



## **The Israel Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) at a glance**

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# The Israel Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) at a glance

The [Israel Institute for Strategic Studies \(IISS\)](#) is a California-registered US non-profit organization (501c3), dedicated to the advancement of joint values shared by Israel and the United States, as reflected in Israel's Declaration of Independence and the US Constitution.

It is a unique and ambitious initiative in pro-Israel endeavor—and is designed to fill a crucial ideo-intellectual gap in the Israeli political landscape.

## 1. What makes IISS a unique and ambitious initiative?

- (a) The scope of its endeavor;
- (b) The rationale of its endeavor;
- (c) The nature of its endeavor;
- (d) The reach of its endeavor.

### (a) IISS – The scope of endeavor

There are many commendable organizations engaged in pro-Israeli advocacy, which promote a wide range of worthwhile causes. Typically, however, these organizations limit the focus of their objectives to specific fields of activity – such as exposing the pernicious anomaly of UNRWA, countering BDS, or combatting anti-Israel bias in the media.

What makes **IISS** a unique initiative in pro-Zionist endeavor is the fact that no other organization sets the overall dominance of the political discourse as its strategic goal.

### (b) IISS - The rationale of its endeavor

**IISS** identifies that it is the political discourse that determines senior decision makers' perception of their policy options and constraints.

**IISS** has mapped out a clear and comprehensive [blueprint](#) of how to achieve control of the discourse - and through this control, impact the decision-making process that shapes the formulation of Israel's strategic policy. (See the "**Ben Gurion Doctrine**" below.)

Through this process, **IISS** aims to inject a far more robust, assertive and victory-oriented tenor into Israeli policy making, which in the past two and half decades, has been largely characterized by disturbing signs of fatigue and flaccidity.

### (c) IISS – The nature of its endeavor

The **IISS** endeavor focuses on identifying and articulating the basic imperatives for Israel's survival as the nation-state of the Jewish people—the Geographic and the Demographic Imperatives –and formulating the strategic rationale for adequately addressing these imperatives.

In undertaking this, **IISS** articulates the need for a uncompromisingly hardline negation of withdrawal from any territory currently held by Israel (The Geographic Imperative) and removing—or at least drastically reducing –the Arab population in these areas (The Demographic Imperative)—chiefly by means of economic inducements for emigration. The latter is to be implemented via a comprehensive system of incentives for leaving and disincentives for staying.

#### **(d) IISS - the reach of its endeavor**

In order to achieve its aspired dominance of the political discourse in Israel, **IISS** needs to break through, and reach across, existing divides which separate today's ideo-political rival camps. In order to co-opt sectors that are usually not supportive of policies opposing territorial withdrawal (i.e. retreat) and political concessions (i.e. appeasement), **IISS** is mindful that it must articulate a compelling strategic rationale in terms which will capture the attention of these sectors and which will not a-priori alienate them. Accordingly, this strategic blueprint must be couched in terms of secular, rather than faith-based, precepts—which serve to augment and reinforce, rather than to replace or repudiate the latter. (See : “**The intellectual challenge**” below.)

### **2. The intellectual challenge: Restructuring the political divide in Israel.**

In order to reach across, and break through, existing barriers, dividing currently rivalrous political camps, **IISS** is striving to formulate a socio-strategic doctrine—in terms of both **substance and symbolism**—that will permit Left-leaning “progressives” to retain their current socio-economic positions on domestic issues, but adopt hardline uncompromising ones on security and foreign policy issues—especially in confronting tyrannical adversaries. Regrettably, given the pejorative connotations that political-correctness has assigned the term “Right-wing”, there is an (unjustified but undeniable) aversion among significant segments of the population to be being labelled as such. Accordingly, restructuring the political divide as being between “Hawks” and “Doves” has far-reaching political potential well beyond mere semantics, creating a new dimension, along which individuals previously beyond reach, can be co-opted to adopt a more robust and assertive stance on security and foreign policy issues.

### **3. Adopting the “Ben Gurion Doctrine”**

In addressing this challenge of dominating the discourse and reaching across the political divide - **IISS** advocates adopting the IDF doctrine developed by Israel's first Prime Minister and Defense Minister, David Ben-Gurion, of **taking the battle to the adversary**. It is almost self-evident that one cannot defeat one's adversaries unless one engages them. **If the battle is an intellectual one, then adversaries must be engaged in intellectual battle.**

The only way to coerce the entrenched Establishment to engage in such a battle is by creating access to their “client base”, which they would then have to defend – i.e. by engaging—or risk losing it.

### **4. The need for “Theater of Intellectual Engagement**

This is the logic that drives the **IISS** endeavor: To create a “**Theater of Intellectual Engagement**” within, or interfacing with, the Establishment and to which its “client base” is exposed. Accordingly, its representatives will be compelled to defend their positions or be seen by their “client base” as capitulating. It is important to underscore that the primary objective here is not to convert the adversarial radicals, but to marginalize them; not to compel them to admit error/defeat, but to **outperform them and discredit them in intellectual clashes** to which their “client base” is exposed – i.e. to get their “flock” to desert them—and thus propagate an alternative criterion of intellectual wisdom—and “wean” the public off the prevailing perverted paradigm.

## **5. Why interfacing with Establishment is crucial**

While there are a several noteworthy – and praiseworthy – endeavors to set up alternative independent centers, disconnected from the mainstream Establishment, the public impact of such entities is inevitably limited. The reason for this is that they are regularly branded by detractors as being biased and ideologically tainted, because of their geographical location, institutional affiliation and so on. As a result, their work is often intentionally ignored so as to minimize its impact – or if that fails—disdainfully denigrated, dismissed and even delegitimized—precisely because they lack mainstream credentials.

By contrast, creating a substantial policy center with a countervailing pro-Zionist orientation, capable of interfacing with the mainstream Establishment, will do much to circumvent – or at least greatly reduce – these difficulties.

## **6. In conclusion**

IISS aspires to become a center of intellectual endeavor, interfacing and interacting with the mainstream Establishment and challenging its intellectual paradigms—and as such, will become a nucleus around which alternative elites can coalesce and a banner around which hitherto hesitant intellectual “dissidents” can rally.

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