counterstrikes that could escalate to war and opted for a diplomatic solution.

In the Middle East simulation, the opening scenario offered two plans for a summit in Washington, one on Israeli-Palestinian issues and the other on Israeli-U.S. coordination regarding a nuclear Iran. During policy formation we noticed that Israel has taken a much softer stand than in the real world, so we added details on a fatal rocket strike at Israel from Gaza to remind all participants that all negotiated accords must contain operational safeguards against provocative violations.

The opening scenario, illustrated in figure 6.2, for a simulation among ISA scholars combined terror and diplomacy to spark an emotional debate and a strenuous negotiation process. Presented in the form of a breaking news publication, it involved high uncertainty, questions of trustworthiness between rivals, and concerns regarding fragile diplomatic solutions. Under severe threat and extreme time pressure it challenged the teams to take risks or face deadlock. In reaction to this scenario, an acute crisis developed, which almost led to the collapse of negotiations on both issues, but eventually resulted in groundbreaking initiatives and the signing of historic accords.

In another example for a simulation among students on the Arab-Israel conflict in 2012, we emphasized the complexities of a turbulent Middle East politics by coupling three invitations all at once, each by a different initiator on a specific issue of contention. This opening scenario, illustrated in figure 6.3, was designed to have students work in three separate working groups. Each invitation required a particular actor to prepare a short opening document for discussion with others.

These invitations described acute military events between states and nonstate actors and hinted at the dangerous consequences of spillover from regional to global confrontations. All invitations, from U.S., UN, and Arab League leaders, emphasized grave stakes to compel actors to join the talks. The request for an opening document intentionally left space for creative initiatives and decisions on the specifics of the negotiation agenda. In reaction to these invitations all parties joined the diplomatic process in an attempt to reach working solutions on each of the contentious issues and prepared opening documents as requested in the scenario.

In the 2013 simulation on the Iranian quest for nuclear weapons, the opening scenario, like the initial one, took