

An Analysis of the Defense Acquisition System of the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF)

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Abstract

The Israeli military's track record boasts victories in four Middle East wars and numerous counter-terrorism battles. This can be attributed to the implementation of a flexible defense acquisition system, allowing for the rapid acquisition of cutting-edge weaponry in response to ever-changing enemy vulnerabilities. If Korea were to adopt the defense acquisition system employed by the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) it has the potential to transform into a small but strong country, mirroring the accomplishments of the IDF.

Keywords: Israeli Defense Forces, Weapon System, Republic of Korea Army, Defense Acquisition System

1. INTRODUCTION

Israel finds itself surrounded by unfriendly Arab countries throughout the country, except for certain parts of the Mediterranean. The country faces challenging topographical security conditions, including limited territory, a small population, and scarce resources, which make survival a constant struggle. As a result, Israel needed to focus on both national defense and national development simultaneously. While Israel shares similarities with the Republic of Korea in terms of historical and geographical environments, war experiences, and military operations, there are significant differences in their defense acquisition systems. Therefore, the objective of this study is to analyze the Israeli military's (IDF) defense acquisition process in conjunction with its military strategy, aiming to provide insights for the future development of the Korean military organization.

2. Understanding the Foundations of the Defense Policy of the Israeli Defense Forces

Israel has historically and geographically engaged in numerous conflicts and wars against neighboring countries in the Middle East [1]. With the exception of certain areas along the Mediterranean, the entire country

Manuscript received: : July 19, 2023 / revised: August 5, 2023 / accepted: August 10, 2023

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is surrounded by unfriendly Arab nations. Not only does Israel face challenges due to its smaller population and land area compared to its neighbors, but its natural resources are also relatively limited [1]. Consequently, the construction of national military power becomes imperative for both national defense and survival [1].



Figure 1. Israeli Defense Forces[2]

Israel's defense policy aims to achieve maximum security while operating within a limited defense budget. This is achieved by establishing technological superiority and qualitative advancements over potential adversaries, drawing from the experiences of past conflicts and threats from neighboring countries [1]. The military strategy involves embracing the concept of preemptive strikes, utilizing the superior air force, rather than relying solely on defensive measures. This approach takes into consideration the narrow territory of Israel and emphasizes minimizing damage within the country by swiftly converting war zones into enemy territory from the onset of a conflict [1].

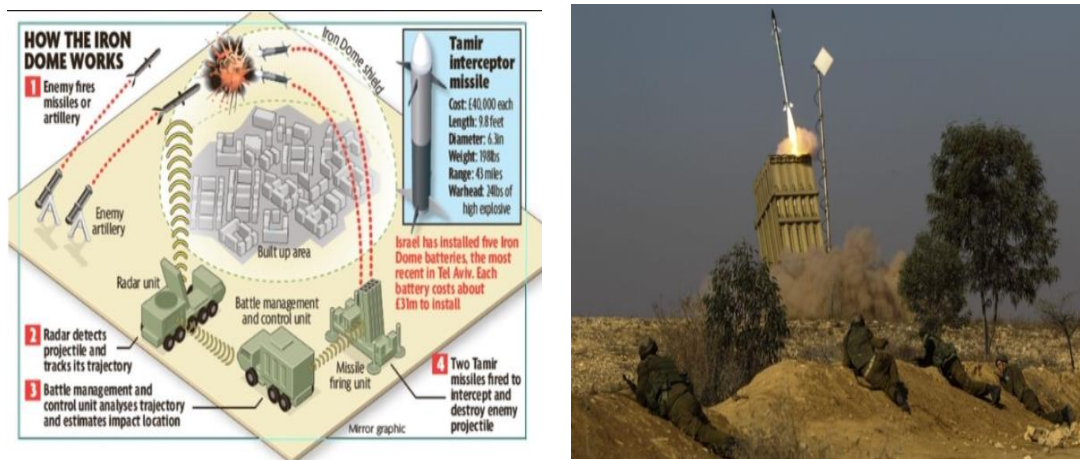


Figure 2. Israeli Defense Fores[3]

3. Reviewing the Military Strategy of the Israeli Military (IDF)

The Council of Ministers serves as Israel's key defense policymaking body. Unlike a separate National Security Council, this gathering may include various ministers such as the Prime Minister, Defense Minister,

Foreign Minister, and Finance Minister [4]. Leading the Israeli Defense Forces is the Chief of Staff. These defense forces rely on information from Aman, a military intelligence agency, in collaboration with Mossad and Shabak [4]. Israel possesses a unique characteristic wherein the concept of defense without a defense doctrine exists. The specific details are outlined below [5]. Firstly, Israel achieves maximum security with a limited defense budget by establishing technical and qualitative superiority over potential adversaries [5]. Secondly, maintaining a robust capability to deter war reduces the likelihood of conflict [5]. Thirdly, an offensive-oriented approach is adopted in the event of a war [5]. Fourthly, the focus of battle is the ability to swiftly transition within enemy territory during the early stages of a conflict [4]. Notably, Israel's military strategy exhibits the resilience of retaliating step by step in response to enemy provocations. It adheres to a three-stage retaliatory operation security policy [4]. In essence, Israel's retaliatory operations heavily rely on intelligence. With world-class intelligence agencies like Mossad, the Israeli military (IDF) is renowned for its capacity to gather, analyze, and disseminate information [5].

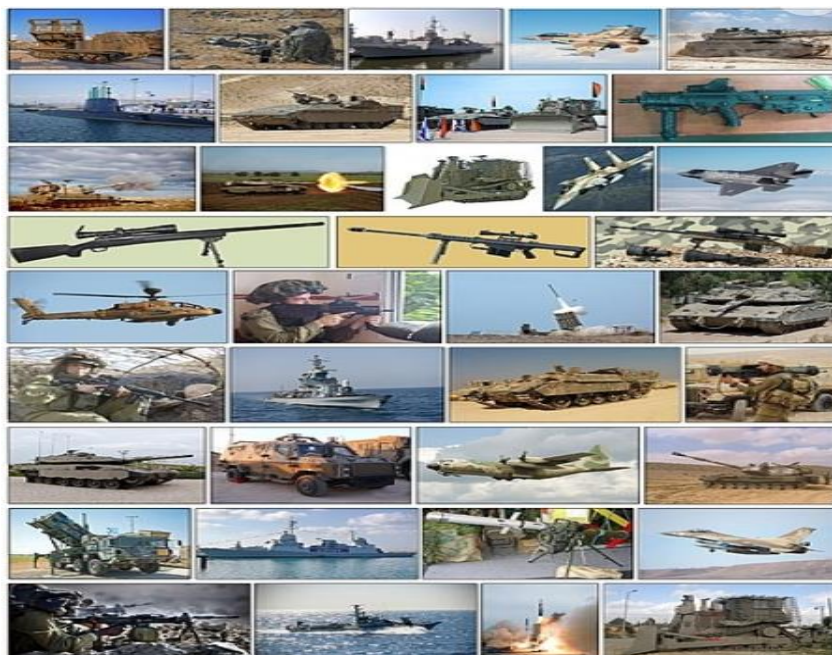


Figure 3. Israeli Military Weapons System[5]

4. Analysis of the Defense Acquisition System of the Israeli Military (IDF)

In Israel, the Minister of Defense directly controls the Defense Ministry, and the Chief of the General Staff oversees defense operations. The Defense Ministry, led by civilian bureaucrats, handles defense industry operations, defense budget acquisition, weapon system acquisition, research and development, and project management [6]. The Chief of the General Staff serves as the unified military commander, providing guidance on military capability development, establishing strategic and operational concepts, and exercising operational and logistical authority [5]. Additionally, the core staff of the Israeli Ministry of Defense serves in dual roles as the Director of Research and Development and the Financial Advisor. They hold positions in both the Ministry of Defense and the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF), overseeing research and development activities, budget coordination, and control [5].



Figure 4. Israeli Tanks [6]

Overall, the IDF takes charge of planning, organizing, and budgeting for military capability development. Most weapon system acquisition projects are delegated to the IDF, which manages tasks such as requirement identification, acquisition method determination, testing and evaluation, and quality inspection [7].

Furthermore, Israel's capability planning is concretized through defense research and development planning, with requirement identification progressing accordingly. This process incorporates future battlefields, threat predictions, and lessons from past wars [7]. Requirement identification involves the IDF, the Defense Research and Development Directorate (DD&D), and defense industry organizations. Through extensive discussions and deliberations, essential weapon system requirements and acquisition priorities of the armed forces are derived and pursued. This reflects a strategic culture that emphasizes operations and technology. Defense industry organizations and the DD&D primarily focus on technical fields, including basic research, applied research, and exploratory development [7].

5. Conclusion

To ensure a robust national defense and security posture, it is imperative for our military organizations to accelerate the development of strategies that align with the Israeli military's (IDF) legacy of experience, successful military strategies, and effective defense acquisition system. Given that our military organizations operate within a similar environment as the IDF, characterized by comparable forms, types, and potential threats from adversaries, it is crucial to introduce the IDF's combat methods, military strategies, and defense acquisition system into our military organizations, tailored to our specific circumstances. By doing so, we can enhance our national defense and security capabilities, establishing a resilient defense posture.

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