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Bar-Ilan University

The Mozes S. Schupf Fellowship Program

Recommendation for Netanel Flamer, ID 300921319

My name is Ilan Maman, a Colonel (Res.) in the Israel Defense Forces, having recently retired after 30 years of service with the Israeli Military Intelligence Forces. I have known Netanel well for over a decade, and I am pleased to recommend him wholeheartedly for your program.

I first Netanel in 2008, when I was the head of the Gaza Strip Research Bureau at the Southern Headquarters and he was a young officer in the Southern Information Security Unit. From the very outset, I recognized that he was an exceptionally talented individual and a brilliant officer. His unique way of thinking and problem solving enabled him to excel in the analysis of terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip. He succeeded in the complicated task of creating a comprehensive picture of how these organizations perceived Israel and the IDF, the focal point of their activities. As a result, I took the exceptional step of inviting Netanel to join a special brain trust under my command that was tasked with uncovering intelligence about Hamas. It was here that I got to know Netanel even better as an officer and as an independent individual, and came to deeply appreciate his professional attributes of originality, acumen and precision, and his personal qualities of humility, kindness, and excellent human relations. In fact, Netanel soon became my closest and most outstanding partner for analysis and research activity.

At the end of 2008, Israel launched Operation Cast Lead in the Gaza Strip, led by the Southern Command, which demanded an overwhelming effort to strike Hamas as powerfully as possible. It was an enormous challenge to uncover where this elusive enemy could be found. With his creative and “out of the box" thinking, Netanel arrived at a crucial insight that was presented to the Commander of the Southern Command. They incorporated his insight into their operational activity, as it enabled them to track the enemy and attack them with full force.

Even after this mission ended, I wanted to be able to work with Netanel again. Finally, an opportunity arose in 2013, when I was appointed Chief of the IMI Intelligence School (the IMI is a world-renowned leading center for Special Forces training for the military, counter-terrorism and law enforcement fields) and Netanel had begun his role as a commander in the Intelligence Officers Training Course. At that time, the course was outdated and even, to some extent, irrelevant. Together with the course commander, Netanel conducted a thorough and comprehensive analysis of what was needed for updating the course. They developed an innovative concept for the training process, which involved holding dozens of meetings with various people from different disciplines. His suggested improvements were enthusiastically accepted by the Head of the Israeli Military Intelligence, who is now the Chief of Staff of the IDF, as well as by other officials. Netanel was also responsible for implementing the changes he had recommended, including dealing with resistance to change, training the course staff, and developing new content and programs.

One of the most important programs Netanel developed was one for encouraging leadership, values and commander skills. In this program, MAOF, meaning Vision, the course cadets participate in numerous workshops and meetings addressing such diverse issues as: the values of an IDF officer, particularly those of an intelligence officer; leadership perceptions and skills; involvement in and caring for Israeli society, with an emphasis on bridging the gaps between the religious and the secular in the country; and more. Netanel’s personality and beliefs were strongly reflected in this program, which has been highly successful and continues to operate in the IMI Intelligence School.

As the chief of the IMI Intelligence School, I was able to closely observe Netanel's leadership abilities. The cadets under his supervision deeply appreciated him, frequently commenting on his social skills and his love and care for both cadets and colleagues, and he invariably received high scores in the course's feedback and sociometric questionnaires. Netanel always sees the human being behind an individual’s surface and function, and he has always been able to combine professionalism and humaneness. At the IMI School of Intelligence, he made me aware of our responsibility as officers to address the problems in Israeli society, such as working to reduce the social gap between religious and secular Israelis.

Consequently, I was not surprised to learn that immediately following his release from the IDF in 2016, he embarked on a completely new career as a high school teacher while simultaneously engaging in his PhD studies. Working in the educational field today, I feel confident about consulting with Netanel on a regular basis. I deeply appreciate his unique point of view, his original and creative way of thinking, and his ability to merge theory and practicality.

Throughout the years that I have known him, Netanel has been an important partner for me, in both the military and the educational fields. I have no doubt that his extraordinary abilities and qualities will enable him to make a great contribution to academic discourse as well as to all of Israeli society.

Therefore, I strongly recommend Netanel for the prestigious Schupf Scholarship, which would enable himto successfully complete his dissertation and continue his important work.

Sincerely,

Ilan Maman, Colonel (res.)

Former IDF Southern Command Chief Intelligence Officer and the Head of IMI School of Intelligence and currently part of the Management Program of the Amit Education Network

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