

Erez Padan

The Israeli State Attorney's Office 3.0

The Israeli State Attorney's Office (hereinafter: "SAO") currently faces serious challenges. Extending beyond specific cases, these challenges touch upon core issues of role, ethos and mission.

The first part of the article describes the operation of the SAO from Israel's establishment until today, including the goals, values and ethos that defined it. A significant change is identified around the turn of the century (2004), when SAO shifted from being an office of lawyers representing the state ("SAO 1.0") to an organized agency, incorporating professional management tools and working methods, and establishing trans-agency collaborations ("SAO 2.0"). However, the basic focus of the SAO did not change: Issuing indictments and litigating court cases. Accordingly, success or failure has been mostly determined by court rulings.

The second part of the article examines SAO's future, specifically, the desired change in its role and mission. The proposed "SAO 3.0" takes a broader perspective, centered on a holistic approach of public safety and crime reduction (accompanied by a commitment to human rights and procedural justice). Recalibration of its role and mission presents an adaptive challenge, through a change of perspective and the measurement of "success". Some of the major implications of the change are: Relying on data analysis and evidence-based policy; acquiring expertise in criminology; expanding collaborations beyond law enforcement agencies to social services municipalities and other agencies; and building community trust and legitimacy – all are required to transform SAO 2.0 into 3.0.