

**Peace journalism or war journalism? A comparative analysis of the coverage
of Israeli and Turkish newspapers during the Gaza flotilla crisis**

Haluk Dag

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By: Haluk Dag

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Signed by the final Examining Committee:

Dr. Andrea Hunter _____ Chair

Dr. Robert Hackett _____ Examiner

Dr. Brian Gabriel _____ Examiner

Dr. Mike Gasher _____ Supervisor

Approved by _____

Graduate Program Director

April 2nd, 2013 _____

Dean of Faculty

ABSTRACT

Peace journalism or war journalism? A comparative analysis of the coverage of Israeli and Turkish newspapers during the Gaza flotilla crisis

Haluk Dag

This thesis examines the peace journalism model, created by Johan Galtung in the 1970s, and argues that the model could be an alternative approach for the mainstream news media's reporting practices, especially in times of conflict. In his model, Galtung presents peace journalism and war journalism as two competing frames in the news coverage of conflict. For the present study, I applied both textual analysis and quantitative content analysis to the coverage of the Gaza flotilla crisis of 2010 between Israel and Turkey in two English-language daily newspapers from Israel (*The Jerusalem Post* and *Ha'aretz*) and two from Turkey (*Today's Zaman* and *Hürriyet Daily News*) between May 31st and June 30th 2010. The analysis showed that more than two-thirds of the articles could be classified as dominant war journalism framing, compared to slightly more than one-quarter as peace journalism. The analysis focused on the newspapers' provocative role in the crisis, as well as the story types (news report, editorial, op-eds, etc.), the production source of stories, the indicators of peace and war journalism, and the relationships between these factors. Moreover, I examined the viability of the peace journalism model and tested its ways of telling stories through rewriting the articles used in the present case study. The thesis concludes that some principles of the model could be more easily adopted by journalists than others. However, without reforming the structural problems at the root of modern journalism, it is unlikely that the peace journalism model will gain wider acceptance.

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“The world today is thirsty for peace ... There is no big or small war. Even the death of one citizen is a war.”

- Yaşar Kemal

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The news media are an important source of information about current events and play a key role in influencing public opinion, especially during in times of war. As Ross (2006) remarks, media play a crucial role in international affairs and conflicts because citizens are dependent on media to provide timely, credible information of distant events. This dependence arises because citizens often do not have the means or the expertise to obtain first-hand information about distant events and conflicts, leading them to rely on the news media to provide coverage. The news media's role is vital because, as Ross argues, in times of conflict misleading information is a primary contributor to the rising fear that can increase the potential for violent conflict. Receiving accurate information from the news media may help reduce the risk of conflict.

However, the news media's role in reporting conflicts faces many challenges, including over-dependence on government and military sources. It is not surprising that nowadays, military strategists consider journalists to be important elements in their pre-war planning. Governments and militaries are careful about how they control the news flow and influence public opinion through the news media. After nearly every major conflict in recent decades, academic studies have focused on several themes, including, but not limited the following: the news media's over-reliance on violence as a news value; the strong influence of governments and militaries on news coverage; triumphalist military language; the oversimplification of facts and disregard for background information; the exclusion of vulnerable groups; and the conflict between professional journalism norms and patriotism (Bennett, 2003; Reese, 2004; Patrick and Thrall, 2007; Lee, 2010). These tendencies emphasize a binary situation that creates polarization

between groups in conflict, potentially escalating tensions. Such coverage may also reduce the ability to fully understand the political choices governments face when conflicts arise. Additionally, these practices inhibit citizens from participating in public debates on policies and attempting to influence or pressure government decision makers.

In this thesis I argue that even though, the peace journalism model faces theoretical and practical challenges, it offers an alternative approach for the mainstream news media's reporting practices. I examine the viability of the peace journalism model and test its ways of telling stories through rewriting the articles used in the present case study. I also provide a literature review to contribute to the still-emerging field of peace journalism.

Peace journalism stems from the work of Norwegian peace researcher Johan Galtung who, working with Mari Ruge, published the pioneering work *The Structure of Foreign News* in 1965. This study examined a number of core principles that form the basis for peace journalism, including the rejection of violence as a news value in international reporting (Lee, 2010). The peace journalism model emerged in the 1990s as an alternative, trans-disciplinary field by using conflict analysis. The model can be seen as a remedy to the shortcomings of the news media's reporting practices, and more specifically their conflict reporting practices. Advocates of peace journalism claim that journalists participate, and represent, the events they are reporting on, thus undermining journalism's avowed objectivity and independence. According to the model, a peace journalist should expose truths from all sides and expose all cover-ups, focus on those who suffer, give voice to vulnerable groups and name the evil on all sides. Additionally, the model highlights journalists' emphasis on non-violent options for conflict resolution.

Another distinct feature of peace journalism, according to Lynch and McGoldrick (2005), is its use of conflict analysis in order to promote *balance, fairness* and *accuracy* in reporting. Also, it provides a new way to trace the connections among journalists, their sources, the stories they cover, and the consequences of their journalism. Finally, it builds an awareness of non-violence and creativity into the practical job of everyday editing and reporting.

Galtung (1998) argues that today's dominant conflict reporting practices, which he calls *war journalism*, depict adversaries as belonging to one of two sides, and portrays combatants as struggling to impose their goals on the public. This type of journalism is *war/violence-oriented*, it focuses on a conflict area, and on the visible effects of violence without providing background information. War journalism effectively demonizes the 'other' side and speaks on behalf of 'us'. War journalism is *propaganda-oriented* in that it relies on official sources and promotes propaganda while revealing 'their' crimes. It is *elite-oriented* because it focuses only on 'our' suffering, and serves as a mouthpiece of official sources and elite males. Finally, it is *victory-oriented*; it sees peace as a result of victory and tends to report only once the conflict starts. War journalism repeatedly reflects the warrior logic of elites and calls for hatred and more violence to avenge and stop the 'other' side. In this two-sided form of journalism, one side inevitably wins and the other must lose. Moreover, Galtung (2002) points out the similarities between war journalism and the neo-fascist theory of war termination: "let them fight and kill each other until they are ready to negotiate" (p.262).

In contrast, the application of peace journalism focuses on conflict transformation and seeks prevention before any violence or war occurs. It is *peace-oriented* in that it

tries to analyse/transform conflicts, it represents all parties and gives voice to empathy, explains conflicts in a broader context, focuses on less visible impacts of conflict such as trauma or cultural damage, and sees conflict as a problem without blaming and demonizing others. It is *truth-oriented*¹ because it tries to expose propaganda messages -- disguised as information -- and reveals untruths on all sides. It is *people-oriented*; by giving voice to vulnerable groups, it focuses on suffering all over. Instead of heavily relying on official sources or elites, and represents the suffering of ordinary people. Finally, it is *solution-oriented*; it sees peace as a result of non-violence and creativity, focuses on a peaceful society and conflict resolution. It is worth noting that all these aspects are consistent with standards of good journalism ideals. Galtung (2002, 2008) repeatedly argues that journalists should be in favour of peace journalism, despite the fact that war journalism is the dominant paradigm in the news media. The author maintains that journalists should prefer the peace journalism model because it is the moral answer; peace journalism's focus on solving conflicts may reduce human suffering while providing a more accurate portrayal of what is going on in the world.

This highly critical and provocative model suggests that while most journalism presents itself as neutral or objective, it is actually focuses on war and favors conflict (Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005). Peace journalism has been enriched by contributions from various war reporters and scholars, and it continues to gain an increasing amount of support. War reporters, especially in the 1990s (when they witnessed the Bosnian and Rwandan genocides, the wars in Iraq and Kosovo), have been deeply affected by journalism's passive stance towards these types of atrocities. Many war reporters began to support the active involvement of journalism in favour of vulnerable groups. At the

¹ As Lynch (2008) explains, the model doesn't offer the 'truth' but uses it to reveal propaganda messages.

same time, as Kempf (2003) remarks, scholars also started to think about how the influence of the media can be used for the prevention and constructive transformation of conflicts. The majority of news media have failed to adopt the peace journalism model and it has remained a subject of disagreement among scholars.

To explain the peace journalism model, I will discuss the various debates over conflict reporting practices and examine the emergence of peace journalism its contributions to reporting practices. Moreover, scholarly criticisms directed towards the peace journalism model will be investigated and the new theoretical approaches proposed to solve these challenges will be reviewed. Additionally, I will discuss conflict analysis to better understand the goals of peace journalism. Since its emergence, peace journalism's ethical stance, its theoretical shortcomings and its reinterpretation of journalism's objectivity norm have been the main targets of criticism by various academics and journalists. However, as peace journalism advocates argue, journalists are implicated in the events that they cover and so the standard approach to objectivity doesn't produce independent or objective accounts of conflict.

This thesis project examines the Gaza flotilla crisis of 2010 between Israel and Turkey as a case study to explore how peace journalism could be helpful in real-world conflict situations. The Gaza flotilla was organized by the Turkish Humanitarian Relief Foundation (IHH) to bring humanitarian aid and break Israel's blockade over the Gaza Strip. However, on May 31, 2010, Israeli commandos overtook the ships while in international waters. During the confrontation between Israeli commandos and pro-Palestinian activists, nine activists died and many others wounded, including a number of commandos. After the operation, the surviving activists and journalists were detained and

interrogated. From the early hours of the operation, I followed the crisis closely. I also had the opportunity to visit the flotilla's main ship, the *Mavi Marmara*, when it visited Istanbul months later and to listen to the stories of the activists. The Gaza flotilla incident was a major topic for Israeli and Turkish news media. Hundreds of articles were published on the issue, and demonstrations were organized worldwide to protest the killing of activists. The United Nations (UN) also created a commission to investigate the Gaza flotilla incident.

For this research project, after briefly examining the historically close relationship between Israel and Turkey before the crisis, I will address the following research questions:

RQ1 – How did the coverage of the Gaza flotilla crisis by *The Jerusalem Post*, *Ha'aretz*, *Today's Zaman* and *Hürriyet Daily News* reflect war journalism?

RQ2 - How could the techniques of peace journalism help journalists avoid these pitfalls and become independent of government and military sources during times of conflict?

RQ3 - Can war journalism articles be reconstructed using the principles of peace journalism and still meet recognized standards of good journalism? What differences would emerge from such an exercise?

Using textual analysis and quantitative content analysis, I will examine the coverage of two Israeli newspapers, *The Jerusalem Post* and *Ha'aretz*, and two Turkish newspapers, *Today's Zaman* and *Hürriyet Daily News* between May 31st and June 30th 2010, at the first month of the crisis. I hope to reveal their provocative role in the conflict. Moreover, I will explore indicators of peace and war journalism and their relationships

with story types. To address the last research question, I will identify three main exemplary themes. For each theme, I will select one representative article from each newspaper (four in total) and rewrite one peace journalism article, guided by Galtung's principles of peace journalism: to transform conflict into peaceful discussions, to use softer language in order to reduce tension, to avoid 'us' vs. 'them' journalism, to give voice to vulnerable groups, and to use conflict analysis to understand the roots of the conflict and give historical background information to tell stories from a wider perspective. I hope to shed light on the shortcomings of the coverage from the Israeli and Turkish media. These reconstructed articles will be compared to the original sources in order to observe differences in tone, content and vocabulary. It is also my hope that they will serve as contributions to the still-emerging field of peace journalism studies.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The role of media in conflicts

To understand the peace journalism model, the shortcomings and structural problems of conflict reporting must be considered. Conflict and war reporting are probably the most sensitive and challenging fields for professional journalists. As noted by Moorcraft and Taylor (2008), while domestic reporting may sometimes topple governments, war reporting could lead to actual deaths. Similarly, drawing on MacMillan (2003), Gasher (2004) argues that war reporting is a particularly significant branch of journalism because individual lives, political regimes, and even the future of nation-states depend on whether, and how, the war is fought. The news media's role of informing citizens is especially crucial in times of conflict because, as Ross (2006) states, information failures are a primary contributor to the rising fear that can increase the potential for violent conflicts. It can be said that providing accurate information to citizens may help reduce the risk of conflict. As peace journalism proponents argue, reporting practices, even peacetime reporting, generally emphasize two-sided conflict. This is particularly problematic in the context of military conflict because it has a polarizing effect that widens the division between groups or nations; it may also create hatred, xenophobia and even trigger violence. After nearly every major conflict in the last decade, research has been conducted on the structural problems faced by journalists reporting on conflict.

A common structural problem of conflict reporting is journalists' over-dependence on official sources that promote their own 'truths' and tend to use disinformation and propaganda techniques in order to influence news flow. That is why

peace journalism recommends journalists avoid heavy reliance on official sources, instead broadening their range of sources in order to give vulnerable groups such as women, the elderly, children and minorities who tend to be the real victims of conflict. Many war journalists are encouraged to cover conflicts and wars from isolated places such as military command centres or conference rooms. Not surprisingly their main sources of information become military spokespeople or government officials; through press conferences, they could influence the flow and interpretation of information.

A good example of this tendency can be seen in the documentary *Control Room* (Naujaim, director, 2004), which focuses on how journalists all around the world covered the American invasion of Iraq in 2003 while based in an American military command centre in Qatar. The documentary proposes that adopting a perspective contrary to that of the military forces can be detrimental, or even fatal, for journalists who try to report independently on the ground or work without being embedded. To support this argument, *Control Room* explores the U.S. army's 'friendly fire' attacks on journalists in Baghdad, especially the attack on Al Jazeera's headquarters and the killing of its correspondent, Tareq Ayyoub. *The Nation* magazine's correspondent Jeremy Scahill similarly talks about the killing of Tareq Ayyoub and notes that despite the U.S. Central Command's statement that "coalition forces came under significant enemy fire from the building where the Al-Jazeera journalists were working", no evidence was ever produced to bolster this claim (Scahill, 2005). The author also discusses the killing of other journalists in Iraq and gives a voice to Reuters's global managing editor David Schlesinger: "we have had three deaths, and they were all non-embedded, non-coalition nationals and they were all at the hands of the U.S. military, and the reaction of the U.S. authorities in each

case was that they were somehow justified”. According to Scahill, in many of these cases “the journalists, mostly Arabs, were reporting on places or incidents that the military may not have wanted the world to see -- military vehicles in flames, helicopters shot down, fierce resistance against the ‘liberation’ forces, civilian deaths” (Scahill, 2005).

Shoemaker and Reese (1996) discuss other reasons for this dependence by touching on the political economy of journalism. According to the authors, official sources and militaries provide a convenient and regular flow of information, which is efficient for journalists who work under the pressure of deadlines. Also, for media outlets it reduces the need for expensive specialists and extensive research. In other words, official sources provide irrefutable, ready-to-serve information to the news media. However, this dependence may lead to uncritical acceptance of how official sources choose to frame events. Moreover, as advocates of peace journalism argue, it may increase the use of ‘us’ vs. ‘them’ journalism that aligns journalists with governmental and military interests:

The routines involved in the media-military relationship have their own logic that shapes news content beyond the simple suppression or censorship of news. They impose an interpretive framework that works against alternative perspectives. As with other media-source relationships, the strong dependence of journalists on the military information can produce co-optation, leading to uncritical acceptance of military frames of reference (Shoemaker and Reese, 1996, p.136)

Another important structural issue, also a major obstacle for peace journalism practices, is pressure from the governments and militaries on news flow. In their research, Reese and Buckalew (1995) examine the coverage of the first Iraq War by an American TV station and reveal how television news adopts patriotic language and supports administration policy, as well as creates an “illusion of triumph”. Bennett (2003) analyses the intertwined relationship between media and the U.S. government during the invasion

of Iraq. He describes it as a near perfect journalistic participation in government propaganda operations. Bennett concludes that campaigns from the Bush administration intimidated and suppressed those who tried to oppose and question government policies in the media. Likewise, Reese (2004) indicates that in front-line coverage, journalistic routines are clearly specified: “military officials desire positive accounts of their activities, to “get their story out,” and to simply accommodate the demands of the many news organizations seeking access to the story” (p.3). Similarly, in their paper focused on the communication strategies of the Bush presidency after the invasion of Iraq in 2003, Patrick and Thrall (2007) discuss how American presidents, when at their most influential, dominate the news and make it difficult for critics to gain a foothold. Wolfsfeld (1997) focuses on similar problems. The author explains that when authorities succeed in dominating the political environment, they have no trouble at all taking control of the news media and imposing their messages. Also, he observes that a lack of alternative sources leads to a united front against the enemy and the news media are reluctant to be cast as traitors and therefore tend to support dominant official perspectives.

Journalists who cover conflicts are not servants to official sources or so naive that they report whatever they are told. As trained professionals, they are well aware of challenges, manipulations and pressures that they face. However, journalists are not working in an isolated world; they are surrounded by conflicting economic and national interests. Additionally, in times of conflict, the expectation of the audience dramatically changes towards more patriotic coverage and puts additional pressure on journalists. In summary, pressure from outside interest groups and their audiences, journalism’s

political-economic realities, sometimes reporters' lack of experience and other challenges compel journalists to cooperate with government and military sources, to cover conflicts in particular ways that is identified as *war journalism*.

Herman and Chomsky's (1998) propaganda model is illuminating to understand certain structural problems and shortcomings of the mass media. The model suggests American mainstream media as operating in a propaganda system that emphasizes corporate and government influence on the news flow. As Hackett (2006) remarks, Herman and Chomsky's findings correspond to certain war journalism characteristics such as double standards that reflect an *elite-orientation*, emphasize 'our' side and see other side as moral and righteous, and perceives the other side as evil and the cause of the conflict. The propaganda model consists of five filters in which propaganda messages are created. The first filter is through corporate ownership of the media. In our globalized world, media outlets are increasingly taken over by corporations and multi-national companies; therefore editorial policies tend to be uncritical and supportive of corporate interests. The second filter is advertising. To cover production costs and compete with other media outlets, the news media need to attract corporate advertising revenue. This dependence on advertising revenue creates "a greater integration of editorial and business operations, more product placements, cutbacks in investigative reporting and analysis, more controversy-avoidance, and greater manageability by governments and other power centres" (Mullen, 2009, p. 14). The third filter is news media dependence on official and corporate sources. The propaganda model suggests that by relying on 'trusted' official sources, the news media give these sources additional power to promote their own agenda and influence news flow. The peace journalism model empathizes *people-oriented*

journalism instead. The fourth filter is flak, which can be defined as negative reaction to media coverage by power groups, hired PR companies, institutions, governments or audience members. Flak creates pressure on journalists and may discourage them from covering certain sensitive issues, or affect the way those issues are covered. The final filter was originally identified with *anti-communism*, but after the collapse of communism, “the ‘war on terror’ has provided a useful substitute for the Soviet menace. Also, the antithesis of communism, the ‘free market’ has been elevated to more prominent ideological status, and has proven to be a strong co-replacement for anti-communism and the basis for the new world order of neoliberalism” (Mullen,2009, p.15). This filter also matches war journalism’s distinct feature of demonizing or dehumanizing the ‘other’ side. Especially during times of conflict, demonization of the ‘other’ is an important tool to neutralize criticisms at home, and helps to justify aggressive and violent government policies. However, as Hackett’s (2006) research indicates, the propaganda model has certain limitations; it tends towards reductionism and it oversimplifies the complexity of the news system. In particular, it does not focus on the way journalists exercise agency within the newsroom and it disregards how audiences interpret the news. Drawing on Allan (2004), Hackett states that the propaganda model also risks:

Reducing the news media to tired ideological machines confined to performing endlessly, and unfailingly, the overarching function of reproducing the prerogatives of an economic and political elite through processes of mystification. Journalists would then become little more than well-intentioned puppets whose strings are being pulled by forces they cannot fully understand (p.4).

As a result of their dependence on official sources and close relationships between the news media and governments, news media can’t easily remain neutral and tend to promote their government perspectives in terms of conflict (Bennett, 2003; Reese &

Buckalew, 1995). Additionally, Liebes (1992) notes that during wars and conflicts, journalists face conflicting pressures of commitment to their own society and its fate, and loyalty to the demands and norms of journalism. Therefore, war coverage puts journalism to the test of choosing between patriotic enthusiasm and morale-building, or a distant and analytical stance. In other words, journalists face a dilemma between ‘our war’ and ‘their war’, a choice that mirrors Galtung’s *war journalism* description.

The predominance of government and military sources in the media also undermines the news media’s role as a monitor of governments and power groups, the supposed mission of watchdog journalism. Waisbord (2000) emphasizes that freedom of the press must be a main condition for watchdog journalism and considers economic independence the only way to arrive at press freedom and solidify the ideals of the watchdog press.

One of the main critiques put forward by peace journalism is the over-reliance on violence as a news value. Lee (2010) argues that because of this over-reliance, conflict reporting suffers from many weaknesses. These include sensationalism, identification with the home side, overemphasis on tangible losses such as human casualties and material damage, military triumphantist language, and a superficial narrative with little context, background, or historical perspective (Lee, 2010, p.362). As the peace journalism model points out, due to oversimplification, conflict coverage tends not to give background information about the complexities of conflicts and only focuses on the visible effects such as the human casualties or physical damages. An example can be seen in Gasher (2004), in which the study reveals how *Time* and *Newsweek* adopted President George W. Bush’s oversimplified ‘good versus evil’ framing in their coverage of the Iraq War in 2003.

Finally, Vincent (2000) and Avraham (2003) criticize ‘us’ vs. ‘them’ journalism and the demonization of the other side in times of conflict. Vincent (2000) reveals that during NATO’s military operation in Kosovo in 1999, the U.S. mainstream media enthusiastically used official Western viewpoints in their coverage that discredited and demonized Serbs. Also, the quest for balanced and fair journalism was ignored. Avraham (2003) also shows how politics enters every level of coverage and how the social-political environment affects the way in which news media organizations cover minorities in a conflict-riddled country like Israel. Due to these social-political conditions, the Israeli news media tend to ignore Arab minorities and their suffering (Avraham, 2003).

Emergence of the peace journalism model

As discussed in this chapter, several academic studies have highlight shortcomings of the news media’s approach to conflicts. Aslam (2011) remarks that in the debate about what should be the news media’s role in conflicts, peace journalism emerged along with other concepts, such as *civic journalism*, *caring journalism*, *citizen journalism*, *reliable journalism*, and *innovative journalism*. Each focused on the social responsibility of the media and advocated a proactive role for the media in resolving conflicts.

Peace journalism stems from Galtung and Ruge’s (1965) pioneering work *The Structure of Foreign News*. The authors examined a number of core principles that they used to form the basis for the peace journalism model, including the rejection of violence as a news value in international news reporting (Lee, 2010). After completing this research, Galtung wrote dozens of books and follow-up studies (Galtung 1995, 1998,

2000, 2002, 2004, 2004a, 2007, 2008, 2008a; 2009, 2012). He also co-founded TRANSCEND International, which works toward conflict transformation through education, training, dissemination and research (transcend.org, 2012). The model “has emerged, since the mid-1990s, as a new, trans-disciplinary field, of interest to professional journalists, in both developed and developing countries, and to civil society activists, university researchers and others interested in the conflict-media nexus” (Lynch, n.d). Based on peace research’s principle of the *participant observer* -- as soon a person starts to observe something, she/he enters into a relationship which inevitably impacts upon it -- the peace journalism model claims that journalists covering conflict are inevitably implicated in, and take sides in, the event they are reporting on. For instance, Galtung (2000) expresses his desire to see objective journalists who can cover all sides of the conflict. However, this doesn't mean that journalists should favour all sides, report on them equally or through their own words or interpretations. Peace journalists should take the side of vulnerable groups, represent them in news coverage and advocate for peaceful or non-violent conflict resolution. This perspective can be seen as a different interpretation of the objectivity norm.

In his article “High road, low road”, Galtung (1998) presents peace journalism and war journalism as two competing frames in the news coverage of conflict. In this description of journalism, *war/violence* journalism is today’s dominant reporting practice and has certain distinct features; it is *war/violence-oriented* and focuses on the visible effects of violence and demonizes the ‘other’ side. The hostile parties are reduced to just two and become combatants in a struggle to impose their goals on each other. War journalism is *propaganda-oriented*; it focuses on the other side’s untruths and helps ‘our’

cover ups. Therefore, propagandist tendencies help to mask crucial issues to the benefit of governments. War journalism is also *elite-oriented*; by relying on official sources, army officers, and elite sources it promotes 'our' points of view and suffering. Therefore, it ignores vulnerable groups that can be the ignored victims of conflicts. Finally, war journalism is *victory-oriented*; it sees peace as a result of victory, conceals peace initiatives. Once the conflict is over, war journalists leave the area for another conflict and only return if the old one flares up. War journalism adds new problems to existing ones because, first of all, in times of conflict it emphasizes two-sided journalism that may widen the gap between conflicted groups and nations. This kind of journalism may also create hatred, violence and the desire to avenge or even destroy the 'other' side. Finally, war journalism's presentation of events may prevent citizens from publicly debating or attempting to influence government policies, or even from being accurately informed.

Peace journalism, as Lee and Maslog (2005) state, is grounded in communitarian philosophy - namely, the commitment to the idea of civic participation, the understanding of social justice as a moral imperative, and the sacredness of the individual. Galtung (1998) points out that peace journalism tries to depolarize issues by pursuing truths on all sides, and to de-escalate conflicts by highlighting peace and conflict resolution in equal proportion to violence. It is *peace-oriented*; it explores conflicts by using conflict analysis and provides a wider perspective and background information. It focuses on alternative peaceful ways rather than conflict and humanizes all sides through empathy and understanding, and focuses on less visible effects of violence, such as trauma and damage to structures or cultures. It is *truth-oriented*; peace journalism exposes not only 'their' untruths and crimes, but the shortcomings on all sides, including ours. Therefore,

it requires not relying on official sources, but having a critical perspective that provides background to analyze the conflict and to reveal hidden propaganda messages. The model's suggestion of *truth-oriented* journalism could raise questions about the long-debated concept of the truth, such as what is truth? Or whose truth is best? Lynch (2008) explains that peace journalism doesn't offer the truth but rather is about deconstructing propaganda messages:

Reporters should report, as accurately and fully as they can, the facts they encounter. Where peace journalism goes further is to call on them to consider how these particular facts, as distinct from a practically infinite number of others 'out there', come to meet them; and how they, the reporters, come to meet this particular facts (Lynch, 2008).

Peace journalism is also *people-oriented*; it has an emphasis on the vulnerable and minority groups. Additionally, it requires the naming of all evil-doers and the search for alternative sources other than official sources -- such as peace groups, peaceful political parties and such. Finally, it is *solution-oriented*; it highlights peace initiatives, tries to promote a culture of peace in society and contributes to the discussion of post-conflict peace-building. Galtung (2002) discusses why journalists should prefer peace journalism. He touches on the moral ground, indicating that a focus on solving conflicts rather than winning them, given the horrors of modern warfare, may reduce human suffering. Moreover, Galtung also discusses a non-moral reason: peace journalism paints a realistic image of what goes on in the world. In other words, war journalism reflects the warrior logic of a world of states pitted against each other, with conflicts as the domain of states, statesmen and the elite in an isolated world.

Table 1: Peace/Conflict Journalism vs. War/Violence Journalism (Galtung, 1998).

PEACE/CONFLICT JOURNALISM	WAR/VIOLENCE JOURNALISM
<p>I. PEACE/CONFLICT-ORIENTED --explore conflict formation, x parties, y goals, z issues, general "win, win" orientation --open space, open time; causes and outcomes anywhere, also in history/culture --making conflicts transparent --giving voice to all parties; empathy, understanding --see conflict/war as problem, focus on conflict creativity --humanization of all sides; more so the worse the weapons --proactive: prevention before any violence/war occurs --focus on invisible effects of violence (trauma and glory, damage to structure/culture)</p>	<p>I. WAR/VIOLENCE-ORIENTED --focus on conflict arena, 2 parties, 1 goal (win), war general zero-sum orientation --closed space, closed time; causes and exits in arena, who threw the first stone --making wars opaque/secret --"us-them" journalism, propaganda, voice, for us" --see "them" as the problem, focus on who prevails in war --dehumanization of "them"; more so the worse the weapon --reactive: waiting for violence before reporting --focus only on visible effect of violence (killed, wounded and material damage)</p>
<p>II. TRUTH-ORIENTED --expose untruths on all sides --uncover all cover-ups</p>	<p>II. PROPAGANDA-ORIENTED --expose "their" untruths --help "our" cover-ups/lies</p>
<p>III. PEOPLE-ORIENTED --focus on suffering all over; on women, aged, children, giving voice to the voiceless --give name to all evil-doers --focus on people peace-makers</p>	<p>III. ELITE-ORIENTED --focus on "our" suffering; on able-bodied elite males, being their mouth-piece --give name of their evil-doer --focus on elite peace-makers</p>
<p>IV. SOLUTION-ORIENTED --peace = nonviolence + creativity --highlight peace initiatives, also to prevent more war --focus on structure, culture the peaceful society --aftermath: resolution, reconstruction, reconciliation</p>	<p>IV. VICTORY-ORIENTED --peace = victory + cease-fire --conceal peace-initiative, before victory is at hand --focus on treaty, institution the controlled society --leaving for another war, return if the old flares up</p>

However, peace journalism adopts a responsibility for exposing the problems and realities of commonly ignored people who don't have power to promote their interests. This is also a basic responsibility of journalism.

Lynch and McGoldrick (2005) are two scholars who contributed to the model, not only through their research and publications, but also by providing training in peace journalism, conflict analysis and promoting the model among journalists. The authors define peace journalism as a set of tools, both conceptual and practical, that journalists can use to better serve the public. The authors find peace journalism provocative due to the fact that, while most journalism occurring during times of conflict is presented as neutral or objective, it is actually war journalism, typically one-sided and biased in favour of conflict. Also, peace journalism requires journalists to see that the practical methods they use need to be understood as a set of conventions. These assertive claims are aimed at the majority of journalists who, Lynch and McGoldrick say, promote violence in the name of the objectivity norm. This indirect promotion of violence may emerge especially in times of conflict through over-reliance official sources, not questioning propaganda messages or promoting these messages or ignoring peaceful ways to end the conflict.

According to Galtung (2002), any journalist can practise peace journalism, just as anyone can practise war journalism. One of the main obstacles to peace journalism is the mindset of editors and their conventional approach: *that is the way we do it*. Most importantly, journalists and their editors need to be trained to do peace journalism. It would be naive to criticize journalists and expect them to use conflict analysis without intensive training. That is why Galtung suggests providing summer courses within motivated media organizations, as well as increasing the number of peace prizes to

encourage and reward good peace journalism reporting. Lynch and Galtung (2010) also explain that peace journalism can be done essentially in the same way that journalists currently produce journalism; journalists just need to keep in mind peace journalism techniques. In their brief peace journalism manual, the authors indicate that to make the links between conflict and violence more transparent, the peace journalist should adopt a critical or constructive attitude to facts provided. Moreover, while reporting violence, peace journalists should focus on the victims and their suffering and give a voice to vulnerable groups.

Contributions to Peace Journalism / Criticism towards Peace Journalism

Since its emergence, the peace journalism model has been enriched by contributions from various scholars and professional journalists, especially in the last decade, to explore the possibilities beyond war journalism. For instance, BBC reporter Martin Bell (1998) confessed that he is no longer sure about the notion of objectivity and describes it as an illusion. Instead, he proposed the long-debated *journalism of attachment* as an alternative. According to this approach, in the face of atrocities, journalism shouldn't be neutral between victim and oppressor. At first glance, Bell's approach seems to resemble peace journalism; however, peace researcher Kempf (2003) remarks that *journalism of attachment* ignores conflict analysis (an essential aspect of peace journalism) and sees conflict as moral antagonism between good and evil. Also, Bell's formulation allows journalists to abandon their professional rules in the name of a higher moral duty. Kempf's research contributes to the study of peace journalism. In 2003, he suggests using a two-step procedure for deconstructing war discourse and for transforming the *violence-oriented* war journalism into *conflict-oriented* peace

journalism. The first step is called “de-escalation oriented conflict reporting” and overlaps with what is usually called quality journalism. It requires neutrality and critical distance between all parties and the conflict. The second step is *solution-oriented* conflict reporting. Very similar to Galtung’s argument, it requires a focus on common rights and peace initiatives, a sign of readiness for peace and mediation attempts, as well as voices anti-war opposition. For putting his approach into practice, Kempf highlights the importance of the training of journalists and recommends a number of ground rules such as “Neither of the parties to the conflict have absolute standards of truth, Conflicts are always open to being dealt with either as competitive (win-lose) or a cooperative (win-win process), peace processes are based on creativity - give voice to the voiceless” (p.11).

An important piece of research is conducted by Lee and Maslog (2005), who analyzed the coverage of four conflicts in Asia by using the frame of peace journalism. The authors remark that existing studies are normative and anecdotal, and mainly focus on identifying procedures for how to do peace journalism. Their study attempted to bridge the gap between theory and practice by operationalizing war and peace journalism in a quantitative content analysis. Their findings reveal strong war journalism framing and the authors conclude “the pattern of salient indicators supporting the peace journalism frame falls short of Galtung’s characterization of peace journalism as an advocacy and interpretive approach oriented in peace-conflict, people, truth, and solution” (p.324).

Another key contributor to the study of peace journalism is Robert Hackett. Hackett’s theoretical framework connects peace journalism with other theories and frameworks by creating broader strategies for peace journalism. Hackett (2006) argues

that to succeed, peace journalism “must translate its normative concerns, rooted in the discipline of peace research, into a strategy based on a theoretically-informed analysis of the governing logics of news production” (p.2). To point out the challenges that peace journalism faces, Hackett asks these questions: “Do media organizations have sufficient autonomy vis-a-vis other institutions, or journalists vis-a-vis media organizations, to put peace journalism into practice? Or is structural reform a prerequisite for the successful implementation of peace journalism?” (p.2). Hackett focuses on three models and theories to examine the relationship between journalism and other relations and institution of power. The first is Herman and Chomsky’s propaganda model; as mentioned above, the model describes structural influences on news production. However, it is criticised by Hackett as *reductionist* and *functionalist* (p.4). The second is Shoemaker and Reese’s hierarchy of influences model. Hackett explains that this model identifies five levels which have influence on news content, as well as helps to assess pressures for and against peace journalism. The first level consists of journalists whose professionally-related roles and ethics have a direct influence on their stories. However, especially when media workers have a position which could override institutional pressures, their socio-demographic background and political tendencies have also an indirect influence. The second level consists of daily work routines in the newsrooms. In other words, getting information from different sources and providing this information to audiences and advertisers results in standardized patterns of content. The third level pertains to the broader organizational imperatives of media institutions. The profit orientation, shared by private media companies, influences the content in accordance with corporate interests. This level corresponds with the propaganda model’s first filter

(corporate ownership of the media). The fourth level consists of extra-media influences such as sources, advertisers and the political power. The fifth level is the influence of ideology which is seen by journalists, audience and other players in the media system as natural and it helps to support existing relations of power.

Overall, Hackett points out that, like the propaganda model, Shoemaker and Reese's model tends to be *reductionist* and obscures the coherence of journalism as cultural practice and form of knowledge production (p.6). Finally Hackett cites Pierre Bourdieu's notion of journalism as a field. Compared to the two previous Anglo-American models, Bourdieu's field model provides an alternative approach. Hackett explains that Bourdieu's journalistic field is influenced by commercial or economic constraints (such as audience rating systems); however, journalism also imposes structural constraints on other fields on politics or cultural production. It is true that peace and war weren't Bourdieu's main interests, but his criticisms of TV journalism (e.g., its emphasis on entertainment, scandals, oversimplification, crime as well as decontextualized events) are consistent with the peace journalism critique (p.7-8).

Finally, Hackett (2006) proposes three strategies for change in journalism. The first is to reform the journalism field from within. The hierarchy and field models suggest some degree of agency for journalists. According to Hackett, dedicated journalists should take the lead as teachers, writers and advocates of peace journalism. He also points out that journalists who work in the Western corporate media don't have sufficient incentives and autonomy to adopt peace journalism techniques, which is an obstacle to realizing this reform. Alternatively, the author suggests that peace journalism can be adopted by the societies -- e.g., in Rwanda or the former Yugoslavia -- where the news media provoked

enmities in times of conflict (Hackett, 2006, p.11). The second strategy suggests building a new field; in other words, to create an alternative media infrastructure supported by civil society, and insulated from corporate or state power. The third strategy's aim is to change the environment of journalism, such as developing social justice movements which also demand a better media system in number of countries. Additionally, Hackett and Schroeder (2009) state that during conflicts, journalists are participants, not detached observers. The authors suggest that peace journalism can be advanced by reforming of other aspects of news production, such as broadening of the range of sources required and the cultural and geographical diversification of coverage.

Similar to the research of Lee and Maslog (2005), Shinar (2009) examined the coverage of the 2006 Lebanese War in the Canada's *Toronto Star* and Israel's *Yediot Aharonot* newspapers. Even though his findings demonstrate a tendency towards war journalism in the coverage, Shinar argues that there are opportunities for the advancement of peace journalism and that some professional practices could be adopted to achieve this objective. Shinar concludes that the analysis of the three frameworks (Hackett, 2006) can increase understanding of the environments in which war journalism thrives. Canadian journalist Howard (2003) also focuses on peace journalism and promotes Galtung's ideals among journalists. He considers media as instruments of conflict resolution; when the news media respond to journalistic values such as accuracy, impartiality and independence, they can then have an influence on peace building. Howard remarks that the news media have the potential to educate, correct misperceptions, identify underlying interests, and humanize all the parties in the dispute.

It also can provide an emotional outlet, enable consensus building, offer solutions and build confidence.

Almost 50 years after its emergence, Galtung's peace journalism model has not been adopted by the majority of news media and remains controversial among scholars and professional journalists. The model's ethical stance, structural problems, theoretical shortcomings and reinterpretation of the objectivity norm have been the main targets of criticism. In her study, which examines three major Asian conflicts, Lee (2010) recommends that to evolve into a mainstream model, peace journalism must expand beyond its basic normative theory by recognizing its structural limitations. The news media's tendency to reflect their government's position is a limitation for peace journalism. Governmental influence on the work of journalists in conflicts is another issue which raises the question of how peace journalism can operate without journalistic autonomy. Lee notes that traditional news-writing norms are actually a challenge for peace journalism. Her findings reveal that feature stories and opinion pieces -- rather than hard news -- are more likely to be framed as peace journalism. Therefore, Lee suggests that journalists need to rethink the notion of hard news values and the inverted pyramid formula for reporting conflicts.

The shortcomings of the model are also examined by Keeble (2010), who suggests that peace journalism can provide a useful critique of the corporate media's promotion of militarism. However, he finds it elitist in its definition of journalism:

Peace journalism theory focuses too closely on the notion of journalism as privileged, professional activity and fails to take into account the critical intellectual tradition which locates professions historically and politically, seeing them as essentially occupational groupings with a legal monopoly of social and economic opportunities in the marketplace, underwritten by the state (p.51).

Unlike peace journalism's position, Keeble claims that improvements in professional routines and reforms in journalism training can't bring a major change. Drawing on Hackett and Carroll (2006), Keeble maintains that change will only come if it is based on a radical political analysis of the media and society. This will include an awareness of the possibilities of journalistic activities both within and outside the corporate media and as part of a broader political project to democratize the media -- and society in general. It requires a new definition of journalism, one which includes intellectuals, campaigners and citizens, all of them articulating their ideas within the dominant and alternative global public spheres. As a solution, Keeble mentions Hackett's (2006) alternative perspective which includes the Propaganda Model, Shoemaker and Reese's "hierarchy of influence" and Bourdieu's notion of journalism as a field.

Peace journalism's advocacy approach -- as opposed to the objectivity norm -- is also criticized. Hammond (2002) brings to light peace journalism's rejection of neutrality and says that despite their claim to be critical and independent, advocacy journalists have tended to follow the agenda of powerful Western governments. This approach includes suppressing inconvenient information, distorting public understanding of conflicts, applauding the deaths of designated Western hate-figures, and ignoring evidence of the destructive effects of Western involvement in centuries such as Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia. The 'peacemaker' role that peace journalism assigns to journalists has also attracted criticism. Former BBC reporter Loyn (2007) finds peace journalism as a meaningless exercise as well as a misleading prescription for journalism. The author criticizes McGoldrick and Lynch (2005) who condemn all other ways of reporting as war journalism and biased in favour of war. Loyn points out that peace-making isn't the

business of a reporter; rather, politicians should lead this mission. Instead of the peace journalism approach, the author focuses on traditional journalistic methods of using objectivity to get at a version of truth. Similarly, Hanitzsch (2004) admits that journalism has the potential to contribute to the peaceful settlement of conflicts; however, this potential influence is limited. Moreover, he indicates that freeing the world from crises, conflicts and other evils cannot be the primary task of journalism; it is the task of other social systems such as government and the military. Hanitzsch argues that “peace journalism draws epistemologically from a naive realism and is, according to mass communication theory, largely based on the assumption of powerful, causal and linear media effects”(p.1). According to him the model can only evolve within a culture of peace there is need to focus on society and culture as source of problems.

Finally, Aslam (2011) specifies that peace journalism alone can't be the ultimate solution to the problems of contemporary journalism. To put peace journalism's ideals into practice, Aslam proposes in-the-field training and journalism education. The first suggestion -- the training of professional journalists -- “may be conducted by non-profit organisations, media organisations or by a self-motivated group of media workers and aims for skills enhancement and capacity-building of journalists in the form of training workshops and seminars” (p. 127). For the second suggestion -- improving journalism education -- conflict analysis and conflict resolution should be a part of the curricula of journalism schools to develop students' sense of social responsibility. Also it could help prepare them to face challenges in the field. Additionally, universities can encourage more research on the impact of peace initiatives on people's lives. Today, he argues, universities focus more on theoretical subjects such as media and society, social change,

communication theories, and development support communication, but little on the area of conflict resolution (p.130).

Conflict Analysis and Peace Journalism

To understand peace journalism and the role of journalists in conflict situations, it is important to examine the existing scholarship on conflict analysis, also known as peace studies or peace research. In addition to creating the field of peace journalism, Galtung is one of the founders of peace and conflict studies and has been making significant contributions to journalism studies. As Perez (2008) remarks, Galtung asks journalists to know how to analyze a conflict properly and to use conflict analysis skills while covering conflicts. According to Lynch (2002a), conflict analysis skills help journalists focus on the core of the conflict, and its impacts on society. Additionally, Lynch and McGoldrick (2005) explain that conflict analysis and conflict transformation -- to have balance, fairness and accuracy in reporting -- are distinct features of peace journalism. Further, conflict analysis provides an alternative way to trace the connections between journalists, their sources, the stories they cover, and the consequences of their journalism. The authors note that conflict analysis skills make journalists capable of reporting conflict more accurately, identifying and restoring parts of stories about conflict generally ignored or marginalized, and taking responsibility for their inescapable involvement in the events and processes on which they report. Lynch and McGoldrick mention that the terms *conflict analysis* and *peace research* cover various theories such as *communication theory*, *intercultural miscommunication theory*, *human needs theory* and *negotiation theory*. These theories inform journalists with different explanations and different practical tools to use in responding to conflict, and different ways of overcoming conflict

situations.

Diagnosing the roots of violence is important for journalists and helps them know how to react and focus on non-violent responses. During a conflict, there is an elevated risk of violence; however, the peace journalism model considers conflict situations creative, as opportunities for human progress and as forces for change (Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005). Understanding the difference between *conflict* and *violence* is crucial for peace journalists. As Lynch (2002a) remarks, in the media the word *conflict* is usually used to mean *violence*. The author, instead, defines conflict as a process through which two or more parties pursue incompatible goals while trying to undermine the goal-seeking potential of the other. Conflict can also be defined as a situation in which actors use conflict behaviour against each other to impose their goals or to demonstrate their hostility (Bartos and Wehr, 2002). Jeong (2000) argues that serious conflicts have their roots in structural injustice and are embedded in an inequitable social and economic system.

Lynch and McGoldrick (2005) insist that conflict is not a synonym for violence; violence is only one possible response to conflict and the emergence of conflict depends on the interaction between the underlying issues, the incompatible needs, interests and goals. Galtung formulized conflict as $conflict = attitudes + behaviour + contradiction$, known as the *conflict triangle* or *ABC triangle*, which is an important tool with which peace journalists can understand both conflict and the causes of conflict while reporting. According to Brand-Jacobsen (2002), *attitude* refers to how parties to a conflict feel and think, and how they perceive the 'other' and the conflict itself. *Behaviour* refers to how parties act in the conflict: seeking common interest and constructive, creative action or

seeking to inflict loss and pain on the 'other'. Finally, *contradiction* refers to the actual issues and what the conflict is about.

Unlike the dominant approach in the news media -- where the focus is on the visible effects of violence -- the peace journalism model divides violence into three categories. The first is *direct violence*, which is visible, destructive and intended to harm through violent actions such as shooting, bombing and killing. The second type is *structural violence*, which is less visible and has no intention to kill but can be more destructive than *direct violence*. Segregation, colonialism, institutionalized racism, corruption-collusion-nepotism or exploitation can be mentioned as examples for *structural violence*. Finally, *cultural violence* also legitimizes direct and structural violence symbolically, through words and images. Hate speech, xenophobia, Orientalism, civilisational arrogance, religious justifications for war or patriarchy can all be seen as cultural violence (Galtung, 2004a). To avoid war journalism's binary approach and to map conflicts, Lynch and McGoldrick (2005) propose some tools (used by conflict analysts) to reveal what a situation is really about and who has a stake. For journalists, these tools provide new ways of deciding who to interview and what questions to ask during conflict coverage. The first tool is "mapping the stakeholders." During conflicts, journalists should not limit themselves to the conflict arena or a limited time frame. Instead, they should reveal other stakeholders in conflicts. The second tool is "needs-and-fears-mapping." Journalists should list all parties in the conflict. After that step, they should write down the current positions of all parties: the demands they are making or their stated goals. The next step is to define problems which can be difficult for

journalists because it is about the disclosing and fully understanding the causes of conflict.

Israeli-Turkish Relations and the Emergence of the Gaza Flotilla

In this thesis, the Gaza flotilla crisis will be used as a case study to explore the use of war journalism practices and how peace journalism could be helpful in real-world conflict. Therefore, to better understand the incident, it is important to review the relationship between Israel and Turkey. Turkey was the first Muslim country to recognize Israel as a state in 1949. Unlike other Muslim countries, Turkey never cut its relations with Israel. Indeed, following the Persian Gulf War in 1991, Israel emerged as a potential ally in the eyes of Turkey due to the increased Kurdish insurgency in northern Iraq, an insurgency supported by Iran and Syria (Kosebalaban, 2010). Therefore, various strategic military agreements between the two countries were signed and relations flourished in military, diplomatic and economic areas.

In April 2002, Tayyip Erdoğan's Justice and Development Party (AKP) came to power with a parliamentary majority, and the new government maintained its relations with Israel. However, the American intervention in Iraq in 2003 created a hostile atmosphere between the Turkish people and the U.S. and its ally Israel. Many Turks began to see Israel as an ally to the Iraqi Kurdish and also to the Kurdish separatists fighting against Turkey (Kosebalaban, 2010). Turkey's recognition of Hamas as a political party further cooled mutual relations. Israel's blockade over the Gaza Strip and the Gaza offensive in 2008 angered Turkey because Turkey had previously been mediating peace talks between Israel and Syria, and Turkey was not informed of this operation (Inbar, 2011). Moreover, Erdoğan attended a conference at the Davos

Economic Summit with Israeli President Shimon Peres, where accusations were traded between the two leaders. As a response, Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Ayalon insulted the Turkish ambassador by seating him deliberately in a lower sofa in a meeting, further damaging their relationship (Kosebalaban, 2010).

The Gaza flotilla -- organized by the Turkish Humanitarian Relief Foundation (IHH) and the Free Gaza Movement -- aimed to bring humanitarian aid and break Israel's blockade over Gaza. The flotilla refused Israel's offer of delivering the aid to Israel's Ashdod port. On May 31, 2010, Israeli forces boarded the ship and took control; however, some activists on the Mavi Marmara ship resisted the Israeli soldiers. By the end of the conflict, nine Turkish activists had been killed, while more than twenty passengers and 10 commandos had been injured (Migdalovitz, 2010). The Turkish government could have stopped the flotilla after Israel repeatedly warned of a possible military maneuver. However, Turkey viewed the flotilla as a political opportunity to put pressure on Israel to remove the blockade on Gaza. Even though the Turkish government wasn't officially involved in the organization of the flotilla, it did nothing to prevent the flotilla from sailing to Gaza. After Turkish officials ensured that there were no arms on the ships, the aid flotilla was allowed to leave.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This project will use a textual analysis. This approach was selected because, as Priest (2009) explains, qualitative methods are designed to explore and assess things that cannot easily be summarized quantitatively. Textual analysis is relevant to this research since, as Gasher (2010) articulates, it “provides close critical readings of selected news texts, revealing: how stories define or frame events; why particular events are deemed newsworthy; which social and cultural values are privileged; the ideal audience to whom the stories are addressed; journalists’ assumptions about readers’ knowledge and interests; and how readers are situated with respect to the subject(s) of the news texts” (p.4). Fursich (2009) defines textual analysis as a type of qualitative analysis that, beyond the manifest content of media, focuses on the underlying ideological and cultural assumptions of the text. Text is understood as a complex set of discursive strategies that are situated in a special cultural context (Barthes 1972, cited in Fursich). “Textual analysis examines how language is deployed to portray newsmakers and news events and to construct the stories through which we come to know the world around us. If news stories are always partial depictions and share cognitive space with other sources of knowledge and information, they nonetheless help to define, or give meaning to, people, places, institutions and events” (Gasher, 2010, p.4.)

I will compare the coverage of *The Jerusalem Post*, *Ha’aretz*, *Today’s Zaman* and *Hürriyet Daily News* from May 31 to June 30, 2010. I hope to reveal the provocative role these newspapers played in the conflict. I will also examine the newspapers’ overreliance on official and elite sources over alternative sources; the use of demonizing, victimizing or threatening words; the use of nationalistic and military discourse; the lack of

background information provided; and the similarities and differences between the newspapers. To apply textual analysis to the coverage -- a total of 405 articles -- and to better represent the coverage in a balanced way, I will choose representative articles from each newspaper and categorize them based on Galtung's (1998) *peace / war journalism* table (see Table 1). This table contains four main categories: (1) *War/Violence-Oriented* vs. *Peace/Conflict-Oriented*; (2) *Propaganda-Oriented* vs. *Truth-Oriented*; (3) *Elite-Oriented* vs. *People-Oriented*; (4) *Victory-Oriented* vs. *Solution-Oriented*.

A quantitative content analysis will also explore the domination of war journalism in the coverage. I also plan to analyze a number of other factors: the frequency of each story type (hard news, editorial, op-eds, etc.) the source of the stories (wire services, foreign or local), and the indicators of peace and war journalism. I will also look at the relationships between these factors. While I will use Galtung's (1998) *peace/war* journalism table for the textual analysis, I will rely on Lee and Maslog (2005) for the quantitative analysis. Their 13 indicators of war journalism and 13 indicators of peace journalism will be my coding criteria. To identify peace and war journalism frames in the coverage, I selected 9 peace journalism and 9 war journalism indicators from Lee and Maslog's list. The main reason was Lee and Maslog's specific list of indicators lent itself better to my quantitative analysis than Galtung's table.

The following questions will guide the research:

RQ1 – How did the coverage of the Gaza flotilla crisis by *The Jerusalem Post*, *Ha'aretz*, *Today's Zaman* and *Hürriyet Daily News* reflect war journalism?

RQ2 - How could the techniques of peace journalism help journalists avoid these pitfalls and become independent of government and military sources during times of conflict?

RQ3 - Can war journalism articles be reconstructed using the principles of peace journalism and still meet recognized standards of good journalism? What differences would emerge from such an exercise?

This thesis project uses Galtung's suggestions to shed light on the shortcomings of the coverage. To address the third research question, I will identify three main themes and representative articles in the coverage. For each theme, I will rewrite one peace journalism article as an experiment by using the peace journalism principles. These principles are as follows: to transform conflict into peaceful discussions; to reduce tension; to avoid 'us' vs. 'them' journalism; to give a voice to vulnerable groups and other stakeholders; and to give historical background information to tell stories from a wider perspective. During this stage, I will also use conflict analysis techniques. These rewritten articles will be compared to the original ones in order to show the differences in tone, content and vocabulary. Two important books -- *Peace Journalism* (Lynch and McGoldrick, 2005) and *Reporting the World* (Lynch, 2002a), which carefully define rewriting principles -- will be used as guides during this stage.

Newspapers to be analyzed

To analyse the presentation of the Gaza crisis in Israel, I selected two English-language daily newspapers since I cannot speak Hebrew. The first chosen newspaper is *The Jerusalem Post*, founded in 1932. Its editorial policy is considered to be right-wing. The circulation of *The Jerusalem Post* is between 30,000 and 50,000; it also publishes a

weekly English international edition with a circulation of 70,000 copies. The second newspaper chosen for analysis is *Ha'aretz*. Israel's oldest daily newspaper, *Ha'aretz* was founded in 1919 and is known for its left-wing and liberal editorial policy. The circulation of *Ha'aretz* is between 65,000 and 75,000 (pressreference.com, 2011).

To maintain the balance between Israeli and Turkish newspapers, I chose Turkey's two English-language dailies. *Today's Zaman* is the most widely-circulated English-language newspaper and its editorial policy considered to be right-wing. The circulation of *Today's Zaman* is around 11,000; however, its sister newspaper *Zaman* leads the Turkish newspaper market. Between March 3rd and 31st, 2013, the circulation of *Zaman* newspaper was over 1 million - the highest circulation in Turkey (gazete net satışları, 2013). *Hürriyet Daily News* is the last newspaper that I will examine. It was launched in 1961 and it is the oldest English-language daily in Turkey. The editorial policy of *Hürriyet Daily News* is considered to be liberal. The circulation of *Hürriyet Daily* is around 5,500. However, its sister newspaper *Hürriyet* is very influential in Turkey with a circulation of over 400,000 (gazete net satışları, 2013).

Limitations

I will examine only the first month of the crisis which can be seen as a limitation of this research. However, starting from the second week of the crisis, the newspapers began to lose their interest in the crisis and the number of the articles dropped dramatically. The first month's coverage will provide enough evidence about the tendencies of the newspapers. An additional limitation of this study is that my examination will focus on only four newspapers, *The Jerusalem Post*, *Ha'aretz*, *Today's Zaman* and *Hürriyet Daily News*. It is important to note that these four newspapers

cannot be completely representative of all Israeli and Turkish newspapers. However, different political perspectives of these newspapers represent a large proportion of Israeli and Turkish audiences.

Finally, it wasn't not possible to download Israeli and Turkish newspapers' articles through academic search engines. Therefore, I used newspapers' free website access to locate and copy their archives. To find the related articles, I used the key words: "*Gaza flotilla*", "*Mavi Marmara*" and "*Operation Sea Breeze*" as it called by the Israeli army. The challenge is that these newspapers don't have sophisticated archiving systems and they aren't able to show how many articles were published in the first month of the crisis. Therefore, it is possible that some of the articles published between the dates set out in my parameters could not be included in this textual analysis. This could limit the scope and breadth of my study.

Chapter 4: Findings

Quantitative Content Analysis

Using quantitative content analysis, the research examines the coverage of the Gaza flotilla crisis from May 31 to June 30, 2010, looking at 405 articles (56 from *The Jerusalem Post*, 117 from *Ha'aretz*, 184 from *Today's Zaman*, and 48 from *Hürriyet Daily News*). This section will discuss the findings of a quantitative content analysis that explored types of stories in the coverage, the sources of production of the articles (wire services, foreign or local), and the indicators of peace and war journalism. The analysis further examined the relationships between story types and peace/war journalism indicators. The analysis showed that hard-news stories² (news reports) dominate the coverage. Of the 405 articles, 278 (68.64%) are hard-news stories. The second largest group is opinion pieces/editorial/op-eds, which consist of 115 (28.39%) examples. The third group, feature stories³, contained 10 (2.46%) examples. The last group consists of letters and speeches, of which there were only two examples (0.49%). Hard-news stories informed the reader about the confrontation and its aftermath, and after the second week of the incident, their numbers began to decrease while opinion and op-ed pieces increased. Of the 278 hard-news stories, 81 (29.1%) originated from international news agencies such as AP, Reuters, and AFP and Turkey's Anatolian News Agency, while 197 (70.86%) of the articles were produced by the newspapers' own staff. However, it can be argued that the use of wire stories may be slightly higher, since journalists sometimes adapt news agencies' stories to create their own stories with their byline. As long as a

² Hard news stories report daily issues by using the inverted pyramid style and aims to respond the 5Ws (who, what, when, where, why) questions by providing factual information.

³ Feature stories have an emphasis on the human element. Journalists usually describe the scene and provide analysis as well as give background information about the topic or people.

byline appeared, I coded these articles as locally-produced news, even though they were partly from news wires (e.g. “Lieberman: Israel has no reason to fear probe of Gaza flotilla raid” By Barak Ravid, Ha’aretz Service and News Agencies).

Prior to discussing the war and peace journalism findings, it is worth mentioning that many of the articles in the coverage contain features of both war and peace journalism. While coding the articles, I tried to determine whether peace or war journalism indicators were predominant. By using Lee and Maslog’s (2005) 9 peace and 9 war journalism indicators, I analyzed and coded the articles. Some articles contained more than one indicator of peace or war journalism. Therefore, to determine whether an article was predominantly peace journalism or war journalism, for each article, I determined the most frequently occurring indicator. The analysis of the coverage showed that war journalism framing dominates over peace journalism. Of the 405 articles, 279 (68.8%) articles have dominant war journalism framing, compared to 112 (27.6%) dominant peace journalism framing. Also, 14 (3.4%) articles were coded as neutral (See Table 2). Neutral news pieces are usually short news reports which contain only some factual information. The highest war journalism framing was found in *The Jerusalem Post* (89.2%) followed by *Today’s Zaman* (69.1%), *Ha’aretz* (64.1%) and *Hürriyet Daily News* (56.2%).

Table 2: Percentage of war & peace oriented and neutral articles

Newspapers	Articles	War Journalism	Peace Journalism	Neutral
<i>Total:</i>	405	68.8%	27.6%	3.4%
Ha’aretz	117	64.1%	32.4%	3.4%
The Jerusalem Post	56	89.2%	8.9%	1.7%
Today's Zaman	184	69.1%	27.1%	3.8%
Hürriyet Daily News	48	56.2%	39.5%	4.1%

While doing textual analysis, I used Galtung's (1998) *peace / war journalism* table. However, for the quantitative analysis I preferred to use Lee and Maslog's (2005) indicators of peace and war journalism. This was done because Lee and Maslog's work has more specific list of indicators lent itself better to my quantitative analysis than Galtung's table, as it gave me a list of easily-identifiable factors to count. In their research, Lee and Maslog identified 13 indicators of war journalism and 13 indicators of peace journalism as coding criteria. I selected 9 war journalism and 9 peace journalism indicators from Lee and Maslog's list (see Table 3). The analysis shows that the most frequent war journalism indicator (29.7%) is a focus on visible effects. This type of article, predominantly hard news, focuses mainly on the confrontation on the Mavi Marmara and its visible effects by giving voice to the Israeli soldiers and the activists. In other words, these stories fail to explain the background of the incident and its impacts. The second common war journalism indicator (29.4 %) is reliance on leaders, official sources and elite. These sources are mostly politicians, army sources and diplomats. The third indicator is using demonizing language; 12.5% of the coverage was found to be of this type. Various demonizing adjectives and labels were used to create a dangerous enemy image that is ready to kill.

Table 3
Selected indicators of war and peace journalism (from Lee & Maslog, 2005) ⁴

	Frequency	%
War Journalism Indicators		
-Reports on visible effects of conflict	83	29.7
-Relies on leaders and elite as news sources	82	29.4
-Uses demonizing/dehumanizing language	35	12.5
-Partisan reporting	33	11.8
-Good vs. bad tagging	15	5.37
-Two party orientation (one party wins, one party loses)	13	4.56
-Uses victimizing language	10	3.58
-Zero-sum orientation	6	2.15
-Uses emotive words	2	0.71
Total:	279	(100%)
Peace Journalism Indicators		
-Reports causes and consequences of the conflict	33	29.5
-Nonpartisan (neutral, not taking sides)	17	15.2
-Focuses on ordinary people and their problems	15	13.4
-Gives voice to different parties & stakeholders	12	10.7
-Win-win oriented	11	9.82
-Avoids demonising language	10	8.92
-Reports on invisible effects of conflict	7	6.25
-Avoids labelling of good vs. bad	6	5.35
-Avoids victimizing language	1	0.89
Total:	112	(100%)

The fourth war indicator is partisan reporting. 11.8% of the articles fell into this category. This type of article, mostly in editorial and opinion sections, use nationalistic language and defends their governments' perspective. The fifth indicator, which represented 5.3% of the articles, is good vs. bad tagging. These articles don't necessarily use demonizing language; however, they always blame the other side.

The most frequent peace journalism indicator found (29.5%) was a focus on causes and consequences of the conflict. Instead of focusing on the visible effects of the

⁴ The numbers included here represent each article's predominant orientation. Each article appears in this table only once. Articles with neutral orientation were omitted from this table.

conflict, these articles examine the causes of the confrontation and its impacts. The second most common peace journalism indicator is nonpartisan reporting, at 15.2%. These articles show that using neutral language is an important step towards peace journalism. The third indicator was a focus on ordinary people and their problems. 13.4% of the articles were coded under this indicator. The fourth indicator, at 10.7%, is giving a voice to different parties & stakeholders. In other words, articles which give voice to other stakeholders who can contribute to easing the Israeli-Turkish tension or Israeli-Palestinian problems. The fifth indicator is win-win orientation; 9.82% of the articles fell into this category. This type of article sees the conflict as an opportunity that both parties can benefit from.

The analysis of the coverage indicates that there is a strong connection between story type and war and peace journalism orientation. In the coverage, hard-news stories tend to employ mostly war journalism framing: 78.05% war journalism framing compared to 17.2% peace journalism framing. On the other hand, opinion pieces/editorials/op-eds show a higher rate of peace journalism framing: 48.9% war journalism compared to 50.4% peace journalism (See Table 4). Not surprisingly, in their study -- which compared the news coverage of the Iraq War (2003) and major Asian conflicts by eight newspapers from India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and the Philippines -- Lee, Maslog and Kim (2006) achieved very similar results. The authors noticed that while war journalism was dominant in hard-news stories, features and opinion pieces were dominated by peace journalism framing. Unlike hard-news stories, opinion pieces, op-eds and editorials generally have a wider perspective and don't focus only on the visible effects of the confrontation. Moreover, the dependence on official sources is relatively limited. These factors increase the tendency

towards peace journalism.

Table 4: Relationship between story type and war/peace journalism

Type of story	War Journalism	Peace Journalism	Neutral	Total:
Hard news	217 (78.05%)	48 (17.2%)	13 (4.6%)	278
Editorial/Opinion	56 (48.6%)	58 (50.4%)	1 (0.8%)	115
Features	5 (50%)	5 (50%)	0	10
Letters/Speeches	0	2 (100%)	0	2

The findings indicate that the tendency towards war journalism was caused by heavy use of hard-news stories. The reliance on Western wire services (especially AP, Reuters and AFP) is an additional factor for the high war journalism. As Lee (2010) says, Western news agencies tend to report conflicts and violence more saliently than other news stories forms. Therefore, it can be argued that Western news writing practices, especially the use of the inverted pyramid style, is an obstacle to peace journalism.

The findings from this study support this argument. The analysis of the production sources of the stories shows that locally produced hard news stories are slightly more peace journalism oriented than stories from wire services. Of the 197 local hard news stories, 36 (18.2%) were framed as peace journalism, 155 (78.6%) as war journalism, and 6 (3.04%) as neutral. On the other hand, of the 81 stories from news agencies, 12(14.8%) were framed as peace journalism, 62 (76.5%) as war journalism and 7 (8.6%) as neutral. However, in opinion pieces/editorial/op-eds section foreign-produced news pieces tend to have more peace journalism indicators than locally-produced stories. Of the 98 local stories in the opinion pieces/editorial/op-eds section, 46 (46.93%) were framed as peace journalism, 51(52.04%) as war journalism and 1 (1.02%) story as neutral. On the other hand, of the 17 foreign-produced stories, 12 (70.5%) were framed as peace journalism, and 5 (29.4%) as war journalism.

Another reason for the dominant war journalism could be the news media's

presumed role of supporting its government during times of conflict. It is not easy for the news media to remain neutral due to their dependence on official sources and the close relationships between the news media and governments (Bennett 2003; Reese & Buckalew 1995). The analysis reveals that, while reporting on the confrontation, both Israeli and Turkish newspapers relied on politicians, diplomats, elites and army sources which led to high instances of *elite-oriented* journalism. Therefore, as claimed by the peace journalism model, Israeli and Turkish journalists tended to obtain their information from officially recognized and ‘reliable’ sources by highlighting ‘our’ side of the story, all in the name of objectivity. As Ross (2009) mentions “media’s dependence on powerful officials as sources of news and interpretation poses a significant direct threat to peace journalism practices, and that inclusion of divergent voices of dissonance *en passant* serves not to advance the goals of peace journalism, but to justify existing war journalism as *objective* reporting” (p.5).

In addition to the official sources and elites, the newspapers used two main types of first-hand witness accounts to report the confrontation: Israeli commandos (usually quoted by the Israeli newspapers) and pro-Palestinian activists (usually quoted by the Turkish newspapers). This choice also led to inflammatory language, demonization and one-sided narratives. To reduce this dependence on the accounts of the commandos and activists, journalists’ accounts would also have to shed more light on this incident. The present analysis shows that there were no reporters from *The Jerusalem Post* or *Ha’aretz* on the flotilla during its journey to Gaza, nor embedded with Israeli marines during the operation. There were more than thirty journalists on the flotilla from different countries, including Turkey. Nevertheless, *Today’s Zaman* and *Hürriyet Daily News* published very

few news reports based on the journalists' direct accounts of the event. In the end, however, these accounts don't differ much from the activists' inflammatory statements and still contain war journalism features.

Finally, it might be argued that the audience may factor into the use of nationalistic and inflammatory coverage during the Gaza flotilla crisis. As Liebes (1992) remarks, during times of conflict, journalists face conflicting pressures of commitment to their own society and its fate, and loyalty to the demands and norms of journalism. Therefore, war coverage puts journalism and journalists to the test of choosing between patriotic enthusiasm and morale-building or a distant and analytical stance. As the coverage from this study shows, all newspapers in some way reflected the sentiments of their audience after the confrontation on the Mavi Marmara ship.

Textual Analysis

My aim in this textual analysis is to demonstrate how the newspapers were implicated in the crisis. I also seek to highlight their over-reliance on official sources, their use of military discourse, their use of threatening and inflammatory language, the lack of background information provided, and the similarities and differences between the newspapers. To better reflect the content of the 405 articles, I chose representative articles from each newspaper and categorized them based on Galtung's (1998) *peace / war journalism* table.

War/violence oriented vs. Peace/conflict oriented

The analysis shows that the dominant aspect in the coverage is a focus on the confrontation on the Mavi Marmara ship that employs the *war/violence* journalism frame. As previously discussed, this type of war journalism focuses mainly on conflict areas and

the visible effects of violence. The war/violence journalism uses victimizing and emotive language, has a voice for 'us' and blames the other side as the cause of the problem.

Ultimately, it demonizes the enemy.

Demonization of 'them'

Lynch and McGoldrick (2005) define demonizing adjectives and labels as well as their functions in war journalism. The authors suggest that peace journalists should avoid demonizing adjectives like "vicious, cruel, brutal, and barbaric. These always describe one party's view of what another party has done. To use them puts the journalists on that side and helps to justify an escalation of violence" (p. 30). Moreover, Lynch and McGoldrick talk about demonizing labels such as "terrorist, extremist, fanatic, fundamentalist. (...) To use such labels is always to take sides. They also generally mean the people labelled are unreasonable, which weakens the case for reasoning (negotiating) with them" (p.30).

The use of demonizing language peaked in the coverage in the first week of the crisis. Israeli newspapers relied on accounts from Israeli commandos, senior army officers, and politicians. Inevitably, the coverage depicts horror scenes and cruel enemies who came to kill Israelis. The coverage provides a variety of demonizing adjectives and labels such as *extremist supporters of terror, dangerous hatred for Jews, vicious, brutal, armada of hate, jihadists, terrorists, saboteurs, hired killers, and murderous mercenaries*. These labels are powerful indicators of war journalism and helped the Israeli government to justify the killing of activists. Another impact of this type of demonizing is that, by creating an image of a dangerous enemy, future rapprochements between Israel and Turkey and other peaceful initiatives towards the Palestinian issue could be inhibited.

A good example of demonization can be seen in a feature story in the *Jerusalem Post*, which presents the accounts of Sergeant S., who single-handedly killed six activists. The sergeant describes an atmosphere in which two armies fought, and he has no doubt that the pro-Palestinian activists were, in fact, terrorists. He explains how, facing more than a dozen mercenaries, and convinced their lives were in danger, he and his colleagues opened fire: “When I hit the deck, I was immediately attacked by people with bats, metal pipes and axes. These were without a doubt terrorists. I could see the murderous rage in their eyes and that they were coming to kill us” (Katz, 2010a). The same story gives a voice to the sergeant’s commander, Lieutenant Colonel T., who adds: “S. did a remarkable job. He stabilized the situation and succeeded in hitting six of the terrorists.” It is worth noting that the majority of articles in the *Jerusalem Post* accentuate the terror connection of the activists. The words “terror”, “terrorism” and “terrorist” are repeated 71 times throughout 56 *Jerusalem Post* articles.

Some stories in *Ha’aretz* also demonize the activists and provide an enemy image by excluding a peaceful perspective and ignoring the real cause of the confrontation: the Gaza blockade and its impact on Palestinians. In an interview in the June 1, 2010 edition, Captain R. narrates his epic fight against “terrorists” armed with knives and batons:

Every [activist] that approached us wanted to kill us (...) people started coming at me from every direction. They jumped at me and hurled me to the deck below the bridge. Then I felt a stabbing in my stomach -- it was a knife. I pulled it out and somehow managed to get to the lower level (Eyadat, 2010).

Another *Ha’aretz* article, from June 4, 2010, demonizes pro-Palestinian activists by pointing out their “terror links”:

It appears that they [activists] were well trained and experienced, especially in view of the arsenal found and code books used to pass on orders from group leaders. Among the rioters, in addition to Turks, were Yemenis, Afghans and one

person from Eritrea. All were apparently experienced in hand-to-hand fighting. Some of them did not retreat when shots were fired (Harel, 2010).

Use of demonizing language is no less pronounced in the Turkish coverage. The only difference is that Israel, rather than the activists or Turkey. The coverage primarily gives voice to activists, the IHH, Turkish politicians and elites who frequently use demonizing adjectives and labels such as *cruel*, *vicious*, *high sea piracy*, *banditry*, *barbaric*, *cold blooded murder*, *bloody raid*, *lake of blood*, *massacre*, *murderers*, *state terrorism*, *terrorist organization*, and *hyenas*. In particular, the accounts of the peace activists became a tool for portraying Israel as a murderous state.

A *Today's Zaman* news report from June 1, 2010 explains, based on the activists' accounts, how Israeli soldiers attacked the *Mavi Marmara*. A Turkish activist says: "When the Mavi Marmara continued on its course the harassment turned into an attack. They used smoke bombs followed by gas canisters. They started to descend onto the ship with helicopters". She describes the operation as "extremely bad and brutal" and the ship as "a lake of blood". Additionally, a Greek activist from another ship, Aris Papadokostopoulos, explains that "the Turkish ship was in front of us. There was a terrible raid from the air and from the sea and from everywhere, with shooting. During their interrogation [by the commandos], many of them were badly beaten in front of us" (Activists tell of beatings during Israeli raid, 2010). In the same edition, Turkish Prime Minister Erdoğan condemns the "bloody massacre by Israel" and accuses Israel by saying: "They have once again showed to the world that they know how good they are at killing people" (No one should test Turkey's patience, 2010).

See 'them' as the problem/ 'us' vs. 'them' journalism

Another indicator of war journalism is the use of 'us' vs. 'them' journalism and

the blaming of the ‘other’ side as the real cause of the problem. Instead of seeing conflict and violence as a problem, revealing the deep reasons behind the conflict and highlighting the impacts of the blockade on 1.5 million civilians in Gaza, the newspapers tended to blame the other side for initiating the violence. These bilateral accusations were created by Israeli and Turkish politicians and officials, and were widely presented by the newspapers. Various news reports in *the Jerusalem Post* and *Ha’aretz* blame the activists for brutally attacking Israeli soldiers, using official accounts as support. For instance, the May 31, 2010 edition of the *Jerusalem Post* provides details of the “well-planned lynch” of Israeli soldiers and a police source comments on the operation: “The soldiers acted with the utmost nobility. They engaged in hand-to-hand combat, sustained injuries, but only opened fire after one of them was lying on the ground unconscious and two others had been shot. This was an unbelievable demonstration of restraint” (Katz, 2010b).

Similarly, the *Ha’aretz* coverage contains parallel war journalism indicators. On May 31, 2010, Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu justified the killing of activists: “They [soldiers] were mobbed, they were clubbed, they were beaten, stabbed, there was even a report of gunfire. And our soldiers had to defend themselves. (...) We want to maintain a situation where we prevent weapons and war materials from coming into Gaza, and allowing humanitarian aid to go to the population of Gaza” (Ravid, 2010a). Another *Ha’aretz* news report from June 1, 2010 includes a strong voice for ‘us’ and justifies the killings. A senior naval officer claims: “this was not spontaneous, but premeditated violence. They said they came on a humanitarian mission, but they came to fight” (Harel & Pfeffer, 2010). Both *The Jerusalem Post* and *Ha’aretz* articles present the soldiers as victims, the activists as an existential threat to Israel’s security, and the killing of nine

activists as an inevitable outcome. These articles send a clear message to the world: Israeli soldiers defended themselves against deadly attacks and their actions were legitimate under international laws.

The news pieces from *Today's Zaman* and *Hürriyet Daily News* also contain accusatory language, used to justify the violent resistance of the activists against the commandos and to emphasize Israeli aggression. For instance, a *Hürriyet Daily News* column, published on May 31, 2010, draws similarities between Israel and “the pirate terrorists of Somalia”, accusing the nation of murdering scores of peace activists. The author also blames Israel for using propaganda methods: “Even though Israeli forces killed and wounded scores of civilians, and contrary to there being no weapons on any of the six ships, Israel, as it has already started, tried to hide its rough-state attitude behind a ‘there were weapons on the ships’ claim and try to portray itself as the real victim of the incident” (Kanlı, 2010).

Focus on conflict area-visible effects

Another war journalism feature found in the coverage is the focus on conflict arenas and the visible effects of violence. Certain articles tended to focus on what happened on the Mavi Marmara ship, examining a narrow time and space by giving voice to commandos and politicians. These stories placed emphasis on the details of the visible *direct violence*, such as how the activists attacked Israeli commandos, how the commandos defended themselves and killed the activists, as well as the descriptions of dead and wounded people or material damage. This approach ignores history and the long-term impacts of the confrontation on Israeli-Palestinian relations and Israeli-Turkish relations. It also ignores the effects of less visible forms of violence, such as *cultural*

violence and *structural violence*, on people and societies. Additionally, other main stakeholders are disregarded; no voice is given to Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank, to people in neighboring Arab countries, to Palestinian refugees in different countries in the region, or to peace groups. This approach also fails to explain conflict and violence in a larger historical and political context. Without a doubt, ‘what happened’ stories are newsworthy and fill a crucial gap to inform the audience. However, as Lynch and McGoldrick (2005) remark, when journalists exclude everything but *direct violence*, their only explanation for violence is previous violence (revenge). The only solution, then, is more violence or punishment. In contrast, peace journalists strive to show how people have been blocked and deprived in everyday life as a way of explaining how the conditions for violence were produced. In the coverage examined here, zero-sum orientation also reinforces war journalism framing. The incident is portrayed simply as a power struggle between Israeli commandos and activists or between Israel and Turkey. Therefore, in this struggle only one side can benefit from the outcomes of the conflict.

An example of the focus on visible effects can be seen in *The Jerusalem Post* news report from June 1, 2010. By relying on the commandos’ accounts, and without giving any background information about the reasons for the confrontation, the main concern in the article appears to narrate the conflict to show the visible effects of violence:

They [commandos] immediately encountered fierce resistance as they were attacked by activists armed with bats, knives and metal pipes (...) the commandos first responded to the violence with crowd dispersion measures, and after almost an hour of scuffles, during which a number of soldiers were wounded -- some of them stabbed or shot -- the commandos were given permission to use live fire. At one point, activists succeeded in stealing a handgun from one of the soldiers, leading to an escalation in violence (Katz, 2010c).

A number of *Ha'aretz* news pieces also emphasized the conflict areas by relying on the commandos' accounts. One of the news reports, from June 4, explores the how the commandos were battling terrorists. Captain A. explains: "There were hundreds of people on the deck. In my estimation, between 50 and 100 of them were terrorists. (...) They would jump on us from doors and windows with batons and knives. At this stage, we all stood with guns and fired at anyone coming at us with means or intent [to harm]" (Pfeffer, 2010a). However, he emphasizes that the commandos fired "very selectively" and most of the passengers who were aimed at by the commandos were "only wounded" (Pfeffer, 2010a).

The coverage of the event by Turkish newspapers focuses on the confrontation and its visible effects, mostly by relying on the accounts of the activists. Additionally, *Today's Zaman* also provides a few news reports which are based on direct journalist witnessing. For instance, photographer Kürşat Bayhan writes the details of the operation, as well as his 30-hour detention in Israel's Beer-Sheva Prison with other journalists:

Soldiers opened fire from the helicopter using live bullets. We were taking photos the entire time up until that point. While hurrying to the press room, I saw someone on the floor; he had been wounded in the shoulder. Then, while passing by Room Two, there was a woman giving her husband a heart massage while yelling, 'please don't die, please don't die' (Bayhan, 2010).

Bayhan also explains that once the commandos boarded the ship, the journalists started to hide their photographs: "I placed a small card containing some photographs under my tongue. As a result, I did not speak much during the 17 hours the card was in my mouth. Unfortunately, the doctor at the prison we were taken to confiscated the card during my health check".

In addition to Bayhan's own news report, *Today's Zaman* used journalist accounts

in three different news reports. For instance, Elif Akkuş, a reporter from the state-run Turkish Radio and Television Corporation (TRT), describes the aftermath of the attack as “a lake of blood” and says that Israeli officials seized all of her belongings:

Helicopters were above us and bullets flew everywhere. Those were very difficult moments. Blood was everywhere. (...) Being a journalist there meant nothing to them. The only thing I have now is my passport. We knew that we would encounter something extraordinary, but we did not expect this (Journalists aboard aid convoy, 2010).

Hürriyet Daily News also used journalist accounts twice. A news report on June 3, 2010, gives details about “premeditated murders” on the Mavi Marmara through activists’ and journalists’ accounts. After being released from Israeli detention and deported to Turkey, *Sydney Morning Herald* journalist Paul McGeough says: “Israeli boats had circled the flotilla like hyenas hunting animals in the night before moving in suddenly” (Activists' eyewitness accounts detail Israeli raid on Gaza aid ship, 2010). McGeough also describes the incident as “very ugly” and the atmosphere as “testosterone-driven”. News reports which are based on journalist eyewitnesses, in both *Today’s Zaman* and *Hürriyet Daily News*, indicate that these accounts are not different from activist accounts, as they too focus on visible effects and contain strong war journalism features.

Peace-oriented journalism

Even though war journalism is dominant, the coverage also provides examples of *peace-oriented* journalism, although not in all of the sources chosen for this study. *The Jerusalem Post* has a strong, patriotic war journalism; it is hard to find any voices critical of the incident and policies towards Palestinians. *Ha’aretz* provides a number of *peace-oriented* news reports, editorials, and op-ed pieces which are highly critical of the

military operation and the Israeli government's policies. In his column on May 31, 2010, Aluf Benn criticized the military operation and recommended a national inquiry to reveal the Israeli government's failings:

The government failed the test of results; blaming the organizers of the flotilla for causing the deaths by ignoring Israel's orders to turn back is inadequate. Decisions taken by the responsible authorities must be probed (Benn, 2010).

Benn also brings up many crucial issues: the many peaceful and diplomatic ways to avoid a confrontation with the Gaza flotilla; Israel's deteriorating relationship with Turkey; the deepening problems of Israel's Arab minorities; and the purpose of the Gaza siege. Instead of drawing out the debate of who attacked who first, the column examines the causes and outcomes of the incident in a broader perspective. Another news report in *Ha'aretz*, from June 5, 2010, depicts peaceful protests across the world against the blockade and the killing of activists. The article mentions that during a big protest in Paris, members of the French Jewish Union for Peace walked alongside Arabs to show their solidarity with Palestinians. Michel Bontemps, a French Jew, indicates that the blockade is counter-productive for Israel, while Youssef Ben Derbal, another French national, adds that showing solidarity with the Palestinians does not mean one is a terrorist, as Israel has claimed (Thousands demonstrate across the world, 2010).

Likewise, the Turkish coverage contains various examples of *peace-oriented* news stories. One example comes from the June 11, 2010 edition, which published a letter containing multiple peace journalism aspects. What makes this letter so interesting is that it was written by Ronen Shamir, an Israeli sociologist. Shamir writes that many Israelis are upset by the ongoing Gaza blockade and Israel's unwillingness to put an end to its occupation; he also mentions that many Israelis lamented losing a long-time ally

through this conflict with Turkey:

On the night that a few fascist brigands burned the flag of Turkey in front of its embassy in Tel Aviv, a thousand of us stood in front of the Ministry of Defense, denouncing the attack on the Mavi Marmara. Last Saturday, on June 5, commemorating 43 years of occupation and committed to its termination, 10,000 Jews and Arabs marched on the streets of Tel Aviv. (...) Yet I wish to convey to the Turkish people that there are quite a few of us here, Israeli Jews and Arabs, who keep on protesting and demonstrating and fighting for peace and friendship in the Middle East (Shamir, 2010).

Unlike many news reports in *Today's Zaman*, which portray Israelis as one homogenous entity to be condemned, this letter gives voice to empathetic and understanding Israelis, serving to humanize the 'other'. The existence of this type of opinion is especially crucial in times of conflict because it may help to reduce the tensions between conflicting sides. Instead of presenting the incident as an Israeli-Turkish conflict, a *Today's Zaman* column mentions the other main stakeholders who could play a significant role in finding a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian issue:

Provocative acts must be avoided by all parties, whether transporting aid or controlling borders. (...) If the aftermath is handled coolly and responsibly by all sides, this latest incident, even with its casualties, could provide an opportunity for peacemaking, coexistence and prosperity in the region rather than further escalation of conflict, so that people can stop killing Palestinians, Arabs, Israelis and Turks, or Europeans, or Americans (Çetin, 2010).

Additionally, to bring peace to the region, Çetin suggests abolishing the blockade and establishing independent international monitoring. He feels that the international community needs to re-examine its tactics and policies towards this issue. This column reflects peace journalism's tactic of seeing conflict as an opportunity for human progress. As Lynch and Galtung (2010) note, through conflict we can find new ways to act; by being imaginative and creative, we can transform the conflict to reach peaceful solutions.

Hürriyet Daily News uses relatively less patriotic and more *peace-oriented*

language. Its coverage focuses on not only the confrontation but also on the broader problems of Palestinians struggling under the blockade and the occupation. An editorial from June 2, 2010, points out that the Gaza blockade is illegal according to UN resolutions and that international law should concentrate on the “central crime” in Gaza:

Those responsible for the Gaza flotilla attack must be held to answer, but the overriding legal issue in our view is the blockade of Gaza itself. (...) This blockade is illegal, pure and simple. It is a violation of repeated United Nations resolutions demanding its end. It is also a violation of Article 33 of the Fourth Geneva Convention which makes collective punishment an international crime (We must focus on the central crime in Gaza, 2010).

The editorial also quotes from Gideon Levy of *Ha'aretz*, who said that Israel is not Turkey's enemy and that there are many voices in Israel that share Turkey's grief. The editorial does not simplify the crisis into an Israeli-Turkish conflict, but rather highlights the blockade's impacts on civilians; furthermore, the article looks at alternatives to end the blockade. Instead of dehumanizing the Israeli side, it presents a peaceful Israeli voice and gives a chance for readers to empathize with Israelis.

Propaganda-Oriented vs. Truth-Oriented

Another feature of war journalism found in the coverage is the *propaganda-orientation*. This type of article focuses on the other side's untruths and supports 'our' cover-ups and lies (Galtung, 1998). Lynch and McGoldrick (2005) notice that there are certain key claims which recur in propaganda, such as “we are under threat, we are left with no alternative, we are taking on evil-doers” (p.95). These types of propaganda claims obfuscate some crucial issues, such as the causes and impacts of conflict, in favour of the government's proposed point of view. The main difficulty faced by journalists is that propaganda claims are difficult or often impossible to verify or disprove. The definition of propaganda from peace journalism's framing is exemplified through the

statements from Israeli politicians presented in *The Jerusalem Post* and *Ha'aretz*. The coverage shows that Israeli politicians often used propaganda claims (such as Israel is threatened by terrorists, Israel is under an existential threat or the world is against Israel) to justify the killing of activists and harsh policies towards Palestinians. Additionally, the alleged links between Al-Qaeda and the IHH, as well as the existence of firearms used against soldiers on the deck (which were never found by Israel), are repeated in the Israeli newspaper coverage. These allegations usually originated with Israeli official sources and intelligence reports. The Israeli Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center played an especially important role during the crisis and released many videos and photographs to support Israeli claims.

The Jerusalem Post largely presents Israeli propaganda claims without question, and justifies the deadly military operation. On June 4, 2010, a news feature voiced the Israeli army's claims that those killed were "mercenaries and hired by the radical Turkish Islamic group the IHH". An interesting feature of the story is the attempt to personally link the Turkish PM Erdoğan with terrorists: "Erdoğan is a known supporter of the IHH and there are suspicions in Israel that he, or other government officials, may have personally instructed the passengers on board the Mavi Marmara to violently attack the soldiers" (Katz, 2010d). This information, which appears to have been served to newspapers directly by the Israeli army, can be read as a response to Erdoğan's criticisms and accusations towards Israel of state terrorism.

The coverage of *Ha'aretz* also makes use of different propaganda claims and propaganda videos released by the Israeli army. A news report, published on June 11, 2010, bases a report on footage from the interrogation of the Mavi Marmara captain. A

montage of the footage was released by the Israeli Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, and the captain's statements support Israeli arguments. Captain Mahmut Tural explains:

[the activists] were cutting the steels and chains. And I said to the chief officer, he collected all of them and put it in the radio room. They [the activists] were preparing [a violent welcome] to the soldiers (Gaza flotilla captain: Activists prepared attack against IDF raid, 2010).

Another *Ha'aretz* news report matches the classic *we are under threat* claim of war propaganda. During his visit to the commandos who conducted the operation, Defence Minister Barak argues that “we live in the Middle East, in a place where there is no mercy for the weak and there aren't second chances for those who don't defend themselves. You are fighting for your lives” (Barak: In the Middle East, there is no mercy for the weak, 2010). This perspective inevitably ignores any peaceful solution and justifies all violence in the name of survival.

In response to the allegations from Israeli newspapers, Turkish newspapers used statements originating with Turkish politicians, official forensic reports (which detail the close and multiple shootings suffered by activists), and customs reports (to show that there were no weapons on board), as well as statements from the IHH officials. A *Today's Zaman* news report from June 1, 2010, gives voice to Erdoğan, who defines Israel's military operation as a “war crime” and the killing of nine activists as “state terrorism”, stating: “Israeli government, in lying, using deception, engaging in bloodshed and massacring the innocent, was damaging the people of Israel most. (...) We are sick of your lies. Be honest”. (No one should test Turkey's patience, 2010). Another *Today's Zaman* news report from May 31, 2010, presents the IHH's counter-claims. An IHH official, Ahmet Mercan, defines the military operation as a unilateral war against

unarmed civilians. Moreover, he claims that “the assault has shown that Israel is not a state or a society. It is a terrorist organization” (Israeli assault on Gaza flotilla draws sharp reaction, 2010).

Propaganda-oriented journalism is also visible in the *Hürriyet Daily News* coverage. The June 3 edition points out the alleged connection between Israel and the separatist Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK), which is fighting against Turkey:

There are increasing speculations, ambiguously supported even by the [Turkish] interior minister, that Israel’s notorious Mossad intelligence agency might have increased its collaboration with the separatist Kurdistan Workers’ Party, or PKK, terrorist gang and particularly the PKK attack on the Iskenderun naval base in which seven [Turkish] soldiers lost their lives the very same night Israel staged the bloody attack on the “Freedom Flotilla” might have been contracted by the Mossad (Kanlı, 2010b).

In opposition to war journalism’s cover-ups and propaganda, peace journalism suggests a *truth-oriented* journalism which exposes not only untruths and cover-ups on ‘their’ side but on all sides. Therefore, it rejects a reliance on official sources and military officials during conflict reporting and emphasizes using a critical perspective with background information to analyze the conflict and reveal constant propaganda messages. While the *Jerusalem Post* coverage does not provide any examples, the *Ha’aretz* coverage provides some pieces with *truth-oriented* framing. These news pieces don’t blame activists and Turkey; instead, they examine the Israeli government’s propaganda efforts to cover up their failure during the military operation.

In his column from June 3, 2010, famous Israeli journalist Gideon Levy criticizes the government’s propaganda efforts and Netanyahu’s “the whole world is against us” argument. As the peace journalism model requires, Levy rejects the propaganda efforts and tries to show how the government’s claims are baseless:

After the saws and knives seized on the Marmara have been publicly exhibited, we will be able to convince ourselves once and for all that there is indeed a danger lurking in every alley, an Al-Qaida operative on every ship, weapons on every deck -- and even that the Marmara was an existential threat. (...) Of course, no one will demand to see the guns that the activists are alleged to have fired, or the video footage in which Israeli soldiers are seen firing, or the confiscated photographs taken by journalists. For us, the pictures of the severe beatings that the IDF Spokesman's Office has released are enough (Levy, 2010).

The Turkish news coverage also displays *truth-oriented* journalism frames. For instance, an op-ed in the June 4, 2010, edition of the *Today's Zaman* says that “even the fact that some of the ‘humanitarian aid workers’ turned on the soldiers with a rather unpeaceful array of knives and clubs is no justification for shooting to kill” (Oz-Salzberger, 2010). This remark is important because, generally in the coverage, the resistance of activists is presented as self-defence, with no critical analysis. The column also touches on the blockade and suggests that “moderate Israeli citizens, who were not involved in the flotilla incident, should lower their heads in shame for their government’s act and then proudly meet the gaze of those Palestinians who are willing to talk peace”. As suggested by peace journalism, the article attempts to expose untruths on all sides and calls for a peaceful solution (Oz-Salzberger, 2010).

Finally, in *Hürriyet Daily News*, columnist Murat Onur explains the major mistakes of the Israeli and Turkish sides that led to the crisis. Onur notices that Turkey completely ignored the fact that some passengers actually engaged in active resistance by using knives, iron sticks and slingshots. Also, he points out that the Turkish government dismissed the responsibility of the IHH its motives (Onur, 2010). These remarks expose the Turkish government and the IHH’s victimizing discourse and highlight certain untruths on the Turkish side.

Elite-Oriented vs. People-Oriented

As Galtung (1998) indicates, war journalism is also *elite-oriented*; it represents ‘our’ points of view and ‘our’ suffering by relying on information from elite and official sources. Therefore, by presenting the ‘truth’ solely through the lens of official sources, journalists become little more than a mouthpiece. Not surprisingly, the coverage from the first week of the crisis was dominated by articles focused on what happened on the Mavi Marmara ship. Later on, the main discussion shifted to Israel’s own investigation into the incident and to the international pressure on Israel to allow a UN inquiry. The primary voice was given to politicians, senior army officers, diplomats, UN representatives, and international law experts, all of whom are seen as elite in the peace journalism model. In these types of articles, Israeli and Turkish official sources repeat the views of their officials and blame each other in order to strengthen their position on the international stage.

On June 18, 2010, a feature story from *the Jerusalem Post* contained an interview with the deputy commander of the Israel Navy, Rani Ben-Yehuda, who commanded the military operation. He repeats the official Israeli view, blaming the activists and explaining how the commandos walked into a well-planned trap: “There was a clever group of terrorists on the ship who took advantage of the humanitarian platform and planned to kidnap, injure and kill Israeli soldiers. No innocent people were killed, only the terrorists” (Katz, 2010e). This *elite-oriented* and patriotic story displays many features of war journalism. First of all, it serves as a mouthpiece for the army commander to blame activists and justify the killing of nine people. It also ignores the other side and paints them as terrorists.

The *Ha'aretz* coverage likewise provides considerable *elite-oriented* journalism. Many of its articles place an emphasis on the UN's demands for an international investigation and detail Israel's arguments for rejecting such an investigation. A news report in the diplomacy section from June 6, 2010 talks about the UN's international inquiry calls; the only voices heard in that article are those of politicians and diplomats. Michael Oren, Israel's ambassador to the U.S., says: "We are rejecting an international commission. We are discussing with the Obama administration a way in which our inquiry will take place". Additionally, the article shifts the focus from the killing of the activists to the activists' "terror connections", stating:

The prime minister said, he told Ban that some of the passengers (...) were members of an extremist terror-backing Turkish organization. He stressed that any investigation into the event should determine who organized these extremists, who funded them and supplied them with equipment, and how they ended up on the ship (Ravid, 2010b).

Today's Zaman news report from June 1, 2010, prominent Turkish jurists, think tanks and politicians condemn Israel and support Turkey's official points of view.

Professor Hasan Köni uses Erdoğan's arguments to comment on the incident:

The Israeli military, however, opened fire on unarmed activists. This is a war crime. This is also a crime against humanity. All Israeli state officials are now 'responsible' for what has happened in terms of international criminal law (Jurists: Israeli flotilla assault violation of international law, 2010).

Similarly, on May 31, 2010, a news report from *Hürriyet Daily News* only gave a voice to leaders from Turkey's ruling and opposition parties, as well as some political analysts. Due to this choice of sources, the article became another platform for the condemnation of Israel. While Hüseyin Çelik, the spokesman of the AKP (the Turkish ruling party) said "our relations with Israel will never be the same", Deputy Prime

Minister Bülent Arınç described the attack as “piracy”. Devlet Bahçeli, the head of the Nationalist Movement Party, called Israel’s attacks “barbaric” and said they should not be left unreciprocated (Raid on flotilla puts final nail in coffin of Turkish ties with Israel, 2010). Again, this article only mentions the suffering of the Turkish side and continues to vilify Israel.

In contrast to *elite-oriented* journalism, peace journalism places an emphasis on women, children, the aged, minorities, and the vulnerable. Peace journalists are also required to name all evil-doers and to find alternatives to official sources such as peace groups, peaceful political parties, and so on. A *Ha’aretz* op-ed from June 11, 2010, written by Henry Siegman (the former director of the American Jewish Congress), indicates that the main question is not who was the first to attack the Mavi Marmara, but rather Israel’s occupation policies and their impact on Palestinians. Siegman rejects the claim that the world’s condemnation of Israel is reminiscent of the widespread distrust of Jewish people during Hitler’s regime, an opinion voiced by some Israelis. Siegman shifts the focus from who was the first to attack to the real issue: Israel’s occupation policies and its impacts on Palestinians:

A million and a half civilians have been forced to live in an open-air prison in inhuman conditions for over three years now, but unlike the Hitler years, they are not Jews but Palestinians (...) Fully 80% of Gaza’s population lives on the edge of malnutrition, depending on international charities for their daily nourishment (...) Particularly appalling is that this policy has been the source of amusement for some Israeli leaders, who according to Israeli press reports have jokingly described it as ‘putting Palestinians on a diet’. That, too, is reminiscent of the Hitler years, when Jewish suffering amused the Nazis (Siegman, 2010).

Today’s Zaman and *Hürriyet Daily News* include numerous stories about the activists and their families which contain victimizing and emotive language. However, there are also *people-oriented* examples. A *Today’s Zaman* news report published on

June 13, 2010, turns the reader's attention to forgotten people of Gaza. This is the only article in the Turkish coverage which gives a voice to ordinary Gaza people:

Zaher is 28 years old (...) He explains that Gaza is connected to the outside world only through the Rafah border crossing, which has been open only three days in a month since 2006 and which is not sufficient for the passage of thousands of people. He adds that aid to Gaza is checked by Israel before being sent to them and that there is difficulty in finding even the most basic foodstuffs and that what they can find is very expensive. Noting that the power is gone for eight hours a day in Gaza, he offers two words to describe their feelings: despair and isolation (Kılıç, 2010).

This news report is an important one because, although the international flotilla was organized to help the people of Gaza, only one of the above *Today's Zaman* news reports actually provided a platform for their voices. It is a noteworthy example of peace journalism ideals.

Victory-Oriented vs. Solution-Oriented

According to the last category of Galtung's (1998) table, *victory-oriented* journalism conceals peace initiatives and focuses on treaties, institutions, and controlling society. In contrast to *victory-oriented* journalism, *solution-oriented* journalism highlights initiatives with the aim of building a peaceful culture and society. After a conflict ends, *victory-oriented* journalism leaves for another conflict area and returns only if the old conflict flares up again. *Solution-oriented* journalism, in contrast, attempts to contribute to peace-building after the conflict ends. The flotilla incident wasn't a conflict between two armies or groups, and it didn't result in any ceasefire or treaty. Therefore, by its nature, it is unlikely to lead to *victory-oriented* coverage. The coverage examined in this analysis provides some partially *solution-oriented* articles which discuss ways to ease the tension between Israel and Turkey and to find a peaceful solution to Israeli-Palestinian problems.

While *The Jerusalem Post* didn't publish any *solution-oriented* examples, the

Ha'aretz coverage offers some news pieces which propose and defend peaceful solutions to the conflict. An editorial from June 4, 2010, remarks on the increasing tension between the two countries and maintains that Turkey isn't Israel's enemy. The editorial highlights peaceful ways to prevent possible confrontations in the future, provides a historical background of the bilateral relationship, and suggests that the Israeli government should immediately rehabilitate its relations with Turkey. Additionally, it calls for lifting the blockade and suggests bringing Turkey closer to the region's political processes (Turkey is not an enemy, 2010). These recommendations are important steps towards reducing the tension between the two countries and towards bringing peace to the region; therefore, the editorial can be defined as solution-oriented.

In *Today's Zaman*, the *solution-oriented* articles tend to focus on the Israeli-Palestinian problem. A column from June 2, 2010, argues that the incident could be an opportunity for Israel to break the blockade and start working towards a solution:

There is a consensus of opinion in the international community that the Palestinian issue can be solved only through a two-state solution (...) The two-state solution is the only insurance against a three-state outcome. So why does Israel insist on maintaining the blockade of the Gaza Strip? Why doesn't Israel try to 'win' this region instead of allowing its opponents to use the unacceptable humanitarian situation there as a weapon against Israel? (Dedeoğlu, 2010).

Finally, the June 11 edition of *Hürriyet Daily News* proposes some peaceful solutions in the wake of the flotilla incident. Dalila Mahdawi, an expert journalist on human rights issues, recommends that instead of using the flotilla incident as an excuse for exchanging fiery political rhetoric and accusations, the incident should be used as an opportunity to persuade both Palestinians and Israelis to return to the negotiating table once and for all:

Violence and finger-pointing is unsustainable -- only a decisive agreement will

protect the rights of the Palestinians and provide assurances to the Israelis. The two sides must accept the inevitability of peace and coexistence, and the international community must help them achieve that (Mahdawi, 2010).

Chapter 5: Transforming War Journalism into Peace Journalism

In this chapter, I will try to demonstrate that Israeli and Turkish newspapers' inflammatory reporting practices -- or their war journalism tendencies -- are not the only option for reporting the Gaza flotilla incident. Ideally, journalists would also adopt peace journalism principles from the outset in all aspects: research, reporting, interviewing and production of stories at the time of the incident. To examine the feasibility of using peace journalism principles, I will rewrite a selection of the articles from my study using peace journalism techniques and conflict analysis. I identified three main themes in the coverage used for this study: (1) what happened on the Mavi Marmara ship?; (2) accusations between Israel and Turkey; (3) calls and debates on the UN investigation into Israel's takeover operation. For each theme, I selected representative war journalism articles from the coverage (i.e., four articles per theme). These articles can be found in the appendices. Articles relating to theme 1 are in Appendix A, theme 2 in Appendix B, and theme 3 in Appendix C. Subsequently, for each theme, I wrote one peace journalism article as an experiment. The aim of this section is to show that Israeli and Turkish newspapers' war journalism tendencies are not the only option to report the incident. In writing these articles, I drew upon two important guidebooks which also attempted to rewrite peace journalism stories: *Peace Journalism* (Lynch and McGoldrick, 2005) and *Reporting the World* (Lynch, 2002a). As it isn't possible to re-report on an incident that occurred almost three years ago, in rewriting the articles I drew on materials in the original newspaper coverage as well as information from sources such as TRANSCEND International, the UN, and various NGOs, peace groups and government websites. These alternative sources are identified in the accompanying references.

Alternative Peace Journalism Story 1

Peace activists across the world demand the removal of the Gaza blockade after Israeli takeover of the Gaza flotilla

In the aftermath of the Israeli takeover operation of six international ships carrying humanitarian aid and 680 pro-Palestinian activists who intended to break the Gaza blockade, the confrontation is being described quite differently by the Israeli government and activist groups. The operation -- which resulted in the deaths of nine Turkish activists, and wounded dozens of others, including ten Israeli commandos -- took place in international waters, about 130 km from the Gaza coast. Since eyewitness accounts from both sides are subjective, what happened on the ship is subject to dispute and interpretation.

Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak expressed his regrets for the victims, but also blamed the organizers of the flotilla for the fatalities and described them as “extremist supporters of terror”. Similarly, Israeli army sources claim that once the commandos came on board the Mavi Marmara, they were met with the resistance of activists armed with bats, knives and metal pipes. In response, the commandos first used crowd dispersion measures, and then, only after approximately one hour of confrontation in which some soldiers were wounded, did the commandos start to use live ammunition (Katz, 2010c). The army sources also claim that two commandos were wounded by gunshots fired from activists and that three commandos were taken captive for a short period of time. In addition to some pistols and rifles taken from commandos by activists, the army sources allege that activists had also brought their own weapons on board and used them against soldiers (Harel, 2010). On the other hand, officials from the Turkish

Customs Undersecretariat rejected these claims from the Israeli army, stating that: “all passengers that boarded the Mavi Marmara ship were screened and that not a single passenger was in possession of any weapon” (Baş, 2010). Moreover, Turkish PM Erdoğan pointed out that since the flotilla was carrying volunteers and bringing aid supplies in accordance with international shipping rules, it was unacceptable to equate unarmed civilians with terrorists. Erdoğan noted that Turkey has always stood against anti-Semitism and offered protection to the Jewish people when they were victims of violence and persecution and “it was now the Israelis’ turn to do the same” (No one should test Turkey’s patience, 2010). Bülent Yıldırım, the leader of the Turkish IHH, also disputed the Israeli government’s claims that the activists had links to terror groups. Yıldırım argued that the passengers on the ship engaged only in civil resistance and that the IHH called on the passengers not to allow Israeli soldiers aboard (IHH chief tells of violence, chaos on international aid ship, 2010). Nilüfer Çetin -- one of the Turkish activists aboard the Mavi Marmara, along with her one-year-old baby -- told reporters in Istanbul that she was aware of the possible danger in joining the trip; however, she said that “there are thousands of babies in Gaza. If we had reached Gaza we would have played with them and taken them food” Greeks from Gaza aid flotilla return to Athens, 2010).

The Gaza flotilla crisis is not a simple confrontation between Israeli soldiers and activists. To understand the crisis, it is important to look at the roots of the Israeli-Arab struggle and historical claims which date back centuries. Especially after the First World War, Jewish people started to return to their ‘promised land’ after centuries of discrimination and persecution. This mass migration brought colonization, expulsion and

military occupation to the Palestinians. However, the Israeli people faced many wars and conflicts started by their Arab neighbours. After Israel gained independence in 1948, the armies of Syria, Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon and Iraq tried to wipe out Israel; however, they were defeated and Israel expanded its territories. The tension between Israel and these countries its neighbours caused another war in 1967. Israel once more defeated them and invaded Gaza, the Sinai Peninsula in Egypt and the Golan Heights in Syria. Moreover, Israel took the West Bank and East Jerusalem. In 1973, Egypt and Syria attacked Israel to take back their territories. As a result, Israel gained more lands beyond the 1967 ceasefire lines. In 1979, Egypt and Israel signed a peace treaty, returning Sinai to Egypt (A history of conflict, n.d). After a long occupation, Israel unilaterally withdrew from Gaza in 2005, but it continued to control Gaza's borders. Tensions rose when Hamas won the 2006 Palestinian legislative elections and took control of the territory in 2007. Israel immediately imposed a naval, air and land blockade on Gaza. Additionally, from December 2008 to January 2009, the Israeli army carried out Operation Cast Lead against Hamas, which resulted in more than 1,000 Palestinian deaths and led to the destruction of Gaza's economic infrastructure (Migdalovitz, 2010).

Israel is not alone in imposing blockades on Gaza. Egypt has imposed a similar blockade since Hamas won the Palestinian legislative election in 2006 (Shokr, 2010). In addition to the U.S. and several Western countries, many Sunni-Muslim Arab countries, including Egypt, mistrust the Hamas regime --which is supported by Iran -- even though Hamas won the Palestinian legislative election in Gaza. By imposing the blockade on Gaza, Egypt has put additional pressure on Hamas to sustain the legitimacy of the Palestinian National Authority, headed by the Fatah leader Mahmoud Abbas.

The Gaza flotilla incident caused the world's attention to shift to the blockade and its impact on 1.5 million Palestinians. An Al Jazeera feature story remarked that Gaza depends on outside humanitarian aid and on tunnels running between Gaza and Egypt. The blockade's impact is felt in every corner; power cuts last up to eight hours a day, the poverty rate is 70 per cent, and the majority of people cannot afford the basic foodstuffs, including clean water. Due to this level of poverty, many children survive on a simple diet of bread, yogurt and water. Additionally, Gaza's infrastructure has, for the most part, been destroyed by various Israeli operations. Due to sewage-contaminated water, many children suffer from skin and respiratory diseases. Moreover, when people get sick, they are usually unable to seek help because they are not allowed to leave for treatment (Joudeh, 2010). Zaher, 28, is one of the Palestinians who struggles under the blockade. He thinks that the attention drawn to their plight by the flotilla is more valuable than the aid it carried. In his opinion, the outside world is not really aware of what happens in Gaza and Zaher uses "despair" and "isolation" to describe their situation under the blockade (Kılıç, 2010).

An unforeseen consequence of the incident is that the reaction to the military operation has united eleven Israeli and Palestinian peace groups, including Ta'ayush, the Arab-Jewish Partnership, Rabbis for Human Rights, and the Israeli Committee against House Demolitions. In a joint statement, these groups declared their support for the Gaza flotilla. The statement described the flotilla as "a courageous act of political protest, an expression of worldwide solidarity with the Palestinian people and rejection of Israeli practices of oppressive occupation, as manifested in the continuing siege and blockade of Gaza and the imposition of collective punishment upon a mass of civilians". The peace

groups described Gaza as “a giant open air prison where a million and half residents deprived of their fundamental rights” (Peace groups express support for Gaza Freedom Flotilla, 2011).

The operation also sparked protests in Israel. One of the protesters in Jerusalem, Yosefa Raz said “something terrible has happened and I feel provoked. After what has happened, I think people felt that something more public needed to be done. We wanted to be seen and heard” (Selig, 2010). Similarly, protests occurred across the world -- in the U.S., France, Sweden, Italy, the U.K., Egypt, Indonesia, Australia and many other countries, including Turkey -- to protest the operation and the ongoing blockade. In almost every city in Turkey, people took to the streets in protest. In Istanbul, around 10,000 Turks carrying Palestinian flags gathered in front of the Israeli consulate to protest the incident (Israel widely condemned in street demonstrations across the world, 2010).

Dr. Dov Shinar, an expert on peace journalism at Israel’s Netanya Academic College, stated that not only should the flotilla have been allowed passage, but also that Israel will not emerge from this unharmed. Shinar points out that the Israeli government created public doubt by stressing “We do not know what the flotilla contains and who is on the ships”. This implied a move towards right wing and security-oriented politics, Shinar added, remarking that the operation and its aftermath demonstrated the importance of discussing the problem itself: that Israel and Hamas have to find ways to communicate (Korkut, 2010).

As a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, linguist, philosopher and political critic Noam Chomsky suggests a two-state settlement along the internationally recognized (pre-June 1967) borders. He indicates that the basic principles of this solution

have been accepted by virtually the entire world: the Arab states (which call for the full normalization of relations), the Organization of the Islamic Conference (including Iran) and relevant non-state actors (including Hamas). Chomsky says that this line was first proposed at the UN Security Council in January 1976 and backed by the major Arab states. However, it was rejected by Israel and the U.S. (Chomsky, 2010).

Johan Galtung, founder and director of the TRANSCEND international peace network, also suggested a solution for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, one that is neither a one-state nor a two-state solution. Instead, he proposes a six-state solution in which Israel's right to exist and the Palestinians' right to be represented by their own independent state are both respected. Based on the 1958 European Economic Community, Galtung suggests a union of Israel and its five Arab neighbors (Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt and Palestine) which would be recognized by the international community (Galtung, 2012).

The killing of civilians during the takeover operation was condemned by the United Nations (UN) Security Council after ten hours of closed-door negotiations in New York. The Council called for a "prompt, impartial, credible and transparent investigation conforming to international standards" (UN Council condemns deaths on Gaza flotilla, 2010). Additionally, the UN's Human Rights Council voted to create an independent fact-finding mission to investigate the violations of international law during the operation. However, Israel has rejected any investigation that would be conducted by the UN. Instead, it favours the U.S. proposal of launching an Israeli investigation with the participation of outside observers (Israel defiant as UN rights body sets up probe into raid, 2010).

Commentary 1

The first theme I identified in the coverage was ‘What happened on the Mavi Marmara?’ Articles that fall into this category were mainly published during the first week of the crisis and tend to narrate the details of the conflict. As examined in the previous chapter, this type of article reports the confrontation in a very limited space and time perspective. In other words, the reader isn’t fully informed about the background to the conflict and its impacts on the Israeli-Palestinian issue or Israeli-Turkish relations. Additionally, these articles tend to rely on accounts from either the commandos or the activists to explain the confrontation. The incident is presented as a battle ground and Israeli and Turkish voices accuse each other of being murderers and terrorists. Demonizing and emotive words dominate the articles, another indicator of war journalism. Also, while the main goal of the flotilla was to help the people of the Gaza strip, the articles ignore this crucial point and shift the attention to the confrontation itself. Drawing on Lynch and McGoldrick (2005), it can be said that the coverage tends to disregard certain key issues: (1) the impacts of the Israeli blockade and military occupation on the daily life of Palestinians; (2) the background of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; (3) Israeli and Palestinian public opinion regarding the abolition of the blockade and a peaceful solution; (4) ways to break the cycle of violence; (5) ideas on how to resolve the conflict or any image of a solution; (6) images of peace and co-operation between Israelis and Palestinians.

In the first alternative peace journalism article, I tried to touch on these missing points as well as to explain the confrontation without using war journalism practices. My first step was to write an inclusive title, without focusing only on the conflict, and

without using any demonizing, accusatory or emotional words. An example of a war-journalism title can be seen in the *Jerusalem Post*: “Nine dead in vicious conflict aboard Mavi Marmara”.

In the first and second paragraphs of the revised article, I provided the agreed-upon facts, explained the incident without glorifying the violence by presenting both Israeli and Turkish perspectives. To reflect the reality of conflict coverage, I included in my article certain allegations made towards activists, such as the use of firearms against commandos. Moreover, I included statements from Israeli and Turkish politicians, even though these statements contain certain war journalism elements, along with the activists’ accounts. Although these statements included certain demonizing labels, I preferred to use rather moderate statements in my own writing. In the third paragraph, I briefly overviewed the historical Israeli-Palestinian problem and the roots of the Gaza blockade. In the fourth paragraph, I showed that in addition to Israel, Egypt has also imposed a blockade and some Sunni-Muslim countries mistrust Hamas and support the Palestinian National Authority. In the fifth paragraph, I focused on the rather invisible *structural violence* caused by the blockade and by Israeli operations. I explained the humanitarian crisis in Gaza by giving voice to Palestinians struggling under the blockade. This paragraph contains certain key features of *people-oriented* journalism. In the sixth paragraph, I intended to break down war journalism’s common *Israeli vs. Palestinian* approach by mentioning unified Israeli and Palestinian peace groups and their calls for peace and the abolition of the blockade. In the seventh paragraph, I discussed the peaceful anti-blockade and anti-occupation protests in Israel, Turkey and across the world, an indicator of the peace journalism approach because it sees conflict as a

problem. In the eighth paragraph, I cited the Israeli professor, Dov Shinar, in order to help explain how the operation is harmful for Israel and to show propaganda methods that were used by Israel to influence public opinion. In the ninth and tenth paragraphs, I mentioned some alternative solutions. For decades statesmen and elites have been suggested various solutions; however, I preferred to present Chomsky and Galtung's suggestions for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Both suggestions have solid grounds; however, it remains to be seen if they will be accepted by Israel and its neighbors. Finally, in the eleventh paragraph I briefly explained the reactions to the deadly takeover operation by the United States and the investigation calls to Israel.

Alternative peace journalism article 2

Turkish and Israeli civil societies raise their voices and demand the immediate abolition of the blockade as details of military operation emerge

In the wake of Israel's military operation of the Gaza flotilla, thousands of people took to the streets in cities across the world, including in Israel and Turkey, to protest the operation and to demand the abolition of the Gaza blockade. The flotilla had intended to break the naval blockade and was bringing humanitarian aid to the Palestinians who have for the past three years been living under a strict blockade from Israel and Egypt. Thousands of people, many carrying Turkish and Palestinian flags, gathered in Istanbul's Taksim Square to protest the operation, showing solidarity with the Palestinians. Members of Turkey's Jewish community also condemned the attack, saying they share Turkey's feelings about the killings of activists on the aid ships. Their statement read: "We are saddened to learn that a military operation was launched against the Mavi Marmara. We share the reactions the operation sparked in our country" (Israeli assault on

Gaza flotilla draws sharp reaction from Turkish civil society, 2010).

Pro-Palestinian protests also took place in Israel, where members of peace groups, including the Hadash Party, gathered in Jerusalem's Paris Square the day after the military operation. The activists protested the naval raid on the flotilla as well as the ongoing Israeli blockade. Tzachi, a student at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, said "we are here to protest the violent takeover of the Gaza flotilla ships and we wanted to voice our strong opposition to the illegal blockade of Gaza" (Selig, 2010).

According to Louise Arbour, president of the International Crisis Group, it is easy to condemn Israel's attack on a flotilla of aid bound for Gaza as unnecessary, ill-conceived and disproportionate. The hard thing to do, she says, is to "understand how this incident is an indictment of a much broader policy toward Gaza for which the wider international community bears responsibility." Arbour pointed out that for years many countries have supported the blockade in the hope of overthrowing Hamas; as a result, today Gaza "suffers from sky-rocketing unemployment and poverty, and lacks medicine, fuel, electricity, food, and other essential commodities" (Arbour, 2010). Similarly, Dalila Mahdawi, a British journalist who focuses on human rights issues, said that lifting the blockade and an independent investigation into what occurred on the flotilla are essential actions, but these are only part of the broader actions needed to end the 62-year-old conflict. Mahdawi says violence and finger-pointing are unsustainable and Israelis and Palestinians should immediately return to peace talks: "only a decisive agreement will protect the rights of the Palestinians and provide assurances to the Israelis. The two sides must accept the inevitability of peace and coexistence, and the international community must help them achieve that" (Mahdawi, 2010).

Even before the flotilla sailed towards Gaza, the Israeli government had started to claim that some activists as well as the IHH had connections to terrorist organizations. According to a report from Israel's Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, the activists who resisted the commandos' actions were well-trained and backed by the Turkish government. The report also claims that the Turkish PM Erdoğan was personally involved in the flotilla's preparations, and that 40 hard-core IHH activists, who had boarded the ship earlier in Istanbul, had skipped the security checks (Pfeffer, 2010). In addition to these claims, Israel's Deputy Foreign Minister Danny Ayalon argued that the flotilla's organizers had ties to global jihad, Al-Qaida and Hamas (Lazaroff & Lappin, 2010).

The Turkish Customs Directorate has rejected Israel's claims and stated that all passengers (42 of them boarded from Istanbul port and 504 from Antalya) were screened and that not a single passenger was in possession of any weapon. During the search of the Mavi Marmara, advanced metal detectors, X-ray scanners and trained sniffer dogs were used (Soncan et al., 2010). On the other hand, the activists admitted that during the confrontation, they incapacitated 10 soldiers, took their guns and threw these weapons into the sea. An IHH official argued: "we would have been right if we used them against them. You are legally innocent if you take the weapon of the person who is attacking you" (IHH chief tells of violence, chaos on international aid ship, 2010). The flotilla was organized by the Turkish IHH and the Free Gaza Movement and Israel's claims of the involvement of Turkish PM Erdoğan or his government cannot be verified. However, it can be said that the Turkish government didn't prevent the flotilla from sailing to Gaza, despite the known risk of confrontation after the Israeli army's warnings of using force to

stop the flotilla. After the Turkish officials ensured that there were no firearms on the ships, the aid flotilla was allowed to leave. To clarify the Turkish government's stand, Deputy Prime Minister Bülent Arınç described the flotilla as a "pure civil society initiative" and stated that the government wasn't involved in the organization of the flotilla. The Turkish government's strategy against Israel is based on political, legal and humanitarian dimensions. Turkey plans to mobilize the international community to create pressure to lift the blockade on Gaza and the West Bank. Additionally, Turkey will try to bring the operation to the international courts. Finally, it will use the operation as a tool to highlight the problems of Palestinians (Raid on flotilla puts final nail in coffin of Turkish ties with Israel, 2010).

According to an investigative *Der Spiegel* article by Yassin Musharbash, Israeli officials couldn't provide strong evidence to back up their claims. The author reported that these accusations are often difficult to verify because they are based on classified intelligence information. For instance, the Israeli army released a list of passengers who were "known to be involved in terrorist activity". One of them, Fatimah Mahmadi, was accused of having smuggled "forbidden electrical components" to Gaza. Another passenger, Ken O'Keefe, an internationally well-known peace activist, was accused of being a "radical anti-Israel activist and operative of Hamas". In the article, Musharbash says that the accusations towards the IHH are based on a limited number of sources and are not well-grounded. The first source is a CIA report from 1996 on the links of Islamic welfare organizations. This report mentioned the IHH but its conclusions were vague. The second source was a study from the Danish Institute for International Studies, which claimed in 2006 that IHH members had trained for armed combat in Afghanistan, Bosnia

and Chechnya, and that firearms had been found in its headquarters in Istanbul in 1997 by Turkish security forces. This same study mentions phone calls between alleged Al-Qaida contacts and weapons shipments to militants. Additionally, it cites a summary of testimony given by Jean-Louis Bruguière (a French judge) at a U.S. trial in April 2001. Bruguière mentioned a link between the IHH and the defendant in the trial; the defendant was later convicted of having plotted to attack Los Angeles International Airport for al-Qaida in 1999 (Musharbash, 2010).

The IHH completely rejects these allegations of terror links. Osman Atalay, a member of the acting board of the IHH, argued that passengers on the vessels were 100-percent peaceful activists. Yavuz Dede, deputy head of the IHH, claimed that these alleged ties to terror groups were part of a “smear campaign by Israel” and the IHH was found to be not guilty by a Turkish court. Referring to the 1997 police raid on the IHH headquarters, Dede claimed that the group was framed because of the political situation in Turkey at the time; in the end, nothing came out of the trial after the raid. The IHH President Bülent Yıldırım was acquitted and released from prison after three months (Öğret & Songün, 2010).

The U.S. doesn't recognize the IHH as a terrorist organization and has declared that it cannot validate any connection between the IHH and Al-Qaeda (US says cannot validate claims of IHH ties to al-Qaeda, 2010). An American terrorism analyst, Evan Kohlmann, succinctly summarized the situation in the previously mentioned Spiegel article: “On one side, you have the Israelis insisting that everyone on board is a terrorist. On the other side, you have the Turks insisting that everyone on board is an innocent peaceful humanitarian. It doesn't take much insight to recognize that neither side is being

very straightforward”.

Due to the Gaza flotilla incident, the international community has stepped up criticism of the Gaza blockade, which has focused the tension between the governments of Israel and Turkey. However, Israel is not the only state imposing an embargo on Gaza. Palestine’s fellow Arab neighbour Egypt has imposed a blockade since 2006, when Hamas won the Palestinian legislative elections. The Egyptian blockade has further deteriorated Gaza’s humanitarian and economic situation. Several human rights groups have described the current situation as the worst humanitarian crisis in Gaza since its military occupation by Israel in 1967 (Shokr, 2010).

In addition to the blockade, the current water shortage is a vital issue for Palestinians who often complain about their denied water rights. Many analysts believe that water is a key issue in the Israel-Palestine conflict, and that this shared problem could lead to cooperation between the two nations in the long term. One such example is the group Friends of the Earth Middle East (FoEME), which brought together Israeli, Palestinian and Jordanian environmentalists to build sewage-treatment plants and to replace old water pipes in the occupied Palestinian territories. “We should be using water as a tool for peace and to bridge the gap of confidence in the region -- not to create a water crisis,” says FoEME’s Palestinian director Nader Al-Khateeb. He says that thanks to the project, 29 cross-border communities have worked together to solve their water problems over the past ten years (Aburawa, 2011). Further complicating the issue, Syria supports anti-Israeli militant groups, including Hezbollah, in the hopes of taking back the Golan Heights. During the 1967 Six-Day War, Israel occupied the Golan Heights, which today supplies a third of Israel’s water. In terms of water supply, Syria is in a critical

position because, after losing Golan, Syria depends on the Tigris and Euphrates rivers where Turkey has various dam construction projects known as GAP (Southeastern Anatolia Project) (Lynch, 2002a). By the end of this project, Turkey will gain near total control over the two main rivers of the Middle East. This once more shows that the path to peace in the Middle East is very complex and there are various conflicting parties. Therefore, peace could be reached through regional cooperation, respect for each nation's security concerns and a fair solution to the water problem, with Turkey's involvement.

Commentary 2

The second group of articles tends to focus on the accusations between Israel and Turkey after the incident. Although there were activists from 38 countries in the flotilla, the incident and its aftermath were predominantly presented as a power struggle between Israel and Turkey. Moreover, the coverage relied on official sources and politicians' accusatory statements, with little to no background information. Israeli newspapers repeatedly highlighted the terror connections of the IHH and the activists, including their supposed connections with Al-Qaeda. For instance, in the selected *Ha'aretz* article in Appendix B, the main source is the Israeli army and the Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center. The article paints the picture not of the flotilla activists but of an organized group which came for war. Also, Erdoğan was presented as an enemy that personally helped this violent group to attack Israeli soldiers. Similarly, the selected *Jerusalem Post* article mentions that the well-trained activists were not carrying identity cards or passports, but did have \$10,000 in cash. The article puts forth establishment propaganda claims (made without proof) that this money came from the Turkish government. As part of their demonization, the activists were presented as part of a

suicide mission. On the other hand, Turkish newspapers also demonized Israel and statements from politicians dominated the coverage. As can be seen in the chosen *Today's Zaman* article, the use of inflammatory language and the condemnation of Israel is prevalent in Turkish coverage. Anti-Israel slogans such as down with Israel and Turkish soldiers to Israel were used, and Israel was classed as a terrorist organization. Likewise, the selected *Hürriyet Daily News* article presents the incident as the final nail in coffin of Turkish ties with Israel. By relying on official sources and statements from politicians, the article promotes Turkey's official policy.

Overall, the second group of selected articles don't contain certain key aspects that could have made these articles examples of peace journalism: (1) a discussion of Israeli and Turkish public opinion; voicing not angry protesters, but moderate voices from both sides which demand better relationships between two countries, the abolition of the blockade and a peaceful solution to the Israeli-Palestinian issue; (2) ideas on how to ease the tension between Israel and Turkey and how to see the incident as an opportunity to contribute to the solution of the Israeli-Palestinian problem;(3) an alternative, critical look towards the alleged terror connections of peace activists; (4) an examination of Egypt's overlooked blockade on Gaza; (5) water inequality in the Middle East, including Turkey's ongoing dam-building projects on Tigris and Euphrates rivers.

The first paragraph of my article provides factual information about the blockade, the flotilla incident as well as global anti-blockade protests. Moreover, the voice of Turkey's Jewish community is presented; this point of view is very important. Since certain articles in the Turkish coverage present the Israeli government and Jewish people as one entity, this coverage could provoke anti-Semitic feelings towards the Turkish-

Jewish community. The statement from Turkey's Jewish community could have helped to make a distinction between the Israeli government's policies and peaceful Jewish people. Likewise, in the second paragraph, the anti-blockade protest in Jerusalem presents moderate-peaceful voices in Israel who demand a peaceful solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the blockade. By giving voice to Turkey's Jewish community and the peaceful protesters, the first two paragraphs display certain *peace-oriented* and *people-oriented* journalism features. The third paragraph points out that that, after the killing of activists, it is easy to condemn Israel and debate about international investigations; however, the key point is the ignored role of the international community in the humanitarian crisis in Gaza as well as the immediate need for peace talks between Israel and Palestine. The paragraph presents the incident as an opportunity to contribute to the solution of the Israeli-Palestinian problem; therefore, it demonstrates *peace-oriented* and *solution-oriented* journalism characteristics. The fourth paragraph mentions Israel's main accusations and the terrorism claims made towards the activists. These claims, based on Israel's Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, link the Turkish PM Erdoğan personally with the IHH. The fifth paragraph gives a voice to Turkish officials as a response to the Israeli government's accusations, and also clarifies the position of the Turkish government in the organization of the flotilla. Turkish officials have rejected any connection between the Turkish government and the IHH as well as existence of any firearms on board. The paragraph also briefly mentions the future strategy of Turkish government towards Israel. The sixth paragraph tries to demonstrate how certain claims made by the Israeli government are not well-grounded and were used as a propaganda tool. By quoting *Der Spiegel's* investigative story, I explained the origin

of the Israeli claims. I also provided the IHH's perspective in the seventh paragraph. The IHH rejects the allegations and describes them as a "smear campaign by Israel". The eighth paragraph firstly shows the position of the U.S. government about the IHH, as well as showing that neither the Israeli and nor the IHH claims are straightforward. In the ninth paragraph, I pointed out an overlooked but important fact in the coverage: Egypt's blockade on Gaza. The paragraph shows that while the international community criticizes Israel over its blockade, Egypt has imposed the same type of blockade on Palestinians. The tenth paragraph highlights a key factor in the Israeli-Palestinian and Israel's disagreements with its Arab neighbours: water inequality in the Middle East. The paragraph explains how increasing water scarcity which can be exploited as an opportunity for cooperation between Israel and its neighbouring countries.

Alternative peace journalism article 3:

Pressure on Israeli government increases after it rejects UN proposal for international Gaza flotilla probe; Jews and Arabs increase their calls for a peaceful solution

The Israeli government has rejected calls from the United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to allow an investigation by an international commission into its military operation on the Gaza flotilla. During the takeover operation, which created a confrontation between the Israeli marines and pro-Palestinian activists, nine activists were killed and dozens others wounded, including Israeli commandos. After the operation, Israel has faced pressure from the international community and peace groups to abolish its blockade on Gaza. However, Israel has repeatedly claimed that its commandos used lethal force only in self-defence after facing resistance from activists.

Instead of an international commission, Israel wants to conduct its own internal investigation, which would include international observers. After speaking with the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon (who had suggested a panel headed by former New Zealand Prime Minister Geoffrey Palmer, as well as officials from Israel, Turkey and the U.S.), Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu said “we need to consider the issue carefully and level-headedly, while maintaining Israel’s national interests as well as those of the Israel Defense Forces”. Regarding the easing of the Gaza blockade, Netanyahu said that “our desire is to facilitate the transfer of civilian and humanitarian goods to the civilian population, while preventing the transfer of weapons and warfare materials” (Ravid, 2010).

During his address to the UN Security Council, Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu demanded that the council condemn Israel’s actions, and called for an international investigation to find out who was responsible for the deaths (Solomont, 2010). According to the Turkish Foreign Ministry, which has already accepted the UN proposal, an internal Israeli investigation “cannot be impartial, fair, transparent and credible” because, “Israel doesn’t have the authority to assign a national commission to investigate a crime perpetrated in international water” (Ankara: Israel’s own inquiry far from global expectations, 2010). While the Arab League condemned the attack and claimed that it negatively impacted regional security and stability, the U.S. special envoy for Middle East Peace George Mitchell said “the tragedy of last week cannot be allowed to spiral out of control and undermine the limited but real progress that has been made” (Israel rejects international investigation, 2010).

Israel’s rejection of an international investigation can be connected back to a

critical UN report, known as the Goldstone Report, on Israel's Operation Cast Lead on Gaza in December 2008. The UN fact-finding mission in 2009 found evidence that both Israel and Hamas had committed serious war crimes and crimes against humanity. Additionally, the report condemned Israel's policy towards Gaza and rejected Israel's argument of self-defence to stop Palestinian rocket attacks from Gaza (UN mission finds evidence of war crimes, 2009). Richard Falk, the UN special rapporteur on Palestine issues, is skeptical about the Israeli government's internal investigation into the Gaza flotilla operation, pointing out that Israel's previous investigation in 2009 had ignored both their own use of lethal weapons and the serious allegations of human right abuses levied against Israel. Instead, the probe found that the most serious violation was a credit card stolen from a Palestinian by an Israeli soldier (Ankara: Israel's own inquiry far from global expectations, 2010).

While a new UN investigation on the Gaza flotilla operation is being debated on the international stage, 37 Palestinian NGOs from Gaza have issued a joint open letter to express their situations under the blockade. The statement declares: "We Palestinians of Gaza want to live at liberty, to have the right to travel and move freely. We want to live without fear of another bombing campaign that leaves hundreds of our children dead and many more injured or with cancers from the contamination of Israel's white phosphorous and chemical warfare. We want to live without the humiliations at Israeli checkpoints or the indignity of not providing for our families because of the unemployment brought about by the economic control and the illegal siege". The joint letter also called on the international community to stop the blockade on Gaza and the West Bank, and to end the Israeli occupation and other war crimes (Open Letter from Gaza, 2010).

In the meantime, Israeli peace groups have increased their efforts to contribute to a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian issue after the Gaza flotilla incident. Jerusalem Peacemakers is a group which gathers grassroots activists and Jewish, Christian, Muslim and Druze religious leaders to work towards the Israeli-Palestinian reconciliation. As part of their efforts, Rabbi Menachem Froman and Sheikh Ghassan Manasra visited the Turkish PM Erdoğan to present to him a peace plan suggestion. The same peace plan will be also presented to Israeli and Palestinian governments as well as to the governments of Arab countries, European countries, Russia and the U.S. (Jerusalem peacemakers visit Turkish PM over peace plan, 2010). Rabbi Froman's plan proposes the establishment of two countries: Israel and Palestine. According to Froman, the Israeli-Palestinian issue is political as well as religious and efforts for peaceful solution "won't succeed without a religious, spiritual basis". He says "the key to peace is peace in Jerusalem", therefore his plan proposes a shared Jerusalem by Muslims, Christians and Jews (Kershner, 2008).

While the bilateral relations between Israel and Turkey only began in the 1940s, the two nations' common history dates back to the 15th century. When Jewish people were expelled from Spain, the Ottoman Empire welcomed them in 1492. For centuries, under Turkish rule, they enjoyed relative prosperity and tolerance compared to many parts of the Christian world. Jews also played key roles especially in bureaucracy, diplomacy and the empire's socio-economic life (Guleryuz, n.d). These relationships continued after the independence of Israel in 1948. Turkey was the first Muslim country to officially recognize Israel in 1949 and bilateral relations increased from 1949 to 1990 due to common foreign policy interests. From the 1990s to 2002, major problems with its neighbors, including Iran, Iraq, and Syria, motivated Turkey to approach Israel; the two

countries became strategic allies and business partners. In 2002, Tayyip Erdoğan came to power with a parliamentary majority and Israeli-Turkish relations became more focused on the Israeli-Palestinian issue (Tiryaki & Yirik, 2010). Turkey's recognition of Hamas as a political party cooled relations. More specifically, Israel's renewed blockade of Gaza and Operation Cast Lead on Gaza in 2008 displeased the Erdoğan government. Prior to the offensive, Turkey had been mediating peace talks between Israel and Syria; however, Turkey had not been informed by Israel of this operation (Inbar, E. 2011). Shortly thereafter, Erdoğan participated in a conference with Israeli President Shimon Peres at the Davos Economic Summit, where Erdoğan harshly accused Peres because of the Operation Cast Lead. In return, Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Ayalon insulted the Turkish ambassador by deliberately seating him on a lower chair during a meeting, further damaging the relationship (Kosebalaban, 2010).

This historical overview shows that Israel and Turkey, two of the most mature democracies in the region, share common values, interests and have various reasons to cooperate to bring peace to the Middle East. In addition to its role of negotiator between Israel and its Arab neighbours, Turkey could also contribute to peace by using its plentiful water resources as a tool to promote stability and peace. The Israel/Palestine Center for Research and Information indicates that water scarcity is a major concern for Israel, Palestine, and Jordan. Recent studies have shown that Israel needs 30 percent more water than it currently has in order to meet the needs of its population in 2020. Today, many Palestinians have very limited access to water and two hundred villages in the West Bank are without a connection to a water grid. In Jordan, water is generally available only 12 hours per day. According to the Israel/Palestine Center for Research and

Information, Turkey, with its rich fresh water sources, is the only practical candidate to solve the regional water scarcity problem. In 1986, Turkish President Turgut Özal first proposed the “Peace Water Pipeline” project which aimed to bring Turkish water through pipelines to Syria, Jordan, Palestine and the Gulf States. In addition to this unrealized project, in 2004 Turkey agreed with Israel to sell its water through the Manavgat River Project which aimed to provide Israel with 50 million cubic litres of water annually for twenty years. However, the project was later cancelled due to high transportation costs and cooling diplomatic relations (Water Imports, 2010). The Israel/Palestine Center for Research and Information report once more underlines how water scarcity can be used as an encouraging force for the Middle Eastern countries to cooperate and reach a peaceful solution to their problems.

Commentary 3

The third group of articles focused on the aftermath of the Gaza flotilla incident, the reactions from the international community, and the debates regarding the United Nations’ investigation proposal. This type of article predominantly gave voice to government members, politicians and elite sources. Inevitably, Israel and Turkey’s official views were over-represented. After the killing of nine peace activists in international waters, an impartial investigation under the UN umbrella was seen as a necessity and was debated on the international stage. However, the newspapers chose to cover this debate by focusing on the confrontation on the Mavi Marmara, without providing any context. In the *Ha’aretz* news report (an example of *elite-oriented* journalism), Israeli PM Netanyahu and Israel’s ambassador to the US were the main voices. They explained why Israel rejected the UN proposal for a Gaza probe. As

expected, Netanyahu accused the activists of being members of an extremist, terror-backing Turkish organization and explained the use of lethal force as self-defense. In addition to official Israeli sources, Turkish FM Davutoğlu and Irish FM Micheal Martin were also cited. However, this doesn't change the *elite-oriented* nature of the article. The *Jerusalem Post* article, heavily dependent on elite males, can be also described as elite-oriented. The reactions and discussions after the Gaza incident were presented in the article from the perspectives of various politicians and diplomats. While Turkey and Arab countries accused Israel of being a terrorist state and condemned their actions, Israel tried to present itself as a victim and to convince the international community that the killing of activists was legitimate, and the operation was part of its fight against a terrorist regime (Hamas) which controls Gaza.

In the *Today's Zaman* article, the main voices were mostly Turkish politicians who condemned Israel's actions and sought an international investigation into the incident. The article also contains statements from U.S. and European diplomats on the international investigation debate. This *elite-oriented* article is missing a look at the suffering of ordinary people in Gaza or an exploration of public opinion in Israel or Turkey. Finally, the *Hürriyet Daily News* article reported Israel's rejection of international investigation by relying elite sources, such as the Arab League. In contrast to the Israeli perspective towards the activists and the calls for investigation from the diplomatic world, the Arab League described the incident as state piracy and terrorism. Again, this article does not contain any references to the difficulties faced by the ordinary people affected by the blockade. Also, it is missing a discussion of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict or any background information about the Israeli-Turkish relationships.

Overall, these *elite-oriented* news reports, along with other *elite-oriented* examples in the coverage, are missing various important factors which could help them become examples of peace journalism: (1) a critical look at the Israeli rejection of the international investigation; (2) focus on vulnerable groups affected by the blockade and by the Israeli-Palestinian conflict which actually created the Gaza flotilla incident; (3) statements from grassroots peacemakers, instead of elite politicians and diplomats who have different political priorities; (5) a discussion of the historically close relationships between Jewish people and Turks; and (6) an exploration of Turkey's rich water resources and how this could contribute to the peace in the Middle East.

The first paragraph of my article summarizes the position of the Israeli government which was at the time under heavy international pressure to accept the UN probe and lift the Gaza blockade. The paragraph also contains statements from Israeli PM Netanyahu, without becoming a mouthpiece for the Israeli official sources. The second paragraph introduces the important stakeholders in the issue such as Turkey, the UN, the Arab League, and the U.S. Without making them the dominant voices in the article, their stances are presented as they are important in easing the tension or finding possible solutions. Additionally, the paragraph examines both Turkey's position towards the UN's international investigation commission proposal and Israel's rejection of the investigation. The third paragraph looks critically at the situation and explores the reasons behind the Israeli rejection of an international inquiry. The UN website and the *Today's Zaman* article provide me with some essential background information about the Israeli rejection. A previous UN report had accused Israel of committing war crimes in 2008; consequently, Israel is unwilling to face another critical report. This part of the

article can be described as *truth-oriented*, as it sheds light on cover-ups and discusses the real reasons behind the rejection of the probe. Unlike the first three paragraphs, the fourth reflects the voices of vulnerable groups affected by the blockade and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In other words, it focuses on *structural violence*. The joint open letter -- which presents 37 different NGOs or civic associations from Gaza -- shifts attention to the problems of ordinary Palestinians. The letter examines the struggles that ordinary Palestinians face in their everyday lives as well as their calls for justice. The fifth paragraph gives voice to grassroots peacemakers from Israel and Palestine who work together to contribute to a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian issue. The *Jerusalem Peacemakers* initiative gathers religious leaders from different groups and sees religion as a force for peace. This paragraph demonstrates that differing religious beliefs don't need be an obstacle to reaching a peaceful solution. Additionally, this section helps to humanize opposing groups instead of demonizing them. Therefore, it shows certain features of *solution-oriented* journalism. The sixth paragraph demonstrates that Jewish and Turkish people have, historically, had a close relationship and share a common history which dates back to the 15th century. This section explains the rising tensions between the two countries in a historical context. The paragraph also indicates that the Gaza flotilla incident isn't the only reason behind the deteriorating relationships. The last paragraph, based on a report from the *Israel/Palestine Center for Research and Information*, highlights, like in the second article, how water scarcity is a key factor for Israel's policies towards Palestinians and other neighbours; Turkey's possible role in solving this problem is also explored. The paragraph shows that Turkey is a relatively water rich country and its water resources may be a tool for regional cooperation and

peace.

Overall Commentary

This chapter aimed to answer my third research question: Can war journalism articles be rewritten using the principles of peace journalism and still meet the recognized standards of good journalism? What differences would emerge from such an exercise? In order to find an answer to this question, as well as to test the viability of the peace journalism model in the present case study, I identified three main themes: (1) what happened on the Mavi Marmara ship?; (2) accusations between Israel and Turkey; (3) calls for and debates on a UN investigation into Israel's takeover operation. For each theme, I wrote one example article, transforming the original war journalism articles using peace journalism principles; I also aimed to write publishable and realistic peace journalism pieces. An important limitation while rewriting these stories was that the incident happened almost three years ago; therefore it was not possible to do any original reporting. I was required to work with the published sources available. Thus, I relied predominantly on information and quotes from the selected stories and the rest of the coverage. Additionally, I drew material from various online sources: news websites (such as *BBC*, *Al Jazeera*, *the Independent*, *Der Spiegel*); TRANSCEND International; the UN, Israeli and Palestinian NGOs; peace groups; and government websites. To rewrite these three peace journalism articles, I relied on more than 40 news sources.

Transforming war journalism into peace journalism is increasingly practiced in certain universities or peace institutions by journalist instructors such as McGoldrick or Lynch. While completing this chapter, I drew upon their guidebooks *Peace Journalism* (Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005) and *Reporting the World* (Lynch, 2002a). Similarly, this

experiment showed that war journalism articles can be rewritten through the use of peace journalism principles and conflict analysis. I noticed that some themes lent themselves more easily to peace journalism framing than the others. For example, the first theme (what happened on the Mavi Marmara ship?) forced me to focus on certain visible effects of the conflict and to give more voice to the official sources. However, the second theme (accusations between Israel and Turkey) more easily lent itself to peace journalism framing. I was able to focus on the populations affected by the conflict and demonstrate the roots of the relationships and the conflict. I tried to avoid a two-sided war journalism narrative and did not have to rely on elite sources.

Finally, this experiment also showed that writing *peace-oriented* stories requires enough time, enough space and journalistic expertise. As a graduate student, I had the liberty to spend weeks on this chapter; to do research, find the sources and write the three peace journalism articles without any space limitation. Moreover, my experience as a reporter and my personal interest in the Gaza flotilla incident were facilitating factors while writing these stories. On the other hand, journalists -- like those who wrote the original stories -- work under the pressure of deadlines. Also, they have additional responsibilities and work on different stories from completely different topics. The print media's space constraint is also an important issue. It can be argued that at least 1,000 words are needed to fulfill the requirements of peace journalism in an article.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

This thesis has argued that the peace journalism model can offer alternative means for reporting conflicts and wars, although it faces theoretical and practical challenges. Peace journalism stems from the work of Norwegian peace researcher Johan Galtung, working with Mari Ruge, who published the pioneering work *The Structure of Foreign News* in 1965. The model emerged as a remedy to the shortcomings of the news media's war and conflict reporting practices. Galtung (1998) explains that peace journalism tries to depolarize issues by pursuing truths on all sides, and to de-escalate conflicts by highlighting peace and conflict resolution in equal proportion to violence. During this research project, I examined the coverage of the Gaza flotilla crisis in two English-language daily newspapers from Israel (*The Jerusalem Post* and *Ha'aretz*) and two from Turkey (*Today's Zaman* and *Hürriyet Daily News*) between May 31st and June 30th 2010, the first month of the crisis. The first research question was: How did the coverage of the Gaza flotilla crisis by *The Jerusalem Post*, *Ha'aretz*, *Today's Zaman* and *Hürriyet Daily News* reflect war journalism? To answer the question, I applied both textual analysis and quantitative content analysis to the coverage (405 articles in total). The analysis focused on the newspapers' provocative role in the crisis as well as story types, the production source of stories (wire stories or produced by newspapers' staff), the indicators of peace and war journalism and their relationships with each other.

The quantitative content analysis showed that in all four newspapers, war journalism framing predominates. In all of the coverage, 68.8 per cent of the articles could be classified as dominant war journalism framing, compared to 27.6 per cent peace journalism and 3.4 per cent neutral. The highest incidence of war journalism framing was

found in *The Jerusalem Post* (89.2%), followed by *Today's Zaman* (69.1%), *Ha'aretz* (64.1%) and *Hürriyet Daily News* (56.2%). Due to their editorial policies, which are usually consistent with the national policies of their governments, it was expected that there would be a high rate of war journalism in *The Jerusalem Post* and *Today's Zaman*. However, the dominance of war journalism framing in *Ha'aretz* was surprising, since *Ha'aretz* is known for its left-wing and oppositional editorial policy. Finally, *Hürriyet Daily News* provided the least amount of war journalism framing, due to its relatively neutral and oppositional editorial policy, as well as its high number of opinion and editorial pieces.

The analysis revealed that the most common war journalism indicator in the coverage was *reporting on visible effects of conflict* (29.7%). This type of story focused mainly on the confrontation on Mavi Marmara and its visible effects. The second most common indicator was *the reliance on leaders, official sources and elite as news sources* (29.4%). This reliance excluded ordinary people affected by the conflict, as well as alternative voices from the other side and created one-sided reporting, emphasizing a propaganda voice for 'us'. The third most common indicator was *the use of demonizing language* (12.5%). Demonizing adjectives and labels were used to help justify the killing of activists by Israeli commandos and created an enemy image.

In contrast, the most common peace journalism indicator was *reporting causes and consequences of the conflict* (29.5%). Instead of focusing on the visible effects of the conflict, these articles examined the causes of the confrontation and its impacts on ordinary people. *Non-partisan reporting* was the second most common indicator of peace journalism (15.2%). These articles show that avoiding partisan reporting is an important

step towards peace journalism. The third most common indicator was *the focus on ordinary people and their problems* (13.4%). As the peace journalism model suggests, this group of articles placed emphasis on the ordinary people: people affected by the Gaza flotilla confrontation, those affected by Israel's occupation and blockade on Palestinian lands, and peaceful groups from Israel, Palestine, Turkey and other countries.

Overall, the domination of war journalism framing can be explained by several factors. The first is a reliance on *war/violence-oriented* hard-news stories to report the confrontation. In the coverage, there is a strong connection between story type and war journalism framing. Hard-news stories tend to employ mostly war journalism framing (78.05 % war journalism, 17.2 % peace journalism, and 4.6 % neutral). Compared to hard-news stories, opinion pieces, op-eds and editorials show a relatively higher rate of peace journalism framing (50.4% peace journalism, 48.9% war journalism, and 0.8% neutral). Hard-news stories in the coverage reinforce a two-sided *war/violence* journalism narrative. However, opinion pieces, op-eds and editorials don't necessarily depend on official sources, don't need to report 'hot news' and the visible effects of the conflict. Therefore, this type of article can get away with not discussing the visible effects of the conflict and the two-sided narrative by drawing on a wider perspective. The analysis also reveals that, while reporting on the confrontation, both Israeli and Turkish newspapers relied on politicians, diplomats, elites and army officers which led to high instances of *elite-oriented* framing. Therefore, as claimed by the peace journalism model, Israeli and Turkish journalists tended to obtain their information from officially recognized and 'reliable' sources by highlighting 'our' side of the story, all in the name of objectivity.

Another point worth mentioning is the use of direct witnessing. In the coverage,

there are two main types of first-hand witness accounts: Israeli commandos (largely quoted by the Israeli newspapers) and pro-Palestinian activists (largely quoted by the Turkish newspapers). As mentioned earlier, this reliance created inflammatory language, demonization and one-sided narratives. To reduce this dependence and maybe to increase the instances of relatively neutral perspectives, first-hand accounts from Israeli and Turkish journalists could have been used to shed more light on this incident. The analysis shows that there weren't any reporters from *The Jerusalem Post* or *Ha'aretz* on the flotilla during its journey to Gaza or embedded with Israeli marines during the operation. On the other hand, there were more than thirty journalists -- who could be called 'embedded journalists'-- on the flotilla from different countries, including Turkey. For instance *Today's Zaman* published the accounts of its own photographer, Kürşat Bayhan, on the operation and his detention in Israeli prison with other journalists. In addition to Bayhan's own story, *Today's Zaman* and *Hürriyet Daily News* published a handful of other news reports, including the first-hand accounts of Turkish and foreign journalists. However, these accounts don't differ much from the activists' inflammatory statements and still contain some war journalism features. While it doesn't excuse inflammatory accounts, during the takeover operation, the journalists were handcuffed, detained and their equipment was confiscated. Therefore, the stories they told became similar to the accounts from the activists.

An additional factor which reinforces the domination of war journalism in the coverage is the reliance on Western wire services such as AP, Reuters and AFP. Of the 278 hard-news stories, 81(29.1%) originated with international new agencies such as AP, Reuters, and AFP as well as very few examples from Turkey's Anatolian News Agency

(wire stories: 76.5% dominant war journalism framing, 14.8% peace journalism, 8.6% neutral). As Lee (2010) points out, Western news agencies tend to report conflicts and violence more saliently than other news stories forms; therefore, journalists need to rethink the notions of hard news values and the inverted pyramid formula for reporting conflict. In addition to professional journalists, journalism schools and scholars should also rethink the issue. Every year, thousands of journalism students learn the inverted pyramid formula at universities as a standard news writing form. Peace journalism and conflict analysis techniques should be added to university curricula to equip future journalists with a variety of perspectives.

The domination of war journalism in the coverage can be also explained by the news media's presumed role of supporting national interests and government policies. Liebes (1992) explains that during conflicts, journalists face conflicting pressures of commitment to their own society and its fate, and loyalty to the demands and norms of journalism. Therefore, war coverage puts journalism and journalists to the test of choosing between patriotic enthusiasm and a distant stance. Similarly, the fourth filter of the propaganda model (Herman and Chomsky, 1988), *flak* (negative reaction to media coverage by public audience, power groups, institutions or governments) defines the pressure on news media to cover issues in certain ways. As the coverage from this study shows, all newspapers in some way reflected the expectations or sentiments of their audience after the confrontation.

In the present study, I also looked for the answer to the second research question which was: How could the techniques of peace journalism help journalists avoid these pitfalls and become independent of government and military sources during times of

conflict? As Aslam (2011) notes, although the peace journalism model has been gaining acceptance among scholars and journalists, the model is unable to provide a realistic solution for the problems of modern journalism. That is why, forty years after its emergence, the model hasn't been adopted by the majority of the news media.

If we consider the peace journalism model and its principles as a whole, it is clear that the model hasn't become the dominant approach in the news media over the past forty years. However, as explained in the literature review, the model consists of various principles, some of which could be incorporated bit by bit. Similarly, the analysis of the coverage showed that consciously or unconsciously, to some extent, newspapers already have adopted some peace journalism principles in their coverage, and this is a promising sign for the future of journalism. Peace journalism may help journalists avoid certain characteristics of war journalism practices in their daily routine. Journalists who have had peace journalism training could better avoid accusatory, demonizing, victimizing and emotive language by choosing alternative words and frames. They could also expand their range of sources and learn how to avoid 'us' vs. 'them' journalism and partisan reporting by giving voice to other stakeholders and ordinary people from a wider perspective. In other words, peace journalism could provide journalists with the tools needed to adopt a more peaceful tone and highlight peaceful solutions in their reporting. The use of conflict analysis is also an important tool for journalists. As Lynch and McGoldrick (2005) explain, conflict analysis skills make journalists capable of reporting conflict more accurately, identifying and restoring parts of stories about conflict generally ignored or marginalized, and taking responsibility for their inescapable involvement in the events and process on which they report. However, the challenges that peace

journalism faces can't be solved simply through better training, raising the awareness of journalists or using conflict analysis to understand the roots of the conflicts.

However, other aspects of peace journalism might be more difficult to incorporate. In their daily routine, journalists struggle with various complicated structural problems strongly related to the political economy of the corporate news media, the close relationship and mutual benefits between the news media and government officials, and the news media's relationship with other power groups. Therefore, as Shoemaker and Reese (1996) explain, today's media system gives little autonomy to journalists to free themselves from institutional and corporate interests. For instance, journalists rarely have enough freedom to pursue investigative stories which could be harmful to corporate interests or to the media outlet's relations with other power groups. This pressure creates an auto-control mechanism on journalists to cover issues in a certain way. Moreover, due to shrinking newsrooms, the responsibilities of journalists, especially print journalists, has gradually increased and journalists are now required to produce more content and updates for different media outlets which belong to the same media corporation.

One of the main structural problems that peace journalism faces is the dependence on official sources, as well as the pressure from the governments and militaries on news flow. These main issues have been examined by various scholars and journalists including Reese and Buckalew (1995), Shoemaker and Reese (1996), Wolfsfeld (1997), Bennett (2003), Naujaim (2004), Reese (2004), and Patrick and Thrall (2007). The peace journalism model warns against heavy reliance on official sources and suggests broadening news sources to give a voice to vulnerable groups. However, these suggestions would remain wishful thinking in today's corporate media system. As

Shoemaker and Reese (1996) explain, official sources provide a convenient and regular flow of information, which is efficient for journalists who work under the pressure of deadlines. For the mass media, this cooperation reduces the need for expensive specialists and extensive research. In other words, ‘reliable’ official sources provide irrefutable, ready-to-serve information to the news media. This is a mutually beneficial relationship and there is little chance for peace journalism to be adopted.

Also, it is worth mentioning that many reporters do not directly witness conflicts that they cover. Therefore, they require sources to provide that information. While using this information from different sides and sources, journalists consider the way that they understand the objectivity norm and the peace journalism model labels this type of journalism as *war journalism*. As Ross (2009) points out, “media’s dependence on powerful officials as sources of news and interpretation poses a significant direct threat to peace journalism practices, and that inclusion of divergent voices of dissonance *en passant* serves not to advance the goals of peace journalism, but to justify existing war journalism as *objective* reporting” (p.5).

The third research question was addressed in this study was: Can war journalism articles be reconstructed using the principles of peace journalism and still meet recognized standards of good journalism? What differences would emerge from such an exercise?

To answer this question, and to examine the viability of the peace journalism model, I selected a sample of war journalism articles under three main themes from each newspaper: (1) what happened on the Mavi Marmara ship? (2) accusations between Israel and Turkey, and (3) calls and debates on the UN investigation on Israel’s takeover

operation. Using the coverage as well as various other sources, I wrote three peace journalism articles. This experiment showed that war journalism articles can be rewritten through the use of peace journalism principles and conflict analysis.

An important challenge that I faced while rewriting these peace journalism stories was that the incident happened almost three years ago; therefore, it was impossible to do an original report. So, I had to use the published sources about the incident. At first, I tried to use information and quotes from the coverage. I then drew additional material from various online sources such as news websites, Galtung's TRANSCEND International, the UN, Israeli and Palestinian NGOs, peace groups and government websites. While rewriting these stories, I noticed that some themes lent themselves more easily to peace journalism framing than the others. For instance, the first theme (what happened on the Mavi Marmara ship?) forced me to discuss certain visible effects of the conflict and to give a voice to the official sources which have the detailed information about the confrontation. These factors inevitably reinforced the two-sided reporting. Similarly, the third theme (calls and debates on the UN investigation) reinforced again a two-sided, *elite-oriented* journalism, because the UN probe was, by its nature, debated among diplomats and politicians. However, the second theme (accusation between Israel and Turkey) was an easier topic with which to create a peace journalism article. I was able to focus on the populations affected by the conflict and demonstrate the roots of the relationships and the conflict. I could easily avoid a two-sided war journalism narrative and did not have to rely on elite sources. Additionally, by discussing water scarcity, I was able to broaden the scope of responsibility to include other regional actors such as Turkey, Syria, and Egypt.

As mentioned earlier, peace journalism requires, first of all, enough time, enough space and expertise. Free from the type of time pressure journalists face daily, I spent days on my research, finding the sources and writing the three peace journalism articles. However, journalists -- like those who wrote the original stories -- work under the pressure of deadlines. In times of crisis, they have to reach sources, get enough information, do research and write their story. It is highly probable that these journalists have also other responsibilities and work on different stories from completely different areas. Additionally, the print media struggle with space constraints. For instance, the hard-news stories examined in this study usually ranged from 300 to 700 words. This space limitation is an obstacle to writing a peace journalism article. Under this limitation, after providing the factual information and giving some official voices, it is very hard to focus on alternative voices, explore the roots of the conflict and examine its impacts, as peace journalism requires. It can be argued that least 1,000 words are needed to fulfill the requirements of peace journalism in an article. Another important point is that journalism is generally *event-oriented*; therefore, coverage tends to focus on the immediate events (incidents, conflicts, wars etc.) to explain its details. This *event-orientation*, generally reliant on official sources and elites, could easily leave aside crucial contextual details or background information about the incident. It can be argued that this approach is also related to the simplistic notion of objectivity that journalists employ during reporting conflicts.

The peace journalism model should reconsider the realities of news production and the mechanism of newsrooms as well as the relationships between commercial media outlets and powerful institutions. In other words, the peace journalism model should be

practical for journalists and marketable for the news media. Today, war journalism practices are dominant in the news media and will remain dominant unless a significant reform movement begins as Hackett (2006) suggests. By focusing on the core of the conflict, war journalism is profitable because it provides a rich content which includes clashes, tears, blood, emotion, victims, and dead bodies. This kind of content is believed to be attractive to audiences, and larger audiences attract more advertisers. This is a challenge which prevents peace journalism from being accepted by the mainstream media. It can be assumed that journalism has conditioned its audience to expect *conflict* and *event-oriented* coverage rather than avoiding focusing on the violence itself through highlighting peaceful solutions, drawing a broader picture with background, and presenting ordinary people. Therefore, reconditioning audiences according to the peace journalism principles will likely require large amounts of time and effort.

Examination of the peace journalism literature shows that there are few studies which examine the challenges and broader strategies for peace journalism to face dominant war journalism practices. One of the most important and inclusive studies was conducted by Hackett (2006). As a theorist, Hackett is able to connect peace journalism with other conceptual frameworks. He suggests that peace journalism “must translate its normative concerns, rooted in the discipline of peace research, into a strategy based on a theoretically-informed analysis of the governing logics of news production”. The author highlights three frameworks to examine the relationship between journalism and other relations and institution of power: (1) Herman and Chomsky’s propaganda model; (2) Shoemaker and Reese’s “hierarchy of influences” model; and (3) Bourdieu’s notion of journalism as a field. The first framework explains corporate and government influence

on the news media; however, it has been criticized as reductionist and functionalist. The second identifies five levels which have influence on news content and which help to assess pressures for and against peace journalism. Like the propaganda model, the hierarchy of influences model tends to be reductionist and obscures the coherence of journalism as cultural practice and form of knowledge production. Finally the third model, according to Hackett, “has the advantage of allowing conceptual space for both the structural influences of and on news media, as well as the potential agency and creativity of journalists”.

Hackett also proposes three important strategies needed in order for peace journalism to be successful from Bourdieu’s analysis of fields: The first is to reform the journalism field from within. Dedicated journalists should take the lead as educators in journalist training, as Lynch and McGoldrick do. Hackett also points out that journalists who work in the Western corporate media don’t have enough incentives and autonomy, a major obstacle to the realization of this reform. Alternatively, the author suggests that peace journalism can be adopted by societies, giving the examples of Rwanda or the former Yugoslavia where the news media provoked the enmities between ethnic groups. The second strategy is to build a new field; in other words, to create alternative media organizations supported by civil society, relatively insulated from corporate or state power. The third strategy’s aim is to change the environment of journalism through social justice movements which also demand a better media system in number of countries.

The emergence of new communication technologies and alternative online news sources certainly has the potential for the development and expansion of peace journalism. More and more alternative news sources are challenging the domination of

corporate media outlets and providing a platform for different groups to express themselves to millions of people. Moreover, these alternative news sources provide rich content for journalists wishing to write peace journalism articles. During this project, I found dozens of valuable alternative sources which could have been used by the Israeli and Turkish journalists during the crisis. Nearly every peace organization or group with little chance to be heard in the mainstream media uses its website to promote its perspective and reaction to events. Therefore, in seconds, journalists can access this information and use it to transform war journalism articles into peace journalism. The internet also provides a great opportunity for the print media to overcome the space limitation that hinders peace journalism. It has become increasingly common for newspapers to insert hyperlinks at the end of articles. This is a very practical way to overcome the space limitations and allow the reader to get further information about the topic, including background of the incident, additional interviews, maps, statistics, photos, videos, audio clips and more.

The peace journalism model emphasizes the potential role of journalists in conflicts and places a measure of responsibility on them to moderate or prevent violence. To do so, journalists are required to use conflict analysis to understand, analyse and transform the conflict by peaceful means. In other words, it is an alternative way for journalists to do “broader, fairer and more accurate ways of reporting” (Lynch, 2002). This new role adds to the responsibilities of journalists, requiring them to not only report on the conflict but also temporarily take on the roles of political analyst, historian, or sociologist.

As Lynch (2008) points out, in a conflict situation such as Afghanistan, the news

media usually fails to answer an important question (why) and argues that peace journalism could bridge this gap:

Why are the Taliban still a factor? Why do people in Afghanistan support them? Such questions are very rarely posed or answered in the media. Instead, their portrayal generally bears out what the novelist Gore Vidal said about Americans' stock view of their enemies - that they are driven to oppose the US simply out of 'motiveless malignity' (Lynch, 2008).

Advocates of peace journalism believe that the model could make a difference in conflict situations. If, through peace journalism practices, societies are given better access to balanced and accurate information, they might raise their voices to put pressure on their governments regarding policies. Moreover, peace journalism practices in the news media might lead to more peaceful arena where conflicting parties or countries could gather to find peaceful solutions to conflicts.

However, the crucial question is: Do the news media actually have enough influence on policy makers, powerful institutions, corporate interests or audience to mobilize them for peaceful solutions or policies? Or do the news media tend to determine their positions depend on its government's policies or other geopolitical forces? The coverage from the recent wars or military interventions in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Libya, as well as the uprising in Syria, show that the editorial policies of the mass media are very close to their governments'. This is a significant obstacle for the application of peace journalism in the news media.

Similarly, as Hanitzsch argues, the potential of journalism to contribute to the peaceful settlement of conflicts is limited. "The extent to which news media can

influence readers, listeners, viewers and users is highly dependent on the audience itself as well as on various social and cultural factors” (Hanitzsch, 2004.p. 491). Additionally, the author points out that freeing the world from crises, conflicts and other evils cannot be the primary task of journalism; it is the task of other social systems such as the government and the military. Considering the obstacles to peace journalism, such as the power of the institutions, governments, and interest groups, it seems as though the peace journalism model, in reality, does not have enough power to change conflict situations fundamentally.

Finally, this research project was limited to the first month of the Gaza flotilla incident and four English-language daily newspapers from Israel and Turkey. Therefore, further research is required to examine the domination of war journalism in Israeli and Turkish media outlets in the long term. I am especially interested in weekly and monthly news magazines. During my research, I noticed that in the peace journalism field, scholars tended to examine newspaper coverage (Fawcett, 2002; Lee and Maslog, 2005; Lee, Maslog and Kim, 2006; Perez, 2008; Shinar, 2009; Lee, 2010; Khan, 2011). I believe that an analysis of magazines, in which journalists enjoy a relative freedom of time and space compared to their colleagues working at newspapers as well as using different news types other than hard news, could give us different results.

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Appendix A

First theme: What happened on the Mavi Marmara ship? Original Stories

Ha'aretz – Israel Navy: 3 commandos nearly taken hostage in Gaza flotilla raid By Amos Harel, June 04, 2010

During Israel's takeover of a Turkish ship in the Gaza-bound aid flotilla this week, some passengers tried to take captive three commandos who lost consciousness as a result of the activists' blows, according to early findings of a navy investigation. The three were dragged into one of the passenger halls below deck and were held there for several minutes. After dozens of other commandos began searching the ship, the Mavi Marmara, the three soldiers regained consciousness and managed to join their comrades. Conversations with senior navy officers in the chain of command during the operation present a different view of the events on Monday. In Israel, the raid has been perceived as a failure, while abroad it has been derided as piracy or worse.

The navy rejects the claims that it was poorly prepared. Officials have been commending the commandos' performance in a situation in which they were confronted by dozens of activists who attacked them as they rappelled from helicopters. "They were terrorists - hired killers who came to murder soldiers, not to assist the residents of the Gaza Strip," said a navy officer. The operation on the Mavi Marmara began at about 4:30 A.M. on Monday. Because of the presence of hard-core activists including members of the IHH, the Turkish group organizing the aid convoy, most attention went to that ship. Navy chief Eliezer Merom and the head of the naval commandos, Lt. Col. A., were on vessels next to the ship. Lt. Col. A. climbed on the Mavi Marmara during the takeover. As seen on a video documenting the takeover, the first four commandos to rappel onto the deck were attacked by activists with bars, axes and knives. The fourth commando, K., saw his team leader on the deck, with a Turkish activist holding the pistol he had grabbed from him and pointing it to his head. K. jumped from the rope and managed to shoot the activist holding the gun. This happened 20 seconds after the first soldier landed on the deck.

The commanders of the first unit were hit by the mob as they landed. One of the soldiers managed to fix another rope, after there were problems with the original one, for 10 more soldiers to land. The commandos cared for the wounded and took over part of the upper deck of the ship. At this stage, six minutes into the operation, another force landed from a second helicopter, led by a major. At that point they realized that three commandos were missing and they began looking for them. A short while later the naval commando chief landed along with dozens more soldiers, some of whom climbed from boats. Others landed from a third helicopter. The search involved limited shooting, in the bridge and on the lower deck, until the three men were recovered. The head of the naval commandos gave orders by radio to use live fire, two minutes after the incident had begun.

Shots had been fired earlier, but Lt. Col. A. later explained that in his orders he wanted to make sure that the troops realized that "the mood of the incident had changed." The soldiers reported that the activists had fired on them during the confrontation and that at least two commandos suffered gunshot wounds. After the incident, 9mm bullet casings were found - a kind not used by the naval commandos. The Israel Defense Forces says

that during the operation a number of pistols and an M-4 rifle were taken from soldiers, but they believe that the Turkish activists had other weapons. The captain of the ship told the naval commando chief that the guns were thrown overboard before the ship was completely taken over.

The wounded activists were airlifted to Israel for treatment, some seriously hurt whose lives were saved by the evacuation. The IDF did not question the activists extensively because of the decision to release them. In conversations after the takeover, activists said they were surprised by the use of helicopters, even though the navy had used this method before. However, nothing else appears to have surprised them because international law requires sufficient warnings before ships are boarded.

Post-operation assessments have the number of hard-core activists involved in the fighting at between 60 and 100. It appears that they were well trained and experienced, especially in view of the arsenal found and code books used to pass on orders from group leaders. Among the rioters, in addition to Turks, were Yemenis, Afghans and one person from Eritrea. All were apparently experienced in hand-to-hand fighting. Some of them did not retreat when shots were fired. The operation involved a month of training, with dummy takeovers of a ship at sea with 50 soldiers performing the role of activists. The navy admits that it trained mostly for "a Bil'in type of opposition, but there was no feeling that this was going to be a walk in the park." He was referring to a village at the separation fence where demonstrations take place.

The navy says it needs to look into whether the psychological preparations of the force were sufficient, and whether it had emphasized an easier scenario that did not take place. The navy says it went over "incidents and responses" in preparation; these included opening fire at charging activists with melee weapons. In case of a threat to their lives, the commandos were ordered to shoot to kill even as they were on their way onto the deck. "The main gap between preparations and intelligence was that we did not know we would face dozens of rioters," a senior officer involved in the operation said. "This was not a disturbance that went awry. It was a planned ambush." Another officer added that "I still wake up at 3 A.M. and wonder how the hell we did not know more." Another officer said that "we became a little spoiled, as a society, expecting perfect performances."

According to a senior officer, "Under the circumstances, and I do not like the result, I think we did the best we could. We took care of five ships without injuries. On the sixth ship, we faced a harsh attack and killed nine saboteurs. "No real peace activist was injured. No soldier was killed, even though it came pretty close. In the end the ships are docked at Ashdod. It was very complicated and the result is near perfect.

The Jerusalem Post- Nine dead in vicious conflict aboard 'Mavi Marmara'. By Yaakov Katz, June 1, 2010

Dozens wounded, including 10 soldiers, in pre-dawn battle at sea; Israel says its commandos were brutally attacked before opening fire. The Israeli Navy's takeover of a flotilla of international aid ships headed to the Gaza Strip came to a dramatic end before dawn Monday, with nine activists dead and dozens wounded. Defense officials said that despite the outcome, Israel would continue to enforce the blockade on Gaza and use force if necessary to prevent activists' ships from reaching the Strip.

IDF naval commandos slid down ropes onto the Mavi Marmara Turkish passenger ship from helicopters. They immediately encountered fierce resistance as they

were attacked by activists armed with bats, knives and metal pipes. The boarding of the five other ships was completed without incident. Aboard the Mavi Marmara, the commandos first responded to the violence with crowd dispersion measures, and after almost an hour of scuffles, during which a number of soldiers were wounded – some of them stabbed or shot – the commandos were given permission to use live fire. At one point, activists succeeded in stealing a handgun from one of the soldiers, leading to an escalation in violence. The navy made initial contact with the flotilla at 11 p.m. on Sunday night and ordered the ships to follow them to Ashdod Port or be boarded. The boarding started at 2 a.m. on Monday and was completed by 8. The IDF released a grainy black-and-white video that supported its version of events and showed activists swarming around commandos after they descended from a helicopter by rope. Activists scuffled with the commandos and were seen throwing an object the military identified as a firebomb.

IDF sources said that despite the unfortunate outcome, the navy will continue to use the same type of operations to stop vessels that try to break the blockade. Another ship, named Rachel Corrie – for the American International Solidarity Movement activist who was killed in Gaza in 2003 – was still making its way to Gaza and the IDF said that it would intercept the ship and prevent it from reaching the Strip. “If more ships come, we will use the same tactic in the future,” a top IDF source told The Jerusalem Post, adding that it was possible that Israel had succeeded in creating a deterrent for future ships trying to reach Gaza. OC Israel Navy V.-Adm. Eliezer Marom said the IDF soldiers who raided the Mavi Marmara acted with “perseverance and bravery.” The soldiers’ lives were in danger and they fired their weapons in self-defense, Marom said. Many more people could have been killed if the soldiers had not acted with the proper sensitivity, he added. Defense Minister Ehud Barak said in a press conference that while he regretted the loss of lives, the organizers of the Gaza-bound protest flotilla were solely responsible for the outcome. The soldiers tried to disperse the activists aboard the ship peacefully but were forced to open fire to protect themselves, Barak said.

He called the flotilla a provocation and called the Turkish organization IHH, which organized the initiative, “extremist supporters of terror.” The defense minister called on Arab and Palestinian leaders not to let this “provocation by irresponsible people” ruin the progress made in proximity peace talks. IDF Chief of General Staff Lt.-Gen. Gabi Ashkenazi said Monday that the violence aboard the Mavi Marmara was instigated by those aboard the ships and that soldiers who opened fire were defending themselves.

Ashkenazi noted that the Mavi Marmara, the only ship on which violence took place, was different than the other five ships of the flotilla. He said that five ships carried humanitarians and peace activists, but the Mavi Marmara was sponsored by the extremist organization the IHH and those aboard acted with “extreme violence.” Helicopters evacuated the wounded to Israeli hospitals, officials said. Five ships had reached port by early evening and 136 activists had been removed without serious incident, the military said.

Sixteen were jailed for refusing to identify themselves, police spokesman Micky Rosenfeld said. According to police procedures, activists who agreed to be deported were immediately taken to Ben-Gurion Airport and flown home at Israel’s expense. Those who did not agree were transferred to a prison facility for questioning. By press time, 150

people from five ships were examined, only 40 of whom came from the Mavi Marmara. Forty people agreed to be deported immediately, mostly Greeks and Turks. Turkey's NTV network showed activists beating one commando with sticks as he landed on one of the boats. Of the 10 soldiers wounded in the raid, Dr. Arnon Afek, deputy director of Sheba Medical Center at Tel Hashomer, said two commandos were brought in with gunshot wounds. Another had serious head wounds from an unspecified blow, Afek added.

Today's Zaman-Activists tell of beatings during Israeli raid

By AP- Athens, Greece, June 1, 2010

Activists returning to Europe after Israeli forces raided their aid flotilla said Tuesday that the commandos had beaten passengers and used electric shocks during the assault. Six Greeks and several others, including a Turkish woman and her 1-year-old baby, were released Tuesday, but Israel has barred access to hundreds of others seized during the raid that killed at least nine people and wounded dozens early Monday. Most of those killed were aboard the Turkish-flagged Mavi Marmara, and there have been conflicting accounts of what happened during the assault. Turkish activist Nilüfer Çetin, who had hidden with her baby in her cabin's bathroom aboard the Mavi Marmara, told reporters she believed there were 11 dead. "The ship turned into a lake of blood," Çetin told reporters in İstanbul, having returned after Israeli officials warned that jail would be too harsh for her child. "We were aware of the possible danger" in joining the trip, she said. "But there are thousands of babies in Gaza. If we had reached Gaza we would have played with them and taken them food." She said Israeli vessels "harassed" the flotilla for two hours starting around 10 p.m. Sunday, and returned at around 4 a.m. Monday, fired warning shots and told the ships to turn back.

"When the Mavi Marmara continued on its course the harassment turned into an attack. They used smoke bombs followed by gas canisters. They started to descend onto the ship with helicopters," she said, calling the clashes that then erupted "extremely bad and brutal." "I was one of the first victims to be released because I had a child," she told reporters, but "they confiscated everything, our telephones, laptops are all gone." Her husband -- the ship's engineer -- was still being held by Israeli authorities. Some 400 Turkish activists were on the six-ship flotilla, along with more than 30 Greeks and people of some 20 other nations including Germany, the U.S. and Russia.

The ships had been trying to break the three-year blockade of Gaza to deliver humanitarian aid, the activists said. "Suddenly from everywhere we saw inflatables coming at us, and within seconds fully equipped commandos came up on the boat," said Greek activist Dimitris Gielalis, who had been aboard the Sfendoni. He was among six Greeks returned home Tuesday. "They came up and used plastic bullets, we had beatings, we had electric shocks, any method we can think of, they used," he said. He said the boat's captain was beaten for refusing to leave the wheel, and had sustained non-life-threatening injuries, while a cameraman filming the raid was hit with a rifle butt in the eye, he said. "Of course we weren't prepared for a situation of war." The returning Greeks said those still in custody were refusing to sign papers demanded by Israeli authorities. "During their interrogation, many of them were badly beaten in front of us," said Aris Papadokostopoulos, who was aboard the Free Mediterranean traveling behind the Turkish ship and carrying mainly Greek and Swedish activists. Papadokostopoulos said the

flotilla was about 80 miles (130 kilometers) off Gaza when the raid occurred around 4 a.m. Monday.

"The Turkish ship was in front of us ... on which there was a terrible raid from the air and from the sea and from everywhere, with shooting," he said. Aboard the other boats, he said, commandos beat activists, but nobody was gravely injured. He said no one put up resistance on the Free Mediterranean, which was carrying a cargo of wheelchairs, building material and medical and pharmaceutical aid.

"Some people were hit by clubs and electric shocks," he said. Crew member Mihalis Grigoropoulos said he was on the bridge of the Free Mediterranean and heard shooting coming from the Turkish ship. Several people who tried to stop the Israeli forces from getting to the bridge were hit by electric shocks and plastic bullets, he said. "We didn't resist at all. Even if we had wanted to, what could we do?"

Civil engineer Thanassis Petrogiannis said he had joined the flotilla to provide help in rebuilding destroyed Palestinian homes. He said that, while in Israeli custody, authorities had demanded he sign a paper written in Hebrew. He refused, and was eventually given another document that he signed. "Everyone who didn't accept to sign is in jail," he said. Grigoropoulos, the crew member, and Gielalis said they were not asked to sign anything, though their cell phones, cameras and clothes were confiscated before they were expelled. While the six Greeks "are in good health," Foreign Ministry Spokesman Grigoris Delavekouras said Greece was demanding the others still in custody be repatriated as soon as possible. "Israel bears responsibility for their safety. So it must contribute so they can return quickly to Greece," he said. Turkey said it was sending three ambulance planes to Israel to pick up 20 more Turkish activists injured in the operation. Three Turkish Airlines planes were on standby waiting to fly back other activists, the prime minister's office said.

Hürriyet Daily News-Activists' eyewitness accounts detail Israeli raid on Gaza aid ship By Daily News with wires, June 3, 2010

Activists detained after their Gaza aid ship was attacked by Israeli commandos earlier this week began detailing their accounts on Thursday of what some activists called "premeditated murder." Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has denounced the activists as "violent supporters of terrorism," charging that Israeli forces were "stabbed, they were clubbed, they were fired upon" as they stormed the boat. Eyewitness accounts differ from what Israeli security forces have said. An Australian journalist on board the Gaza-bound aid ship said Israeli commando boats had circled their flotilla like "hyenas hunting animals in the night" before his colleague was shot with a stun gun. Two Swedes aboard the Gaza-bound aid flotilla intercepted by Israeli forces this week said in a radio broadcast Thursday they had witnessed "premeditated murder" aboard the Turkish ship that came under the heaviest attack. And the leader of the Turkish Humanitarian Relief Foundation or, İHH, Bülent Yıldırım, said he saw Israeli soldiers shoot a photographer and an activist who had already surrendered.

A 'very ugly' incident

Sydney Morning Herald journalist Paul McGeough and photographer Kate Geraghty were released from Israeli detention and deported to Turkey on Thursday, and said they were slowly recovering from their ordeal. "We're fine, we're both fine," McGeough told the Herald's website from Turkey. "We are leaving Israel on legal advice

that we will be able to appeal our deportation in absentia," he added. McGeough said Israeli boats had circled the flotilla like "hyenas hunting animals in the night" before moving in suddenly, describing it as a "very ugly" incident. "Kate and I got pushed around," he said, adding that the atmosphere was "testosterone-driven."

'We could have died'

"We were witnesses to premeditated murders," said Swedish historian Mattias Gardell who was on the Mavi Marmara along with his wife, fellow historian Edda Manga. Manga and Gardell, who were among 11 Swedes taking part in the flotilla but the only ones on the Mavi Marmara, were on deck when the shooting began. "I saw the ship's security personnel trying to prevent divers from climbing onto the boats," Manga said. "Then one of our comrades said [the soldiers] were shooting and had killed three people ... [and] that we had to throw ourselves to the floor. We were on deck. We could have died," she said.

Shot after surrendering

Yıldırım, the leader of the Turkish İHH, said many people were wounded by gas bombs and that a journalist was taking photographs when he was shot by an Israeli soldier, adding that one of their friends was shot after he surrendered. Yıldırım said passengers on the ship showed civil resistance, the press was there, and that the İHH called on the passengers not to allow Israeli soldiers in. "We rendered ten of the soldiers who got on the ship ineffective, we took their weapons, but it would have been self-defense even if we had used those weapons," he said. "Still, we threw the weapons into the sea."

Appendix B

Second theme: Accusations between Israel and Turkey Original Stories

Ha'aretz- Probe: Erdoğan knew Gaza flotilla would be violent By Anshel Pfeffer, June 9, 2010

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan knew in advance that activists aboard a Gaza-bound aid flotilla planned to attack Israeli troops, Israeli intelligence officials have said. In a report published this week, a group of independent investigators from Israel's intelligence community found that activists aboard the 'Mavi Marmara' were part of an organized group that was prepared for a violent conflict. Last week Israeli commandos killed nine pro-Palestinian activists when they boarded the Turkish-owned boat, part of a six-ship convoy trying to break Israel's maritime blockade on the Gaza Strip. The report, published by the Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center (known in Israel by its Hebrew acronym Malam), said activists who attacked commandos with clubs and knives were supported by the Turkish government. Malam is a privately run but is widely seen as an unofficial branch of Israel's intelligence community and has in the past been a medium for passing Israel's intelligence findings to the public. The report said while most of the Mavi Marmara's 500 passengers were humanitarian volunteers who underwent security checks before boarding the ship at Antalya in Turkey, a group of 40 IHH activists had boarded the ship in an Istanbul port beforehand, keeping apart from the rest of the passengers throughout the journey.

This hard core of activists boarded the ship without checks and was equipped with communications equipment, flak jackets embroidered with Turkish flags, and gas masks, Malam said.

According to the report, the group turned the upper deck into its headquarters, blocking it off to other passengers. It had a clear internal hierarchy, with specific activists nominated as commanders. Bülent Yıldırım, the leader of the IHH, an Islamic organization that planned the voyage, was on the Mavi Marmara and briefed group members about two hours before the Israeli Navy intercepted the ship. Their main objective was to hold back soldiers by any means, and to push them back into the sea. As they had been banned from bringing weapons aboard, IHH members improvised weapons including metal rods and knives cut from the ship's metal rails, which they used to attack the soldiers. According to a witness aboard the ship, a confrontation broke out when the ship's crew heard IHH members sawing the railing into metal rods, but they were unable to confiscate them from them.

IHH activists also gathered all the knives from six cafeterias on the ship, as well as axes from fire extinguishers on the deck, all of which served as weapons against Israeli commandos. Before the takeover, IHH ordered all other passengers into the hold of the ship and told them to remain there. Only journalists and security personnel were allowed access to the deck. Video footage matched testimonies from passengers who claimed they witnessed any violence, as they were denied access to the deck, where the clash occurred. The testimonies are also similar to the version given by the Navy commandos who said that they fought with a group of approximately 50 people who used every weapon available to attack them. Eight of the nine dead were identified as IHH members. Files found on laptops owned by the IHH members pointed at strong ties between the

movement and Turkey's prime minister. Some of the activists even said that Erdoğan was personally involved in the flotilla's preparations. They also said that they knew in advance that their chances of making it into Gaza were slim, but their initial goal was to "to expose Israel's true face to the world." An IHH journalist said during his investigation with Israeli security forces that "the Turks set a trap for you and you fell straight into it." He also said that the recent flotilla was the first in many.

The Jerusalem Post- IDF: Mercenaries to blame for violence - Army says some 50 well-trained passengers were recruited in Turkey. By Yaakov Katzlast, June 4, 2010

The IDF has identified one of the passengers aboard the Mavi Marmara, which navy commandos commandeered earlier this week, as the ringleader of a group of mercenaries who were recruited from a city in northwest Turkey, according to new details from the military's ongoing investigation of the Gaza flotilla. The IDF identified a group of about 50 men – of the 700 on board – who were well-trained and were stationed throughout the ship, mostly on the upper deck, where they laid an ambush for the IDF soldiers who rappelled onto the deck from helicopters. The members of this violent group were not carrying identity cards or passports. Instead, each of them had an envelope in his pocket with about \$10,000 in cash. The defense establishment suspects the funding for the mercenaries may have come from elements within the Turkish government. According to sources within the defense establishment, one member of the group, who appears to have been the ringleader, traveled to the city of Bursa in northwest Turkey and allegedly recruited mercenaries for the flotilla there.

In videos from the Marmara released this week by the IDF, this group of men can be seen preparing to confront IDF commandos. The videos, taken by the ship's security cameras, show the group of activists brandishing metal bars, slingshots, and other assorted weaponry. The group was split up into smaller squads that were distributed throughout the deck and communicated with one another with handheld communication devices. The men wore bulletproof vests and gas masks. One video clearly shows a member of the group throwing a stun grenade onto the IDF commando vessel that pulled up alongside the Marmara. Another video shows how groups of at least four or five men swarmed each commando that landed on the top deck, beating them with metal bars, and in one case throwing a soldier off the third deck. Soldiers testified that in at least two instances their side arms were taken from them, as were their helmets and vests. Two soldiers jumped off the ship into the water to save themselves from being lynched. On Wednesday, Deputy Defense Minister Matan Vilna'i told a Knesset hearing that all nine men killed on the Marmara were "involved in the fighting." "There were no innocents among the dead," Vilna'i said. Meanwhile, Palestinian Media Watch reported Thursday that three of the four Turks killed on ship sought a martyr's death. PMW quoted from the official Palestinian Authority daily Al-Hayat al-Jadida:

"Three of the four Turks killed in the Israeli attack on the 'Freedom Flotilla' bound for the Gaza Strip wanted to die as martyrs, said their relatives and friends. The wife of one of them, Ali Haydar Bengi, told the Vatan daily: "He used to help the poor and the oppressed. For years, he wanted to go to Palestine. And he constantly prayed to Allah to grant him shahada (martyrdom)." "Ali worked at telephone repair shop in Diyarbakir, the largest city in southeastern Turkey. Sabir Ceylan, a friend of Ali, told the Milliyet newspaper: 'Before embarking on this journey [to Gaza], he said he desired to

become a martyr. He had a strong desire to die as a martyr.’ “Another Turkish victim was Ali Ekber Yaratilmiş, a 55-year old pensioner. He was a father of five who lived in Ankara. Ali volunteered for the Turkish Aid and Human Rights Organization [İHH], which transfers aid to Gaza. A friend, Mehmet Faruk Cevher, told the Sabah daily that [Ali] ‘devoted his life to charity work, that’s why he went to Gaza. He always wanted to become a martyr.’ “The third victim was Ibrahim Bilgen, a 61-year old pensioner and father of six sons. He was a supporter of the Felicity Party, an Islamic movement in the southeastern city of Siirt, Anatolia news agency reported. His brother-in-law, Nuri Mergen, told the agency: He was an exemplary man and a truly good man. That’s why he was truly worthy of shahada(martyrdom). Allah granted him the death that he wished for.” Palestinian Media Watch reported in the last two days that participants on board were chanting Islamic battle cries and talking about their coming martyrdom during the days before the confrontation.

Today’s Zaman - Israeli assault on Gaza flotilla draws sharp reaction from Turkish civil society May 31, 2010

Thousands of Turks took to the streets on Monday in protest of a pre-dawn Israeli assault on a flotilla of aid ships bound for the Gaza Strip which left up to 19 people dead and dozens wounded. The aid ships, dubbed the Freedom Flotilla, were taking badly needed humanitarian supplies to the people of the Gaza Strip, who have for the past three years been living under a harsh economic blockade. The Israeli assault came as the ships were sailing in international waters.

The assault drew strong condemnation by Turkish civil society, which denounced the Israeli violence with massive rallies throughout the day yesterday. A group of around 2,000 people had convened in İstanbul's Taksim Square before noon. Carrying Turkish and Palestinian flags, the group chanted anti-Israeli slogans and called on the Turkish government to take action against the disproportionate use of force by Israeli soldiers against civilians. “Down with Israel!” “Greetings to Palestine and aid ships; go ahead with resistance!” and “Turkish soldiers to Israel!” chanted the protestors.

Turkish Red Crescent (Kızılay) President Tekin Küçükali said his organization was ready to provide medical assistance to civilians injured during the Israeli attack. “The armed raid on civilians carrying humanitarian aid to Gaza has opened a deep wound in people's consciences. We are ready to undertake any responsibility to take the injured to secure places and take care of their wounds there,” he stated. In the meantime, officials at the Antalya Customs Office announced that passengers on the Turkish ships in the aid convoy did not have any weapons or even a knife on them. “All passengers boarded the ships after being screened. Our records show that no weapons were detected on them,” they said. The announcement refutes Israeli claims that the activists were carrying weapons and munitions to Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.

The Humanitarian Aid Foundation (İHH) expressed concern that Israeli security forces may plant weapons on the aid ships after seizing control. “Let alone a weapon, there wasn't even a jackknife onboard the ships. But the ships are currently under Israeli control, and the Israelis may place weapons or munitions on the ships to back up their assertions,” İHH Vice President Yavuz Dede said. İHH is one of the main coordinators of the Freedom Flotilla.

Ahmet Mercan, another İHH official, said Israel's bloody raid on aid activists was

a “unilateral war” waged against unarmed civilians. “The assault has shown that Israel is not a state or a society. It is a terrorist organization. The world is now faced with a test. Will it side with human rights or not? How will the world react in the face of such an assault? Israel initiated a war. This is a unilateral war being waged on civilians. This is a war waged on 50 countries. This is a war waged on the collective conscience of humanity,” he said.

Members of Turkey's Jewish community also condemned the attack, saying they share Turkey's feelings about the killings of activists on the aid ships. “We are saddened to learn that a military operation was launched against the Mavi Marmara [one of the Turkish ships in the flotilla]. We share the reactions the operation sparked in our country [Turkey],” read a statement issued by the community.

Thousands of people living in İstanbul and Ankara have been in front of the Israeli Embassy and Consulate since the early hours of Monday to protest the killings of the unarmed civilians. Police tightened security measures around the buildings, preventing protestors from entering the embassy or consulate.

‘Attack damaged Turkish-Israeli ties’

A statement issued by the Independent Industrialists and Businessmen's Association (MÜSİAD) said the Israeli assault had damaged ties of fraternity between Turkey and Israel. “With the most recent assault in international waters of unarmed ships which were carrying only humanitarian aid to Gaza, Israel has shown the entire world that it will not allow any peaceful attempt in the region and will not respect human rights. The attack cannot be approved or backed by any nation in the world. World leaders do not have the luxury to hide themselves behind mere statements. It is high time the world said ‘stop’ to the perpetrators of the bloody assault,” the MÜSİAD statement read and called on the United Nations and the international community to review their approach to Israel.

A similar statement came from Confederation of Turkish Real Trade Unions (Hak-İş) President Salim Uslu, who said Israel committed a crime against humanity by attacking civilians on a ship carrying humanitarian aid to people in need. He also called on the international community to take action against Israeli violence.

“Israel insists on not ending its terror and attacks in the Middle East. It has turned into a traumatic actor in the region. It attacks civilians, children or women included. Israel has caused the shame of the century to humanity and continues to do so. ... The United Nations, NATO, the European Union, the Organization of the Islamic Conference [OIC] and the Arab League should take action and say ‘stop’ to [Israel's] dirty game,” the statement went on to say.

A doctors' organization known as Yeryüzü Doktorları (Doctors on Earth) also condemned the killings of the activists on the aid flotilla, saying humanitarian aid flowing to people in need should not be blocked, regardless of their religion, language or ethnicity. “The attack on the Freedom Flotilla came in violation of international law and universal humanitarian values. Yeryüzü Doktorları strongly condemns the Israeli assault on the aid ships carrying humanitarian aid to Gaza,” read the statement.

Hürriyet Daily News- Raid on flotilla puts final nail in coffin of Turkish ties with Israel. May 31, 2010

As details slowly emerge in the wake of Israel's deadly attack on a flotilla of aid ships bound for the Gaza Strip, leaders from Turkey's ruling and opposition parties raise their voices to condemn the action. It is the latest and worst incident in a long line of troublesome encounters over the last year and a half between the two allies and some say this could be the final act. 'Our relations will never be the same,' says a member of the ruling AKP

Israel's deadly attack on a Palestinian aid convoy is likely to be the last straw in already fraught Turkish-Israeli relations, according to senior officials in Turkey's ruling party. Though the identities of the killed civilians were still unknown late Monday when the Hürriyet Daily News & Economic Review went to print, it is believed that many of the dead are Turkish citizens. "Our relations with Israel will never be the same," Hüseyin Çelik, spokesman of the Justice and Development Party, or AKP, told reporters Monday.

The Israeli attack dealt a devastating blow to relations already strained by tensions over Israeli actions in Gaza in late 2008. Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's escalating rhetoric that targeted the Israeli government and his remarks that Israel's alleged nuclear weapons capacity was comparable to Iran's quest to develop such weapons was responsible for putting a strain on bilateral ties over the past year.

On Monday, Turkey appeared to be taking the lead in gathering international support against the Israeli attack, with the government already pressing international organizations such as the Organization of the Islamic Conference, or OIC, the European Union and the Arab League to take action. "The worst possible scenario has happened," said the head of the Turkish Center for International Relations and Strategic Analysis, or TÜRKSAM, Sinan Oğan.

"Israel has made a suicide commando move, and has committed suicide internationally, he said. "The Turkish-Israeli relationship is now open to every different scenario." He said, "The relationship between Turkey and Israel will face its biggest test in history, with the possibility of Turkey taking this issue to the European Union."

Hasan Köni, an international relations professor, said the incident would further strain Turkish-Israeli ties in comments to the private Habertürk channel on Monday. "Israel lost a lot. It's a major mistake in the eyes of the West. This will strengthen Turkey's hands," Köni said, adding that it will be hard to repair Turkish-Israeli ties in the near future following Turkey's decision to recall its ambassador for a second time in only a few months. In addition to the diplomatic recall, Turkey also canceled three joint military drills and sporting activities on Monday. Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu also called on the United Nations Security Council to convene an urgent meeting on the attack, which was declared "piracy" by Deputy Prime Minister Bülent Arınç. Erdoğan, meanwhile, cut short his Latin America tour and was expected to return home Tuesday.

Three pillars of the strategy

Turkey's strategy against Israel will likely be based on three main dimensions, including political, legal and humanitarian aspects. Politically, Turkey plans to mobilize all international organizations to exert pressure on Tel Aviv to change its aggressive policies toward the Palestinians and remove the blockade on West Bank. Turkey is also likely to push for a global front to force Israel to punish those responsible for Monday's attacks.

On the legal front, Turkish diplomats have begun to explore avenues to determine whether it is possible to bring the attack before international courts. Lastly, Turkey will also use the attack to draw attention to the humanitarian situation of the Palestinian people. The visit of Mahmoud Abbas, president of Palestine, is seen within this context.

Attack not to remain unanswered

Crisis desks were established at the Turkish Prime Ministry and the Foreign Ministry on Monday morning. Speaking to reporters after an emergency meeting, Arınç said 400 of the Mavi Marmara's 581 passengers were Turks.

"I strongly condemn the use of force by Israeli military forces on an aid convoy composed of 32 countries, including Turkey," he said. "This attack must not remain unanswered." Arınç said the government was not involved in the organization of the flotilla, saying it was a pure civil society initiative. Early in the day, Israel's ambassador to Ankara, Gabby Levy, was summoned to the Turkish Foreign Ministry. Deputy Undersecretary Ünal Çeviköz demanded Levy provide a detailed report about the outcome of the passengers of the boats, the Hürriyet Daily News has learned.

Çeviköz said it was against international law to forcibly interfere with ships carrying humanitarian aid in international waters. "We want the return of the injured, and the cooperation needed to have them treated in Turkey. We expect the other passengers to be returned to their countries immediately," he said. "We demand an end to this unlawful situation, and the release of the detained ships in international waters." Meanwhile, while en route to the United States, Davutoğlu said, "Under all conditions, even if no one had been injured, this is still an act of piracy."

Opposition slams Israel

Turkey's two main opposition parties strongly criticized Israel over a deadly attack on ships carrying aid to Gaza, announcing their support for a government decision to take the issue to international organizations. "Nothing can justify this inhumane attack," Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, head of the Republican People's Party, or CHP, told reporters at a press conference Monday. Criticizing the Israeli government for not sufficiently warning members of civilian organizations before their departure that soldiers could use deadly force, Kılıçdaroğlu said recalling the Turkish ambassador was the correct decision. Devlet Bahçeli, head of the Nationalist Movement Party, or MHP, called Israel's attacks barbaric and said attacking a ship flying a Turkish flag was a hostile move. "These attacks should not be left unreciprocated. The reaction of the government should not be temporary and left on paper."

He also asked the government to cut all economic and defense relations with Israel, adding that the country must pay compensation for the attacks. "It should also apologize to Turkey," Bahçeli said.

Appendix C

Third theme: Calls and debates on the UN investigation. Original Stories

Ha'aretz- Israel rejects UN proposal for joint Gaza flotilla probe with U.S. and Turkey. BY Barak Ravid, June 6, 2010

Israel rejected on Sunday a proposal by United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for an international investigation into its deadly raid on a Gaza-bound aid ship and said it had the right to launch its own inquiry. "We are rejecting an international commission. We are discussing with the Obama administration a way in which our inquiry will take place," Michael Oren, Israel's ambassador to Washington, said on the U.S. TV program "Fox News Sunday". The UN chief had suggested establishing a panel that would be headed by former New Zealand prime minister Geoffrey Palmer and include representatives from Turkey, Israel and the United States, an Israeli official said earlier in Jerusalem.

Netanyahu discussed the proposal for a multinational panel with Ban in a telephone call on Saturday but told cabinet ministers from his right-wing Likud party on Sunday that Israel was exploring other options, political sources said. "I told [Ban] that the investigation of the facts must be carried out responsibly and objectively," Netanyahu told ministers. "We need to consider the issue carefully and level-headedly, while maintaining Israel's national interests as well as those of the Israel Defense Forces."

The prime minister said he told Ban that some of the passengers aboard the stormed the Mavi Marmara were members of an extremist terror-backing Turkish organization. He stressed that any investigation into the event should determine who organized these extremists, who funded them and supplied them with equipment, and how they ended up on the ship.

Netanyahu also discussed the Israeli blockade on Gaza, saying that discussions surrounding the easing of the blockade had begun before the flotilla ever set sail. "Our desire is to facilitate the transfer of civilian and humanitarian goods to the civilian population, while preventing the transfer of weapons and warfare materials." He added that "the provocative flotilla will not stop us from discussing this, and we are considering proposals on the topic made by friendly nations." The prime minister further told the cabinet that he spoke with U.S. Vice President Joe Biden over the weekend as well as the prime ministers of Greece and Bulgaria.

Nine Turks were killed on Monday in the Israeli commando raid on the Mavi Marmara, part of a six-vessel convoy that set out to challenge an Israeli-led blockade. Israel has said its troops used lethal force in self-defense after they were set upon by pro-Palestinian activists wielding clubs and knives. Israeli leaders have spoken publicly about setting up an internal investigation with foreign observers into the interception of the Turkish-flagged ship off the coast of Gaza, an enclave run by Hamas Islamists who oppose Western-backed Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas's peace efforts with Israel. "Israel is a democratic nation. Israel has the ability and the right to investigate itself, not to be investigated by any international board," Oren said. Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu, speaking on CNN, said Ankara would insist on an independent commission and suggested that Israel's rejection of an international inquiry showed it wanted to cover up the facts of the raid. "We want to know the facts. If Israel

rejects this, it means it is also another proof of their guilt. They are not self-confident to face the facts," he said.

Turkey's relations with Israel, once a close ally, have soured badly since the deadly raid. Israel's navy boarded another ship carrying aid and pro-Palestinian activists to Gaza on Saturday. Its interception of the Irish-owned MV Rachel Corrie ended without violence following diplomatic efforts to avoid bloodshed. "I want to pay tribute to the crew of the Rachel Corrie for demonstrating in no uncertain terms their peaceful intentions," Irish Foreign Minister Micheal Martin told Irish public radio RTE. "We of course communicated that relentlessly to the Israeli authorities." An Israeli official said Israel wanted to establish whether the Turkish government had sponsored the Mavi Marmara, where the strength of the resistance to the boarding party appeared to have caught the Israeli military off guard. Israel has said seven of its troops were wounded.

The Jerusalem Post- Turkey demands int'l inquiry c'tee By E. Solomont, June 1, 2010

NEW YORK - The United Nations Security Council convened an emergency meeting on Monday afternoon to discuss Israel's raid of a Gaza-bound flotilla that left at least 10 dead and dozens more wounded. Amid a sharp international outcry across Europe and the Middle East, diplomats gathered in New York for an urgent meeting, with Arab states pushing for a full investigation that would hold Israel accountable for its role in the fatal naval operation. Several states blamed Monday's bloodshed on Israel's blockade of Gaza, and called for an immediate end to Israeli restrictions.

Set for 1 p.m. New York time, the meeting was called at the behest of several countries, including Turkey, a non-permanent member of the council, and Lebanon, which holds the council presidency until midnight Tuesday. Addressing the Security Council, Turkey's Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu called Israel's use of force both "inappropriate and disproportionate." Israel must be prepared to face the consequences and be held responsible for its crimes, he said.

"This is a black day in the history of humanity when the distance between terrorists and states has been blurred," he said. "It is murder conducted by a state," with "no excuse, no justification whatsoever." He urged the council to adopt a statement condemning Israel's actions; calling for a full investigation; and punishing those responsible.

During a visit to Uganda, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon condemned the violence and called for a "full investigation to determine exactly how this bloodshed took place." Speaking to reporters in Kampala following the opening of a conference on the International Criminal Court, the top UN official condemned the violence that occurred.

"I am shocked by reports of killings and injuries of people on boats carrying supplies for Gaza," he said. "I believe Israel must urgently provide a full explanation," he added. "Right now, what is absolutely vital is that we first have a full account of the incident, what had happened, and Israel must provide the full explanation on this."

Amid calls for Israel to be held accountable, several states criticized the blockade of Gaza. "It is a matter of grave concern that Israeli action should end in such heavy loss of life," the British ambassador to the UN said. "There is an unambiguous need for Israel to act with restraint." He said it was "clearer than ever" that Israel's restrictions must be limited, and that "the current closure is unacceptable and counterproductive."

'Israel regrets loss of innocent lives, it was not a peaceful protest'

Daniel Carmon, Israel's deputy permanent representative to the UN, strongly defended Israel's response, while characterizing the results of the operation as "tragic and unfortunate." "Let me be very clear," he said. "This was not a peaceful protest."

Those on board the ships "were not humanitarian aid activists," he said. "What kind of peace activists use knives, clubs and other weapons to attack soldiers who board a ship in accordance with international law?" Carmon said the naval operation had begun as a preventive measure to counter illegal breakage of the Gaza blockade. Israel acted to protect its own civilians and ensure the country's security. "Let me remind the council that a state of armed conflict exists between Israel and the Hamas terrorist regime controlling Gaza," with mortars regularly launched toward Israel, he said. "Let me remind the council that Gaza is occupied by terrorists that ousted the [Palestinian Authority] in a violent coup, and that arms are continuously being smuggled, including by sea." A maritime blockade is a legitimate and recognized measure under international law, he said.

"Israel provided, in due time, not only information about the existence of the blockade, but also appropriate notification to the relevant governments and to the organizers of the Gaza Flotilla," Carmon asserted.

The organizers had other plans, he charged. The soldiers boarding one of the ships were "violently attacked" with live ammunition, knives, clubs, deck furniture and other weapons in what amounted to "no less than a lynch," he said. "The soldiers undoubtedly acted in self-defense, prompted by the uncontrolled violent attempts on their lives."

Earlier on Monday, the White House said it "deeply regrets" the loss of life and injuries incurred during the raid. "The US deeply regrets the loss of life and injuries sustained and is currently working to understand the circumstances surrounding this tragedy," a White House spokesman said.

Meanwhile, a group of Arab ambassadors met at the Egyptian mission to the UN in New York on Monday morning to coordinate their effort. "We condemn this action by Israel and we call, collectively as Arabs, for an independent international investigation to know who gave the orders on the Israeli side to open fire on civilians," said Riyad Mansour, the Palestinian observer to the UN. Speaking to reporters in New York ahead of the Security Council meeting, he said, "The Security Council will have an open session at 1 p.m., and we are exerting all efforts so that the Security Council will shoulder its responsibility, that will rise to the level of crimes of Israel". This kind of "provocation and aggression" on the part of the Israelis, he said, was not conducive to peace negotiations, including proximity talks. And he ridiculed Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's decision to cancel a visit to the White House on Tuesday. "I guess he is so embarrassed to face a new chapter of criminal action against the Palestinian people," he said. As the unofficial sponsor of the flotilla, Turkey was among the countries to call immediately for a meeting of the Security Council. "This attack is another sign of the reckless levels that the Israeli government's violent policies have reached," said Deputy Prime Minister Bulent Arinc. "We condemn Israel's attack at the highest level."

Dozens of stone-throwing protesters tried to storm the Israeli Consulate in Istanbul after the IDF flotilla raid was reported. Protesters scuffled with Turkish police guarding the consulate; later, peaceful demonstrators held Palestinian flags and listened to readings from the Koran.

Robert Serry and Filippo Grandi, UN officials involved in the Middle East peace process, condemned the raid and said it had taken place “apparently in international waters.” In a joint statement, they said, “We wish to make clear that such tragedies are entirely avoidable if Israel heeds the repeated calls of the international community to end its counterproductive and unacceptable blockade of Gaza.” France, Germany and Britain expressed shock at the early morning raid. In a statement, Tony Blair, the representative of the quartet – which includes the US, UN, EU and Russia – expressed “deep regret and shock at the tragic loss of life.” The statement continued, “We need a different and better way of helping the people of Gaza and avoiding the hardship and tragedy that is inherent in the current situation.” The European Union also criticized Israel for excessive use of force. The EU called for an investigation by Israel and the lifting of the Gaza blockade, which it deemed “politically unacceptable.” In a statement, EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton expressed “deep regret” at the loss of life and violence and extended her sympathies to the families of the dead and wounded.

**Today’s Zaman - Ankara: Israel’s own inquiry far from global expectations
June 16, 2010**

ANKARA - Ankara has strongly condemned Israel's apparently intentional snub of a UN proposal for a full international investigation into its own forces' lethal raid on a Gaza aid flotilla, while urging the international community, particularly Washington, to up pressure on Israel to agree to this proposal. Furthermore, the Turkish capital clearly reiterated that it would take “certain measures” in the eventual absence of Israel's affirmation of the UN proposal. On May 31, Israeli commandos killed one US national and eight Turkish peace activists when they boarded the Mavi Marmara, part of a six-vessel convoy that set out to challenge the blockade of the Gaza Strip. The bloodshed triggered an international outcry and damaged Israel's ties with Turkey. Israel's cabinet convened on Monday to form a commission to carry out an Israeli inquiry into a deadly raid on the Gaza aid flotilla, while responding to international demands for impartiality by putting two foreign observers on the panel.

“Israel's declaration that it will establish a commission composed of Israeli citizens and two foreign observers in order to investigate the Israeli raid against the Freedom Flotilla does not in any way meet Turkey's clear demand or the international community's expectations, which were expressed in the Presidential Statement of the United Nations Security Council,” the Turkish Foreign Ministry said in a written statement released late on Monday.

“An inquiry to be conducted by such a commission cannot be impartial, fair, transparent and credible,” the ministry said, because, “Israel does not have the authority to assign a national commission to investigate a crime perpetrated in international waters.”

Recalling that Turkey has indeed already agreed to the proposal by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, which was conveyed to the Turkish and Israeli prime ministers only five days after the raid, to establish an international commission comprising one Turkish, one Israeli and three international experts, the statement added: “We strongly condemn Israel's disregard of this proposal to date. We expect that the international community, and above all the US, which lost a citizen of its own, will support this constructive proposal by the UN secretary-general and take action in that direction

without delay.”

Speaking to reporters late on Monday following a Cabinet meeting during which Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu informed Cabinet members of the latest developments regarding the issue, Deputy Prime Minister Cemil Çiçek echoed the message within the Foreign Ministry statement. Turkey has already accepted Ban's proposal, Çiçek noted. “Israel has yet to respond to this. If Israel accepts this proposal, then the matter will be examined thoroughly by this commission in all its aspects and where each party can provide any materials or documents they may have or any defense they may make for this violence,” Çiçek continued.

“Today, we discussed measures which will be taken if Israel rejects the UN secretary-general's proposal because those people who lost their lives are our citizens. A considerable number of people who were injured are our citizens. A commission set up unilaterally by Israel will not satisfy us,” he said, while noting that the currently unspecified measures against Israel would be announced according to upcoming developments within days, and in particular according to Israel's stance on the UN proposal.

EU in ‘wait and see’ mood While the White House has backed Israel's inquiry, calling it “an important step forward,” the European Union is reportedly planning to “wait and see” how Israel's inquiry is conducted before taking a firm stance on its legitimacy.

“I think this is an important step forward in what is called for in the UN Security Council presidential statement. That said, we're not going to prejudge the process or the outcome,” US State Department spokesman Philip J. Crowley told reporters at a daily press briefing on Monday. “Turkey, as any sovereign country, has a right to conduct its own investigation. I'm not aware that Turkey has reached its own judgment on how to proceed,” he also said in response to a question.

In Brussels, an EU diplomat was quoted as saying that the 27-nation bloc plans to wait and see how Israel's inquiry is conducted before taking a firm stance on its legitimacy. “There was no willingness to approve it or to explicitly disapprove it,” the EU diplomat told news portal EUobserver following a meeting of EU foreign ministers in Luxembourg on Monday.

“Since it was not possible to agree on a judgment, we can always reserve our position and see how it functions in practice. It's a similar situation to the Goldstone inquiry. In the beginning we had our reservations. But in the end it did a good job,” the diplomat added, referring to a recent UN report which accused Israel of war crimes in Gaza in 2009.

UN rapporteur skeptical

In Geneva, Richard Falk, UN special rapporteur on Palestinian issues, has expressed doubt over the internal probe of the Israeli government, saying that he is “rather skeptical” of the probe “given the kind of statements that the political leadership of Israel has made about not subjecting the Israeli military participants in the naval operation to any kind of questioning.” Falk, speaking to reporters on Monday, said Israel's own probes into its 2008-2009 assault on Gaza did not inspire confidence as the biggest violation found was “that an Israeli soldier had stolen a credit card” from a Palestinian. “None of the serious allegations involving tactics and weapons and the attack itself were subjected to any sort of objective analysis,” Falk said.

Hürriyet Daily News - Israel rejects international investigation of raid

By The Associated Press, June 3, 2010

JERUSALEM - Israel has rejected international calls for an investigation of its deadly raid on a Gaza-bound aid flotilla. Israel on Thursday rejected calls from the United Nations and others for an international investigation of its deadly raid on a Gaza-bound aid flotilla but left the door open to foreign involvement. Israel says the commandos used force, killing nine people, only after activists attacked them with knives, crowbars and clubs, as well as two pistols grabbed from raiders. Activists who had set sail for Gaza with tons of aid, hoping to break Israel's 3-year-old blockade of Gaza, say Israeli commandos fired first.

Officials have insisted Israel's military already is investigating the raid and the country is capable of conducting a credible review. "It is our standard practice after military operations, especially operations in which there have been fatalities, to conduct a prompt, professional, transparent and objective investigation in accordance with the highest international standards," government spokesman Mark Regev said.

Another official in the prime minister's office said there would be no separate international investigation. He spoke on condition of anonymity pending an official decision. Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman, however, proposed attaching international observers to an internal Israeli probe. He told the Ynet news website that he has proposed setting up a commission of inquiry, headed by a respected former Israeli Supreme Court judge. "If they'll ask to include foreign observers, we'll include them," Lieberman said. A junior Cabinet member, Binyamin Ben-Eliezer, went even further, saying, "an international commission of inquiry must be established because we have nothing to hide. "We must quell world criticism," Ynet quoted Ben-Eliezer as telling fellow Labor Party ministers. An inner Cabinet of ministers with security responsibilities must convene to discuss the matter. Israel has refused to cooperate with previous international probes, most recently the U.N. investigation into Israel's 2009 war in the Gaza Strip that concluded that both the Israelis and Hamas militants, who control Gaza, committed war crimes.

Israel says the commission that ordered the probe has a record of anti-Israel conduct, and has rejected the investigation as fundamentally flawed. The international outrage over the deaths on board the flotilla's lead ship, the Mavi Marmara, has sparked a wave of protests across the diplomatic world and condemnations by a sheaf of countries. South Africa became the latest country to recall its ambassador to Israel, although it stressed it has no intention of expelling the Israeli ambassador or cutting diplomatic ties with the Jewish state.

The raid has also provoked multiple demands for an international probe, and on Wednesday, U.N. chief Ban Ki-moon indicated he was headed in that direction. In a strongly worded statement, the Arab League called the raid "state piracy and terrorism" and said it threatened regional stability and security. Arab foreign ministers also urged the U.N. Security Council to force Israel to lift the blockade. Earlier this week, the 15-nation U.N. Security Council called for a "prompt, impartial, credible and transparent investigation conforming to international standards" but stopped short of calling for an independent international investigation. The U.S., as a member of the council, supported that statement. Washington's special Mideast envoy, who is in the region to mediate

another round of indirect talks between Israelis and Palestinians, said the raid "underscores the need to make progress in negotiations to lead to a two-state solution." "The tragedy of last week cannot be allowed to spiral out of control and undermine the limited but real progress that has been made," envoy George Mitchell said Thursday at an investment conference in the West Bank city of Bethlehem.