Publishing, 2016), p.7.

⁷⁵ Lieberman, Elli., ed., *Deterring Terrorism: A Model for Strategic Deterrence*, pp.30-31.

⁷⁶ Mazarr, Micheal J., *Understanding Deterrence*, (RAND, 2018), p.8.

⁷⁷ Huth, Paul, and Bruce Russett, ‘What Makes Deterrence Work? Cases from 1900 to 1980’, *World Politics*, 36.4 (1984), 496–526, pp.496-497; Morgan, Patrick M. *Deterrence: A Conceptual Analysis*, (Sage Publications, 1983).

1.3.1 Status-quo maintenance

The first requirement of deterrence in question is a direct consequence of deterrence inciting inaction (unlike compellence); status-quo maintenance. Like aggressor motivation, it forms a scope condition in the study of deterrence, and implicitly follows the notion of having clear circumstances in which a threat will be used. In relation to the use of terrorism as a means of deterrence, status-quo maintenance is worth considering separately, as the notion of maintaining the status-quo does not necessarily intersect with the circumstances in which actors adopt strategies of terrorism. To first frame status-quo maintenance in relation to deterrence in general, it is pertinent to note the following. While an actor employing deterrence may have incentives to alter the status-quo to its favour, or desire revision to a previous status-quo, this necessarily cannot be sought through deterrence itself. Highlighted in particular by game theory centric approaches to deterrence, it is noted that in situations where two parties share a preference that neither gains an advantageous position, a deterrence game is *not* instigated until at least one party desires to alter the status-quo, in pursuit of its respective advantage.⁷⁸ Should one party decide to alter the status-quo, the prospect of a unidirectional⁷⁹ deterrence dynamic emerges. If both desired to alter the situation in their favour, the prospect of a game of mutual deterrence emerges.

In such a scenario both parties possess a desire to alter the status-quo and win, but find themselves bound to support the status-quo, for fear their opponent will similarly attempt to overturn it. A rigorous understanding of this fundamental mechanic is vital to framing deterrence-terrorism as a viable subtype. Given the fact terrorism emerges as a form of political violence due to, in the majority of cases, a desire to elicit some change, the default preference to alter the status-quo may mistakenly be presupposed.⁸⁰ For the use

⁷⁸ Zagare, Frank. C., *Dynamics of Deterrence*, p.32.

⁷⁹ The term ‘unidirectional’ is here used to avoid the term ‘unilateral’, which may be employed either to denote a deterrence game that is not mutual, or a deterrence dynamic where only one party possesses nuclear weapons. See: Zagare, Frank. C., *Dynamics of Deterrence*, p.32.

⁸⁰ The predominance of status-quo revision as a goal is manifest in large N studies of terrorist objectives. See footnote 13. Logically, the exclusive study of terrorism as a compellent strategy presupposes a desire to alter the status-quo.

of terrorism to express itself as deterrent, and not compellent, the actor employing terrorism must prefer the status-quo to outcomes in which their adversary wins. This may well seem moot, but a subtle distinction must be made here. As the study of organisation survival has indicated, terrorists exhibit strong preferences to survive and propagate.⁸¹ At a cursory glance, eradication (counterterrorist win) is eminently less preferable to the remaining intact as an organisation (status-quo), both of which are inferior outcomes to achieving one's objectives (terrorist win). However, given the fact that a likely status-quo in an ongoing terrorist campaign will include counterterrorist efforts, the differentiation between these first two outcomes becomes limited when considered teleologically. Unless the party employing terrorism is absolutely confident that counterterrorist efforts will have no eventual success (lose scenario through external pressure), and their organisational survival is not threatened in the event of a protracted conflict without a change in conflict status (lose scenario through internal collapse), the maintenance of the status-quo amounts to a losing scenario over a long enough timeframe. Applied in reality, we find that an actor employing terrorism with a preference to maintain the status-quo describes a complex and perhaps unlikely scenario. In more lucid terms, such a terrorist organisation would need to feel safe in its capacity to mobilise individuals and resources in the future, have achieved some of its initial goals (even if this is arresting the success of their adversary), and only then fulfil the numerous other requirements of a successful deterrent strategy. In short, no small order. This fact alone is a likely explanation for conceptual absence of deterrence-terrorism to date, as "few insurgencies reach a mature age because most of them die in infancy without facing future dilemmas."⁸² Improbability is however in no way equal to impossibility when approaching theory deductively. With a view to conceptualising deterrence-terrorism, it may then be noted that such a strategy is likely to be found only in cases where the actor employing terrorism is long-lived and well established. Long term insurgencies with partial successes, pseudo-states and states are then far more likely practitioners of deterrence-terrorism than fledgling movements or lone wolves.

⁸¹ Lieberman, Elli., ed., *Deterring Terrorism: A Model for Strategic Deterrence*, pp.20-21.

⁸² Al-Aloosy, Massab, *The Changing Ideology of Hezbollah*, (Palgrave Macmillan, 2020), p.130.

1.3.2 Signalling

To maintain the delicate balance found in a deterrence dynamic, particularly in a case of mutual deterrence (Fig. 2), it is vital that parties pursuing a deterrent strategy communicate their preferences. This includes the aforementioned desire to preserve the status-quo (after consideration of likely outcomes), as well as the circumstances in which the threat will be carried out, and the resolve to follow through with said threat. We may also say that creating an understanding of the existence of a credible threat itself must be communicated, and that this too is a component of signalling.⁸³ When problems like bluffing and secret weapons are considered, this communicative aspect certainly outshines the technical-material aspects of creating a functioning and sufficient (therefore credible) deterrent. Nevertheless, treatment of credible deterrents is here presented separately, given the fact that that material aspects are more fundamental than communicative aspects, or at the very least should be overcome first.

Establishing commonly known and unambiguous circumstances in which a deterrent threat will be used is highly conducive to the prevention of strategic missteps. Adversary preferences and other key variables are, even a fixed point, subject to significant uncertainty to an actor. The results in the possibility of an inadvertent triggering of deterrent threats by actors misinformed as to the true value of a certain action or inaction. Since words are cheap, for want of a better phrase, the effect of diplomatic communications or public declarations is often backed up by some tangible action, relating to preparation of threat use. Establishing responses to specific actions (certain preparations or military operations) is often the simplest method of reaching an understanding of circumstances in which a threat will be used, as this allows adversaries to cut through rhetoric made, for instance, for domestic reasons.⁸⁴ For an actor to establish they have the resolve to carry out a threat is a more nuanced affair. Reputation, as Schelling notes is the key factor here, and above all else it is the perceived behavioural

⁸³ As eluded earlier, typologies of deterrence requirements share the common features mentioned here, but a number of possible overlapping arrangements exist for ease of presentation. The objective here is, as is the case in all such arrangements, to organise the requirements of deterrence in a manner most conducive to drawing focus on the immediate subject matter. In this case, aspects of deterrence that complicated if applied to terrorism.

⁸⁴ Schelling, Thomas. C., *Choice and Consequence*, p. 301.

tendencies of an actor that governs whether or not adversary will take their statements at face value.⁸⁵ Presenting unambiguous circumstances in which unambiguous threats will be used simplifies deterrence dynamics, and may be considered something of a default.⁸⁶ This however is not ironclad, insofar as it remains possible, and at times beneficial, for actors to adopt a policy of strategic ambiguity; communicating only the minimal information that they possess some means of inflicting costs, and will use them if certain unspecified circumstances arise.⁸⁷ A prominent example of this is Israel's policy on nuclear weapons, where in the state deliberately does not remark on the precise actions it deems worthy of nuclear response.⁸⁸ This policy, viable too in conventional scenarios, thereby dissuades adversaries from "designing around" the deterrent threat.⁸⁹ For reasons that will be expounded below, such a policy, while not without benefits, likely creates more problems than solutions for actors at the lower end of a power asymmetry, reinforcing the general requirement for adept signalling in cases where terrorism is sought as a means of deterrence.

This need for effective signalling is most dramatically outlined in nuclear scenarios, where the immense costs held in Damoclean fashion by defenders offers limited room for error. Such a dynamic requires little expansion here. The variable scale of conventional responses does to require adept and thorough signalling through other mechanisms, with more diverse possibilities as to the potential use of force as a means of communication. This lends itself to the practice of probing and challenges in the form of 'controlled pressure'.⁹⁰ The variable nature of a conventional responses and challenges in such scenarios might be seen as an inherently less stable form of deterrence, when compared to a nuclear dynamic, thereby similarly demanding effective signalling but for slightly different reasons. In an engagement with an actor employing terrorism-based deterrence against an adversary, this scalability is even further pronounced, with a vast number of

⁸⁵ Taddeo, Mariarosaria, 'The Limits of Deterrence Theory in Cyberspace', *Philosophy & Technology*, 31.3 (2018), 339–55, p.351.

⁸⁶ Schelling, Thomas. C., *The Strategy of Conflict*, p.187.

⁸⁷ Schelling, Thomas. C., *Choice and Consequence*, p.301.

⁸⁸ Baliga, Sandeep, and Tomas Sjöström, 'Strategic Ambiguity and Arms Proliferation', *Journal of Political Economy*, 116.6 (2008), 1023–57, p.1024.

⁸⁹ Rhodes, Edward, 'Conventional Deterrence', *Comparative Strategy*, 19.3 (2000), 221–53, p.250.

⁹⁰ Levy, Jack S., 'Deterrence and Coercive Diplomacy: The Contributions of Alexander George', *Political Psychology*, 29.4 (2008), 537–52, p.546.

potential targets, delivery systems, and variable frequency of attacks. It follows therefore that in terms of managing a conflict spiral, terrorism-based deterrence would demand pronounced and effective signalling.

In this respect terrorism appears more at home than it does with other aspects of deterrence, given the extensive study of terrorism as exactly this; a communicative strategy.⁹¹ Actors who employ terrorism by very virtue of their activities must make significant efforts to communicate their objectives and threats to have any prospect of success. However, certain aspects of the scenarios in which actors may employ terrorism have the potential to complicate this communicative process should it be leveraged towards a deterrent effect. These are *variable territoriality* and *communication of capability*. To address the former, as terrorism (for more readily than nuclear weapons or a conventional standing army) may be employed by an actor of any scale, from an alliance of states to an individual human. As such the defined ‘territory’ of an actor who employs terrorism is by no means a given. With a view to establishing thresholds of adversary action considered significant enough to warrant a response, allowing a deterrent effect to follow, infringement on territories and populations of oneself or one’s allies is the something of a default within deterrence theory and real-world practice.⁹² These have been conceived as “redlines” in more recent analysis of the coercive use of force, and notably feature in Israeli discussion of deterrence.⁹³ This naturally reflects the state centric nature of International Relations, deterrence theory included. An actor employing terrorism may well be able to fulfil these criteria, should they have a sufficiently localised areas of operations and interests. In such cases, signalling circumstances of threat use is not more challenging than with other forms of deterrence. However, should consideration move from states/pseudo states or localised movements who make use of terrorism, to global terrorist networks, single issue groups and, most problematically lone wolves, signalling circumstances in which a threat will be used becomes much more complex.

⁹¹ Tosini, Domenico, ‘The Suicide Bomber as a Medium of Terrorist Communication: A Contribution from Social Systems Theory’, *International Review of Sociology*, 28.3 (2018), 524–40, p.527-528.

⁹² Quinlan, Michael. ‘Deterrence and Deterrability’. p.12; Tertrais, Bruno, ‘Drawing Red Lines Right’, *The Washington Quarterly*, 37.3 (2014), 7–24, p.8.

⁹³ Tertrais, Bruno. ‘Drawing Red Lines Right’. p.7-8.

With reference to actors such as global networks, a variable boundary of interests that may include vast segments of the global population entails scenarios so numerous that they are impossible to monitor and include so many potential adversaries that a deterrent is very difficult to tailor. In the case of Al Qaeda for instance the population under deterrent protection would include vast sections of Muslims across the globe. Further religion alone is an insufficient criterion given the group's strict and peculiar definitions of a theologically acceptable 'in' group. As such potentially all but in reality only some Muslims, differentiated at the individual level, would be the referent objects of the security a deterrent strategy must provide. Even if such populations are treated collectively there are too many scenarios involving too many adversaries to communicate clear boundaries of acceptable and unacceptable adversary behaviour. An analogue of this problem might be found in the study of extended deterrence, wherein it is noted that should an actor recklessly extend their protection to an excessive large or indeterminate group of allies or worse still individuals, the capacity of that state to categorically define instigating violations is vastly diminished. So too is the credibility of response in relation to far flung and minor causes. It is expected therefore that the greater the restriction of the defender's security commitments in cases of deterrence-terrorism, the easier it is to convincingly signal the circumstances in which a threat will be used, and the resolution to use the threat if the given interest(s) are infringed upon. Defined populations and geographical boundaries to protect are conducive to the feasibility of deterrence, and deterrence-terrorism. We may conclude then that the closer the terrorist actor is to 'statehood' in terms of its resources, territoriality and localisation of interests, the simpler the process is by which it may define and communicate redline circumstance with which to base a deterrent threat.⁹⁴

⁹⁴ In the case of lone wolves and to an extent single issue groups, defining a redline may be unproblematic, for instance, threatening violence in response to the passing of legislation or the opening of an unwanted facility. However, the process of signalling itself also alerts authorities to the hostile intent of such potential defenders. In any scenario with a function state apparatus, the immediate countermeasures are likely to nullify both the threat in question through countermeasures. Establishing resolve suffers from a similar problem as any threat leveraged is likely novel and if somehow communicated without revealing compromising specifics cannot be counted as credible. The profusion of death threats to political figures might be taken as example of this. For these reasons, deterrence-terrorism is not considered a viable strategy for lone wolves, who may therefore be excluded from further consideration.

Signalling capability and resolve are also potentially problematic in attempts to use terrorist threats as the basis of deterrence. In communicating capability, the possession of the physical means to impose costs through the use of terrorism has in itself does not necessarily infer any potential threat. This is due simply to the fact banal objects and even human beings themselves may serve as instruments of terrorism, if applied in violent, extra-normal and symbolic attacks. While this problem would not arise with high cost and non-dual use technology (where ambiguous response could certainly be leveraged),⁹⁵ the same does not apply to the most simplistic and acceptable means of terrorist attacks such as small arms and low yield improvised bombs. With less impressive and ambiguous technologies, the problem is expounded by the manner in which declaring one's intentions diminishes the future prospect of success should the threat need be used, a problem seen in conventional deterrence, but expounded by the relative ease of countering the majority of a terrorist threat's destructive capability.⁹⁶ The signalled threat to kidnap a politician or bomb a café, for example is still threatening, but affords the would-be aggressor time to counteract this risk. Maintaining secrecy as to the exact nature of one's capabilities while being sufficiently clear as to convey the costs one would impose in the violation of a redline is then, a balancing act. It is expected therefore that actors who seek deterrence through terrorism will seek to maintain ambiguity wherever possible, but will accept the diminishment of their threat by being specific if they feel they need to reinforce signalling, perhaps in response to an adversary's probes as to their vital interests. Defenders may then exhibit layered signalling, where in greater ambiguity is maintained in relation to more peripheral challenges, but a core unambiguous deterrent is maintained and signalled to be used in the event of a specific central cause.

Regarding resolve, signalling the willingness to follow through with a terrorist threat, i.e. violate the accepted framework of political violence through extra-normal behaviour, is similarly challenging in scenarios where actors cannot rely on the reputation garnered by past behaviour. If utilising prominent and eminently destructive technology, demonstrative use in less sensitive environments (attacking for instance military targets or unoccupied areas with the same technology), combined with clear threats to retarget

⁹⁵ Schelling, Thomas. C., *Choice and Consequence*, p.301.

⁹⁶ Harknett, Richard J., 'The Logic of Conventional Deterrence and the End of the Cold War', *Security Studies*, 4.1 (1994), 86–114, pp.98-99.

such weapons against sensitive targets (like civilians) may overcome this problem. This is parallel to the theorised manner in which a novel nuclear actor could establish and communicate the credibility of their threat and mirrors the credibility problem presented by massive retaliation and similar high cost threats in existing theory.⁹⁷ With less destructive means, the most viable way to communicate resolve to commit the extra-normal threat is to use (to some extent) the threat thereby indicating the likely course of future events; suggestive escalation.⁹⁸ Such behaviour and the problems posed thereby is not novel, but is dramatically pronounced in relation to deterrence-terrorism, given the sensitivity of violent, extra-normal and symbolic actions. Suggestive escalation in the form of terrorist attacks is inherently risk fraught, as it undermines the basic message of deterrence signalling; that a cost will be imposed *if* unwanted actions are undertaken, and will not be imposed if the status-quo is maintained. This paradox likely prohibits a single play deterrence dynamic where the threat is based on terrorism. Deterrence however teleologically produces an ongoing state of affairs; a multigame scenario. The fact then that effective signalling of a credible extra-normal terrorist threat entails as some at some stage the of said threat becomes less constricting to the development of a deterrence dynamic. Reputation here is key, and the previous terrorist actions may be leveraged by the defender (perhaps in earlier non deterrent conflict) as the basis of signalled resolve. It is expected therefore that the problem of signalling resolve is less burdensome the longer the defender has made use of terrorism prior to attempting to establish the deterrent dynamic in question. This suggests deterrence based on terror is more likely to succeed as a strategy adopted to maintain a status-quo after other phases of conflict.

1.3.3 Credible threats using terrorism

A credible threat is perhaps the simplest aspect of deterrence theory. In abstract any threatened action which would inflict unacceptable costs on an adversary is a credible threat (provided it is successfully communicated and given the defender's resolve to follow through). What is key here is the material ability to impose the costs in question; possession of the required technology and techniques. Given this, it is required that the

⁹⁷ Schelling, Thomas. C., *Choice and Consequence*, pp.314-316.

⁹⁸ Morgan, Forrest., and others., *Dangerous Thresholds*, (RAND, 2008), p.32.

costs imposed are unacceptably high to the would-be aggressor for the unwanted action to be undertaken.⁹⁹ The question of resolve has been addressed above in relation to signalling, but notably may also be framed in terms of forming a credible threat. A threatened cost that an aggressor does not believe the defender will use is nullified.¹⁰⁰ The question of a credible threat is then partly material (capability) and partly ideational (adversary perceptions of cost unacceptability), if both aspects are present an actor may be said to possess a credible threat. For the species of deterrence at play in a given case to be deterrence-terrorism, this credible threat and the costs imposed by it must be constituted through the use of terrorism. In accordance with the definition of terrorism above, the threat must be violent, extra-normal and symbolic, creating an adversary cost through the confluence of these factors and the psychological cost that follows over any direct material cost.

To address the material aspect of credible threats formed through terrorism, the exact technology and resources required is case specific and dependent on factors such as the proximity of the aggressor to the defender, and the defender's countermeasure capabilities, and the type of attack pursued. At an abstract level, all that is required is the ability to commit violent, extra-normal and symbolic attacks. This produces the first generalisable inference in relation to forming a threat through terrorism; the flexibility of terrorist capabilities. This flexibility is intuitive; the scope of potential military and non-military targets that can be attacked in fulfilment of these criteria, with for instance an explosive device, is limited only by guile and human imagination. It is expected therefore that the mere possession of a technology cannot be counted upon to infer upon an adversary any particular threat, unlike a nuclear weapon or large standing army.¹⁰¹ The relative importance of signalling vs material capability (communicating the threat over forming the capability to execute it) in deterrence-terrorism is then expected to be in favour of signalling. The breadth of actions that may be taken to conduct a violent, extra-normal and symbolic attack also produces a second general inference; low entry-cost. Even while at immense asymmetries in terms of resources or technologies, actors are likely to inherently possess and maintain the capability of conducting terrorist attacks,

⁹⁹ Quinlan, Michael. 'Deterrence and Deterrability'. p.14.

¹⁰⁰ Huth, Paul, and Bruce Russett. 'What Makes Deterrence Work? Cases from 1900 to 1980'. p.502.

¹⁰¹ Schelling. Thomas. C., *Choice and Consequence*, p.296, p.301.

and thus some imposing *some* costs (unacceptable or otherwise). The scope of required technologies varies from little to none (knife and vehicle ramming attacks) to highly developed (PGMs). This is an area of significant divergence from nuclear or conventional deterrence wherein the acquisition costs of the required technologies vastly reduce the likelihood of their use by non-state actors. While states no doubt still possess a material advantage in forming a terrorist threat due to their greater resources, non-state actors are much less impeded by technical deficiencies in forming the capability to conduct terrorist attacks. As such, it follows that deterrence-terrorism is likely to be of the particular utility to actors subject to power asymmetries.

This ease of entry however impinges on the question of countermeasures. Bar the hypothetical perfect weapon, every weapon system developed to date has a degree of countermeasure. As we move down the spectrum of technical sophistication from a nuclear arsenal to the bread and butter of terrorist attacks; shootings and bombings, these countermeasures become more and more readily available, particularly to state actors. If countered, a given capability becomes incapable of imposing costs, and as such loses its capacity to form the basis of a deterrent threat.¹⁰² As such, it is likely that in cases of deterrence-terrorism the defender must continually seek to overcome the development of adversary countermeasures, through novel applications of existing resources or further armament. This resembles the arms-race dynamic often found in nuclear deterrence, but with significantly pronounced urgency for the defender.¹⁰³ This is particularly true where the deterrent threat has a specific target and method of execution. While the cost of securing oneself against terror is by no means small, and by no means a guaranteed success, it is a much more manageable prospect than securing against a nuclear or conventional threat. Further, the consequences of a partial countermeasure failure are in all likelihood non-catastrophic, with the exception of WMD terrorism.¹⁰⁴ As terrorism

¹⁰² Harknett, Richard J. 'The Logic of Conventional Deterrence and the End of the Cold War'. p.94.

¹⁰³ Lieber, Keir A., and Daryl G. Press, 'The New Era of Counterforce: Technological Change and the Future of Nuclear Deterrence', *International Security*, 41.4 (2017), 9–49, p.14.

¹⁰⁴ On the subject of WMD terrorism, the highly credible threat posed by a nuclear weapon results in a dynamic which is accepted to fit within the corpus of nuclear deterrence, albeit with diverging opinions as to the feasibility of deterring such a threat. As such, WMD terrorism, while a bridge between the proposed concept deterrence-terrorism and the accepted body of nuclear deterrence, will not be further considered in this paper. As Schelling surmises: "The most plausible nuclear terrorism on part of a non-governmental group may be the kind that is almost indistinguishable from the traditional deterrence practiced by the United States and some other countries." Schelling, Thomas. C., *Choice and*

generally depends on an attritional strategy, an adequate but imperfect initial countermeasure may well be enough to motivate the aggressor to ignore the threat delivered to it, knowing that it can adapt countermeasures in the future in the event a series of attritional attacks commences. It follows then that while forming the material capability required for a deterrent threat based on terrorism is easier than that required in traditional types of deterrence, the capability produced is inherently less stable. This can be mitigated by the defender through innovation and further armament, but in doing so the technologies required become increasingly difficult to produce if the actor remains at the lower end of a power asymmetry.

To consider the ideational aspect of a credible threat, the costs threatened by the defender must be capable of imposing unacceptable costs. As Neumann and Smith note, terrorism is “a form of psychological warfare,” wherein the material effects of an attack are tangential to the climate of fear they provoke.¹⁰⁵ It is threat of these psychological consequences that create the costs in question, and are intended to alter the adversary’s cost/benefit analysis when faced with the decision whether or not to revise the status-quo. Deterrence on the basis of terrorism is then strictly confined to deterrence by punishment, as opposed to denial-oriented dynamics of conventional deterrence.¹⁰⁶ Empirical analysis of “precisely targeted antisociety campaigns” as a means of coercion (compellent or deterrent) notes that “punishment strategies rarely succeed,” and where they do political alienation is far more effective than economic deprivation.¹⁰⁷ As such the augmentation of a terrorist threat hinges on increasing its capacity to inflict political costs rather than moves towards a greater capacity for conventional warfare. Forming a credible threat on the basis of a terrorist deterrent is then difficult, and highly contingent on the preferences of the adversary with respect to their domestic political situation, and its tolerance levels of a terrorist attack or an ongoing terrorist campaign. This factor dictates to some degree the perception of cost in existing types of deterrence, and can be said to govern to a large

Consequence, p.302. For further reading see: Wilner, Alex S., ‘Apocalypse Soon? Deterring Nuclear Iran and Its Terrorist Proxies’, *Comparative Strategy*, 31.1 (2012), 18–40; Van De Velde, James R., ‘The Impossible Challenge of Deterring “Nuclear Terrorism” by Al Qaeda’, *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 33.8 (2010), 682–99.

¹⁰⁵ Neumann, Peter. R., Smith. M. L. R. (2008), *The Strategy of Terrorism*, Routledge, p.9.

¹⁰⁶ Rhodes, Edward. ‘Conventional Deterrence’. p.250.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid. pp.248-249.

degree the effects of a compellent terrorist campaigns.¹⁰⁸ In deterrence-terrorism however, the potential of this one factor to so wholly dictate whether or not a threat is credible (i.e. costly), affords it disproportionate influence on the prospect of success or failure.

This represents a deviation from nuclear deterrence, where a nuclear threat that cannot be countered will have inevitable material consequences for an adversary's ability to perform the unwanted action, quite apart from the adversary's psychological perception of the threat.¹⁰⁹ In asymmetrical conventional scenarios deterrence through material effect is also possible, as a rational aggressor with a very high tolerance for losses may be dissuaded from action if they believe their adversary can entirely deny them their objectives; certain deterrence.¹¹⁰ This is not the case in deterrence-terrorism, which acts through symbolic costs due to the very nature of terrorist violence. As such the credibility of the threat posed may be countered purely ideationally (as well as materially). It is expected therefore that defenders attempting to implement deterrence through terrorism must continually reappraise and adapt their threat, to increase the probability their adversary sees the costs of their attacks as unacceptable. This hinges on the requirements of extra-normality and symbolism; even if an adversary cannot prevent a certain type of attack, it does not inherently follow that they will indefinitely see such action as going "beyond the norms of violent political agitation accepted by [their] society."¹¹¹ As in relation to countermeasures, it is expected then that the defender in instances of deterrence-terrorism seeks to diversify and improve its ideational capability; to attune its threat to adversary perceptions of extra normality and symbolism. At a given moment, establishing this ideational aspect of credibility amounts to an assessment of the would-be aggressors' perceptions of the signalled threat.

¹⁰⁸ Arce, Daniel G., and Todd Sandler, 'Terrorist Signalling and the Value of Intelligence', *British Journal of Political Science*, 37.4 (2007), 573–86, p.585.

¹⁰⁹ Buzzard, Anthony W., 'Massive Retaliation and Graduated Deterrence', *World Politics*, 8.2 (1956), 228–37, p.231; Powell, Robert. *Nuclear Deterrence Theory: The Search for Credibility*, (Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp.8-9.

¹¹⁰ Zagare, Frank C., and D. Marc Kilgour. 'Asymmetric Deterrence'. p.258.

¹¹¹ Neumann, Peter. R., Smith. M. L. R. (2008), *The Strategy of Terrorism*, Routledge, p.9.

Beyond ensuring a threat is not countered materially or ideationally, the final manner in which a defender may seek to alter their adversary's cost/benefit perception is through restraint from use of force. If the target of a deterrence strategy believes that the defender is fully utilising its capacity to impose costs, there is no additional imposed cost for the aggressor in the event of committing an unwanted action.¹¹² It cannot then be said the defender influences the aggressors decision whether or not to conduct an unwanted action. Regardless therefore, of how the deterrent threat is constituted, it must not be used except in the event of a violation of the pre-signalled redlines. 'Use' here for the sake of generalising refers to the employment of the means behind a threat to its maximal extent. In deterrence-terrorism this means the defender is restrained in its current use of terrorism. It is true and should be noted that limited employment of any deterrent means, even nuclear weapons through redeployment, can occur underneath the thresholds of deterrence failure. Much study has been made of such methods, and the dynamics by which this may prompt a retaliatory spiral resulting in 'use' in the full sense of the word.¹¹³ Non-use however, is may be said to be a general and idealised condition of a credible threat.¹¹⁴ This is noteworthy as, seen above, limited use of terrorism is an effective way in which an actor who implements a deterrent terrorist threat may signal their capability and resolve to commit extra-normal actions. It may be inferred then that while non-use is an ideal, defenders may have to balance the benefit in signalling against the benefit in credibly producing unacceptable new costs in the event of an unwanted action. To surmise then, in cases of deterrence-terrorism, the deterrent threat is constituted through terrorism (violent, extra-normal and symbolic), is capable of imposing unacceptable costs, and is reserved for use in the event of deterrence failure (credibility).

¹¹² This is derived from Morgan's analysis of deterrence, with a view to ascertaining whether or not the concept applies to a given case. See: Huth, Paul, and Bruce Russett. 'What Makes Deterrence Work? Cases from 1900 to 1980'. p.496-497.

¹¹³ For a succinct overview of escalation literature see: "The Nature of Escalation" in: Morgan, Forrest., and others., *Dangerous Thresholds*. Key works covered herein include: Brodie, Bernard, *Escalation and the Nuclear Option*, (Princeton University Press, 1966); Smoke, Richard, *Controlling Escalation*, (Cambridge University Press, 1977); Posen, Barry R., *Inadvertent Escalation: Conventional War and Nuclear Risks*, (Cornell University Press, 1991).

¹¹⁴ Schelling, Thomas. C., *The Strategy of Conflict*, p.124.

1.4 Deterrence-terrorism: Definition and theoretical expectations

To draw together the deductions produced in this analysis, it has been seen that the four core requirements of deterrence remain intact should an actor seek to pursue a deterrent effect through the use of terrorism. Consideration of the need for circumstances in which a deterrent threat will be used has yielded the scope condition *status-quo maintenance*, as well as remaining a core requirement in and of itself. This scope condition may be used to identify cases in actors who employ terrorism may be incentivised to pursue a deterrent strategy; aiding case selection in empirical analysis. The need to communicate these circumstances, and the resolve to follow through remain intact, and may be approached collectively as *signalling*. It is expected that actors who seek to use terrorism for the purposes of deterrence make active use of signalling, but the circumstances in which this is feasible likely restricts such a strategy to mature actors. These actors, who have elected to seek maintenance of status-quo from existing conflicts, can rely on past reputation to establish resolve. Finally, in producing a credible threat, it is concluded that for such a threat to be considered terrorist, it must seek to impose costs through *violent*, *extra-normal*, and *symbolic* actions rather than any material effect. For this threat to be credible it must be able to produce *unacceptable costs*, and thus must be tailored to the disposition of the adversary's political environment. Further, to impress upon the adversary that the unwanted action will produce these unacceptable costs, it is concluded that (in ideal cases that do not employ bluffs) the threat remains unused; manifest in restraint by the actor who employs terrorism. To present these deductions visually:

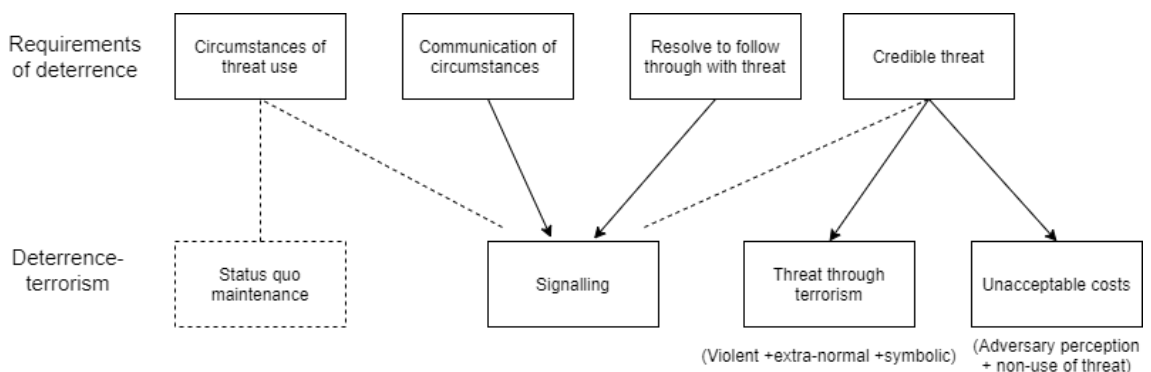


Figure 1 – Deductive derivation of deterrence terrorism

From these deductions, a working definition of deterrence-terrorism may be formed.

Concisely then a working definition of deterrence-terrorism is *a deterrence strategy wherein the deterrent threat is constituted through terrorism*. Terrorism has been defined as actions that are *violent, extra-normal* and *symbolic*. To provide a longer definition, deterrence-terrorism is:

A strategy whereby party A seeks to prevent an unwanted action by party B through the threatened imposition of unacceptable costs, stemming from violent actions that are extra-normal and symbolic, in the event the unwanted action is undertaken by party B.

While much has been said above as to the difficulties in implementing such a strategy, and the expected actor behaviours that follow, the requirements of deterrence-terrorism do not deviate from those expected in the abstract baseline models. To reiterate, actors who seek to employ deterrence must have clear circumstances in which they will use a threat, communicate these circumstances, possess a credible threat, and demonstrate the resolve to follow through. In cases of deterrence-terrorism, the defender must fulfil these conditions, while constituting a credible threat through terrorism. This produces the following hypothesis:

Where a terrorist threat fulfils the requirements of deterrence, military restraint follows.

Illustrated visually, the fundamental proposition is:

Deterrence-terrorism -> Military restraint

To present an operationalizable definition of deterrence-terrorism, the following may be said:

Deterrence terrorism occurs where an actor:

- i. Possesses a threat constituted on the basis of terrorism;
- ii. Signals the unwanted action that will cause this threat to be carried out, and the resolve to do so;

- iii. The threat is sufficiently costly to the target to prevent the unwanted action.

Each of these three conditions is formed deductively from the accepted deterrence theory.¹¹⁵ The first and third points together represent the notion of a credible threat. They are here divided to illustrate the two key aspects that emerge in instances of deterrence-terrorism; that the threat is formed through terror, and the threat is credible i.e. capable of imposing the required costs. The second point, signalling, draws together the remaining requirements of deterrence strategy; circumstances of threat use, communication thereof, resolve to execute. By examining if an actor possesses a deterrent threat based on violent, extra-normal and symbolic actions, signals the circumstances of the threat use (and by extension has such circumstances) and the resolve to follow through, we may ascertain whether or not an actor is seeking to employ deterrence-terrorism. Should the costs presented by this threat be unacceptable to an adversary, it is expected a deterrent effect will follow.

In terms of the theoretical expectations of actor behaviour in instances of deterrence terrorism, defenders are expected to attempt to meet the basic requirements of deterrence. Crucially, in terms of the novel aspect of the proposed concept, they will seek to create their credible threat on the basis of violent, extra normal and symbolic actions. These actions impose ideational and symbolic (rather than material) costs. As such defenders will strive to maintain not only the physical capability to commit such actions, but also seek to ensure their adversary continually perceives them as extra-normal and symbolic. This variation of the traditional arms race confers a particular emphasis on signalling, and an inherent instability not found in nuclear or conventional deterrence.¹¹⁶ It is expected in cases of deterrence-terrorism that defenders will seek to strike a balance between maintaining secrecy as to responses (to evade countermeasures) and clearly assigning costs to unwanted actions (to prevent miscommunication). Given the inherent flexibility of terrorist threats stemming from the potential breadth of their execution, defenders are likely to favour the stabilising advantage of clear signalling over the advantage in surprise

¹¹⁵ See Figure 1.

¹¹⁶ A full exploration of the distinction between deterrence-terrorism and existing types of deterrence may be found below, in section 1.4.2.

in inflicting costs. Regarding resolve, it is expected defenders rely primarily upon their past reputation as actors willing to commit violent, extra-normal and symbolic attacks. Given the fact extra-normal behaviour is by its very nature aberrant, defenders are likely to employ carefully calibrated, limited, uses of force if they feel threatened or are subject to probes by their adversary; thus demonstrating capability and resolve, while reinforcing signalling of the circumstances of threat use.

Expectations of deterred parties are more nuanced, and less onerous. In essence, they adhere closely to the general expectations of conventional deterrence scenarios. As immense material costs are necessarily not present in cases of deterrence-terrorism, like many conventional deterrence alignments, probing is expected to be a common practice. Where deterrence-terrorism aligns with power asymmetry in favour of the deterred party, this is likely to be exemplified. More uniquely, the symbolic costs presented by deterrence-terrorism, combined with the relative ease in establishing countermeasures likely incentives deterred parties to invest heavily in defence systems and building societal resilience. In addition, the symbolic nature of the presented threat is expected to produce in national security analysis a focus on the threat posed by terrorism disproportionate to the material damage threatened. Physical countermeasures may include specific systems to detect and evade terrorist attacks but is more likely to take the form of more dispersed counter-terrorism measures. This is in stark contrast to the logic of nuclear deterrence where mutual vulnerability may potentially be sought to stabilise deterrence.¹¹⁷ Where significant opportunity costs exist in forming countermeasures suited to conventional denial,¹¹⁸ it is likely countermeasure costs are sunk in cases of deterrence-terrorism. As signalling requirements make deterrence-terrorism less likely in cases where the defender has not used terrorism in the past, investment into counterterrorism likely exists prior to the establishment of deterrence based on terrorism. Thus, expectations of the deterred party's behaviour further contribute to the instability of deterrence-terrorism as compared to other types.

¹¹⁷ Harvey, Frank P, 'The Future of Strategic Stability and Nuclear Deterrence', *International Journal* 58.2 (2003): 321–46, p.322.

¹¹⁸ Shimshoni, Jonathan, *Israel and Conventional Deterrence*, p.13.

At its core then, deterrence-terrorism operates in the same fundamental fashion to conventional or nuclear deterrence. Unacceptably high costs threatened by a defender prevent unwanted actions by their adversary. Deterrence-terrorism is however differentiated by the nature of threat used to impose unacceptable costs, and the nature of these costs themselves. The model proposed here is deductively derived from existing theory and yields specific expectations as to actor behaviour in scenarios where deterrence-terrorism is employed. To transition from theory to reality, it is pertinent to examine first the utility of such a strategy to real world actors, and then to the academic analysis of deterrence.

1.4.1 Deterrence-terrorism: Differentiation from other subtypes of deterrence and analytical utility

Thus far the presupposition of terrorism as a potential means of deterrence has been established, and its specific dynamics highlighted. The emerging concept, deterrence-terrorism has been defined, and from this, the potential utility of such a strategy to actors under certain conditions has been outlined, in addition to scenarios where such a strategy is likely impossible. To assert the analytical utility of deterrence-terrorism as an independent concept however, it must be demonstrated that it is not subsumable under more general sub-concepts of deterrence, or existing types. To this end, the varying expectations of deterrence-terrorism must be seen to provide explanatory power in areas and cases where existing concepts are deficient. In demonstrating the independent viability and analytical utility of the proposed concept, the argument will progress in two stages. Firstly, the grounds of deterrence-terrorism's separation from existing types of deterrence will be outlined, in addition to the difference between it and other deterrence related concepts such as counter-value deterrence. Secondly, the policy implications that arise from actor expectations in cases of deterrence-terrorism will be illustrated.

The difference between deterrence-terrorism and nuclear or conventional deterrence is a facet of the difference between terrorism, and nuclear or conventional warfare. To approach the conceptual boundaries of nuclear, conventional and terrorist warfare more broadly, it is pertinent to examine the separation of these types of armed force in strategic theory, as this ultimately guides the separation of types of deterrence. With reference to strategic theory, the delineation between forms of violence is inherently obscure, given

potential for divergent technologies to exploit the same mechanics, and the aforementioned absence of moral, legal and ethical aspects to concepts which might otherwise serve as basis of distinction.¹³⁰

This can be clearly articulated by exploring the separation of nuclear and conventional deterrence. Superficially, the differentiating factor here is the nuclear warhead itself; differentiation by technological means. Nuclear deterrence, it would appear, stands separate from conventional deterrence, as in lieu of nuclear weaponry, the constituent factor of the deterrent threat may be any and all other military technologies.¹³¹ This however is deceptive. As elucidated earlier, the theory of deterrence is ultimately ambivalent to the precise technology through which a threat is constituted. Rather the distinction of nuclear deterrence from its conventional sister types stems in truth from the distinct dynamics that emerge from weaponry that facilitates the imposition of immense material costs, rapid retaliatory strikes, and the complications that follow vis-a-vis signalling and limited response.¹³² In short, a conventional weapons platform or system of sufficiently destructive capacity may operate in a similar role to a nuclear deterrent, provided its capabilities are patently clear to all parties involved. Likewise, a non-nuclear WMD may, if reliable enough, fulfil the same role. The immense costs of such threats serve as their defining characteristic. This notion predates nuclear weapons themselves and may be seen in the interwar theories of Douhet, wherein a sufficiently large bomber force (or speculatively one with gas bombs) has the capacity to inflict costs upon an adversary of such scale that any advantage gained by military action to alter the status-quo would be negated.¹³³ Technology is not then the determinant factor in distinguishing deterrence subtypes.

¹³⁰ A salient example of this may be seen in emerging precision guided munition (PGM) technology, where the outcome of high sensitivity strikes on the overall balance of forces between adversaries may be likened to nuclear weapons in their capacity to incapacitate an adversary and create deterring costs. See: Elleman, Michael, and Mark Fitzpatrick. 'Evaluating Design Intent in Iran's Ballistic-Missile Programme'. *Adelphi Series* 57, 466–467 (2017), 89–130, pp.109-110. Another example is the debate surrounding very low yield nuclear weapons. In some analysis these have been seen to have to blur the lines between nuclear and conventional warfare. See: Zaborski, Jason. 'Deterring a Nuclear Iran'. *The Washington Quarterly* 28.3 (2005): 153–67, p.160.

¹³¹ Shimshoni, Jonathan, *Israel and Conventional Deterrence*, p.2.

¹³² Chapter 5 "The Diplomacy of violence" in: Schelling, Thomas, C. *Arms and Influence*, especially p.20.

¹³³ Overy, R.J. 'Air Power and the Origins of Deterrence Theory before 1939'. *Journal of Strategic Studies* 15.1 (1992), 73–101, p.74.

To carry such logic to the quandary of delineating deterrence-terrorism from nuclear deterrence, if the threatened action in a given case is of these immensely destructive characteristics, the deterrence dynamic would possess similar actor expectations to nuclear deterrence, and as such we must conclude it is subsumable into nuclear deterrence theory. By definition then, any such scenario falls outside the purview of deterrence-terrorism. The threatened action, while certainly still violent, and perhaps even extra-normal, can scarcely be said to be symbolic. As outlined in the initial conceptualisation of terrorism in this study, the costs terrorism inflicts are psychological; i.e. ideational. As Schelling notes, nuclear weapons established their “balance of terror” in the cold war through their capacity to inflict “enormous civilian damage.”¹³⁴ In short, whence a terrorist threat takes on the nature of costs found in nuclear or pseudo-nuclear frameworks, it is no longer terrorism in the sense terrorism is understood in strategic theory. This is why ‘WMD terrorism’ is not here considered to fall with the definition of terrorism here adopted. For deterrence-terrorism to be conceptually relevant, the costs threatened in a given case must remain violent, extra-normal or symbolic.

Regarding the division between conventional threats and terrorist threats, there is undoubtedly more scope for overlap, given the scalable destructive power of conventional warfare; which ranges from humble small arms to large standing armies. Two interrelated bases for the separation of conventional deterrence and deterrence-terrorism are here presented: denial vs punishment, and material vs symbolic costs. Conventional deterrence is focused on the notion of denial; the ability of the defender to defeat or sufficiently degrade an adversary’s forces should they attempt to revise the status-quo, such that the balance of costs/benefits no longer favours revision.¹³⁵ If a conventional threat was purely attuned to inflicting value based costs, with no prospect of degrading the adversary’s military capacity to prosecute a conflict, it would indeed meet the definition of deterrence-terrorism. Such actions, have been considered in relation to conventional deterrence, but are in the main sequestered due to their difficulty (and even distastefulness to the majority of actors), when compared to conventional deterrence through denial.¹³⁶ Thus, in

¹³⁴ Neumann, Peter. R., Smith. M. L. R., *The Strategy of Terrorism*, p.79.

¹³⁵ Shimshoni, Jonathan, *Israel and Conventional Deterrence*, pp.11-13.

¹³⁶ Ibid. p.14-15.

demarking deterrence-terrorism as a distinct concept, greater clarity is afforded to the existing concept of conventional deterrence. “Punitive attacks on people,” or “massive retaliation on diminutive scale” as Schelling describes,¹³⁷ are, it is here argued, better situated within the concept of deterrence-terrorism than conventional deterrence. In addition to this punishment-denial basis of separation, material effect of threatened costs further serves a point of distinction.

As noted above, a conventional denial threat entails the destruction or incapacitation of an adversary’s offensive capabilities. The conventional threat then, if executed in all likelihood involves material consequences of some significant to the aggressor. Deterrence-terrorism and threats therefrom, in contrast, have no such prospect. Rather the costs therein are materially unimportant; it is their symbolic, psychological costs that dissuade an adversary. The principally symbolic vs principally material mechanism of cost is the basis of this distinction. Notably, at this abstract level there is some potential overlap here between deterrence-terrorism and the concept of counter-value deterrence. Counter-value deterrence originally referred to the threatening of high value targets such as an adversary’s population centres to impose unacceptable costs, and was a concept principally applied in debates as to the targeting of nuclear weapons in early deterrence research.¹³⁸ This is to say, it may be argued that a nuclear strike (or for that matter conventional military attacks on a populated city) meets the requirements violence, extra-normality and symbolism used here to distinguish the terrorist nature of threat. While certainly terrifying however, such action is not necessarily terrorist. The distinction here is subtle. Put bluntly, while one may no doubt use nuclear or conventional weapons to *terrorise*, it is difficult to conceive nuclear or large-scale conventional counter value threats that do not imply massive material effects. A purely, or even predominantly, symbolic form of nuclear punishment would indeed fulfil the criteria of deterrence-terrorism. The possible scope for such action however relegates it to something of a tangential puzzle. Punishment/ counter-value oriented conventional deterrence, as outlined above, qualifies as deterrence terrorism if and only if it does not serve the dual

¹³⁷ For further reading see Chapter 5 “The Diplomacy of violence” in: Schelling, Thomas, C. *Arms and Influence*, especially p.15.

¹³⁸ This distinction has somewhat fallen out of favour in lieu of the separation of denial/punishment divide. The potential overlap with deterrence-terrorism still applies. See: Jervis, Robert. ‘Strategic Theory: What’s New and What’s True’. *Journal of Strategic Studies* 9.4 (1986), 135–62, p.138

purpose of degrading the adversary's capacity to fight. Thus, the notion of countervalue does not in and of itself encompass the idea of pursuing a deterrent effect through the use of violent, extra-normal and symbolic action, as it does not wholly account for the distinction between material and ideational costs. Put alternatively, while all deterrence terrorism is counter value, not all counter value actions can be categorised as deterrence terrorism.

Further, the conceptual distinction of conventional deterrence and deterrence-terrorism is more harmonious with the field of military strategy as a whole, where conventional warfare for all its breadth as a term is conceived with relatively strict limitations; the engagement of armed forces in state on state conflicts.¹³⁹ This is reflected in existing conventional deterrence literature, where consideration of terrorism is already sequestered and the relevant actors are more or less identifiable only as states, and less prominently pseudo-states.¹⁴⁰ Terrorism as it has been noted is a strategy open to actors at virtually any level of technical capability, and is most likely in situations involving power asymmetries. Rather than further obfuscate an existing concept then, it is argued that in light of the deviant expectations of actor behaviour, analysis is better served through the introduction of deterrence-terrorism as a distinct type of deterrence. Ultimately, this turn in terminology is imperfect, and reflects conceptual complexities embedded in the academic and general use of the terms at play in this study. It is believed however that the introduction of the concept deterrence-terrorism is an effective point of departure in remedying and refining the conceptual landscape of strategic theory as it pertains to the practice of deterrence.

Separated then, from existing concepts in deterrence theory, the question remains as to what insights are provided by deterrence-terrorism. Most fundamentally, an appreciation of deterrence through symbolic costs provides explanatory power in cases where the status-quo is maintained amidst aggressor intent, and in the absence of either nuclear deterrence, or conventional deterrence through denial. More concretely, the practical utility of such a conceptual innovation is first and foremost in forming effective

¹³⁹ Janos, Andrew C. 'Unconventional Warfare: Framework and Analysis'. p.637.

¹⁴⁰ Mearsheimer, John J. 'Conventional Deterrence: An Interview with John J. Mearsheimer', *Strategic Studies Quarterly* 12.4 (2018), 3-8, pp.5-6.

counterterrorist strategies. In instances of deterrence-terrorism, the miscategorisation of the threat as compellent would hamper the formation of effective countermeasures, given the need to understand a terrorist group's objective. Practically this may entail increases of violence stemming from aggressive counter-terrorist strategies designed to counter aims which do not in fact drive a group's actions. For instance, the noted need to keep maintain and signal a threat's extra-normality may prompt an actor who employs terror to prominently stress their capability and resolve to execute a novel and costly form of terrorist attack. This actor, the defender, is seeking to communicate a more credible threat, to establish more stable deterrence. With no basis of understanding that the defender seeks to maintain the status-quo, their adversary may well conclude that they are facing impending attacks, and as such are incentivised to attempt to rapidly eliminate this threat pre-emptively. The stage is set then for a complete failure of deterrence, and the use of a terrorist threat that perhaps need never have been realised had the aggressor known that terrorist capabilities may be used to maintain the status-quo. This escalation spiral, predicated on ignorance as to the defender's incentives is a staple of deterrence theory.¹⁴¹ Without an understanding of possibility of deterrence-through-terrorism, such a spiral is more difficult to avoid.

The policy implications of the proposed concept go further than the mere identification of potential deterrence equilibria in conflicts involving actors who employ terrorism. The fundamental nature of terrorism as it is here defined influences the manner in which countermeasures might (even inadvertently) be sought by aggressors. In short, terrorism acts through its ideational not material consequences. As such the costs a terrorist threat would impose can too be countered purely ideationally. This is manifest in the body of work exploring societal resilience in face of terrorist threats. As such, unlike conventional and nuclear scenarios (where threatened costs are unlikely to change unless physical countermeasures are introduced), the extra-normal and symbolic nature of a terrorist threat may degrade over time, all else being equal. As the threatened society grows accustomed to a threat, its power to inflict psychological costs will degrade; it becomes less and less extra-normal. Thus deterrence-terrorism diverges from existing types in this

¹⁴¹ Kydd, Andrew. 'Game Theory and the Spiral Model'. *World Politics* 49, no. 3 (April 1997): 371–400; Jervis, Robert. 'Arms Control, Stability, and Causes of War'. *Political Science Quarterly*, 108, no.2 (Summer, 1993).

inherent instability. Should this fact not become lost on defenders, they will seek further armament, and new targets to threaten. They may in fact seek to restore the perceptions of cost through limited use of force, perhaps even unprompted. In face of such a dynamic, the balance of terror with which aggressors and defenders must contend becomes even more precarious. The demands of signalling, cost perception, evading material and ideational countermeasures are complicated. The basic requirements of deterrence remain intact, but their relative importance shifts. Ultimately, this is the basis of dividing nuclear and conventional deterrence; as the nature and role of the threat-source carries with it divergent possibilities for actor behaviour.¹⁴² So too, it is proposed, should deterrence-terrorism be separated from existing types.

As a last word on the utility of the novel concept, the introduction of the concept of deterrence-terrorism facilitates further examination of deterrence as it may be used by non-state actors, and without recourse to the traditional means forming threats. This aligns with the general aims of the aforementioned fourth wave of deterrence research and expands the operating environment of well-established body of theoretical work. This notion requires little expansion here, beyond the general merit of attempting to maintain the fundamental aspiration of strategic theorising; general applicability. As Schelling puts it; strategic analysis “cannot proceed from the point of view of a single, favoured participant.”¹⁴³ It befits then the study of deterrence, that the peculiarities that emerge in using terrorist threats are explored with the same rigour as perhaps more palatable established types of deterrence.

1.5 Summary of theoretical findings

In summary the plausible use of terrorism as a means of establishing and maintaining a deterrent threat is presupposed by existing deterrence literature. The execution of such a strategy is however complicated by the nature of terrorism as compared to other methods of threat construction such conventional arms and nuclear weapons. This produces certain specificities with a view to signalling and the formation of a credible threat that must be overcome by any actor that seeks to employ a strategy of deterrence terrorism. These are:

¹⁴² Shimshoni, Jonathan, *Israel and Conventional Deterrence*, p.27.

¹⁴³ Schelling, Thomas. C., *Choice and Consequence*, p. 199.

the immense difficulty of establishing resolve without previous use of the threat in question; an emphasised requirement on adept signalling to confer the deterrent purpose of the threat; a need to balance informing the adversary of what costs will be incurred in the event of unwanted actions vs the need to evade countermeasures; and the challenge of maintaining a persistently extra-normal and materially capable threat. The difficulty of these additional requirements, in addition to terrorism's suitability as a deterrent threat in circumstances that feature significant asymmetry between actors, render deterrence-terrorism something of a niche strategy that would be encountered only in conflicts with certain characteristics. These relate principally to the defender and are a preference to maintain the status-quo atypical of actors for whom terrorism is viable strategy, and the possession of sufficient resources to impose an unacceptably costly threat. In such conflicts however, deterrence-terrorism has a formative influence, and the expectations of actor behaviour in instances of deterrence-terrorism are divergent from both compellent terrorism and other forms of deterrence.

2 Methodology

In the following chapter, a brief outline of the methodological challenges facing the study of deterrence will be provided. The methodological approach by which deterrence-terrorism will be shown to be a plausible cause of a deterrence dynamic will be outlined. The method in question, an interpretive single-case study employing process tracing, will be evaluated in terms of its explanatory power and limitations. A hypothesis and operationalisation of variables will be presented in abstract, such that the methods used here may be employed in other cases. Following this the suitability of the case in question; Hezbollah-Israel 2006-2020 will be justified.

Despite its storied history throughout the Cold War, and strong association with policy guidance, deterrence theory has had a troubled relationship with empirical testing.¹⁵⁹ As Lebow surmises, successful deterrence leaves ‘little or no behavioural traces.’¹⁶⁰ While identifying failures of deterrence is relatively straight forward,¹⁶¹ proving deterrence theory, i.e. firmly establishing causality has been problematic enough that the concept has been likened to an ‘article of faith’.¹⁶² In the most fundamental sense, an observer cannot know that had no deterrence effect been pursued by the defender, the deterred unwanted action would have been committed by the aggressor. As it specifically pertains to methodology, this challenge was taken up principally by the third wave of deterrence research, which implemented both statistical methods and case study research to test preceding deterrence theory.¹⁶³ Despite their advancement of the field, such testing is not without criticism. Quantitative approaches have been conducted in the form of large N studies of deterrence, which have been criticised in terms of both their validity and

¹⁵⁹ Lupovici, Amir. ‘The Emerging Fourth Wave of Deterrence Theory-Toward a New Research Agenda: The Emerging Fourth Wave of Deterrence Theory’. *International Studies Quarterly* 54.3 (2010), 705–32, pp.707-708.

¹⁶⁰ Lebow, Richard Ned, and Janice Gross Stein. ‘Deterrence: The Elusive Dependent Variable’. *World Politics* 42.3 (1990), 336–69, p.336.

¹⁶¹ Ibid. pp.335-336.

¹⁶² Halas, Matus, ‘Proving a Negative: Why Deterrence Does Not Work in the Baltics’, *European Security*, 28.4 (2019), 431–48, p.1.

¹⁶³ Knopf, Jeffrey W. ‘The Fourth Wave in Deterrence Research’. p.1.

reliability, in face of the contentious coding and case selection.¹⁶⁴ Qualitative case studies too have gained ire, for their purported lack of generalisable conclusions and selection bias.¹⁶⁵ These challenges are inherent to the study of deterrence, and will therefore apply to the empirical analysis of deterrence-terrorism.

While case selection is a prominent feature is an aspect of testing that stems both from research design and deterrence theory, it impinges principally on the question of ‘how often’ deterrence is successful.¹⁶⁶ This is less relevant given the task at hand; proving the plausibility of deterrence on a basis of terrorism, in a single case. Nevertheless, obstacles to empirical testing remain. Even assuming an applicable case, ambiguities ingrained in deterrence theory provide an obstacle to the development of a clear, formulaic method of verifying causality (that a deterrent effect causes inaction) at a more fundamental level. These include the operationalisation of success and failure (how much damage can be accepted as deterrence success), establishing certain aggressor intent, establishing clear aggressor and defender roles, and even the demarcation between deterrence and compellence.¹⁶⁷ To these we may also add the problematic nature of operationalising signalling, wherein we must account for bluffing, misinterpretation and the simple capacity of retrospect to distort the prominence of a certain action or statement. To alleviate these, a ubiquitous feature of the study of deterrence testing is through and detailed use of what might be considered historical sources;¹⁶⁸ mixed in nature and through their combined detail capable of providing sufficient grounds for causal inference.¹⁶⁹ Ultimately, deterrence’s dependence on multi-source inference as means of proving its inherently negative claims will leave any attempt at empirical study open to claims of subjective error at some level. Nevertheless, such methods have not led to

¹⁶⁴ Lebow, Richard Ned, and Janice Gross Stein. ‘Deterrence: The Elusive Dependent Variable’. p.340; Quackenbush, Stephen L. ‘General Deterrence and International Conflict: Testing Perfect Deterrence Theory’. p.61.

¹⁶⁵ Achen, Christopher H., and Duncan Snidal. ‘Rational Deterrence Theory and Comparative Case Studies’. *World Politics* 41.2 (1989), 143–69, p.161-162.

¹⁶⁶ Fearon, James. ‘Selection Effects and Deterrence’. *International Interactions* 28.1 (2002), 5–29, pp.6-7.

¹⁶⁷ Lebow, Richard Ned, and Janice Gross Stein. ‘Deterrence: The Elusive Dependent Variable’. pp.336–69.

¹⁶⁸ Huth, Paul, and Bruce Russett. ‘Testing Deterrence Theory: Rigor Makes a Difference’. *World Politics* 42.4 (1990), 466–501, p.466, p.469.

¹⁶⁹ Collier, David. ‘Understanding Process Tracing’. *PS: Political Science & Politics* 44.04 (2011), 823–30, p.825.

abandonment of deterrence theory, and as such multi-source inference will remain the principle mechanism through which deterrence-terrorism will be analysed in this study.

2.1 Single case study research design: hypothesis, DV, IV, operationalisation

To reiterate the research problem thus far, the theoretical puzzle at hand is how terrorism might serve as deterrent, and not compellent, coercion. This research question is posed more directly as the following: “Can the threat of strategic terrorism serve as a means of deterrence.” Deterrence is here held to be identifiable where actors possess motivation and intent to revise the status-quo but show military restraint. The hypothesis derived through deductive analysis of deterrence theory is:

Where a terrorist threat fulfils the requirements of deterrence, military restraint follows.

Deterrence-terrorism -> military restraint

Far from tautological this hypothesis outlines an approach to the empirical assessment of the novel concept, to this point merely a deductive extension of existing theory. Firstly, an extant or historical example of deterrence between an actor of any nature and an actor employing terrorism must be identified, where the dynamic is mutual (both parties seek to maintain the status-quo), or, in which the terrorist actor is the defender. Secondly, and following the guidance of George’s influential qualitative research on deterrence,¹⁷⁰ a form of heterogeneous process-tracing will be used to establish the plausibility of deterrence-terrorism causing military restraint in the given case. With a view to establishing causality, the supplementary nature of the empirical investigation to theory building in this paper guides the threshold of causality sought. That is to say, this study aims to “demonstrate the empirical relevance of a theoretical proposition by identifying at least one relevant case,” in keeping with Eckstein’s posited function of plausibility

¹⁷⁰ Levy, Jack S. ‘Deterrence and Coercive Diplomacy: The Contributions of Alexander George’. pp.549-550; Della Porta, Donatella. Keating, Micheal., eds., *Approaches and Methodologies in the Social Sciences: A Pluralist Perspective*, (Cambridge University Press, 2008), p.223.

probes.¹⁷¹ The research design presented is then, a plausibility probe, designed to “determine whether more intensive and laborious testing is warranted.”¹⁷²

In this study it is sought that by proving that a deterrence effect has been pursued by an actor through the threat of terrorism, and adversary military restraint has followed, deterrence-terrorism may be said to be plausible, provided alternative, types of deterrence, such as conventional or extended deterrence, can be eliminated, and aggressor motivation be established. Such testing is categorised as ‘hoop test’ in Bennet’s typology of process tracing tests of causal inference.¹⁷³ This is to say the presented test seeks *necessary*, but not *sufficient* criteria for affirming causal inference. If passing, the relevance of the hypothesis is confirmed, and alternative explanations are weakened, but not eliminated. If failing, the hypothesis may be eliminated. The pursuit of hoop test plausibility over doubly-decisive causal inference (i.e. testing that confirms the hypothesis and eliminates all other potential explanations) is selected in keeping with the primary goal of this work; conceptual innovation through deductive reasoning, presented with a complementary empirical case. It should be noted that testing for higher thresholds of causality is a logical avenue for further research but remains beyond the scope of this work. While it is noted plausibility, probes employ “relatively weak empirical tests,” such methods are here deemed adequate in determining is more robust testing of the proposed concept is worthwhile in the presented case, in keeping with the overall aims of plausibility probes.¹⁷⁴

The presented hypothesis produces the independent variable (IV) *deterrence-terrorism*, and the direct variable (DV) *military restraint*. To operationalise *deterrence-terrorism*, the defining requirements outlined in the theoretical chapter will be used as indicators. Each requirement amounts to, in effect, a hoop test. Should each tested requirement be found present, the IV too is held to be present. To operationalise the DV, a relatively

¹⁷¹ Levy, Jack S., ‘Case Studies: Types, Designs, and Logics of Inference’, *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, 25.1 (2008), 1–18, p.6.

¹⁷² Stuart, Graham H., and others, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*, (MIT Press, 2005), p.75.

¹⁷³ Collier, David. ‘Understanding Process Tracing’. *PS: Political Science & Politics* 44.04 (2011): 823–30, p.825.

¹⁷⁴ Beach, Derek, and Rasmus Brun Pedersen. *Process-tracing methods: Foundations and guidelines*. (University of Michigan Press, 2019), p.249.

permissive approach will be employed, focused on restraint. *Relative inaction* will naturally be the first and most vital indicator. As deterrence success and failure is not dictated by a single action or inaction, this indicator must be calibrated in relation to whatever course of action the defender seeks to prevent; something that will be manifest in signalling.¹⁷⁵ To this end, two qualifications are sought. Inaction is relative to: the deterred party's constellation of actions vs similar actors, and stated policy in face of terrorist threats. To supplement and substantiate this primary indicator, and to facilitate empirical assessment with positive variables, deterrence will also be identified by *de-escalation in crisis flashpoints*. This indicator will permit greater substantiation of the DV, by allowing assessment of moments where aggressor action would be expected, and not just inaction. To surmise:

DV: Military restraint	IV: Deterrence-Terrorism
Indicators: target must demonstrate; i. Relative inaction* ii. De-escalation in crisis flashpoints	Indicators: terrorist actor must: i. Possesses a threat constituted on the basis of terrorism; ii. Signals the circumstances of threat use and resolve to follow through; iii. The threat is sufficiently costly to the target to prevent the unwanted action.
Precision: Dichotomous	Precision: Dichotomous

*(relative vs; constellation of actions vs other actors + stated policy in face of terrorist threats).

Figure 2

¹⁷⁵ Huth, Paul K. 'DETERRENCE AND INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT: Empirical Findings and Theoretical Debates'. *Annual Review of Political Science* 2.1 (1999): 25–48, p.28.

In terms of precision, both the IV and the DV are here presented as dichotomous, and will be held to be either present or absent. This is in keeping with the aspiration to test for a case as close to a perfect type as possible, thereby aiding the ultimate goal of this research design; empirical plausibility of a novel concept. It must be noted however, particularly in relation to the future potential use of the concept, that neither the DV or the IV is necessarily bound to this level of precision. As noted in the theoretical consideration concerning the means of deterrence (its being on a spectrum rather than in distinct categories), in a given case an actor may well seek to employ general deterrence by any and all available means, and thus employ more than one sub-type. As a result of this, in instances of culminative deterrence, a case might be identifiable as being more or less strongly terrorist or conventional. Some cases may then reflect an ordinal level of precision in terms of the IV. Likewise, failures (and thus successes) of deterrence may be partial, similarly inviting use of non-dichotomous precision. While this must be born in mind, dichotomous precision will be here employed, in pursuit of the most illustrative demonstration of the proposed concept's plausibility.

While all alternative hypothesis explaining adversary restraint will not be addressed in this plausibility probe, certain alternative explanations of the DV must be eliminated to meet necessary criteria of deterrence-terrorism having caused a deterrent effect in the selected case. These apply either to deterrence in general, or deterrence-terrorism specifically. Those that prevent assigning causality to a deterrent effect in general are the scope conditions; *inability to conduct unwanted action*, and *absence of aggressor motivation*. The structure of the research design employed here ensures that these factors are inherently addressed in testing for the DV. In proving *relative inaction* in the sense required for deterrence success,¹⁷⁶ it is necessary to eliminate these two factors. Should these be eliminated, it may be concluded that military restraint is present in the given case. To establish that the deterrence effect is in fact deterrence-terrorism, *conventional deterrence*, and *nuclear deterrence* must be eliminated.¹⁷⁷ In any selected case, nuclear

¹⁷⁶ i.e. a choice rather than an external imposition, made in a cost-benefit calculation that reflects the costs threatened by the defender.

¹⁷⁷ Extended deterrence is another mechanism by which an actor could have come to find itself in deterrence dynamic. However, given the fact the extended deterrence may exist regardless of the deterring party's actions (i.e. regardless of whether or deterrence-terrorism has been pursued) it is not

deterrence may be detected relatively simplistically, as it requires an extent public declaration of nuclear technology. Eliminating conventional deterrence as a causal factor is the crux of proving the merit of deterrence-terrorism as a concept, and is an inherent component of indicator 1 of the IV; that the terrorist actor constitutes their deterrent threat through terrorism. Particular focus will therefore reside with this indicator. Having satisfied the requirements of deterrence-terrorism and eliminated existing forms of deterrence, it may be concluded that the deterrent effect in the selected case plausibly caused by deterrence-terrorism.¹⁷⁸

2.2 Method: Process tracing

To assess this hypothesis, the overall framework employed is that of a *process-tracing* in an *interpretive (plausibility probe) single-case study*. Theory guided case studies use “theoretical frameworks to provide an explanation of particular cases, which can lead...to an evaluation and refinement of theories”.¹⁷⁹ As alluded above, case studies are well suited to the study of deterrence given their capacity to amalgamate heterogenous source material in greater depth than large or small N comparative cases.¹⁸⁰ A single case study has been selected given the scope and aims of this work, and to permit a maximal level of depth given resource limitations. An interpretive case study will be employed as that the goal here is the introduction of a novel concept; deterrence-terrorism, with the intention of providing a new analytical concept attuned to the particular dynamics at play in cases where actors seek to form deterrent threats through terrorism, rather than conventional or nuclear threats. Process tracing is method by which analyst may “discover a casual mechanism and show that a posited underlying mechanism connecting causal and dependent variables exist.”¹⁸¹ As the purpose of this study is a plausibility probe, this will be limited to establishing necessary evidence of the proposed concepts

considered an obstacle to establishing the plausibility of deterrence-terrorism. The absence if extended deterrence is an aspect of sufficient evidence, not necessary evidence for causal inference.

¹⁷⁸ Within the positivist limits of studies that involve, to some extent, counterfactual propositions.

¹⁷⁹ Typology here follows the work of Pascal Vennesson, cited in: Della Porta, Donatella. Keating, Micheal., eds., *Approaches and Methodologies in the Social Sciences: A Pluralist Perspective*, p.227.

¹⁸⁰ Landman, T., and Robinson, N., eds., *The SAGE handbook of comparative politics*. (Sage Publications, 2009), pp.50-53.

¹⁸¹ Della Porta, Donatella. Keating, Micheal. (eds.) (2008). *Approaches and Methodologies in the Social Sciences: A Pluralist Perspective*, p.231.

operation in a given case; through examining the presence of each indicator of the IV in the presented case. Process tracing has been selected as a method for its triply appropriate nature for the specific task at hand.

Firstly, given the aforementioned challenges regarding limited behavioural evidence, deterrence is inherently dependent on heterogeneous source work. It is apt therefore to employ process tracing as the method is itself designed to exploit multiple “streams of evidence” for causal inference.¹⁸² Secondly, process tracing, in the vein of social-science or history, has an extraordinarily rich history in the field of military affairs, particularly with a view to conducting post-conflict analysis of strategy. This is principally due to its ability to help decipher cause and effect from the multi-faceted, incomplete and chaotic record of armed conflict.¹⁸³ While recent and well-studied, the conflict between Hezbollah and Israel is no exception to these data problems. Thirdly and lastly, such an approach attempts to go some way towards the direction of study suggested by critics of deterrence’s empirical testing.¹⁸⁴ Process tracing closely integrates more historical methods of testing, and the testimony and analysis of subject matter experts.¹⁸⁵ These factors combined first help overcome the difficulties inherent first in proving the applicability of deterrence theory to a given case, and secondly in proving deterrence’s role in preventing conflict. Further, and given the irregularity of deterrence-terrorism inherent in its strategic specificity, process-tracing is beneficial in its capacity to verify ‘assumed cause-effect relationships’ that would normally require large cross-case datasets.¹⁸⁶ This last factor does much to mitigate the challenges of attempting to deduce a novel concept presupposed in existing theory and empirically test it within the scope of a work such as this.

¹⁸² Lebow, Richard Ned, and Janice Gross Stein. ‘Deterrence: The Elusive Dependent Variable’. p.342.

¹⁸³ Vennesson, Pascal. and Wiesner, Ina. “Process Tracing in Case Studies” in: Soeters, Joseph., Shields, Patrica. M., Rietjens, Sebastian., eds., *Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in Military Studies*, (Routledge, 2014), pp.93-98.

¹⁸⁴ Lebow, Richard Ned, and Janice Gross Stein. ‘Deterrence: The Elusive Dependent Variable’. p.351; Lupovici, Amir. ‘The Emerging Fourth Wave of Deterrence Theory-Toward a New Research Agenda’. p.725.

¹⁸⁵ Vennesson, Pascal. Wiesner, Ina. “Process Tracing in Case Studies” in: Soeters, Joseph., Shields, Patrica. M., Rietjens, Sebastian., eds., *Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in Military Studies*, p.100.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid. pp.97-98.

It must be noted of course that single case studies are of only limited assistance in the overall goal of establishing generalisable trends of across cases in the traditional methods of the natural sciences, the highest aspiration of predictive theorising, including that on deterrence.¹⁸⁷ Given the aims of this work however, establishing the presence of a proposed sub-type of deterrence formed through deductive reasoning; deterrence-terrorism, this disadvantage is accepted in favour of a single-case study's capacity to deeply investigate the mechanics of a particular case. This will provide an initial empirical basis, a proof of concept as such, which further research may substantiate using more cases and different methods.

2.3 Case selection: Hezbollah-Israel 2006-2020

The deterrence dynamic between Hezbollah-Israel from 2006 to 2020 is suitable for the empirical testing of deterrence-terrorism due to its close alignment to theoretical expectations of a candidate case, in terms of its fulfilment of scope conditions. First and foremost, after decades of intense conflict culminating in medium intensity war in 2006, no major armed conflict has erupted between the two actors. This is despite stated intractability of their co-existence. On the one hand Israel claims it will not tolerate threats to its security or terrorist strongholds on its borders.¹⁸⁸ Israel is committed to 'mowing the grass' and has conducted numerous military operations against Palestinian groups in this period, in addition to interdiction strikes further afield.¹⁸⁹ Hezbollah remains vocally and ideologically committed to the idea of 'the resistance',¹⁹⁰ and persists in its efforts to gain rocket capabilities despite major commitments in Syria and political instability at

¹⁸⁷ Flyvbjerg, Bent. 'Five Misunderstandings About Case-Study Research'. *Qualitative Inquiry* 12.2 (2006), 219–45, pp.224-225, 227.

¹⁸⁸ Deeb, Lara. 'Deconstructing A "Hizbullah Stronghold."' *The MIT Electronic Journal of Middle East Studies*. Vol.6, (2006): 115-125, pp.115-116.

¹⁸⁹ 'Mowing the grass' refers to strategy of periodically employing moderate to high levels of military force with the dual purpose of creating a temporary deterrent effect against an enemy that cannot be deterred indefinitely due to ideological commitments, and degrading the capabilities of such enemies to harm Israel in the short term. See: Inbar, Efraim, and Eitan Shamir. "'Mowing the Grass": Israel's Strategy for Protracted Intractable Conflict'. *Journal of Strategic Studies* 37.1 (2014): 65–90.

¹⁹⁰ The Resistance or 'Muqawama' refers to a doctrine Hezbollah shares with several Palestinian and Arab actors, wherein conflict with Israel is portrayed as a long, historical struggle, "eventually ending in victory." Notably it frames losses or any scale as mere setbacks in the overall course of the struggle. See: Inbar, Efraim, and Eitan Shamir. "'Mowing the Grass": Israel's Strategy for Protracted Intractable Conflict'. p.69.

home.¹⁹¹ The parties have however maintained a relatively stable peace since 2006, despite their preceding conflict remaining unresolved. Thereby the given case also provides a rich and accessible pre-deterrence history for analysis in relation to the DV, in gauging relative inaction.¹⁹² In relation to the scope condition of deterrence-terrorism specifically, the organisational evolution of Hezbollah is in line with theoretical expectations. As a political actor that has employed terrorism for some time and gained territory, resources, concessions and legitimacy in the process, Hezbollah not only has a status-quo worth maintaining, but may be incentivised to do so at the expense of more maximalist ideological goals.¹⁹³

Further, while the concept of deterrence terrorism has not been explored directly and with reference to theory, more inductive analysis has explored the idea of Hezbollah pursuing a deterrent effect.¹⁹⁴ Hezbollah has in the studied period, continued to build its capabilities to harm Israel against a constellation of pre-emptive Israeli action against terrorist actors. Such a case is suitable then, for theory driven assessment of the feasibility of a novel subtype of deterrence, particular to the practice of terrorism. Lastly, and in specific relation to the differentiation of deterrence-terrorism from conventional deterrence, the sophistication and considerable military resources of the terrorist actor in the selected case makes it more likely to be capable of achieving a deterrent effect through conventional military force; conventional deterrence through denial. The selected case is therefore permitting evaluation of the theoretical distinction between conventional deterrence and deterrence-terrorism.

The possibility of a deterrence dynamic between Hezbollah and Israel came to the fore with the unilateral withdrawal of Israel from Lebanon in 2000. Hezbollah had emerged from the complexities of the Lebanese political environment during the civil war with the

¹⁹¹ Yadlin, Amos and Orion, Assaf. *The Campaign between Wars: Faster, Higher, Fiercer?*, INSS Insight No.1209, 2019.

¹⁹² Sobelman, Daniel. 'Learning to Deter: Deterrence Failure and Success in the Israel-Hezbollah Conflict, 2006–16'. p.152.

¹⁹³ Valensi, Carmit, and Yoram Schweitzer. 'Hezbollah's Concept of Deterrence Vis-à-Vis Israel According to Nasrallah: From the Second Lebanon War to the Present', p.116.

¹⁹⁴ Examples include: Sobelman, Daniel. 'Learning to Deter: Deterrence Failure and Success in the Israel-Hezbollah Conflict, 2006–16'. *International Security* 41, no. 3 (January 2017): 151–96; Valensi, Carmit, and Yoram Schweitzer. 'Hezbollah's Concept of Deterrence Vis-à-Vis Israel According to Nasrallah: From the Second Lebanon War to the Present'.

twofold goal of fighting Israel, and eventually establishing governance within Lebanon.¹⁹⁵ The withdrawal therefore represented the establishment of circumstances partially in line with Hezbollah's goals; a status-quo the organisation was incentivised to maintain. Indeed, the period of 2000 to 2006 has been categorised as a phase of adaptation for the organisation, a "learning period" in which Hezbollah and indeed Israel began to establish a mutual understanding of each other's vital interests and the consequences of their violation.¹⁹⁶ This early deterrence dynamic collapsed however in the 2006 Lebanon War, and return of the IDF to south Lebanon. The 2006 war witnessed the use of Hezbollah's previously withheld rocket threat, with a view to inciting Israeli withdrawal.¹⁹⁷ As noted in the theoretical chapter, this represents the use of compellence. The conflict precipitated from misjudgements by Hezbollah as to the escalatory nature of kidnapping; a failure in brinkmanship and of deterrence.¹⁹⁸ The outcome of the conflict itself has generally been considered a failure for Israel, and an expensive victory for Hezbollah. Following the 2006 War, deterrence has been re-established, with no major military action to date.

The presented conflict has then, an interesting relationship to the matter at hand; the question of a deterrent threat formed through terrorism. While the case does indeed feature a failure of deterrence, there also exists a long period of its success following its reestablishment. Indeed, the use of compellence in an attempt to return to the status-quo is postulated to be closely related to deterrence.¹⁹⁹ By assessing the hypothesis in relation to the case at hand, a theoretically cogent arc in terms of deterrence's employment emerges; the development of deterrence after the establishment of a mutually acceptable status-quo between adversaries, its failure through rapid escalation stemming from misperception, conflict and compellence, and the restoration of deterrence. In examining if the deterrence dynamic at play since 2006 is the result of the threat of terrorism, i.e.

¹⁹⁵ Al-Aloosy, Massab, *The Changing Ideology of Hezbollah*, p.51.

¹⁹⁶ Samaan, Jean-Loup. 'The Dahya Concept and Israeli Military Posture Vis-à-Vis Hezbollah Since 2006'. *Comparative Strategy* 32.2 (2013), 146–59, p.148.

¹⁹⁷ DeVore, Marc R., Armin B. Stähli, and Ulrike Esther Franke. 'Dynamics of Insurgent Innovation: How Hezbollah and Other Non-State Actors Develop New Capabilities'. *Comparative Strategy* 38.4 (2019), 371–400, p.387.

¹⁹⁸ Bitton, Raphael. 'Getting the Right Picture for the Wrong Reasons: Intelligence Analysis by Hezbollah and Hamas'. *Intelligence and National Security* 34.7 (2019), 1027–44, p.11

¹⁹⁹ Lowther, Adam B. *Deterrence: Rising Powers, Rogue Regimes and Terrorism in the Twenty-first Century*, p.167.

deterrence-terrorism, analysis will be restricted to just this period; 2006 to 2020. While the reasons for deterrence's failure in 2006 is certainly a relevant research question, it only bears significance to the proposed concept of deterrence-terrorism *if* it is first proven that deterrence-terrorism is the operative form of deterrence at play in the given case. As the goal of the empirical portion of this paper is simply to establish the plausibility of deterrence-terrorism in a real-world case, consideration of the years 2000-2006 may be of not immediate relevance provided it can be proven an extent deterrence dynamic has prevailed since 2006.

The selected case is not without disadvantages. Firstly, as is the case with any extent conflict involving ongoing counterterrorist operations, access to data pertaining to security and the internal workings of a terrorist organisation will be incomplete. This is something of an inevitability when studying contemporary events, and must be mitigated by careful consideration of the validity of any given source.²⁰⁰ More significantly in terms of the case's suitability as an empirical test case of deterrence-terrorism, it can strongly be argued that Hezbollah is an outlier among terrorist organisations. Indeed, Hezbollah is certainly atypical in many respects. Its pseudo-state like characteristics, involvement in Lebanese government since 2005, and its significant access to military and financial resources mark it out among contemporary organisations that employ terrorism as 'exceptionally' effective; a group in 'propitious circumstances'.²⁰¹ Further, and in relation to the politicised nature of the term terrorism, it can be argued that Hezbollah is a political mass movement, that has an armed wing which may or may not be viewed as 'terrorist'.²⁰² The argument could then be made that regardless of the outcomes of hypothesis testing, results would be not generalisable to the majority of actors that employ terrorism. These factors are however not deemed to be an obstacle to the testing the hypothesis presented here. As elucidated in the theoretical chapter of this paper, deterrence-terrorism is a

²⁰⁰ Baudet, Floribert, Sibul, Eric. A. "Historical research in the military domain" in: Soeters, Joseph., Shields, Patricia. M., Rietjens, Sebastian., eds., *Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in Military Studies*, pp.71-72.

²⁰¹ DeVore, Marc R., and Armin B. Stähli. 'Explaining Hezbollah's Effectiveness: Internal and External Determinants of the Rise of Violent Non-State Actors'. *Terrorism and Political Violence* 27.2 (2015), 331–57, p.332.

²⁰² Salamey, Imad, and Frederic Pearson. 'Hezbollah: A Proletarian Party with an Islamic Manifesto – A Sociopolitical Analysis of Islamist Populism in Lebanon and the Middle East'. *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 18.3 (2007), 416–38, pp.428-430.

strategy that may be employed by any actor, including states. That Hezbollah is state-like does not then prevent the empirical testing of deterrence-terrorism; establishing if a threat constituted through terrorism can create a deterrent effect. While comparison between Hezbollah and less established terrorist groups, particularly desperate networks like Al Qaeda would need to overcome the fundamental differences between such organisations, this would represent a further development of the testing attempted here, beyond the scope of this study. A second short coming is related to Hezbollah's role as a strong Iranian ally in the Middle East, amounting to of a proxy in some analyses.²⁰³ The argument that might follow this conclusion is that any interaction between Hezbollah and Israel must factor in Iranian responses, which may amount to extended deterrence by Iran to Hezbollah. An ideal case for testing would indeed involve no strong external allegiances such as this, but alliances are a common and fundamental part of the landscape in which deterrence operates and is tested in.²⁰⁴ By firmly establishing the Hezbollah's deterrent dynamic is based on terrorism and that it maintains an independent command this factor can be accounted for, and poses no obstacle to the task of establishing necessary evidence of deterrence-terrorism in a single case study.

2.4 Data and process-tracing execution

In seeking to apply the theoretical framework of deterrence to the presented case, the indicators of a deterrence dynamic and the requirements of deterrence will be examined in turn to ensure necessary evidence is present to infer the plausible presence of the novel concept. Such structure mirrors that of Sobelman's inductive analysis of Hezbollah's attempts to pursue a deterrence strategy across a wider timeframe.²⁰⁵ Such an approach, it is granted, eschews the use of a progressive timeline, conducive to the inference of causal chains often sought in process tracing studies.²⁰⁶ The theory centric approach here adopted is however held to provide the firmest basis of clearly establishing the plausibility

²⁰³ Wilner, Alex S. 'Apocalypse Soon? Deterring Nuclear Iran and Its Terrorist Proxies'. p.20.

²⁰⁴ Sorokin, G. L. 'Alliance Formation and General Deterrence: A Game-Theoretic Model and the Case of Israel'. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 38.2 (1994), 298–325, p.298

²⁰⁵ Sobelman, Daniel. 'Learning to Deter: Deterrence Failure and Success in the Israel-Hezbollah Conflict, 2006–16'.

²⁰⁶ Della Porta, Donatella. Keating, Michael., eds., *Approaches and Methodologies in the Social Sciences: A Pluralist Perspective*, p.231.

of deterrence-terrorism as outlined by deductive analysis. To assess the DV, the presence or absence of a military restraint amidst aggressor intent must be established. Given the propensity for governments to actively combat terrorist organisations that challenge them in some way, conflict studies by prevalent think tanks and leadership statements provide sufficient basis for inference in the selected case. Clearly stated intention and desire to remove or neutralise terrorist threats *and* remove Hezbollah's capability to harm Israel, is considered sufficient to establish aggressor intent. Herein, the principal primary sources employed are the Israeli Defence Forces Strategy Document of 2015 and statements made by Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu. Where necessary this will be corroborated by expert analysis of Israeli security landscape. Here the authorship of the Institute for National Security Studies will be the principle reference point, given its status as an independent advisory body to the Israeli government.

Relative inaction is a general phenomenon that should be present across the entire timeline, should deterrence-terrorism be successful. As stated above, 'inaction' is inferred in relation to: actions taken by the aggressor against other terrorist groups, and in relation to its stated policy towards terrorist organisations. This will be measured in terms of the presence or absence of military operations that infringe on the core interests of the deterring party, as indicated by their signalling practices. Against the backdrop of similar operations against other actors (a matter of historical record), and in light of aggressor motivation, relative inaction is inferred. 'Shortfall' between stated policy and objectives achieved will be tested to corroborate this. Due to the close connection this consideration bears to aggressor motivation, the two will be tested simultaneously. Thus in relation to the presented case, ideally it will be proven that (1) Israel has not conducted military operations against Hezbollah that threaten the status-quo to such an extent Hezbollah would consider it a deterrence failure and has not acted as aggressively towards Hezbollah as it has against other terrorist organisations in the region in the studied period, (2) and has not acted as aggressively as its stated policy towards terrorism would suggest.

Concerning the second indicator, de-escalation in flashpoint crisis will be established by highlighting prominent 'near-misses' that have occurred between 2006-2020. Here situations in which conflict escalation seemed likely but did not occur will be examined.

While conflict records are sufficient to establish such flashpoints in general, leadership statements from both Israel and Hezbollah in the immediate aftermath of each incidence will be examined for evidence of conciliatory statements and recognition of a desire to maintain the status-quo. The selected flashpoint are: the 2012 Burgas Attacks, The 2015 Shebaa Farms Incident, and the 2019 Crisis. These incidents were selected due to their deviation from the “rules of game,” a term used to encapsulate the unspoken but mutually respected behaviour restrictions in the conflict.²⁰⁷ Specifically, these deviations are in the form of Israeli casualties or location beyond the Shebaa Farms area, described as a designated space in which both actors can “let off steam.”²⁰⁸ Other terrorist attacks conducted by Hezbollah may be found in appendix 1. The use of these three flashpoints as a basis on which to establish behaviours tendencies across the entire studied period is, it is granted, may be seen to strain the principals of process tracing as a method. Given the fact this plausibility probe seeks only to establish necessary evidence of the causal proposition, and given the adherence to multisource inference as the principal analytical tools, such an approach is deemed suited to the task at hand.

To assess the presence/absence of the IV; Hezbollah’s strategy of deterrence-terrorism, analysis naturally forms three parts. Firstly, it must be established that Hezbollah possess a deterrent threat formed on the basis of terrorism. Secondly that Hezbollah signals the circumstances of threat use and resolve to follow through. Thirdly, that the threat is perceived by Israel as being capable of imposing unacceptable costs. A terrorist threat requires the possession of deterrent threat that primarily acts through terrorism not other means (such as conventional denial). This requires the assessment of material capability to conduct violent, extra-normal and symbolic attacks on Israel, and overcome any countermeasure this would entail. To this end expert analysis of Hezbollah military strength and past experience conducting terrorist attacks, and Israeli’s defensive posture must be relied upon, given the inaccessibility of first-hand sources or direct observation. Such analysis will also account for Hezbollah’s material capability to create a conventional deterrent threat, thereby judging whether Hezbollah’s purported threat may be considered terrorist in its nature.

²⁰⁷ Sobelman, Daniel. *New Rules of the Game: Israel and Hezbollah after the Withdrawal from Lebanon*. INSS, Memorandum No.69 2004.

²⁰⁸ Al-Aloosy, Massab, *The Changing Ideology of Hezbollah*, p.109.

Secondly, it must be seen that Hezbollah fulfils the requirements of signalling. While the entirety of the timeline is under scrutiny, emphasis will be placed on action and statements during and after flashpoints. Leadership statements will be examined for evidence of attempts to communicate circumstances of threat use and the resolve to follow through with the aforementioned threat. Primary sources here include the 2009 Hezbollah Manifesto, wherein the organisation frames its conflict and declares its goals. Speeches by the leadership of Hezbollah; namely Hassan Nasrallah, will be used in conjunction with this. Such sources are deemed valid basis of determining the organisation objectives and intent, due to the fundamental fact documents of this nature and verbal statements are themselves the means by which signalling must be achieved. This use of verbal statements to infer the presence or absence of signalling follows the conventions of deterrence testing.²⁰⁹ Regarding speeches, Sobelman's inductive study of Hezbollah's signalling practices provides considerable work in this direction, and will be drawn upon in tandem with the speeches themselves in testing for the communication of circumstances of threat use and resolve to follow through.

Lastly, analysis of Hezbollah's purported threat will be conducted, to assess the credibility of it inflicting unacceptable costs. Here, Israel's public perceptions of rocket attacks, and the prominence of Hezbollah's threat in professional security analysis will be examined to establish that the prevalent political perception that the costs of a conflict outweigh any benefits to be gained. This represents the ideational aspect a credible threat. Given the unfeasibility of a plausibility probe of this scope to conduct new survey or interview data, academic and professional sources will be relied upon for expert analysis, in keeping with Lebow and Stein's recommendations in testing deterrence.²¹⁰ While far from ideal this mirrors a general challenge in the study of extant conflicts. While the sources employed in this paper would no doubt be enriched by interviews of leadership on both sides of the conflict, and access to data that remains classified, practical limitations prevent their use here beyond identification as a potential avenue for future study. It is believed by inferring from a wide bed of secondary sources and leadership

²⁰⁹ Huth, Paul, and Bruce Russett, 'Testing Deterrence Theory: Rigor Makes a Difference', p.482.

²¹⁰ Lebow, Richard Ned, and Janice Gross Stein. 'Deterrence: The Elusive Dependent Variable'. p.351.

statements, that the plausibility of deterrence-terrorism between Hezbollah and Israel may be established.

3 Case study: Deterrence-terrorism and Hezbollah-Israel 2006-2020

3.1 Military restraint: Israel's conflict with Hezbollah 2006-2020

That an extent deterrence dynamic exists between Hezbollah and Israel is a relatively well attested feature of contemporary professional and academic inductive studies of the conflict in South Lebanon.²¹¹ As an extent case of deterrence is a vital prerequisite of assessing the plausibility of deterrence-terrorism in a given case, it is valuable to illustrate the particulars of the dynamic present between Hezbollah and Israel. Further, by testing against the two indicators of the DV, *relative inaction* amidst intent and *de-escalation at crisis flashpoints*, the threshold of activity by the aggressor against the defender considered a deterrence success is clear, thereby facilitating further comparative generalisation or causal testing should the hypothesis be deemed plausible in the given case.

3.1.1: Relative inaction: The Israeli campaign against Hezbollah 2006- 2020

The first and most substantial proof of relative inaction against Hezbollah by Israel is a comparison between action taken against Hezbollah, that against other non-state actors in the region since 2006. The basis for such a comparison may be found in Israel's Defence Forces Strategy Document, which explicitly lists "substate organisations" including Hezbollah and Hamas as a distinct type of threat, with a distinct policy when it comes to confrontation.²¹² A comparison therefore serves to highlight discrepancies in the military actions taken towards such organisations, underscoring the inaction which forms the basis of the DV; military restraint. Following the culmination of the 2006 Lebanon War and UNSCR 1701, Israel has conducted no major land based military operations in southern Lebanon. This stands in stark contrast to the Gaza Strip, wherein Israel has conducted Operations Cast Lead, Pillar of Defence, and Protective Edge against Hamas and allied

²¹¹ See: Examples include: Sobelman, Daniel. 'Learning to Deter: Deterrence Failure and Success in the Israel-Hezbollah Conflict, 2006–16'.; Valensi, Carmit, and Yoram Schweitzer. 'Hezbollah's Concept of Deterrence Vis-à-Vis Israel According to Nasrallah: From the Second Lebanon War to the Present'.

²¹² IDF General Staff, *Israel Defence Forces Strategy Document*, (Belfar Center, 2015), Chapter I.

militant groups, in addition to numerous intense episodes of exchanged fire. The Gaza wars have been identified as the most prominent example of Israel's principal strategy for combating persistent security threats by substate organisations; 'mowing the grass.'²¹³ A key aspect of the strategy is the partially pre-emptive nature of such operations, whereby the rapid degradation of an the adversary's military/terrorist capabilities is sought in order to reduce the overall security threat to an acceptable level.²¹⁴ In the case of both Hamas and Hezbollah, this is principally constituted through short range unguided rockets, with sufficient reach to strike major Israeli population centres.²¹⁵ In this field, Hezbollah's capabilities far outclass those of Hamas at any stage of the studied period, in terms of total warheads, long-range rockets, and barrage capabilities.²¹⁶ Nevertheless, in contrast to keen interventionism in Gaza, Israel continues to operate in what has been termed a "pattern of mutual deterrence" in relation to Hezbollah.²¹⁷

The absence of major land or air-based campaigns against Hezbollah since 2006 does not mean Israel's inaction has been complete. Far from this, numerous clandestine actions and interdiction strikes against Hezbollah have occurred in the studied period. In relation to the testing of the presented hypothesis, what matters here is whether or not such actions are sufficient in magnitude that they might be identified as a deterrence failure. Covert action against Hezbollah is difficult to quantify with any degree of veracity. Given their very nature as clandestine actions designed to prevent attribution, covert actions alone are not considered incompatible with an ongoing state of deterrence, but rather may be considered symptomatic of one provided they do not threaten vital interests to such a degree that a non-covert response is triggered. Interdiction strikes by Israel against Hezbollah and its IRGC allies occurred on at least 100 occasions before 2017, principally

²¹³ Shkolnik, Michael. "Mowing the Grass" and Operation Protective Edge: Israel's Strategy for Protracted Asymmetric Conflict with Hamas'. *Canadian Foreign Policy Journal* 23.2 (2017), 185–89, pp.185-186.

²¹⁴ Inbar, Efraim, and Eitan Shamir. "Mowing the Grass": Israel's Strategy for Protracted Intractable Conflict'. p.63.

²¹⁵ Eilam, Ehud. 'The Struggle against Hizbullah and Hamas: Israel's Next Hybrid War'. *Israel Journal of Foreign Affairs* 10.2 (2016), 247–55, p.247.

²¹⁶ Ibid. p.248.

²¹⁷ Northern Command Chief Gadi Eisenkot cited in: Sobelman, Daniel. 'Learning to Deter: Deterrence Failure and Success in the Israel-Hezbollah Conflict, 2006–16'. p.153.

in Syria.²¹⁸ Such attacks certainly have been seen to strain the deterrence dynamic between Hezbollah and Lebanon, but have not yet provoked an uncontrolled escalation spiral.²¹⁹ The 2019 flashpoint between Israel and Hezbollah which followed coincident Israeli strikes in Damascus and, critically, Beirut featured the most dramatic escalation in the studied period, but remained below the threshold of deterrence failure. As it will be expounded below in relation to signalling, the use of military force within Lebanon is Hezbollah's core interest in terms of unwanted actions against which deterrence is pursued. Following the attack, rather than a full use of retaliatory measures, a non-fatal ATGM strike was launched by Hezbollah on an IDF vehicle south of the Blue Line, prompting an artillery barrage by the IDF in the Shebaa Farms area. The conclusion that this was not a failure of deterrence, but rather controlled signalling by both sides follows not only analysts' assessments,²²⁰ but the statements of Hezbollah's leadership itself. Hassan Nasrallah categorised the Hezbollah's response as a "message," demonstrative of the manner of future "retaliation."²²¹ Electing to respond south of the Blue Line, and not in the Shebaa farms was identified as a violation of "Israeli red lines" in response to the IDF's own violations of "the rules of engagement."²²² This measured pattern of action and response demonstrated a strained but intact deterrence dynamic in southern Lebanon, that does not extend to Hezbollah and allied IRGC activities in Syria. Relative to the Gazan Wars, such activities cannot be considered full use of Israel's military options against what has indeed been identified as its principal security threat,²²³ suggesting that military action has been and still is restrained by some factor.

The second aspect by which Israel's relative inaction may be established, is the short fall between Israel's stated rhetorical policy in face of terrorist security threats and actions

²¹⁸ IDF statement quoted in: Reuters, "Israeli missiles hit military post near Damascus: Syrian state tv." December 2 2017. Note, due to the inconsistent practice of IDF claiming responsibility for strike that occur in Syria, a precise number of sorties cannot be determined.

²¹⁹ Schweitzer. Yoram, Mizrahi. Orna. 'The Complexity behind Hezbollah's Response to Israel's Attacks'. INSS. Insight no.1210, (September 2019).

²²⁰ Valensi, Carmi, and Yoram Schweitzer. 'Hezbollah's Concept of Deterrence Vis-à-Vis Israel According to Nasrallah: From the Second Lebanon War to the Present'.

²²¹ Associated Press "Calm prevails on Lebanon-Israel border day after brief clash," (2019) [Accessed: 05/03/2020].

²²² Al Manar "September 1, 2019... Save the Date, No More Israeli Red Lines" (2019) [Accessed: 05/02/2020].

²²³ Sobelman, Daniel. 'Learning to Deter: Deterrence Failure and Success in the Israel-Hezbollah Conflict, 2006–16'. p.152.

taken against Hezbollah. Such consideration is essential not only for substantiating the claim of relative inaction, but also for firmly establishing aggressor intent; a prerequisite for a deterrent effect to occur, and the plausibility of deterrence-terrorism's operation in the given case. As a cautionary point, politicised security claims to domestic audiences cannot be considered wholly representative of government intentions, given incentives to 'talk up' security for political gain. More cogent analysis is found in the statements of professional and subject matter experts, who are less inclined towards hyperbole. In this regard, Israeli objectives at the outset of the studied period have been surmised as the need to:

*"seriously degrade Hezbollah's military capabilities as much as possible. This is to weaken the group, and also to re-establish deterrence, so that even if Hezbollah has rockets, they will be much more cautious about using them."*²²⁴

This follows not only the abstract strategy of "mowing the grass," but mirror's Israeli stated policy towards Hamas' capabilities in the Gaza Strip.²²⁵ This policy is clearly outlined in the IDF Strategic Document, wherein in conjunction to building deterrence against adversaries it stated Israel is to use "all defence organisations in coordinated action to impede the enemy's capabilities to build up its force."²²⁶ "Using force in Routine" (i.e. outside wars) is outlined a "key political and strategic goal" of the IDF.²²⁷ This, in conjunction with "Offensive military concept" being one of the "principles of the national security doctrine," it would be expected that Hezbollah's offensive threat would be confronted with operations of equal or greater military scale than those against Hamas.²²⁸ The document further states:

"The main achievements in defeating an enemy like Hezbollah and Hamas will be:

1. Eliminating the enemy's capability by destroying its forces.
2. Reducing the effectiveness of the enemy's capability against the Israeli home front.

²²⁴ Brigadier General Michael Herzog, quoted in: Council on Foreign Relations "Defining Victory: The Differing Goals of Israel and Hezbollah" (2006) [Accessed: 05/02/2020].

²²⁵ Levy, Yagil. 'The Gaza Fighting: Did Israel Shift Risk from Its Soldiers to Civilians?' *Middle East Policy* 24, no. 3 (September 2017): 117–32, p.117.

²²⁶ IDF General Staff, *Israel Defence Forces Strategy Document*, Chapter I, section 5.C.

²²⁷ Ibid. Chapter III, section 3.A.

²²⁸ Ibid. Chapter I, section 4.B.

3. Achieving goals that the enemy regards as being valuable.
4. Crushing the enemy's desire to continue fighting.”²²⁹

Comments by contemporary Chief of General Staff of the IDF, Gadi Eisenkot in analytical contributions to Israel's security situation further corroborate this notion. He states the duty of the IDF has progressed from achieving victory in conventional warfare to “the decisive defeat of groups that situate themselves among civilian populations”.²³⁰ He further states “the major threat currently facing Israel is Hezbollah,” and that the organisation possesses “disturbing” capabilities in excess of those held by Hamas.²³¹ In facing such threats, he espouses the use of a “campaign between the wars,” intended among other things to “reduce or eliminate the enemy's force-buildup processes.”²³² In terms of this translating into measurable actions that would disprove any claims of restraint, as early as 2008 in and light of experiences in the 2006 Lebanon War, the Israel's Northern Command has embraced what has been termed the Dahya Concept; retaliation through “disproportionate force”.²³³ As Eisenkot himself framed it: “what happened in the Dahya quarter in Beirut in 2006 will happen in every village from which Israel is fired upon. We will apply disproportionate force on it and cause great damage and destruction there.”²³⁴ Such strategic thinking actualises the latent capability to conduct military operations presented by Israel's significant military superiority relative to Hezbollah. On the basis of this evidence it is determined that Israel possesses clear aggressor motivation in relation to Hezbollah; defined as the intent to degrade and prevent the improvement of the organisation's offensive capabilities.

In light of this intent however, and in relation to the assertion of relative inaction in the presented case, while the series of offensive military operations in Gaza (most recently Operation Protective Edge) have been successful in vastly diminishing Hamas' rocket

²²⁹ Ibid. Chapter III Section 12.

²³⁰ Gadi Eisenkot, *The Challenges facing the Israel Defense Forces, 2015-2016*, (INSS, 2016), p. 9.

²³¹ Ibid. pp.10-11.

²³² Eisenkot, Gabi and Siboni, Gabi, *Guidelines for Israel's National Security Strategy*, (The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2019), pp.32-33.

²³³ Siboni, Gabi. (2008) *Disproportionate Force: Israel's Concept of Retaliation in Light of the Second Lebanon War*, INSS Insight No.74.

²³⁴ Samaan, Jean-Loup, ‘The Dahya Concept and Israeli Military Posture Vis-à-Vis Hezbollah Since 2006’, p.146.

arsenal and degrading its fighting force through targeted killing,²³⁵ Hezbollah has retained and built on its rocket capabilities throughout the period in question.²³⁶ While interdiction campaigns have been conducted with the specific stated intention of preventing rapid quantitative and qualitative increases in Hezbollah's rocket arsenal, particularly in relation to PGM capabilities, such campaigns have failed to fully prevent further armament by the group. Evidence for this most prominently seen in the IDF's released intelligence showing the construction of PGM facilities inside Lebanon, around the time of the 2019 flashpoint.²³⁷ While such efforts are evidence of the active pursuit of security goals in line with an overall strategy of degradation, and interdiction efforts have 'setback' Hezbollah's armament programme, there remains an identifiable gap between stated security objectives in relation to Hezbollah and current successes. In relation to deterrence terrorism, this suggests that extent "rules of the game" do not permit military action above a certain threshold. These are principally the prevention of interdiction strikes inside Lebanon itself, demonstrative of an overall pattern of military restraint in keeping with a deterrence dynamic.

What emerges then in the period of 2006-2020 is a constellation of aggressive Israeli military responses to non-state security threats in its immediate neighbourhood. Amidst this, an increasingly recognised and formalised lack restraint from large scale conflict between Israel and Hezbollah stands out as an exception, wherein Israel restricts both the scope of its efforts to counter the security threat presented by Hezbollah. With a view to establishing the plausibility of deterrence-terrorism by Hezbollah having produced this, it is pertinent to further examine Israeli behaviour within the confines of this dynamic, such that it can be positively identified as a deterrence dynamic.

²³⁵ Shkolnik, Michael. "Mowing the Grass" and Operation Protective Edge: Israel's Strategy for Protracted Asymmetric Conflict with Hamas'. pp.185-186.

²³⁶ Gleis, Joshua. L. and Berti. Benedetta, *Hezbollah and Hamas: a Comparative Study*, (John Hopkins, 2012), p.78.

²³⁷ BICOM, *Hezbollah's Precision Missile Project*, (Britain Israel Communications and Research Centre, 2019), p.9.

3.1.2: De-escalation at crisis flashpoints: limitation of response in the 2012 Burgas Attack, the 2015 Shebaa Farms Incident, and the 2019 Crisis

De-escalatory actions during crises are of great use in establishing the presence of a deterrence dynamic insofar they are more demonstrably manifest than general restraint, helping overcome the inherent challenges to testing for inaction.²⁴⁴ In assessing the plausibility of deterrence-terrorism causing Israeli military restraint, de-escalation in crises is additionally useful as the decision not to infringe on the vital interests of an actor using terrorism (in probing or in a chain of action and reaction) speaks to the undesirability of accepting the costs imposed by the threat of retaliation. As Israeli intent to commit and experience in conducting large scale military actions against non-state actors in its vicinity have been established above, de-escalatory behaviour in avoidance of costs greatly substantiates the plausibility of deterrence-terrorism operating successful in the given case.

To this end, the most important flashpoints to assess are those uses of force by Hezbollah against Israel that violate the aforementioned rules of the game. Here the 2012 Burgas Suicide Bombing, the 2015 Shebaa Farms Incident and the 2019 crisis are the most significant incidents. The July 2012 Burgas Suicide Bombing was an attack on an Israeli operated tourist transport bus in Bulgaria, killing 7 (including the bomber) and injuring 32 civilians, predominantly Israeli citizens.²⁴⁵ The attack was the first major use of force by Hezbollah against Israel since the culmination of the 2006 War 6 years prior, and therefore the first in the studied period.²⁴⁶ Attribution of the attack to Hezbollah, with IRGC support was swift by Israeli analysts, in the wake of several foiled attacks in the preceding months, and revenge for the killing of senior Hezbollah Emad Mughniyeh in 2008 was cited as a principle motivation.²⁴⁷ In face of this first challenge to the prevailing trend of restraint by Israel and status-quo maintenance by Hezbollah since 2006, Israeli rhetoric in the immediate aftermath was firm. President Netanyahu promised that “Israel

²⁴⁴ Lebow, Richard Ned, and Janice Gross Stein. ‘Deterrence: The Elusive Dependent Variable’. p.336.

²⁴⁵ BBC, “Deadly blast hits bus carrying Israelis in Bulgaria” (2012) [Accessed: 15/03/2020].

²⁴⁶ The Global Terrorism Database, <http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd>. [Accessed: 07/01/2020].

²⁴⁷ Both Hezbollah and Iran it should be noted, denied responsibility for the attack. See: The Times of Israel, “7 dead, 3 critical after attack on Israeli tourists in Bulgaria” (2012) [Accessed: 15/03/2020]; The Times of Israel, “Hezbollah denies connection to Burgas bombing” (2013) [Accessed: 15/03/2020].

will do everything so that those responsible for the crime will pay the price,” and “We will continue to fight against Iranian terror. It will not defeat us. We will act against it with great force”.²⁴⁸ Defence minister Ehud Barack supported the position with the claim Israel would “do everything possible in order to find those responsible, and those who dispatched them, and punish them.”²⁴⁹ Such statements, if taken in light of Israel’s aforementioned intent to actively combat terrorism, particularly through use of the Dahya Concept, produces the expectation of a response, the severity of which either supports or disproves the claim of de-escalation.

Rather than a disproportionate punitive strike, Israeli responses to the attack remained covert and diplomatic. The wake of the Burgas attack saw significant efforts made by Israel towards encouraging European states to wholly list Hezbollah as a terrorist organisation,²⁵⁰ and the continuation of what has been termed “the overseas war,” wherein Israel and Hezbollah have been engaged in a tit for tat chain of attempted terrorist attacks and targeted killings.²⁵¹ Like the predominate restriction of Israeli interdiction strikes against Hezbollah to Syria, the preponderance for clandestine action by Israel speaks to a dynamic where actions against adversaries are restricted to areas where the ‘rules of the game’ are more permissive. Further, the decision not to launch immediate “revenge” strikes on prominent targets such as headquarters, a pattern common in Israeli-Palestinian exchanges, demonstrates a measured approach by Israel, suggestive of an aversion to escalating violent interactions with Hezbollah.

Both the 2015 Shebaa Farms Incident and the 2019 crisis similarly demonstrate reluctance by Israel to conduct escalatory strikes against Hezbollah, but rather relying on measured responses with limited provocative characteristics. In both incidents Israeli reactions to Hezbollah counteractions followed a brief and controlled arc, limiting causes for escalation. In January 2015 widespread Israeli airstrikes on Hezbollah targets in the

²⁴⁸ The Times of Israel, “Netanyahu: Those responsible for Burgas ‘will pay the price’” (2013) [Accessed: 15/3/2020].

²⁴⁹ Reuters, “Bulgaria says suicide bomber blew up airport bus” (2012) [Accessed: 15/03/2020].

²⁵⁰ The Guardian, “EU resists Hezbollah ban but lists armed wing as terrorist group” (2013) [Accessed: 15/03/2020].

²⁵¹ Valensi, Carmit, and Yoram Schweitzer. ‘Hezbollah’s Concept of Deterrence Vis-à-Vis Israel According to Nasrallah: From the Second Lebanon War to the Present’, in: ‘The Quiet Decade,’ p.121.

Lebanese-Syrian border area (relating to Hezbollah involvement in the Syrian Civil War) prompted a an ATGM attack by Hezbollah on two IDF vehicles, killing 2 and wounding 7.²⁵² Similarly to the prelude to the 2012 Burgas attack, the killing of a prominent Hezbollah commander in the attacks was cited by both parties as motivation for the attack.²⁵³ Hezbollah's reaction was however greatly expedited, with the Shebaa Farms attack occurring 10 days later. Israel reacted with an artillery barrage into Lebanese held territory along the perimeter of the Shebaa Farms, prompting mortar fire by Hezbollah from Syrian territory into the Golan Heights. In face of this tit-for-tat fire and the prospect of further escalation President Netanyahu stated:

*"To anyone who tries to challenge us on the northern border, I suggest that they look at what happened here, at the Gaza Strip," he said. "Last summer Hamas took the hardest blow ever since its establishment and the IDF is ready to act, with might, in all sectors. Security is above all."*²⁵⁴

The limitation of Israel's response in conjunction with the clear threat of imposing further costs is indicative of pattern of mutual (rather than unidirectional) deterrence, in which both parties seek to balance restraint with clear signalling when faced with a crisis amidst an overall pattern of inaction.²⁵⁵ Indeed, a near identical cycle of limited action and limited response followed the next year, again prompted by strikes in Syria. The 2019 crisis further corroborates this pattern. In response to the first direct military action by Israel in undisputed Lebanese territory since 2006 in August, Hezbollah launched a single and largely symbolic attack south of the Blue line in September.²⁵⁷ Israel in turn limited its response to artillery fire in the Shebaa Farms.²⁵⁸ In all three of the tested flashpoints, Israel was seen to eschew the further escalation suggested by its military doctrine, and

²⁵² The Wall Street Journal, "Two Israeli Soldiers Killed in Attack Claimed by Lebanon's Hezbollah" (2015) [Accessed:15/03/2020].

²⁵³ Reuters, "Hezbollah: we don't want war with Israel but do not fear it" (2015) [Accessed: 15/03/2020].

²⁵⁴ Al Jazeera, "Two Israeli soldiers killed in Hezbollah missile attack" (2015) [Accessed: 15/03/2020].

²⁵⁵ Israeli, Zipi, "'Did We Win or Lose?':Media Discourse in Israel about the Second Lebanon War, 2006-2016," in: 'The Quiet Decade,' In: Dekel. Udi, Siboni. Gabi, Einav. Omar. (eds) *The Aftermath of the Second Lebanon War, 2006-2016*. p.76.

²⁵⁷ Schweitzer, Yoram. Mizrahi, Orna, *The complexity behind Hezbollah's response to Israel's attacks*. p.3.

²⁵⁸ Reuters, "Hezbollah targets Israeli forces with bomb, Israel shells south Lebanon" (2016) [Accessed: 15/03/2020].

rather responded with restraint. The probing of possible advantages to be gained in adjusting the rules of the game by Israel, against the backdrop of greater regional and domestic pressure on Hezbollah is not, it is argued above, sufficient to describe a deterrence failure in the presented case.²⁵⁹ Rather, repeated commitment to managing and limited the prospect of a conflict spiral resulting from these probes is considered evidence of an ongoing relationship governed by a deterrence dynamic, in line with expectations of escalation management in existing deterrence theory.²⁶⁰

3.2: Deterrence-terrorism: Hezbollah's deterrence strategy, 2006-2020

Having established that a deterrent effect has existed between Hezbollah and Israel from 2006 to 2020 by identifying the military restraint amidst intent characteristic of deterred actors, the hypothesis will now be tested through examination of each indicator of the IV; deterrence-terrorism. Concurrently, alternative explanations that impede the plausibility of deterrence-terrorism having produced the deterrence dynamic in question will be eliminated, namely nuclear or conventional deterrence.

3.2.1: Threat through terrorism: Hezbollah's rocket threat, 2006-2020

In assessing the plausibility of *some* form of deterrence strategy acting in the presented case, it must be seen that Hezbollah possesses a deterrent threat. But for this deterrent strategy to be deterrence-terrorism, it must be seen that this deterrent threat is constituted through terrorism; violent, extra-normal and symbolic action. This section will then examine the capability of Hezbollah to form a deterrent threat, and examine if this threat is terrorist, rather than conventional or nuclear. The question of the credible imposition of unacceptable costs will be treated below, in keeping with the distinct nature of imposed costs (psychological and symbolic not material) in deterrence-terrorism.

Hezbollah is considered to be among the most militarily capable non-state actors in the world today.²⁶³ By some accounts, particularly in light of its experience fighting an

²⁵⁹ Ibid., p.4.

²⁶⁰ Morgan, Forrest., and others., *Dangerous Thresholds*, p.22.

²⁶³ CBS, Hezbollah: "A-Team of Terrorists," (2007) [Accessed: 14/04/2020].

expeditionary campaign in Syria, it no longer resembles an insurgency and is closer in nature to a professional army.²⁶⁴ Unsurprisingly this affords the organisation diverse means of pursuing armed conflict, and in turn constituting a threat. Since the culmination of 2006 Lebanon War and the present day, Hezbollah has sought to continually increase its capacity for both semi-conventional warfare and standoff attacks. This has included a near twenty-fold increase in estimated numbers of full time fighters and the acquisition of vehicles and heavy weapon systems,²⁶⁵ increases in numbers of short and long-range rockets and PGM upgrades of existing warheads,²⁶⁶ increases in anti-tank capabilities principally ATGMs,²⁶⁷ novel infiltration, intelligence and special operations capabilities,²⁶⁸ armed and unarmed drones,²⁶⁹ and greater diffusion and redundancies in its command and control networks. In addition to this extensive involvement in the Syrian Civil War will have given Hezbollah commanders updated experience in medium intensity warfare, as well as improved institutional ties to IRGC and Syrian supporters.²⁷⁰ Such capabilities largely fall into two categories when framed in relation to deterrence. Those that are principally useful in medium to high intensity warfare in south Lebanon/northern Israel, and those that create the capability for standoff attacks. In terms of deterrence, both may be used to constitute a threat. As it will be shown, while Hezbollah's capacity in the former category of armed conflict inside its territory may be categorised as a conventional threat-through-denial, it is the capacity to conduct standoff attacks (that indeed fulfil the criteria of terrorism) that serves as the means of inflicting unacceptable costs in its deterrent strategy against Israel. At this stage, nuclear deterrence may be discounted entirely as the operative form of deterrence in the given case. Hezbollah has demonstrated no capability related to WMDs of any nature, although the future possibility of such developments have been speculated.²⁷¹ The future prospect of Hezbollah acquiring chemical weapons in light of its experience in the Syrian Civil War

²⁶⁴ Al-Aloosy, Massab, *The Changing Ideology of Hezbollah*, p.161.

²⁶⁵ Shapir, Yiftah S. (2017) *Hezbollah as an Army*, INSS Strategic Assessment 19 no.4, pp.70-73.

²⁶⁶ BICOM, *Hezbollah's Precision Missile Project*, pp.2-3.

²⁶⁷ Shapir, Yiftah S. (2017) *Hezbollah as an Army*, p.72.

²⁶⁸ Dekel, Udi. Orion, Assaf "The Next War against Hezbollah: Strategic and Operational Considerations," in: 'The Quiet Decade,' In: Dekel. Udi, Siboni. Gabi, Einav. Omar., eds., *The Aftermath of the Second Lebanon War, 2006-2016*, p.132.

²⁶⁹ Byman, Daniel. 'Israel's Four Fronts'. *Survival* 61.2 (2019), 167–88, p.176.

²⁷⁰ Shapir, Yiftah S. (2017) *Hezbollah as an Army*, p.69.

²⁷¹ Los Alamos National Laboratory. 'The Radiological and WMD Threat Posed to National Security By Hezbollah in Latin America' (2019).

is not impossible, but to date do not form a component of Hezbollah's military capabilities.

Of these diverse technologies, Hezbollah's principal means of creating a threat towards Israel takes the form of rocket attacks against civilian targets.²⁷² Hezbollah's rocket arsenal is presently estimated to stand at 100,000 rockets, with typical ranges between 8 and 40 kilometres.²⁷³ The number of long range rockets supplementing this extensive but basic arsenal however has "skyrocketed," including the acquisition of M-600 and Fateh 110 missiles with ranges of 300km and, it has been alleged, even Scud-D theatre ballistic missiles with ranges up to 700km.²⁷⁴ These increase in range not only expands the proportion of Israel's population and property that might be subject to threat in pursuit of deterrence, but significantly hardens Hezbollah's threat in the event of Israeli ground invasion; putting its potential launch sites out of reach even in the event of occupation up to the Litani River.²⁷⁵ Quantitatively increases in warheads are also designed to help mitigate the impact of Israeli interception systems such as Iron Dome or David's Sling, ensuring the maintained capability to conduct violent attacks, and this uphold the basis of threat.²⁷⁶ Further, in addition to the greater destructive power of larger and more numerous rockets, the pursuit of PGM technology has is seem by Hezbollah to radically improve its deterrent threat, by expanding targets from civilian population sites to key infrastructure installations like nuclear plants, or famously, the Ammonia tanks in Haifa Bay.²⁷⁷ Hezbollah has then constituted the material capability to launch standoff attacks, and as such may use the threat thereof in its interactions with its adversaries.

That such weapons are capable being used in violent attacks, and as such can constitute a threat is self-evident. That they may be used to conduct *terrorist* attacks, and by extension a terrorist threat, hinges however on the suitability to conduct extra-normal and symbolic

²⁷² Dekel, Udi. Orion, Assaf "The Next War against Hezbollah: Strategic and Operational Considerations," in: 'The Quiet Decade,' In: Dekel. Udi, Siboni. Gabi, Einav. Omar., eds., *The Aftermath of the Second Lebanon War, 2006-2016*, p.132.

²⁷³ Shapir, Yiftah S. (2017) *Hezbollah as an Army*, p.71.

²⁷⁴ Samaan, Jean-Loup. 'The Dahya Concept and Israeli Military Posture Vis-à-Vis Hezbollah Since 2006'. p.151

²⁷⁵ Ibid. p.151

²⁷⁶ Armstrong, Michael J. 'The Effectiveness of Rocket Attacks and Defenses in Israel'. *Journal of Global Security Studies* 3.2 (2018), 113–32, p.1.

²⁷⁷ BICOM, *Hezbollah's Precision Missile Project*, p.8.

attacks. The development and maintenance of these capabilities into the studied period was guided by Hezbollah's experience before and during the 2006 Lebanon war, and inferred experience gained through observing their adversary's responses to rocket attacks in other conflicts. While the use of rockets against Israeli civilian targets is not unique to Hezbollah or the studied period, Hezbollah's investment into rocket technology and use of rockets in the 2006 Lebanon War was predicated on the belief that if used on a sufficient scale, Israeli behaviour could be influenced by the imposed symbolic costs of such attacks.²⁷⁸ While rocket attacks on civilian targets in northern Israel were not unprecedented, their renewed use on such a scale represented sufficient deviation from the norms expected in Hezbollah's conflict with Israel, from at least the conclusion of Operation Grapes of Wrath in 1993, that such attacks may be considered extra-normal.²⁷⁹ Further, Hezbollah's pursuit of new civilian targets (increased range), new thresholds of violence (increased warhead numbers) and novel infrastructure targets (PGMs) indicates the organisation not only seeks to overcome adversary material countermeasures, but seeks to innovate in the extra-normality of its threatened actions. This highly pronounced psychological dimension to the more typical race to keep threats capable (i.e. overcome countermeasures), is a unique facet of deterrence-terrorism stemming from the precise means of inflicting cost employed. Indeed, if carried out, such rocket attacks undoubtedly will have a material effect. However, the limited nature of such prospective damage in relation to Israel's overall economic standing and industrial capacity indicate that the psychological and political damage of strikes on such *symbolic* targets, rather than direct material effect, is the principal cost Hezbollah seeks to impose.²⁸⁰ Evidence for this may be found in analysis of the Second Lebanon War, where the steady and widescale use of short range rockets on civilian population centres in Northern Israel yielded no overall damage to Israel's GDP.²⁸¹ This leveraging of political and psychological costs imposed by attacks that cause ultimately "irrelevant" material damage is the final element

²⁷⁸ DeVore, Marc R., Armin B. Stähli, and Ulrike Esther Franke. 'Dynamics of Insurgent Innovation: How Hezbollah and Other Non-State Actors Develop New Capabilities'. p.387.

²⁷⁹ Al-Aloosy, Massab, *The Changing Ideology of Hezbollah*, p.85.

²⁸⁰ Note: analysis here focuses on Hezbollah's physical ability to impose costs, and the inferences that may be made therefrom. For analysis and evidence of the credibility of Hezbollah's ability to impose costs, and the perception of the unacceptability by Israel, see subsection 3.2.3

²⁸¹ Altshuler, Alex. Even, Shmuel. Elran, Meir. Shaham, Yonatan. "Israel's Emergency Preparedness a Decade after the Second Lebanon War" in: *The Quiet Decade*, In: Dekel. Udi, Siboni. Gabi, Einav. Omar., eds., *The Aftermath of the Second Lebanon War, 2006-2016*, p.62.

distinguishing terrorist violence from other uses of armed force.²⁸² Hezbollah's rocket arsenal therefore meets, in terms of its intended use, the theoretical requirements of a threat constructed through use of terrorism.

In establishing the plausibility of the overall deterrent effect between Hezbollah and Israel being the result of this terrorist threat, any conventional threat posed by Hezbollah must be seen to be incapable of deterring undesired action; i.e. deterring military action in Lebanon. As noted above, Hezbollah possesses a considerable and increasing capacity for what amounts to conventional warfare inside Lebanon. As evidenced in the 2006 Lebanon war, and Israeli conflict analysis that has followed, these capabilities do much to mitigate the material advantage of the IDF, increasing the expected cost of conflict inside Lebanon; deterrence through denial.²⁸³ With a view to establishing the plausibility of deterrence-terrorism, this at face value is suggestive of a strategy of cumulative deterrence, wherein a combination of conventional and terrorist threats are leveraged to dissuade Israeli military action. However, as noted in the preceding examination of Israel's aggressor intent and its constellation of actions against similar non-state actors in the studied period, it can be seen that ground campaigns are but a limited component of Israel's strategy of mowing the grass, and eminently less preferred than aerial interdiction.²⁸⁴ Given Hezbollah's lack of anti-air capabilities, and given Israel's manifest willingness and capacity to launch airstrikes on Hezbollah and its allies in Syria, the absence of any air campaign over Lebanon is unexplained without some intervening cost Israel expects in response.

Hezbollah's ability to fight conventionally in South Lebanon cannot explain these costs, and as such the organisation's capacity for conventional deterrence through denial cannot account for the totality of the prevailing deterrence dynamic. Hezbollah's rocket threat however can; as it is a means of attack which can impose costs with or without a ground invasion. As will be seen below in relation to signalling, a mutual understanding of reciprocity (airstrikes in Lebanon will result in rocket attacks) exists between both

²⁸² Neumann, Peter. R., Smith. M. L. R., *The Strategy of Terrorism*, p.9.

²⁸³ Sobelman, Daniel. 'Learning to Deter: Deterrence Failure and Success in the Israel-Hezbollah Conflict, 2006–16'. p.190.

²⁸⁴ Samaan, Jean-Loup. 'Missile Warfare and Violent Non-State Actors: The Case of Hezbollah'. *Defence Studies* 17.2 (2017), 156–70, p.156.

actors.²⁸⁵ Indeed, in each of the flashpoints in the studied period, Israeli responses were restricted to border areas, from which it may be inferred that the expected costs of an air campaign (akin to those conducted against Hamas in the studied period) exceeded the strategic utility of any air campaign over Lebanon. Framed as such, Hezbollah's conventional threat, actionable only in the event of a ground invasion of Lebanon, may be better understood as defensive forces deigned to protect the organisation's rocket force.²⁸⁸ Within Hezbollah's order of battle, rocket forces are entirely separate from its fighting units, and have not been used in a supporting role.²⁸⁹ This mirrors the division of forces seen in extant and historical nuclear deterrence frameworks, where conventional forces may be maintained to augment the survivability of the primary threatening instrument; nuclear weapons.²⁹⁰ As such, when taken on balance it may be said that while Hezbollah's conventional forces and as such conventional threat forms part of the organisations overall capability, it is not an instrument of constituting the deterrent threat by which military action in Lebanon (to the extent witnessed in the extent dynamic since 2006) is dissuaded. As the rocket threat fulfils the requirements of violence, extra-normality and symbolism utilised in the identification of terrorism in this study, it may be concluded Hezbollah's threat is terrorist in its nature. Hezbollah then has been found to possess a threat, and this threat conforms to the conceptualisation of terrorism employed in this study.

3.2.2: Signalling: Hezbollah's leadership statements and controlled escalation 2006-2020

In assessing deterrence-terrorism having produced military restraint between Hezbollah and Israel in the period since 2006, the presented hypothesis requires that Hezbollah fulfil the requirements of deterrence. As extracted in the theoretical chapter, Hezbollah must then demonstrate the practice of signalling, in addition to the possession of a threat. Signalling by Hezbollah may be distinguished into several practices; increasingly direct.

²⁸⁵ Rubin, Uzi. 'The Rocket Campaign against Israel during the 2006 Lebanon War', *Mideast Security and Policy Studies*, No.71, pp.1-3.

²⁸⁸ Sobelman, Daniel. 'Learning to Deter: Deterrence Failure and Success in the Israel-Hezbollah Conflict, 2006-16'. p.188.

²⁸⁹ Shapir, Yiftah S. *Hezbollah as an Army*, pp.71-72.

²⁹⁰ Lieber, Keir A., and Daryl G. Press. 'The New Era of Counterforce: Technological Change and the Future of Nuclear Deterrence'. pp.42-43.

The most general signals by Hezbollah pertain to its conflict framing and military doctrine. From these, adversaries and other observers can infer Hezbollah's vital interests and security commitments, i.e. the circumstances in which force will be used. More direct than these are leadership statements, which reiterate vital interests, and serve to signal intent and resolve during specific crises. Most direct are Hezbollah's limited violent reactions in crises; actions undertaken to clearly signal resolve, in addition to the capability to use the credible threat.²⁹²

Hezbollah's military doctrine is something that has to an extent been addressed directly by the organisation in its 2009 Manifesto. This key document is an essential source in establishing both Hezbollah's justifications for its actions in the majority of the studied period, and how it wishes to be perceived by others including its adversaries. In addition to basic conflict framing, Hezbollah's strategic approach to confronting Israel is manifest; that it is prepared to respond if its interests are threatened. This signalling serves the pursuit of deterrence, insofar as they assist in establishing the circumstances in which the withheld violent threat will and will not be used. As noted in the section on case selection, Hezbollah's framing of its conflict with Israel portrays a position of intractability. Indeed, in the 2009 manifesto this is reiterated with claims Hezbollah "categorically rejects any compromise with Israel," calls for Palestinians to reject "all normalisation processes," and predictions of the "demise of the Zionist entity."²⁹³ However, in terms of actualising these abstract politicised statements, Hezbollah described its own strategic evolution from:

*"... a liberation power to a balance and confrontation power and then to a defence and deterrence one besides its political internal role as an influencing pillar in building the just and capable state."*²⁹⁴

²⁹² As noted in the theoretical chapter, which the notion of a credible threat does indeed possess a communicative aspect, and therefore is present in the practice of signalling, it's primarily material nature (in an ideal type case) warrants its separate consideration to signalling practices concerning circumstances of threat uses, communication if these circumstances and resolve to execute threat.

²⁹³ Hezbollah, "The New Hezbollah Manifesto" (2009),
 < <http://www.lebanonrenaissance.org/assets/Uploads/15-The-New-Hezbollah-Manifesto-Nov09.pdf> >
 [Accessed: 02/03/2020].

²⁹⁴ Ibid.

This self-professed transition from insurgent movement to component of state security “participating in defending the country” is justified on the basis of the strategic disparity between Israel and Lebanon, and is envisaged to provide a “formula” for countering a persistent Israeli threat. In addition to signalling the direct intention of seeking deterrence tied to the integrity of Lebanese territory, these statements align with the theoretical expectations concerning status-quo maintenance and the expected utility of deterrence terrorism. Having achieved, in its own words “divine, historical and strategic victory” in 2006, claimed success in “forcing the Zionist’s...withdrawal” in 2000, and having gained a role in the governance and political structure of Lebanon, Hezbollah has plausibly made sufficient progress in its aims to transition from a compellent strategy to one focused on deterrence. Having placed Israel “between the incapable war strategy [sic] and the incapability to reach a settlement,”²⁹⁵ Hezbollah conforms with the expected desires of a late stage insurgent/terrorist actor; in its attempts to protect gains made through preservation of the status-quo. Such overt and unambiguous (re)framing of Hezbollah’s goals in its persistent conflict with Israel serves a basic level of signalling; the pursuit of general deterrence in protection of the integrity of Lebanese territory (and by extension its own). This represents the organisation’s core vital interest in relation to the deterrence dynamic with Israel.

While conflict framing in the 2009 Manifesto highlights the desirability of deterrence to Hezbollah, and outlines vital interests, it does not cover specifics, particularly in terms of threatened response. This is achieved principally in the form of leadership statements. Even prior to the studied period, in the formative years following the 2000 withdrawal, Hezbollah’s leadership has dually stressed both its capacity for effective guerrilla and semi-conventional warfare in South Lebanon, and its capacity for standoff attacks.³⁰⁰ In the studied period, the function of these two capacities and the circumstances of their use has been clearly signalled. Guerrilla warfare is presented as a means by which Hezbollah, an actor at the lower end of a vast asymmetry in means, could increase the costs of Israeli military action in South Lebanon. Hezbollah claims a unique proficiency in this regard, and uses the successes on the 2006 Lebanon War as a basis of signalling its capacity and

²⁹⁵ Ibid.

³⁰⁰ Valensi, Carmit, and Yoram Schweitzer. ‘Hezbollah’s Concept of Deterrence Vis-à-Vis Israel According to Nasrallah: From the Second Lebanon War to the Present’, p.118.

resolve to re-enact the costs inflicted in the conflict if the circumstances are repeated.³⁰¹ Regarding standoff attacks and the means of inflicting unacceptable costs if threatened by unwanted actions other than a full scale invasion, signalling of threatened response is even more direct:

*“The purpose of our rockets is to deter Israel from attacking Lebanese civilians. The fact is that Israel did not attack Lebanese civilians. The enemy fears that every time he confronts us, whenever there are victims in our ranks among Lebanese civilians, this will lead to a counter-barrage of our rockets, which he fears.”*³⁰²

Following the failure of deterrence in 2006 and the ensuing war, Hezbollah has emerged with a refined awareness of Israeli redlines, and to its mind a proven strategy of inflicting costs on Israel; the use of semi-conventional and guerrilla warfare in South Lebanon to prevent rapid Israeli success (i.e. the destruction of its rocket forces), while inflicting political costs through standoff rocket attacks on Israeli civilian targets.³⁰³ The inductive study of Hezbollah leadership statements from 2006 shows clear desire to signal both the intent and capability of pursuing this strategy, with a trend towards the emphasis of standoff attacks as time progresses.³⁰⁴ This is further manifest in the pursuit of PGM technology, the intended purpose of which was explicitly highlighted in the “ammonia speech.” Here the claimed capability to conduct precision strikes on sensitive targets such as the ammonia tank in Haifa Bay and nuclear power stations was alleged to give Hezbollah strategic parity with Israel.³⁰⁵ Leadership statements by Hezbollah do therefore signal a specific threat in response to specific actions; that an increasing sophisticated rocket arsenal will be used to target Israeli civilians in the event of large scale Israeli military operation in Lebanon.

³⁰¹ Hezbollah, “The New Hezbollah Manifesto” (2009).

³⁰² Hassan Nasrallah commenting on the prevailing dynamic of the 2006 Lebanon War. Cited in: Valensi, Carmit, and Yoram Schweitzer. ‘Hezbollah’s Concept of Deterrence Vis-à-Vis Israel According to Nasrallah: From the Second Lebanon War to the Present’, pp.118-119.

³⁰³ DeVore, Marc R., Armin B. Stähli, and Ulrike Esther Franke. ‘Dynamics of Insurgent Innovation: How Hezbollah and Other Non-State Actors Develop New Capabilities’. p.387.

³⁰⁴ Valensi, Carmit, and Yoram Schweitzer. ‘Hezbollah’s Concept of Deterrence Vis-à-Vis Israel According to Nasrallah: From the Second Lebanon War to the Present’, pp.122-125.

³⁰⁵ Anetbi, Liran “Unmanned Aerial Vehicles in Asymmetric Warfare: Maintaining the Advantage of the State Actor,” in: The Quiet Decade,’ In: Dekel. Udi, Siboni. Gabi, Einav. Omar., eds., *The Aftermath of the Second Lebanon War, 2006-2016*, p.90.

In addition to these general comments, Hezbollah's use of leadership statements serves to signal circumstances of threat use and resolve, pursuant to a deterrence, at the highlighted flashpoints. These crises have thus far occurred at the peripheries of the core deterrence dynamic; through their geographic isolation or limited scale. In relation to the Israeli airstrike that precipitated the 2015 Shebaa Farms Incident, Nasrallah noted the overt and military nature of the airstrike, as differentiated from a preceding and covert targeted killing which was described as "a security operation which some may refer to as equivocal."³⁰⁸ Hereby more detailed aspects of the circumstances of threat use were signalled; the differentiation of Israeli covert action and conventional military strikes as respectively tolerable and intolerable means of targeted killings. Facing this violation, the framing of the 2015 Shebaa Farms attack is clearly demarked; a measured but escalatory response to Israel challenging of the rules of the game. The 2019 flashpoint followed a similar course; wherein Hezbollah stressed that "If Israel attacks us then we won't recognize the so-called Blue Line."³⁰⁹ Notably in assessing the criteria of deterrence-terrorism however, there exists a degree of ambiguity in Hezbollah's signalling in more marginal contested theatres. While the 2019 Beirut attack produced a response and unambiguous signals as to the location of further threatened attacks, the organisation has claimed in relation to targeted killings that it was "entitled to respond...in any place and in any way."³¹⁰ It may be inferred therefore that certainty in response is proportional to the severity of the interest challenged. That mass use of a rocket threat would follow major operations in Lebanon is unambiguous, whereas responses to actions in Syria or targeted killings are more flexible. This speaks to a fluid deterrence dynamic and may be taken as evidence of a continual process of reassessment by Hezbollah as to its evolving deterrence strategy against Israel. With a view to assessing the plausibility of deterrence terrorism, it remains clear that Hezbollah actively participates in signalling through the form the leadership statements, with a view to not only reinforcing its vital interests but also communicating clear circumstances in which scaled threat will be used. Notably,

³⁰⁸ Valensi, Carmit, and Yoram Schweitzer. 'Hezbollah's Concept of Deterrence Vis-à-Vis Israel According to Nasrallah: From the Second Lebanon War to the Present', in: 'The Quiet Decade, p.121.

³⁰⁹ Al Manar "September 1, 2019... Save the Date, No More Israeli Red Lines" (2019) [Accessed: 05/02/2020].

³¹⁰ Valensi, Carmit, and Yoram Schweitzer. 'Hezbollah's Concept of Deterrence Vis-à-Vis Israel According to Nasrallah: From the Second Lebanon War to the Present', p.121.

resolve to actually launch rockets, much in line with deterrence theory's expectations as to reputation and resolve, is based on action undertaken in the 2006 Lebanon War, as such is signalled principally with reference to this.³¹¹

Ultimately, while manifestos, leadership comments in interviews and public statements are a robust source of intent indicators in the study of deterrence, concrete military actions, i.e. suggestive escalation, may be considered the clearest proof of an actor's capability and commitment to execute a deterrent threat.³¹² To this end, Hezbollah's limited military responses to Israeli actions that are perceived to violate the rules of the game, i.e. threaten vital interests such that the overall deterrence dynamic is brought into question, demonstrate a clear pattern wherein limited use of force is implemented in an attempt to establish a principle of reciprocity. Both aforementioned flashpoints, the 2015 Shebaa Farms Incident and the 2019 border escalation featured responsive limited military action by Hezbollah. Both incidents served to reinforce leadership statements made, and demonstrate more forceful and urgent signalling than for instance the promise of retaliation in the killing of Emad Mughniyeh or Jihad Mughniyeh. This is principally manifest in the relatively swift response of Hezbollah, and clear claims of proportional reciprocity; that a violation of the rules of the game that challenges the status-quo will elicit a proportional violation in response.³¹³

The notable absence of Hezbollah's use of force in relation to less vital interests also serves to signal intent in relation to Israel, insofar as it assists in preventing misinterpretation of the circumstances of threat use. While Israel's major operations in the Gaza Strip garnered strong condemnation from Hezbollah, no violent action has been conducted in response, in spite of explicit requests.³¹⁴ Material support to Palestinian organisations, particularly Hamas has been ongoing in the period in question, suggestive of an overall framework of cooperation of, but not one in which deterrence is extended

³¹¹ Samaan, Jean-Loup. 'Missile Warfare and Violent Non-State Actors: The Case of Hezbollah'. p.164.

³¹² "The Nature of Escalation" in: Morgan, Forrest., and others., *Dangerous Thresholds*, pp.15-16.

³¹³ Al Manar, "Sayyed Nasrallah: Retaliation Inevitable, All Threats & Intimidation Will Not Prevent It" (2019) [Accessed: 03/03/2020]

³¹⁴ Al Manar, "Hezbollah Condemns Israeli Aggression on Damascus, Mutilation of Palestinian Martyr's Body in Gaza" (2020), [Accessed: 03/03/2020]; Al Manar, "Hezbollah Condemns the Israeli 'Barbaric' Aggression on Gaza" (2019), [Accessed: 03/03/2020]; Haaretz, "Hezbollah 'Refused Hamas Request to Bomb Israel in Gaza War'" (2010) [Accessed: 03/03/2020].

by Hezbollah to any Palestinian actors.³¹⁵ Similarly, lack of action following assassinations, provided they are not executed through direct military strikes, demonstrates the presence of a threshold of acceptable action. Where this is surpassed, for incidence through Israeli use of overt military force (a helicopter airstrike in 2015) or strikes inside Lebanon (drone attack in Beirut in 2019), Hezbollah seeks to communicate and reinforce respect of this threshold by itself challenging Israeli redlines such as border attacks along the Blue Line or inflicting higher cost attacks in terms of casualties in the Shebaa Farms. As highlighted earlier, these actions are still restrained; rocket attacks on civilians, and kidnapping are not measures that have been employed since 2006, due to understanding gained during the 2006 Lebanon War that these will provoke Israeli responses of such a scale they cause deterrence failure.³¹⁶

What emerges then in relation to Hezbollah's signalling is a clear pattern of communicative practices, which attempt to demonstrate to Israel Hezbollah's general goal of maintaining the status-quo post-2006, and the notion that violation of the rules of the game will elicit a response, in keeping with a the expectations of a deterrence dynamic, including deterrence-terrorism. Hezbollah's vital interests, and in turn threatened responses, do however involve an element of ambiguity. While it is clear that military strikes inside Lebanon, and the overt military targeted killing of senior members of Hezbollah are deemed redlines, Hezbollah appears to be unwilling or unable to challenge continual clandestine activity by Israeli intelligence including assassination,³¹⁷ and the majority of interdiction strikes in Syria. This mirrors Israeli restraint in face of Hezbollah's continual pursuit of further armament and sponsoring of terrorism internationally; were probing actions are gradual and are greatest at the peripheries of Hezbollah's interests. Vitally for an assessment of the plausibility of deterrence-terrorism, it is seen here that Hezbollah does still actively signal its commitments and their limits in these contested spaces. Avoiding a major military incursion by Israel appears to be Hezbollah's prime interest, with limiting the scope of targeting killings in its leadership and limiting the scale of Israeli interdiction strikes in Syria subordinate objectives.

³¹⁵ El Hussein, Rola. 'Hezbollah and the Axis of Refusal: Hamas, Iran and Syria'. *Third World Quarterly* 31.5 (2010), 803–15, p.811.

³¹⁶ Elrich, Reuven. "The Road to the Second Lebanon War" in: 'The Quiet Decade,' In: Dekel. Udi, Siboni. Gabi, Einav. Omar., eds., *The Aftermath of the Second Lebanon War, 2006-2016*, p.22.

³¹⁷ Al-Aloosy, Massab, *The Changing Ideology of Hezbollah*, p.164.

Ambiguity in response concerns principally the location and timing of responses, something that is indeed theoretically expected given the inherent nature of a deterrent threat constituted through terrorism. The relative availability of countermeasures to terrorist attacks, and the presence of a stark asymmetry in conventional capabilities in the given case incentivises defenders in deterrence-terrorism to maintain a degree of ambiguity as to responses. For all the signalling that pertains to the certainty of *some* response to adversary actions, the rules of the game between Hezbollah and Israel are noted for their informality, and perhaps even flexibility.³¹⁸ As theoretically suggested, the non-catastrophic nature of the single use of a terrorist threat in turn leads to a deterrence dynamic that tolerates considerable uses of force by both aggressors and defenders, when compared for instance to a nuclear or conventional framework. This deductive expectation is mirrored in inductive analysis of Hezbollah and Israel's relationship since the 2006 Lebanon War; described as the 'learning' of deterrence. The layered practice of signalling seen here and repeated limited probing by both sides of the limits of acceptable behaviour aligns with such a dynamic.

3.2.3: Credible imposition of unacceptable costs: Israeli perceptions of Hezbollah's rocket threat, 2006-2020

In the presented case so far, robust and active signalling by Hezbollah both in general terms and during flashpoints, fulfils the requirements of deterrence by establishing circumstances in which a threat will be used, communicating these circumstances, and demonstrating resolve to act on them. As it has been shown, the principle threat Hezbollah has constituted and communicated is terrorist in its nature; rocket attacks against civilian targets. Taken together these factors represent necessary evidence to conclude that at the very least Hezbollah is attempting to pursue a strategy of deterrence-terrorism. For this to have plausibly caused the extent deterrent effect in the presented case, it remains to be seen that this communicated threat can credibly impose unacceptable costs. Given the fact a terrorist strategy, including deterrence terrorism, leverages the psychological impact of attack over any material effect, the most significant indicator of the credible ability to impose unacceptable costs is the adversary's political perception of these

³¹⁸ Lieberman, Elli., ed., *Deterring Terrorism: A Model for Strategic Deterrence*, p.92.

attacks. Therefore, it must be seen that the terrorist costs Hezbollah seeks to impose are perceived to be unacceptably high by Israel. This is demonstrated through Israeli perceptions of past rocket attacks and the centrality of the rocket threat in Israeli professional and academic strategic assessments.

In the presented case, much of the ambiguity surround the potential perception of a counter-value threat (inherent to deterrence analysis where threats are unused) is alleviated by the fact Hezbollah did use its threat prior to the studied period, in the 2006 Lebanon War. Additionally, the numerous instances of rocket attacks on Israel by other actors, principally Hamas, provides a broad bed of evidence from which the political perception of indirect attacks on Israeli civilians may be inferred. To begin with political perceptions among the wider Israeli population, study of populations around the Gaza Strip have demonstrated that the threat of rocket attacks has a significant psychological effect on civilians and imposed significant localised economic costs.³¹⁹ Despite being substantially lower in destructive capability than Hezbollah's threatened actions, survey data indicates widespread dissatisfaction in the government response to the Gazan rocket threat, with 52% polled unsatisfied or very unsatisfied, and 53% believed in the IDF response was too weak.³²¹ Such trends have been identified in long term analysis of Israeli voter patterns; attitudes to security have proven to be the greater correlate to voter behaviour than other issues since 1984.³²²

While such evidence lends credence to the claim Israeli perceptions of rocket attacks, and hence Hezbollah's threat, are costly, the breadth of the studied period demands further substantiation of this indicator. Here, the perceptions of rocket attacks in the 2006 war are of principal significance, as they afford insight into what is generally a counterfactual notion in deterrence scenarios; the use of a conditional threat.³²³ The immediate reaction to what was widely seen as Israel's first military failure was manifest in public opinion, with polls indicating up to a quarter of Israelis viewing Hezbollah as the victor and 94%

³¹⁹ Getmansky, Anna, and Thomas Zeitzoff. 'Terrorism and Voting: The Effect of Rocket Threat on Voting in Israeli Elections'. *American Political Science Review* 108.3 (2014), 588–604, p.529.

³²¹ Data from two 2019 polls by Army Radio and the Kan Public Broadcaster, cited in: Times of Israel, "Over half of Israelis unhappy with response to Gaza rocket fire" (2019) [Accessed: 28/04/2019].

³²² Sander, Shmeul and others *Israel at the polls 2006*, (Routledge, 2008), p.168.

³²³ Schelling, Thomas. C., *The Strategy of Conflict*, p.124.

believing the war was mismanaged.³²⁴ The inability of the IDF to stem Hezbollah's robust rocket attacks provoked widespread media criticism.³²⁵ Indeed, even in face of a sustained air campaign, Hezbollah managed launch rocket attacks beyond the border areas, as far south as Haifa, Tiberias and Afula.³²⁶ The perceived threat of such attacks was manifest in the widespread displacement of Israeli civilians, some 250,000, while an estimated one million spent the entirety of the conflict in or near shelters.³²⁷ In addition to these clear signs of avoiding costs in the form of civilian casualties, the destruction of Hezbollah's rocket arsenal swiftly became the rubric of Israeli perceptions of success and failure during and after the conflict, quite apart from the question of returning IDF personnel held captive.³²⁸ This stark shift in focus from the very factor that precipitated the conflict is evidence of the importance Israeli leadership and society placed on the rocket threat; importance that stemmed from perceived costs. Given the fact that in northern Israeli peacetime economic output was maintained by up to 60% of industries and businesses, such costs were evidently symbolic.³²⁹ The perceived credibility of rocket attacks following the 2006 Lebanon war has empirically measured in the decline in demand for housing in areas subject to rocket attacks during the war, persisting until at least 2012.³³⁰ This heterogeneous bed of data, ranging from voter patterns, media coverage and economic behaviour lends significant credence to the claim Israeli perceptions of the costs of Hezbollah's terrorist threat is high.

The second stream of evidence by which the perception of Hezbollah's threat credibly imposing unacceptable costs may be established is the centrality of such a threat in professional and academic analysis of Israeli security. The foremost exemplar of this is the IDF Strategy Document itself, which explicitly notes the: "decline in threats from

³²⁴ Sander, Shmeul and others *Israel at the polls 2006*, p.144.

³²⁵ Israeli, Zipi, "'Did We Win or Lose?': Media Discourse in Israel about the Second Lebanon War, 2006-2016,' in: 'The Quiet Decade,' In: Dekel. Udi, Siboni. Gabi, Einav. Omar., eds., *The Aftermath of the Second Lebanon War, 2006-2016*, p.73.

³²⁶ Samaan, Jean-Loup. 'Missile Warfare and Violent Non-State Actors: The Case of Hezbollah', p.160.

³²⁷ Rubin, Uzi. 'The Rocket Campaign against Israel during the 2006 Lebanon War', p.9.

³²⁸ Samaan, Jean-Loup. 'Missile Warfare and Violent Non-State Actors: The Case of Hezbollah', pp.160-162; Israeli, Zipi, "'Did We Win or Lose?': Media Discourse in Israel about the Second Lebanon War, 2006-2016,' In: Dekel. Udi, Siboni. Gabi, Einav. Omar., eds., *The Aftermath of the Second Lebanon War, 2006-2016*, p.79.

³²⁹ Rubin, Uzi. 'The Rocket Campaign against Israel during the 2006 Lebanon War', p.15.

³³⁰ Elster, Yael, Asaf Zussman, and Noam Zussman, 'Rockets: The Housing Market Effects of a Credible Terrorist Threat', *Journal of Urban Economics*, 99 (2017), 136-47, p.140.

regular national armies and a rise in threats from irregular or semiregular substate organisations” and the “increased threat of fire on the home front (volume, pace, size of payload, survivability).”³³¹ As noted above in relation to intent, the authorship of Eisenkot and Siboni singles out Hezbollah as the most prominent threat facing Israel, beyond that posed by state actors like Iran and Syria.³³² Such opinions, from prominent individuals within Israel’s security community, are not isolated. Similarly, expert analysis starkly differentiates the rocket threats posed by Hamas and Hezbollah, with the latter seen to potentially impose much greater, and much more extra-normal costs, something stressed too by Hezbollah itself.³³³

The distinguishing characteristics highlighted are the number of long-range and high throw-weight rockets, and Hezbollah’s emerging PGM capabilities. In addition to the vastly expanded number of target cities for unguided attacks, the reiteration of Hezbollah’s signalled capability and intent to strike high sensitivity targets indicates the scale and nature of the terrorist threat in question is perceived to be more costly by Israel.³³⁴ Novel targets include not only infrastructure such as the Dimona nuclear plant, but also symbolic military targets, such as the Ministry of Defence, and the IDF Headquarters in Tel Aviv. Further, such analysis expands beyond the specific threat made by Hezbollah, and postulates a number of other high cost targets such as offshore gas facilities and reservist mobilisation centres. Such considerations are evidence of the success of Hezbollah’s signalling in altering Israeli perceptions, but also organisations’ success in maintaining extra-normality in its threats, by gradually expanding its capabilities.³³⁵ In addition to being evidence of cost perception, the process by which Israeli analysis has begun to reproduce Hezbollah’s signals of intent, resolve and capability speaks to the possibility of ‘internalised deterrence,’ a process by which an actor’s cost/benefit analysis is altered by “a self-induced fear.”³³⁶

³³¹ IDF General Staff, *Israel Defence Forces Strategy Document*, Chapter II, Section 4.

³³² Gadi Eisenkot, *The Challenges facing the Israel Defense Forces, 2015-2016*, (INSS, 2016); Siboni, Gabi. (2008) *Disproportionate Force: Israel’s Concept of Retaliation in Light of the Second Lebanon War*, INSS Insight No.74.

³³³ Sobelman, Daniel. ‘Learning to Deter: Deterrence Failure and Success in the Israel-Hezbollah Conflict, 2006–16’. p.182.

³³⁴ BICOM, *Hezbollah’s Precision Missile Project*, p.8.

³³⁵ Sobelman, Daniel. ‘Learning to Deter: Deterrence Failure and Success in the Israel-Hezbollah Conflict, 2006–16’. p.191.

³³⁶ *Ibid.*, p.161.

Somewhat tangential to the prominence of Hezbollah's rocket threat in security analysis is Israeli investment in anti-missile countermeasures. Similarly reflecting the high profile of the rocket threat, thus implying high perceived cost, Israel's multi-layered anti-missile shield represents immense material investment to counter a threat which presents limited economic costs if enacted. Most prominently represented by Israel's Iron Dome system, such countermeasures saw significant investment in the wake of the 2006 war.³³⁷ While high-trajectory interception systems may be said to counter more materially substantial threat emanating from further afield, the investment into low altitude defence reflects a perceived urgency in countering short range rockets. While numerous industrial incentives may exist in the procurement of such countermeasures system, its integration into the very fabric of border societies, along with sirens and shelters reflects at the very least significant government sensitivity to the public perceptions of security. Indeed, the reduction in perceived costs by the wider public arising from successful rocket interception in the 2012 and 2014 operations in Gaza has been identified as having provided significant flexibility to the government at those times.³³⁸ Combined with the prominence of Hezbollah's threat in professional analysis, the Israeli experience of the 2006 Lebanon War, and the wider perception of rocket attacks emanating from Gaza, a diverse bed of evidence exists denoting high Israeli perceptions of the costs imposed by Hezbollah's rocket threat. In light of this evidence, and critically given the aforementioned clarity of Israeli intent to eliminate such threats, and restraint in doing so, it may be concluded that these costs are unacceptably high in relation to the benefits gained by attempting to alter the status-quo. Such reasoning reflects the fundamental propositions of deterrence theory.

³³⁷ Shapir, Yiftah S, 'Lessons from the Iron Dome', *Military and Strategic Affairs*, 5.1 (2013), p.82.

³³⁸ Ibid. pp.40-41.

Conclusion

This study set out to solve the theoretical puzzle presented by the neglect of one branch of coercion, deterrence, in the study of terrorism as a strategy. This theoretical puzzle was reflected in an empirical puzzle; the precise means by which Hezbollah has deterred Israel from military action in the period 2006-2020. Thus, the aims of this exercise in theory building were twofold. First to apply the concept of strategic terrorism to the canon of deterrence theory to examine the theoretical basis of deterrence formed through the threat of violent, extra-normal and symbolic actions. Second to assess the plausibility of such a form of deterrence; deterrence terrorism as having produced the Israeli military restraint found in inductive studies of the conflict between Hezbollah and Israel from 2006-2020.

In relation to the theoretical portion of the study, it was found through deductive reasoning that the novel concept; deterrence-terrorism is presupposed in existing theory. Terrorism then, can serve as a means of deterrence. The fundamental requirements remain intact: actors must possess a credible threat, signal the circumstances of its use and the resolve to follow through. In doing so on the basis of terrorism however, certain peculiarities arise, rendering deterrence-terrorism distinct from nuclear or conventional types.

If leveraged as a deterrent threat, terrorism as it is thus defined demands tailored threat construction. Sufficient to impose unacceptable costs through symbolic, not materially costly, violence and attuned to the political perceptions of the adversary. This circumvention of the need to inflict material costs, as well as the absence of any prospect of deterrence through denial forms the delineation between nuclear and conventional deterrence, and terrorism-based deterrence. Further, deterrence-terrorism demands peculiarly adept signalling from deterring parties; firstly, as to the deterrent, not compellent, objectives of the terrorist threat; secondly in striking a balance between informing the adversary of consequences and evading countermeasures; and thirdly in communicating the resolve to commit extra-normal actions. This question of resolve reflects the fundamental nature of a terrorist threat; if expected and normalised the action loses its power to terrorise through psychological costs. Thus, deterring parties must

impress on their adversaries their willingness to commit generally unthinkable actions. To do so credibly requires in effect use of the threat (or similarly extra-normal behaviour) in the past; the general requirement of reputation becomes magnified such that it is unlikely state or non-state actors who have not found use for terrorism in the past can simply adopt it as a strategy without first establishing their (for want of a better phrase) terrorist credentials. These stringent signalling requirements likely mean deterrence-terrorism is not an option open to every actor physically capable of terrorism, but rather is a strategy for 'mature' conflict participants, seeking to maintain a recently gained favourable status-quo while capitalising on past extra-normal and symbolic violence.

Deterrence-terrorism yields divergent expectations of deterred parties too. While one can move the threshold of unacceptable costs through ideational changes in nuclear and conventional deterrence, one cannot remove it completely without abandoning consideration of consequences. Not so for deterrence-terrorism. Symbolic action may impose immense costs, but such costs are entirely dependent of the psychological disposition of the aggressor. Deterrence-terrorism yields then an inherently unstable form of deterrence, wherein the deterring party must adapt and attune their threats to maintain the costs they seek to impose, even in the absence of new material countermeasures. This then might be seen as both a boon and obstacle to deterred parties, who it should not be forgotten are (in terms of policy guidance) probably counterterrorist. While threatened costs may be eliminated without preventing an adversary from attacking, so too may costs persist even in face of materially negligible destruction.

From this theoretical basis, a plausibility probe into the case of Hezbollah's deterrent campaign against Israel was conducted to provide empirical support of the proposed concept, in keeping with overall aim of theory building. To this end, process tracing, in the form of a theoretically structured series of hoop tests was preformed, establishing that necessary evidence of deterrence-terrorism and military restraint was present in the studied period. Indeed, relative inaction and de-escalation in flashpoints by Israel are manifest in face of a terrorist threat from Hezbollah, signalled and perceived as capable of imposing unacceptable costs. Israeli military restraint was ultimately manifest in the shortfall between the objectives outlined in the IDF Strategic document and leadership

statements, and action taken to degrade Hezbollah's capacity to threaten Israel. Israeli military operations in region against other terrorist actors, and outside Lebanon demonstrated capability and willingness to pursue these objectives elsewhere. In each of the three highlighted flashpoints, opportunities to escalate military actions against Hezbollah were ignored, in favour of deliberate, limited action. From this the presence of the DV, military restraint was established. The IV, deterrence-terrorism was established through analysis of Hezbollah's possession of terrorist threat, its signalling practices, and the credibility of its threat imposing unacceptable costs. Herein, Hezbollah's rocket threat was found to be substantial. While the organisation possessed considerable defensive military capabilities, these were insufficient to deny the full spectrum of Israeli military actions, particularly airstrikes. Conventional denial was then at most a complimentary strategy, ensuring costs through extra normal symbolic violence in the form of rocket attacks could be leveraged. Such attacks were abundantly signalled as the response to any military action inside Lebanese territory, highly limited use of force reinforced this in the 2015 and 2019 flashpoints. Striking was the overt framing of these action as messages to convey the deterrent intentions of the organisation towards Israel. Lastly, the prospect of rocket attacks was seen to be unacceptably costly in Israeli calculations. Here the centrality of rocket attacks by Hezbollah being the greatest threat to Israel in professional and expert analysis was pronounced. Through the fulfilment of all these criteria; the requirements of deterrence based on terrorism; deterrence-terrorism was found to be present in the presented case.

In finding necessary evidence of deterrence-terrorism in the presented case, analytical and policy implications follow. The first of these bears immediate relevance to decisions made by Israeli leaders in the near future. In keeping with the theoretical expectations of deterrence-terrorism, Hezbollah will (and has been seen to) need to diversify and modify its potential means of inflicting extra-normal and symbolic violence. Israel's anti-missile shield programme presents then the potential for immense destabilisation. Policy makers therefore should carefully weigh the benefits of such systems, which while useful against other compellent actors in the region may ultimately incite dangerous escalatory signalling from Hezbollah. Secondly, and more optimistically, through deterrence-terrorism Hezbollah and Israel would appear to have found a mutually acceptable, albeit

fragile, equilibrium in their conflict. The capacity of terrorism to increase the costs of technologies otherwise insufficient to create deterrent threats allows the status quo to be maintained by actors who, if governed only by compellent terrorism, would inevitably come to blows. This tentative cold peace, an unorthodox resolution from a counterterrorist perspective drives at the third insight yielded by this study. The empirical case here, in combination with the basic idea of terrorism in pursuit of the status quo; deterrence-terrorism, suggests that future advances in the capacity of terrorist actors to commit costly attacks may in fact have a stabilising effect in protracted conflicts. Chekov's gun, or in this case his rocket, may well remain unused so long as the status quo is upheld.

This study was not without its limitations, many of which provide distinct avenues of future research. Foremost, and as is the case with any plausibility probe, the necessary causal conditions here presented are certainly in need of sufficient evidence to substantiate the hypothesis's proof, to further benefit the theory building. This would entail exploration of extended deterrence, as well as the nuances of Israeli leadership's cost calculations. Ultimately, as undesirable as the continued existence of Hezbollah's terrorist threat may be to Israel, its eradication in such a fashion that destroys Hezbollah itself may be considered even worse.³⁴⁷ To this end second-hand and academic sources would likely no longer prove sufficient, and in depth interviews need be conducted. To assert the applicability of deterrence-terrorism beyond Hezbollah, a pseudo-state actor with a well-defined cause and considerable resources, detailed examination of historical and extent terrorist actors need be conducted. Where the objective of maintain the status-quo intersects with the use of terrorism, deterrence-terrorism, successful or otherwise should be found. State actors should not be neglected in this endeavour. Wherever symbolic violence is leveraged in pursuit of the status quo, deterrence-terrorism is conceptually relevant. It is suggested then that targeted killing come under renewed scrutiny. If material consequences cannot be established, the possibility of deterrence-terrorism by state actors is present. Furthermore, some theoretical avenues remain unexplored. Consideration of deterrence-terrorism's potential interaction with the cyber domain was beyond the scope of this work. The empirical study of Hezbollah's deterrent

³⁴⁷ Harlap, Samuel, *Confronting Hezbollah and Hamas: Surgical versus Therapeutic Strategies*, INSS Guest Column (2019).

practices also highlighted another aspect of deterrence-terrorism that requires further investigation; its interrelation with conventional denial where such capabilities are incapable of presenting unacceptable costs but are necessary to ensure the survivability of the deterrent terrorist threat.

In summation, this exercise in theory building does not seek to add to the body of deterrence as such, but rather draw out a concept latent in accepted theory, but obscured by semantic challenges and state centric bias in strategic theorising. Deterrence-terrorism it is envisaged is an avenue through which understudied strategic environments may be examined with greater rigour. Ultimately, actors who employ terrorism are fully engaged with the strategic mindset of state actors. It befits the study the strategy that the reverse is also true.

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Appendix 1

GTD ID	Date	Country	City	Perpetrator group	Fatalities	Injured	Target type
2.02E+11	24/08/2018	West Bank and Gaza Strip	Beit Likya	Hezbollah (suspected), Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) (suspected)	0	0	Unknown
2.02E+11	04/01/2016	Israel	Hor Dov	Hezbollah	0	Unknown	Military
2.02E+11	28/01/2015	Israel	Ghajar	Hezbollah	2	7	Military
2.01E+11	07/10/2014	Israel	Nahal Sion	Hezbollah	0	0	Military
2.01E+11	07/10/2014	Israel	Nahal Sion	Hezbollah	0	2	Military
2.01E+11	14/03/2014	Israel	Har Dov	Hezbollah	0	0	Military
2.01E+11	14/03/2014	Israel	Dovev	Hezbollah, Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) (suspected)	0	0	Military
2.01E+11	12/03/2014	Syria	Unknown	Hezbollah	0	0	Unknown
2.01E+11	05/03/2014	Syria	Golan Heights district	Hezbollah	2	0	Unknown
2.01E+11	01/03/2014	Israel	Unknown	Hezbollah (suspected)	0	0	Military
2.01E+11	29/12/2013	Israel	Kiryat Shmona	Hezbollah	0	0	Private Citizens & Property
2.01E+11	07/08/2013	Lebanon	Labboune	Hezbollah	0	2	Military
2.01E+11	07/08/2013	Lebanon	Labboune	Hezbollah	0	2	Military
2.01E+11	18/07/2012	Bulgaria	Burgas	Hezbollah (suspected)	7	30	Tourists

Data gathered from the Global Terrorism Database. Attacks designated flashpoints are highlighted. Note the 2019 Crisis is not present, due to its recent nature. Note the fatalities listed in the 05/03/2014 denote two Hezbollah personnel killed while on the Syrian side of the Golan Heights border. Data and coding practices accessible at: The Global Terrorism Database, <http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd>.

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