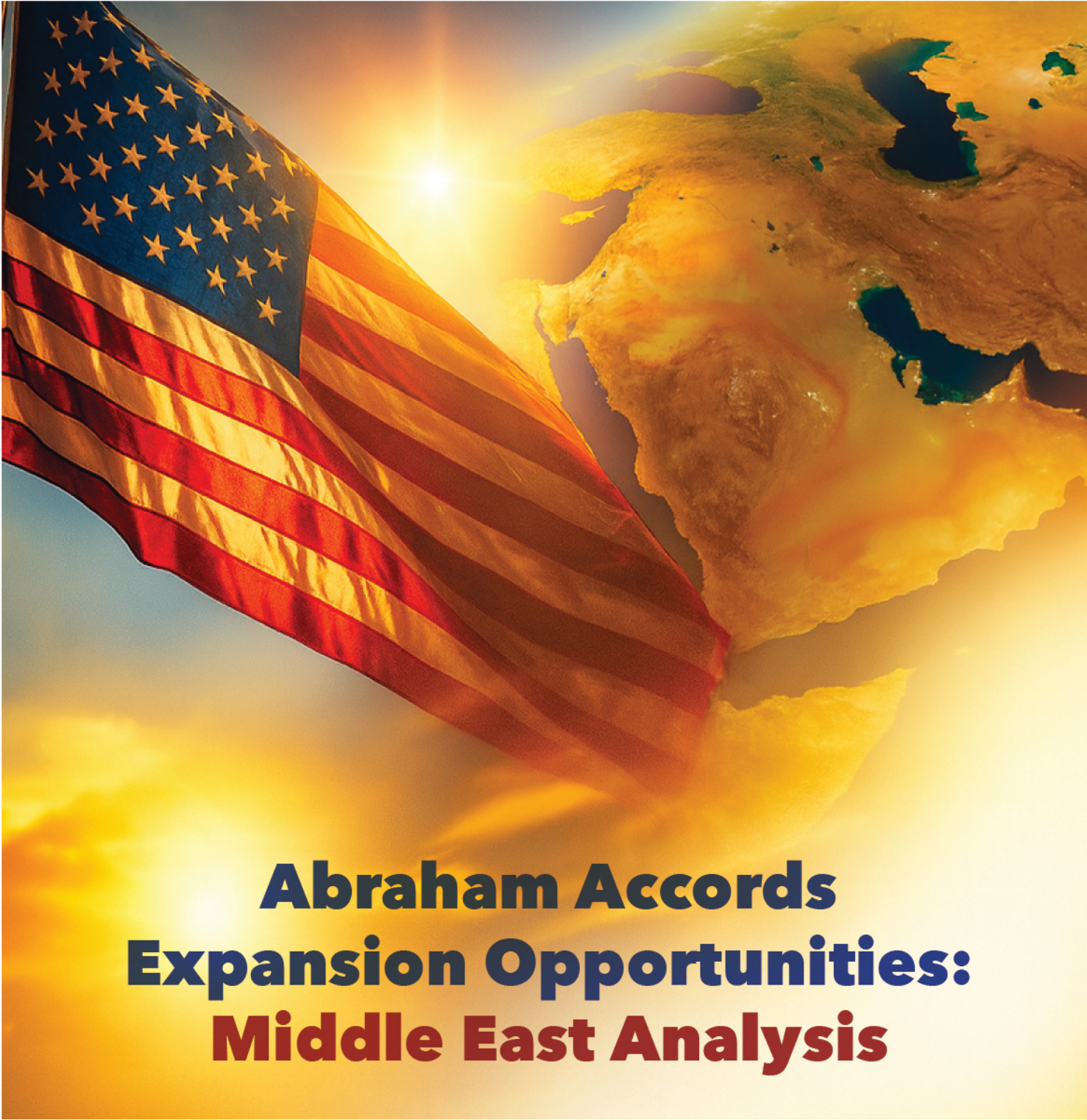


The background of the top half of the page features a large American flag on the left, waving and partially overlapping a map of the Middle East on the right. The scene is bathed in a warm, golden light, suggesting a sunrise or sunset, with a bright sun visible in the upper center. The flag's stars and stripes are clearly visible, and the map shows the geographical outlines of the region.

Abraham Accords Expansion Opportunities: Middle East Analysis

October, 2026



About the Council for a Secure America

The Council for a Secure America (CSA) is a nonpartisan, nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization that educates on the nexus of U.S. energy security, national security, and diplomacy. CSA focuses on how American energy strength advances key U.S. foreign policy priorities, including the U.S.–Israel relationship, the Abraham Accords, and global stability.

Through national briefings, public-opinion polling, research initiatives, and rapid-response analysis, CSA provides policymakers, industry leaders, and stakeholders with timely, accurate insights during periods of geopolitical uncertainty. CSA's work is informed by a Peace Through Prosperity framework that emphasizes the strategic importance of natural resources as a national security imperative.

American energy statecraft has reshuffled the geopolitical landscape and sowed the seeds of peace in the Middle East, enabling old adversaries to become allies. In 2020, the United States brokered the Abraham Accords— promoting unprecedented normalization and multilateral ties between its closest ally, Israel, and Arab States including the United Arab Emirates, the Kingdom of Bahrain, Sudan, and the Kingdom of Morocco. CSA champions the ideals of the Abraham Accords and their critical impact on geopolitical security and global trade. CSA is advancing these partnerships and is committed to bringing multi-faceted awareness to complex and evolving challenges.



Report Prepared from a Variety of Media, Government, and Expert Sources and Are Hyperlinked Throughout

Sources are hyperlinked in the report and found on www.CouncilforSecureAmerica.org

- +972 Magazine
- Agence France-Presse (AFP)
- Al Jazeera
- Al Majalla
- Al Qabas
- Al-Akhbar
- Al-Anba
- Al-Rai
- Al-Seyassah
- AlMuntaqa
- Amwaj.media
- Anadolu Agency
- Arab Center Washington DC
- Arab Gulf States Institute
- Arab News
- Arab Times
- Lieber Institute (West Point)
- Associated Press (AP)
- The Atlantic
- Atlantic Council
- Axios
- Azrieli Institute of Israel Studies
- Baker Institute for Public Policy, Rice University
- BBC News
- Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard Kennedy School
- BOE Report
- Brookings Institution
- Bunud
- Carnegie Endowment for International Peace
- Center for Israel Education
- Center for Jewish Studies, Fordham University
- Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS)
- Central Intelligence Agency
- The Century Foundation
- Chatham House
- The Cipher Brief
- CNN
- COLlive
- Congressional Research Service
- Constitute
- Council on Foreign Relations
- Courthouse News Service
- Debriefer
- Decree
- Deutsche Welle (DW)
- Diarna
- EBSCO (Research Starters)
- Enab Baladi
- Encyclopaedia Britannica
- European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR)
- European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA)
- Foreign Policy Research Institute
- Fox News
- Global Energy Monitor
- Global Firepower
- Globes
- Gulf International Forum
- Gulf News
- Haaretz
- House of Commons Library
- i24NEWS
- Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB)
- The Independent
- Institute for National Security Studies (INSS)
- International Commission of Jurists
- International Energy Agency
- International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS)
- Investing News Network
- Iraqi Ministry of Justice
- Israel Hayom
- Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Istishraf
- Jerusalem Center for Security and Foreign Affairs
- The Jerusalem Post
- Jewish Insider
- Jewish Institute for National Security of America (JINSA)
- Jewish Telegraphic Agency Jewish Virtual Library
- KSL.com
- Kuwait News Agency (KUNA)
- Kuwait Times
- Lebanese Petroleum Administration
- Library of Congress Federal Research Division
- Middle East Eye
- Middle East Institute
- Middle East Monitor
- Middle Eastern Studies
- Mishpacha
- Moment Magazine
- Nature
- The New Arab
- The New York Times
- Observer Research Foundation Middle East
- Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR)
- Omani Foreign Ministry
- Oxford University Press
- PBS NewsHour
- Peace Research Center Prague
- Presses de l'Ifpo
- QatarEnergy LNG
- Random House
- Reuters
- Rigzone
- Sana'a Center for Strategic Studies
- The Scribe
- Shafaq News
- Shenaname
- The Soufan Center
- Springer
- The Times
- The Times of Israel
- U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency
- U.S. Dept. of Education
- U.S. Dept. of Justice
- U.S. Dept. of State
- U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA)
- U.S. International Trade Administration
- U.S. Marine Corps
- UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
- United Nations
- UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
- UN High Commissioner for Refugees
- The Wall Street Journal
- The Washington Institute for Near East Policy
- The White House
- Wilson Center
- World Bank
- World Jewish Congress
- Yemen Press Agency
- Ynetnews

Executive Summary

This report ranks nine Middle East Muslim-majority countries that currently have no formal diplomatic relations with Israel by their likelihood of joining the Abraham Accords. The Accords were established in 2020. Currently four Muslim-majority countries have since signed on. Key differentiating factors for potential new members include geographic proximity to Israel, active conflict status, and how much control leadership exerts over its domestic population.

Based on CSA's analysis, Kuwait ranks most likely to join the Abraham Accords, driven by the Emir's leadership and closer ties to the United Arab Emirates (one of the early Accord signatories) and the United States. Lebanon and Syria follow, though perhaps not closely, reflecting active public talks with Israel, Lebanon's 2026 recognition of Israeli sovereignty, and Syria's security-to-peace track.

Once promising in the lead up to October 7, 2023, normalization between Israel and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has since cooled, with the 2026 Iran War deepening its wariness of normalization with Israel. The Sultanate of Oman, Qatar, and Iraq rank unlikely near-term due to Iranian or Muslim Brotherhood ties, with Iraqi Kurdistan a notable exception. Yemen and Iran rank lowest, tied to civil war and existential adversary status, respectively.

As of [CSA's June 2026 polling](#), over 80% of Israelis support the Abraham Accords. With just over 2 years left in President Trump's term, there is still time for him to expand the Abraham Accords within the Middle East.

Methodology

This report and the country rankings herein were based on expert analysis of the current geopolitical situation in the Middle East, drawing on primary and secondary sources and CSA's polling in relevant countries.

Rankings reflect a range of factors, including domestic political power and governmental structure, public opinion and statements by political leaders, relations with the United States and Israel, regional alliances, economic and energy interests, and ongoing conflicts. These factors were considered together to assess each country's political willingness and capacity to normalize relations with Israel and join the Abraham Accords. **The rankings reflect conditions prior to the time of publication and may change as political and security developments unfold.**

Current Abraham Accords Members

The Abraham Accords are the normalization agreements between Israel and Muslim-majority nations that did not have diplomatic ties with Israel. (Turkey formally established diplomatic relations with Israel in 1950; Egypt did so in 1979; Jordan in 1994.) The Abraham Accords were spearheaded by the United States under President Trump in 2020. These are the original signatories:

1. United Arab Emirates – September 2020
2. Kingdom of Bahrain – September 2020
3. Kingdom of Morocco – December 2020
4. Republic of the Sudan – January 2021

THE ABRAHAM ACCORDS, VISUALIZED

■ Abraham Accords Signer ■ Already Recognized Israel



Middle East Countries in Order of Likelihood to Join the Abraham Accords

1. [State of Kuwait](#) (most likely)
2. [Lebanese Republic](#)
3. [Syrian Arab Republic](#)
4. [Kingdom of Saudi Arabia](#)
5. [Sultanate of Oman](#)
6. [State of Qatar](#)
7. [Republic of Iraq](#)
8. [Republic of Yemen](#)
9. [Islamic Republic of Iran](#) (least likely)



Kuwait

Likelihood of Joining Abraham Accords



Overview

- **Demographics:** [Muslim](#) 74.6%, Christian 18.2%, other and unspecified 7.2%
- **Language:** [Arabic](#)
- **Energy Industry:** U.S. Dept. of Commerce [reports](#) that in Kuwait “oil accounts for around 95 percent of exports and approximately 90 percent of government revenue.” [Insufficient domestic gas supplies](#) make imported liquefied natural gas (LNG) important for electricity generation.
- **Key Industries:** petroleum, petrochemicals, cement, shipbuilding and repair, water desalination, food processing, construction materials. Proponent of renewable energy and maintains the oldest sovereign wealth fund.
- **Jewish Community:** Kuwait once had a small Jewish community of approximately [200](#) by the early 1900s, most of whom migrated during the economic crisis of the 1930s.
- **System of Government:** Historically Kuwait was the most liberal and semi-democratic state in the Gulf. The parliament had extensive powers and [gave great weight](#) to the opposition, which is strongly anti-Israel. Due to power sharing between the freely elected parliament and the ruling family, the monarchy was forced to compromise with the opposition, which is composed of

supporters of [Arab nationalism and political Islam](#). But in May 2024, the new Emir of Kuwait Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad [suspended parliament](#), and has increasingly ruled the country as an absolute monarchy.

■ **Palestinian Population:**

- Prior to the First Gulf War, Kuwait hosted the largest Palestinian community in exile outside of Jordan numbering [400,000](#).
- Yasser Arafat lived in Kuwait, worked in the Kuwaiti government and even founded the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) in Kuwait in [1959](#). After Arafat supported Saddam Hussain's invasion of Kuwait, most Palestinians [left](#) or were expelled from the country.
- An estimated [70,000](#) - [80,000](#) Palestinians live in Kuwait today, making them the [largest](#) foreign community in Kuwait. Some, but not most, have citizenship.

Kuwait-U.S. Relations

- **Diplomatic Relations:** The U.S. and Kuwait have had [continued diplomatic relations](#) since Kuwaiti independence in 1961.
- **1991 Gulf War:** The [1991 Gulf War](#) began with the U.S.-led coalition driving Iraqi forces out of Kuwait, solidifying a deep and lasting security relationship between the U.S. and Kuwait. PLO leader Yasser Arafat [supported Iraq](#) against Kuwait.
- Following the Gulf War, Kuwait contributed approximately \$16 billion to cover U.S. war expenses, demonstrating its commitment to security cooperation with the U.S.
- **Military Cooperation:** Kuwait is home to [one of the largest](#) U.S. military presences in the [world](#), including U.S. Army Central, the Army branch of U.S. Central Command. The U.S. first established a base in Kuwait in [1991](#).

- Unlike other American allies, Kuwait [does not require](#) the U.S. to pay for land use and offers access to subsidized utilities. Kuwait has also provided over [\\$2 billion](#) to assist stabilization efforts in Iraq.
- **Trade Relations:** U.S.-Kuwait trade relations remain [robust](#), with total trade reaching approximately [\\$5 billion](#).
- **2026 Iran War:** During the 2026 Iran War, Kuwait was aggressively targeted by Iran, with attacks on their [oil infrastructure](#), [airport](#), and [drinking water infrastructure](#). In July 2026, the Wall Street Journal reported that Kuwaiti warplanes worked alongside American forces and [struck targets inside Iran](#) in retaliation for Iranian attacks on its soil. Kuwait [denied](#) these reports.

Kuwait-Israel Relations

- **Diplomatic Relations:** Kuwait [has never had](#) diplomatic relations with Israel.
- **Criminalized Relations with Israel:** Kuwaiti law prohibits the entry of [Israelis](#). Under [Kuwaiti law](#), individuals and companies cannot conduct business with organizations or people living in Israel or even with people who have an interest in Israel, even if they live outside Israel.
- **Wars With Israel:**
 - 1967 Arab-Israeli Six-Day War and 1973 Yom Kippur: Kuwait was a [minor participant](#) in the 1967 Six-Day War and 1973 Yom Kippur War, sending troops and aircraft to Egypt. Additionally, Kuwait lost [nearly two-dozen soldiers](#) during the interbellum “War of Attrition” which ended in 1970.
- **Trade:** It is illegal to import, trade or possess any Israeli products.
- **Abraham Accords Response:** [Prior](#) to and [after](#) the signing of the Abraham Accords, Kuwait was strongly opposed to normalization of relations with Israel.

This position was reiterated after the October 7 Massacre, when Kuwait's Foreign Minister declared [opposition](#) to normalization "resolute, unambiguous, and unwavering."

- In September 2026, Israel's Ambassador to the UAE H.E. Yossi Shelley [said](#) that Kuwait could join the Abraham Accords within 6 months.

CSA Analysis: Kuwait once appeared to be one of the least likely nations to normalize relations with Israel due to its more democratic government and large Palestinian population. However, the ascension of Emir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad in 2023 and [his increasing power](#), combined with [Kuwaiti rapprochement with the UAE](#), indicate that Kuwait may now be a more likely candidate for normalization in the future.



Lebanon

Likelihood of Joining Abraham Accords



Overview

■ Demographics:

■ [Muslim](#) 69.3% (31.2% Sunni, 32% Shia, 6.1% other), Christian 30.7%, Druze 5.5%, very small numbers of Jews, Baha'is, Buddhists, and Hindus (data represents citizens only, not refugees)

■ Ethnic Breakdown: [Arab](#) 95%, Armenian 4%, other 1%

■ [Language](#): Arabic (official), French, English, Armenian

■ **Energy Industry**: Lebanon relies on [imported fuels, private generators and rooftop solar](#) to supplement an [unreliable electricity grid](#), while offshore oil and gas [remain at the exploration stage](#).

■ [Key industries](#): banking, tourism, real estate and construction, food processing, wine, jewelry, cement, textiles, mineral and chemical products, wood and furniture products, oil refining, metal fabricating

■ **Jewish Community**: dates back at least to [1,000 BCE](#). By the formation of Israel in 1948, [thousands](#) of Jews [lived in Lebanon](#). Over time, with increasing persecution, Lebanese Jews fled the country and today [less than 30](#) remain.

- **System of Government:** Lebanon's government, while a democracy, is built upon a nearly one hundred year old religious power sharing [concept](#): a Maronite President, a Shiite Speaker of Parliament, and Sunni Prime Minister.
- Internal decision making is [exacerbated by external actors](#) - Syria and Iran backing Hezbollah, Saudi Arabia backing Sunni communities, and the U.S. supporting the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF).
- **State Sponsor of Terror Designation and Sanctions:** [Hezbollah](#) is both a Shia political party in the government cabinet and a large militia that was designated a terrorist organization by the U.S. and other countries. It [grew](#) as an opposition force to the Israeli military occupation of Southern Lebanon in the 1980s but evolved to an anti-Israel and anti-Western force in Lebanon long after Israel's retreat from Lebanon in 2000.
- Hezbollah forces fought in Syria in support of then-Syrian President Assad for over a decade and have continued to fight against Israel. Hezbollah remains a strong proxy of Iran.
- **Palestinian Population:** With over 800,000 Syrian refugees and over 150,000 Palestinian refugees, Lebanon has the [highest per capita refugee population](#) in the world at approximately 22%. Palestinians born in Lebanon are [not allowed](#) to become citizens and are barred from owning property.
- Lebanon's President [commented](#) in October 2025 that: "Conditions are moving toward negotiations to achieve peace and stability. Therefore we say that through dialogue and negotiations solutions can be reached. We cannot be outside the ongoing track in the region."

Lebanon-U.S. Relations

- **Diplomatic Relations:** The U.S. government was an early supporter of Lebanese independence in the 1940s and by the 1950s had sent [14,000 military personnel](#) to support political stability.
- **1982 Lebanon War:** In the 1980s, the U.S. sent [1,400](#) Marines to Lebanon to counter Israel's ground invasion of Lebanon. A [Hezbollah suicide bomber](#) drove 2,000 pounds of explosives into the Marines Corps barracks in 1983, killing 220 Marines, 18 U.S. Navy sailors and 3 U.S. Army soldiers. The U.S. largely retreated from Lebanon following the attack.
- In the 1990s, [Syria and Iran deepened their influence](#) in Lebanon via their proxy, Hezbollah.
- In 2004, the U.S. and France [helped compel](#) Syria to withdraw troops from Lebanon which had remained there since [1976](#). Just two years later, the U.S. helped mediate an end to the Israel-Hezbollah War of 2006.
- Hezbollah's continued arms buildup coupled with deepening government corruption turned Lebanon into a largely [failed state](#) in the early 2000s.
- **Military Cooperation:** Since 2006, the U.S. has provided more than [\\$3 billion in military assistance](#) to the Lebanese Armed Forces to serve as a counterweight to Hezbollah. Since the civil war in Syria began, the U.S. has provided more than [\\$3 billion in humanitarian assistance](#) for Lebanon.
- **Energy Statecraft:** The U.S. mediated an agreement between Israel and Lebanon in [2022](#) to settle disputes over maritime gas borders, allowing both countries to benefit from natural gas production.

- **Israel-Hamas War:** Following October 7, 2023, the U.S. dispatched [two aircraft carriers](#) to the eastern Mediterranean to deter Hezbollah and Iran from entering the war.
- Today, the U.S. government actively pressures the Lebanese government to [disarm](#) Hezbollah.

Lebanon-Israel Relations

- **Diplomatic Relations:** While they have never had [formal diplomatic relations](#), Lebanon and Israel have engaged in bilateral negotiations numerous times since 1991.
- **Criminalized Relations with Israel:** Communications or trade with Israelis are harshly penalized criminal offenses in Lebanon. In 2026, three people were each [sentenced](#) to [15 years of hard labor](#) for these crimes.
- **Wars with Israel:** While Lebanon joined other Arab armies to attack Israel in the 1948 War of Independence, Lebanon did not participate in the 1967 6-Day War or the 1973 Yom Kippur War.
- Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, several conflicts brought Israel to engage in Lebanon.
 - First, Israel sided with the Christian community during the Lebanese Civil War which started in 1975. This led to the short-lived [May 17 Agreement](#) in 1983 which was mediated by the U.S. and provided a path to bilateral relations between the two countries.
 - Second, the Palestinian terrorists known as the fedeyeen relocated in 1970 and 1971 [from Jordan](#) to Southern Lebanon. Palestinians continued to attack Israel from Lebanon leading to Israeli retaliation.

- The IDF entered Lebanon in [1978 and again in 1982](#) to attack the leaders and fighters of the Palestine Liberation Organization which was based in Lebanon until their relocation to Tunisia in 1982.
- In [1985](#), Israel withdrew its forces from Beirut to Southern Lebanon, where they stayed to fight Hezbollah and Palestinian terrorists in a nine mile security buffer zone until 2000.
- **2006 Israel-Lebanon War:** In [2006](#), Hezbollah kidnapped two IDF soldiers along the Lebanon-Israel border which led to a 34-day war.
- **Energy Statecraft:** In 2022, Israel and Lebanon [signed a diplomatic agreement](#) delineating a shared maritime border and allowing for Lebanese offshore gas exploration.
- **Israel-Hamas War:** Following the October 7 Massacre, Hezbollah began to fire missiles, mortars, and rockets at Israel. This continued until the later part of 2024, when Israel launched an [assault on Hezbollah](#), decimating its leadership and destroying much of its military infrastructure in Southern Lebanon (see the [CSA Primer on Lebanon 2024](#)).
- **Lebanon-Israel Ceasefire (2024):** The U.S. mediated a [ceasefire](#) agreement between Israel and Hezbollah by the end of 2024 that called for Hezbollah to withdraw from Southern Lebanon completely.
- **2026 Iran War:** The 2024 ceasefire largely held, with a [flare up](#) occurring during the 2026 Iran War, but Hezbollah did not completely withdraw.
- **Diplomatic Agreements:** In June 2026, Lebanon and Israel signed a U.S.-brokered “Trilateral Framework” under which Lebanon [agreed to recognize](#) Israel as a sovereign nation for the first time as part of a broader agreement around the disarming of Hezbollah and Israeli withdrawal from South Lebanon.
- In August 2026, [a second round of talks were held](#).

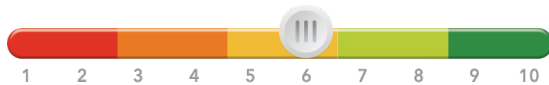
- In September 2026, a meeting was held between the Israeli and Lebanese ambassadors to the United States ahead of a [third round](#) of talks scheduled for October.
- These negotiations continue as the IDF continued to attack Hezbollah locations and the LAF continued to work towards disarming Hezbollah.
- **Public Opinion Polling:**
 - [CSA polling conducted in June 2026](#) revealed that 72% of Israelis support a future diplomatic agreement between Israel and Lebanon.
 - [June 2026 CSA polling in Lebanon](#) showed that 41% of Lebanese believe it is likely there will be peace between Lebanon and Israel but only 32% supported normalization with Israel.

CSA Analysis: Lebanon's recent recognition of Israeli sovereignty and the ongoing talks between the countries, which indicate that it is possible for Lebanon to join the Abraham Accords. A majority of Lebanese support efforts to disarm Hezbollah and only 19% oppose normalization with Israel if a resolution to the Palestinian issue can be achieved, according to [June 2026 polling from CSA](#). Hezbollah has yet to be disarmed or to fully withdraw from Southern Lebanon, presenting a significant obstacle to normalization. Israelis maintain that normalization will not be possible without ensuring security along the border.



Syria

Likelihood of Joining Abraham Accords



Overview

■ Demographics:

■ [Muslim](#) 87% (official; includes Sunni 74% and Alawi, Ismaili, and Shia 13%), Christian 10% (includes Orthodox, Uniate, and Nestorian), Druze 3%

■ [Arab](#) ~50%, Alawite ~15%, Kurd ~10%, Levantine ~10%, other ~15% (includes Druze, Ismaili, Imami, Nusairi, Assyrian, Turkoman, Armenian)

■ **Language:** Arabic (official), Kurdish, Armenian, Aramaic, Circassian, French, English

■ **Energy Industry:** Syria is rebuilding its [war-damaged oil, gas and electricity industries](#). Historically, oil and gas made up a [quarter of government revenue](#), but production fell by almost 90% during the civil war.

■ **Key industries:** petroleum, textiles, food processing, beverages, tobacco, phosphate rock mining, cement, oil seeds crushing, automobile assembly

■ **Jewish Community:** Jews lived in Syria going back to [biblical](#) times. Many more moved to Syria after the expulsion of Jews from Spain in [1492](#).

■ In the early [1900s](#), tens of thousands of Jews lived in Syria.

- After Syrian independence, attacks against Jews increased and culminated in the [1947](#) pogroms which saw the destruction of shops and synagogues in Aleppo.
- By the 1990s, after decades of persecution, nearly all of Syria's Jews had emigrated.
- **System of Government:** In [2025](#), Syria's new President al-Sharaa signed a constitutional declaration creating a five-year transitional period giving himself executive authority with Islam as the main source of legislation, a People's Assembly, and judicial independence.
- **Palestinian Population:** Syria is home to approximately [420,000 Palestinian refugees](#), a community [shaped by displacement](#) beginning in 1948 and whose members are excluded from attaining Syrian citizenship.

Syria-U.S. Relations

- **[Diplomatic Relations:](#)** Diplomatic relations between the U.S. and Syria began in 1944.
- In 1967, Syria severed diplomatic relations with the U.S. because of the Arab-Israeli 6-Day War.
- U.S.-Syrian Relations were reestablished in 1974.
- **State Sponsor of Terror Designation and Sanctions:** In 1979 Syria was later placed on the U.S. [list of state sponsors of terrorism](#) since the list's inception because of Syria's support of terrorism and terrorist groups under the Assad regime, its pursuit of weapons of mass destruction and use of chemical weapons, and its ongoing efforts to undermine U.S. stabilization activities in Iraq and Syria.

- **U.S. Aid:** The U.S. was the [largest donor to the humanitarian response in Syria](#), providing over \$12.2 billion in humanitarian assistance since the start of the civil war in 2011.
- **Military Cooperation:** U.S. forces have operated in Syria since [2014](#).
- **U.S. Sanctions:** From 1979 to 2024, the U.S. enacted an array of [sanctions](#) on the government of Syria, Syrian companies and people, and third parties supporting certain Syrian government activities. In 2025, most sanctions against Syria were [terminated](#).
- **Fall of Assad:** In 2024, the [Assad regime](#) fell (read the [CSA Primer on the Fall of Assad](#)) after over 50 years. The regime had sponsored terrorism against the U.S. and Israel.
- Syria had served as a military base of operations for Iran and Russia, brutally repressed its own people, used chemical weapons, sought nuclear weapons, and was a global leader in trafficking narcotics, [fueling tensions](#) with the U.S. for decades.
- **New Syrian Government:** Syria's new government is led by Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, a U.S.-designated terrorist group with [ties to al-Qaeda](#). The current U.S. administration is approaching relations with the new leadership in Syria cautiously and with a conditional approach.
- **Presidential Meetings with Syrian Leadership:**
 - In May 2025, President Trump [met](#) Syrian President al-Sharaa in Saudi Arabia. This was the first meeting between a U.S. and Syrian President since President Clinton's [meeting](#) with President Hafez Assad in 2000 while attempting to mediate peace between Syria and Israel.
 - In November 2025, President Trump [hosted](#) President al-Sharaa in the White House. This was the first visit by a Syrian President to the White House.

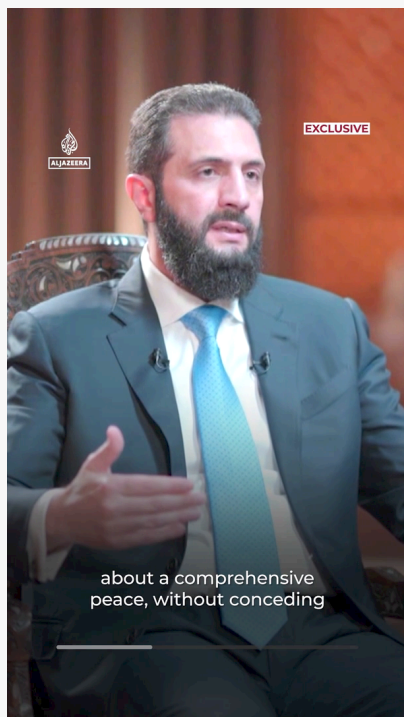
- 2026 Iran War: Syria sought to avoid direct involvement in the 2026 Iran war, reinforcing its borders with Iraq and Lebanon as President Ahmed al-Sharaa pledged to remain outside the conflict unless Syria itself was attacked.

Syria-Israel Relations

- **Diplomatic Relations:** While they have never enjoyed formal diplomatic relations, Syria and Israel have participated in [indirect and direct peace talks](#) a number of times.
- **Criminalized Relations with Israel:** Syria [criminalizes agreements and dealings](#) with Israelis and Israeli citizens [cannot enter](#) Syria.
- **Wars with Israel:**
 - 1948 Arab-Israeli War: Upon Israel's establishment in 1948, the Syrian army [attacked](#) Israel which ended with an [armistice agreement](#) in 1949 which outlined a demilitarized zone.
 - 1967 Arab-Israeli Six Day War: In the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, Syria attacked Israel again and lost control of the [Golan Heights](#) to Israel. During the 1990s, Syria and Israel held occasional [peace talks](#) over its return in exchange for peace.
 - 1973 Yom Kippur War: In addition, Syrian forces fought to recapture the Golan in the 1973 Yom Kippur War and engaged in postwar clashes in 1974.
 - 1982 Lebanon War: Syrian forces also fought in the 1982 Lebanon War.
 - In 2007, Israel [destroyed](#) a nuclear reactor being built inside Syria. Since the start of the Syrian civil war in 2011, Israel has carried out hundreds of airstrikes against Iranian and Hezbollah targets in Syria.

- In 1999-2000, in 2008, and in 2010, Israeli and Syrian officials unsuccessfully attempted to [negotiate peace](#).
- **Security Zone:** Following the fall of the Assad regime, the IDF entered Syria to create a security buffer zone.
- **Diplomatic Negotiations:** Starting in May 2025, Israel and Syria, under its new leadership, have engaged in indirect and direct [talks](#) to ease tensions and exchange security information. U.S.-mediated talks between Israel and Syria [continued on and off](#) through 2026, mostly focused on reaching a [security agreement](#).
- **Abraham Accords Response:** In August 2025, Syria's President suggested that Syria [could not replicate the Abraham Accords](#) due to the unique circumstances of the relationship.
- In mid-2026, Syria's President stated that talks about a "[comprehensive peace](#)" agreement would be the next step after a security agreement was reached.
- President al-Shaara later stated in September 2026 that Syria and Israel had ["almost reached agreements on 90%"](#) of the issues between them.
- He suggested that [first](#) Israel would withdraw from the areas of Syria it had entered after December 2024, returning to the lines of the 1974 Separation of Forces Agreement, and then the two sides could discuss a [security arrangement](#) prior to peace talks.
- **Public Opinion Polling:**
 - [June 2026 CSA polling in Israel](#) revealed that 64% of Israelis support a future diplomatic agreement between Israel and Syria.
 - [June 2026 CSA polling in Syria](#) showed that 54% of Syrians believed peace between Syria and Israel was likely, 53% supported a security arrangement with

Israel, and 46% supported while 19% opposed normalization with Israel (20% neither supported nor opposed and 15% preferred not to answer).



Ahmed al-Sharaa on relations with Israel

Al Jazeera: "What are President al-Sharaa's views on the question of the relationship with Israel given its many acts of aggression and violations?"

al-Sharaa: "If the security agreement succeeds, and Israel commits to the security side, and Syria does as well, along with all the conditions of the agreement that may be concluded later, this would qualify for a second stage of talks about a comprehensive peace, without conceding Syria's right to the occupied Golan."

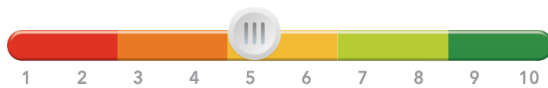
Source: [Al Jazeera](#) · Video frame 00:23

CSA Analysis: The fall of the Assad regime presented an opportunity for Syria's new leaders to establish dialogue with Israel. Syria's President communicated a clear appetite for a peace agreement if the current security talks are successful. Furthermore, [CSA polling in June 2026](#) found that a majority of Syrians supported a security agreement with Israel, and that only 19% of Syrians were opposed to full normalization with Israel if a resolution to the Palestinian question could be reached. Nonetheless, Syria's claim to the Golan Heights remains an obstacle to full normalization.



Saudi Arabia

Likelihood of Joining Abraham Accords



Overview

- **Demographics:** Only [Muslim](#) citizens are allowed, with 85-90% Sunni and 10-12% Shia Muslims.
- **Language:** [Arabic](#)
- **Energy Industry:** Saudi Arabia is a [major OPEC oil producer with extensive refining and petrochemical industries](#), although regional conflict has [sharply disrupted](#) production and export routes.
- **Key industries:** crude oil production, petroleum refining, basic petrochemicals, ammonia, industrial gases, sodium hydroxide (caustic soda), cement, fertilizer, plastics, metals, commercial ship repair, commercial aircraft repair, construction
- **Jewish Community:** There is believed to have been an ancient Yemenite Jewish community that lived in [Narjan](#), Saudi Arabia that existed until their emigration of the final 250 Jews to Israel in 1949.
- **System of Government:** Saudi Arabia is an [absolute monarchy](#), public opinion has less influence over governmental decisions than in other countries in the Middle East.

- **Energy Production:** Saudi Arabia is the world's [second largest](#) oil producer, after the U.S., and has the [sixth largest](#) natural gas reserves.
- Saudi Arabia holds significant influence over the Muslim world as it is the physical birthplace of Islam and home to Islam's two holiest shrines in Mecca and Medina.

Saudi-U.S. Relations

- **Diplomatic Relations:** The U.S. and Saudi Arabia have enjoyed full diplomatic relations since [1940](#).
- The U.S. historically provided security and military support and sales [in exchange](#) for a favorable Saudi energy policy and oil sales.
- Relations took a negative turn following 9/11 and in 2018 after the assassination of Washington Post journalist Jamal Khashoggi, but have always rebounded.
- **Military Cooperation:** There are over [2,000 U.S. soldiers](#) stationed in Saudi Arabia, providing air and missile defense capabilities in the region, including Patriot missiles and THAAD systems.
- **Abraham Accords Response:** In March of 2023, it was [reported](#) publicly that Saudi Arabia was in talks with the U.S. about normalizing relations with Israel in exchange for security guarantees and nuclear development.
- **Energy Statecraft:** In September 2023, Saudi Arabia [signed a memorandum](#) alongside the U.S., the EU, India, the UAE, Germany, Italy and France to develop the India–Middle East–Europe Economic Corridor ([IMEC](#)), a proposed trade and infrastructure network connecting India to Europe. The original route would

combine shipping and rail connections through the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Israel.

- **Trade and Economic Cooperation:** The U.S. is Saudi Arabia's [second largest](#) supplier of goods after China. Saudi investors hold significant amounts of [U.S. Treasury securities](#). Both the Saudi riyal and Saudi oil are [pegged and priced to the U.S. dollar](#).
- **Palestinian Population:** According to a [2023 U.S. State Department report](#), about 300-400,000 Palestinians lived in Saudi Arabia who are not registered as refugees.
- In July 2026, the U.S. stated that implementation of a Saudi-U.S. civilian nuclear cooperation agreement [would be contingent](#) on Saudi normalization with Israel.
- **2026 Iran War:** Saudi Arabia faced [Iranian attacks on its territory](#) and [renewed fighting with Yemen's Iran-backed Houthis](#), while disruptions to shipping through the Strait of Hormuz and threats to Red Sea routes jeopardized its oil exports.

Saudi-Israel Relations

- **Diplomatic Relations:** Israel and Saudi Arabia have no diplomatic relations.
- **Criminalized Relations with Israel:** Saudi Arabia remains [committed to the primary boycott](#) of the Arab League boycott, which criminalizes direct business dealings with Israel or Israeli nationals.
- **Wars with Israel:**
 - 1948 Arab-Israeli War & 1973 Yom Kippur War: Saudi Arabia had [minor roles](#) in the 1948 Arab-Israeli and 1973 Yom Kippur wars against Israel.

- 1956 Suez War and 1967 Arab-Israeli Six-Day War : Saudi Arabia provided support to some Arab nations during the 1956 Suez War and 1967 Six-Day War.
- In [2002](#), Saudi Arabia published the Arab Peace Initiative, outlining a path towards normalizing relations between Israel and all Arab countries.
- **Israeli-Saudi Military Cooperation:**
 - Between 2010 and 2023, Saudi Arabia increasingly took public and private steps towards normalization with Israel.
 - This included [conducting tests](#) to stand down its air defences in northern Saudi Arabia to enable Israeli jets to make a bombing raid on Iran’s nuclear facilities.
 - The deputy intelligence chief of Saudi Arabia [secretly traveled to Israel](#) several times, [regular meetings](#) between Saudi and Israeli officers in the joint war room where Jordan, Saudi Arabia and the United States coordinate regional security, a [Saudi delegation](#) led by a retired general traveling to Israel, and even Israel and Saudi Arabia holding [direct talks](#) on establishing economic ties.
- Some reports even suggested that Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman [secretly met with Israeli officials](#) in 2015 and 2017, that Netanyahu flew to Saudi Arabia in [2020](#), and that the Crown Prince [called](#) Netanyahu directly in 2021.
- The Crown Prince stated in an [interview in 2022](#) that, “We don’t look at Israel as an enemy, we look to them as a potential ally, with many interests that we can pursue together.”
- In 2023, just weeks before the October 7 massacre, an [Israeli Minister](#) made the first public official visit to Saudi Arabia. This was followed by a visit just days before the October 7 massacre by another Israeli Minister who gave [the first public speech in Saudi Arabia](#).

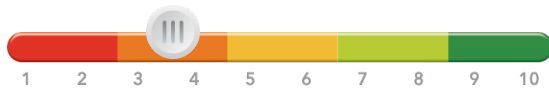
- **Israel-Hamas War:** Even after October 7, 2023, official Saudi [school textbooks](#) continued to show significant moderation of anti-Israel and anti-semitic material, while the government [increasingly detained](#) citizens who spoke out against Saudi's stance on normalization with Israel.
- **Abraham Accords:** In a [November 2025 meeting with President Trump](#), Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman said he was ready to work on joining the Abraham Accords and normalizing relations with Israel.
- **2026 Iran War:** The outbreak of the 2026 Iran War and the strength of the Israeli-Emirati partnership [reportedly increased concern](#) in Saudi Arabia that Israel is more of a liability to Saudi national security interests than previously believed.
- **Public Opinion Polling:** Recent [June 2026 CSA polling](#) in Israel showed that 78% of Israelis support a diplomatic agreement between Israel and Saudi Arabia, with [71% of Israelis believing it would help the Israeli economy](#).

CSA Analysis: Israel and Saudi Arabia were on a [very public path towards normalization](#) prior to October 7, 2023 - with public visits of Israeli Ministers to Saudi Arabia and movement towards the IMEC connecting India to Israel via Saudi Arabia. Following the war in Gaza and subsequent 2026 Iran War, that progress dissipated. During the 2026 Iran War, the UAE, Israel's strongest Gulf ally, was targeted by Iran [more than any](#) other Gulf state. This may have further [disincentivized](#) Saudi Arabia from normalization with Israel, positioning Israel as more of a liability to Saudi national security interests than previously believed. Saudi mistrust of the [Israeli-Emirati relationship](#) and [demonstrated willingness to resist American pressure on normalization](#) suggest that normalization is currently unlikely.



Oman

Likelihood of Joining Abraham Accords



Overview

- **Demographics:** 85.9% [Muslim](#), Christian 6.4%, Hindu 5.7%, other and unaffiliated 2%
- **Language:** [Arabic](#)
- **Energy Industry:** Oman's energy industry is anchored in [oil exports](#), with oil and gas responsible for 70% of government revenues and 30% of GDP. Recent investment in refining, renewable power and green hydrogen have supported [efforts to diversify the sector](#).
- **Key industries:** crude oil production and refining, natural and liquefied natural gas production; construction, cement, copper, steel, chemicals, optic fiber.
- **Jewish Community:** Although there is no [remaining](#) Jewish community in Oman today, there [were](#) Jews in Oman as early as the 9th century.
- **System of Government:** Oman is an [hereditary absolute monarchy](#).
- **Total bilateral U.S.-Oman trade** in 2021 was over \$3.2 billion. U.S. exports to Oman include vehicles, aircraft and engines, and industrial engines and machines. U.S. imports from Oman include industrial supplies, bauxite and aluminum, fertilizers, jewelry, plastics, and fuel oil.

- **Palestinian Population:** Oman's Palestinian community, estimated at [approximately 10,000 people](#) in the 2010s, [grew through labor migration](#) that expanded to the country from the mid-1970s onward.
- Oman remains a broadly [conservative society](#) and in recent years Islamic causes have become more popular.
- Sultan Qaboos [died in 2020](#) after ruling for 49 years. He was replaced by Sultan Haitham who appears to have moved Omani foreign policy closer to Iran and [away](#) from Israel.
- Generally, Oman maintains a [‘friends-of-all’](#) foreign policy based on moderation, diplomacy, and dialogue, and [doubled down](#) on this stance in 2026

Oman-U.S. Relations

- **Diplomatic Relations:** The U.S. and Oman signed a treaty of friendship and navigation in [1833](#). It was replaced in 1958 by the Treaty of Amity, Economic Relations, and Consular Rights, and the two countries established diplomatic relations in 1972.
- **Trade:** In [2009](#), the United States and Oman signed a Free Trade Agreement (FTA), which has increased trade in both directions and created opportunities.
- In [2022](#), the U.S. Secretary of State and Omani Foreign Minister launched the first Strategic Dialogue between the two countries coinciding with the 190-year anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Amity and Commerce, which established commercial relations between the two countries.
 - It was the first trade agreement the U.S. signed with an Arab country.
 - Oman has played a backchannel role for U.S. relations with Iran.

- **Military Cooperation:** The U.S. and Oman have close [military cooperation](#) and work together to ensure freedom of navigation in the key naval chokepoint of the Strait of Hormuz (through which [30%](#) of the world's maritime oil shipments pass), to counter piracy, and to combat weapons and narcotics trafficking.
- **2026 Iran War:** Oman's relationship with the U.S. grew more complicated with the outbreak of the 2026 Iran War.
 - Oman issued [harsh critiques](#) of the U.S. in 2026 and [refused to join](#) the Board of Peace.
 - Reports of Omani discussions with Iran over management of the Strait of Hormuz [drew strong rebukes](#) from the U.S. government.

Oman-Israel Relations

- **Diplomatic Relations:** Under Omani Sultan Qaboos, Oman had [overt and covert relations](#) with Israel, despite no formal diplomatic relations.
- **Criminalized Relations with Israel:** In 2023, the country's [parliament](#) voted to criminalize any relations or interactions with "the Zionist entity."
- **Response to Peace Accords with Israel:** Oman [supported](#) the 1978 Camp David Accords between Israel and Egypt. After the signing of the peace treaty in 1979, Oman was one of the three Arab countries (alongside Sudan and Morocco) which did not sever their diplomatic relations with Egypt
- In the [1970s](#) and 1980s, Oman and Israel maintained secret security relations.
- Sultan Qaboos and his government [hosted](#) and met publicly with many Israeli officials including visits to Oman by Prime Ministers Rabin (1994), Peres (1996) and Netanyahu (2018).

- **Response to Abraham Accords:** Sultan Qaboos was [supportive](#) of the Abraham Accords, but chose not to normalize ties with Israel.
- **New Omani Leadership:** In 2021, Oman’s government, under newly appointed Sultan Haitham, first publicly [rejected normalization with Israel and the Abraham Accords](#).
- In 2025, Oman’s Grand Mufti announced [opposition](#) to normalization with Israel.
- In 2026, Oman’s Foreign Minister again rejected “[normalization](#)” with Israel, and identified Israel as the “[gravest threat](#)” facing the Gulf.
- **2026 Iran War:** Throughout the 2026 Iran War, Oman maintained its role as mediator, most [recently](#) vis-a-vis Iran and the administration of the Strait of Hormuz, as well as between the U.S. government and the [Houthis](#) in Yemen.

CSA Analysis: Omani foreign policy places itself as an [interlocutor state](#) and an actor for [de-escalation and conflict resolution](#). Sultan Qaboos, prior to his death, was [supportive](#) of the Abraham Accords, but chose not to normalize ties with Israel. Under Sultan Haitham’s leadership, **Oman continued its public rejection of normalization with Israel in 2026.** Further, Oman’s [domestic political situation](#) following the death of Sultan Qaboos renders joining the Abraham Accords increasingly unlikely, despite historical relations with Israel. A resumption of the [commercial air flyover rights](#) agreed upon in 2019 would be a positive indicator against this public trend.



Qatar

Likelihood of Joining Abraham Accords



Overview

- **Demographics:** [Muslim](#) 65.2%, Christian 13.7%, Hindu 15.9%, Buddhist 3.8%
- **Language:** [Arabic](#)
- **Energy Industry:** Qatar, located between Saudi Arabia and Iran, is the second largest LNG exporter in the world, hosts the third largest proved natural gas reserves in the world, and is the [sixth largest](#) natural gas producer globally.
- Qatar's energy industry centers on natural gas and LNG exports from the North Field, which holds [about 10% of known global gas reserves](#). 2026 Iran War damage and shipping restrictions [severely disrupting LNG supplies](#).
- **Key industries:** liquefied natural gas, crude oil production and refining, ammonia, fertilizer, petrochemicals, steel reinforcing bars, cement, commercial ship repair
- **Jewish Community:** Qatar, unlike other Gulf States, [had no historical Jewish community](#). Today, there is a small community [served by a Chabad Rabbi](#).
- **System of Government:** Absolute [monarchy](#) led by Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani.

- **Palestinian Population:** Qatar hosts [approximately 20,000](#) Palestinians.
- Qatar has the [3rd largest](#) proven natural gas reserves in the world, and is a major exporter of LNG.
- **Energy Statecraft:** Qatar shares [ownership](#) with Iran of the South Pars/North Dome Gas Field, the largest gas field in the world. Its relations with Iran, as well as [support for the Muslim Brotherhood](#), create a different geopolitical orientation as compared to other Gulf States.
- Qatar funds Al Jazeera, an international news network [founded in 1996](#) that has become a major source of the country's regional and global influence. The network has drawn criticism for [providing a platform](#) to figures affiliated with Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood.

Qatar-U.S. Relations

- **Diplomatic Relations:** The U.S. recognized Qatari independence in [1971](#) and established diplomatic relations in 1972. The U.S. Export-Import Bank later provided [over \\$1 billion](#) in loan guarantees to support the early development of Qatar's gas production facilities.
- **Military Cooperation:** Qatar maintains strong ties with the U.S., especially militarily. Qatar hosts U.S. CENTCOM at the Al Udeid Air Base, the largest U.S. military base in the Middle East, and is the [second largest purchaser](#) of American weapons in the world.
- In 2024, the U.S. and Qatar renewed a military cooperation agreement, extending the U.S. military's presence in Qatar for another [10 years](#).
- **Trade:** The U.S. is Qatar's [largest foreign direct investor](#) and largest source of imports.

- **Educational Ties:** Qatar maintains extensive financial and educational ties with American universities. U.S. Department of Education [disclosures for 2025](#) identified Qatar as the largest foreign source of university funding, with more than \$1.1 billion in reported gifts and contracts.
- In 2024, Qatari citizens became the only citizens of an Arab country to receive [visa-free](#) entry to the U.S..
- **Abraham Accords:** In 2026, the U.S. [publicly encouraged](#) Qatar to join the Abraham Accords.

Qatar-Israel Relations

- **Diplomatic Relations:** While no formal diplomatic relations exist between Qatar and Israel, Qatar is [not designated](#) as an enemy state and official meetings go back to the early [1990s](#).
- **Trade:** Israel opened an official [trade office](#) in Doha, Qatar in 1996, the opening of which then Prime Minister Shimon Peres [attended](#).
 - As Deputy Prime Minister of Israel in [2007](#), Shimon Peres returned to Doha.
 - Israel's Foreign Minister visited Doha in [2008](#) and Israel's Industry, Trade and Labor Minister visited in [2010](#).
- **Abraham Accords Response:** Qatar's Emir said in private in [2020](#) that he was "open" to normalizing ties with Israel.
- During the 2022 World Cup hosted in Qatar, [thousands of Israelis](#) were allowed to travel to Qatar, including via direct commercial flights, and a temporary consular office was established.
- Qatar seemingly takes a [two-faced approach towards Israel](#). While it strongly condemns Israeli policies toward the Palestinians, it also plays a crucial role as a

mediator between Israel and Hamas and is actively involved in coordinating humanitarian aid for Gaza.

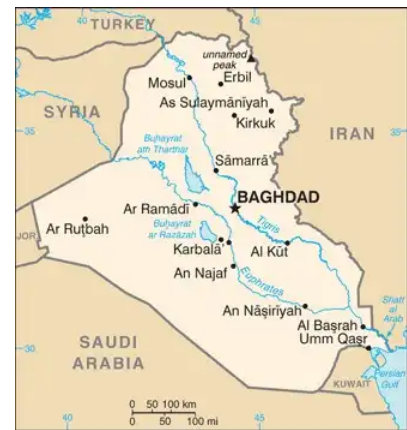
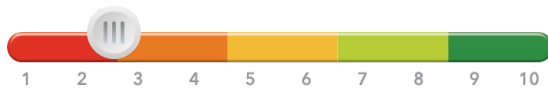
- **Qatar-Hamas Relations:** Qatar has [hosted](#) Hamas leadership and is a significant financier of Hamas. This strategy enables Qatar to maintain its status as a key regional actor, balancing its support for the Palestinian cause with pragmatic engagement with Israel.
- **Israel-Hamas War:** Following the October 7 Massacre and ensuing war in Gaza, Qatar and Israel continued formal, [working level relations](#).
 - Their intelligence agencies and senior government officials meet, as economic and commercial cooperation, albeit [limited](#), exists.
- In 2024, Israel [banned Al Jazeera](#) for national security reasons after the outlet published live troop movements and a video detailing how to destroy Israeli tanks.
- **2025 Doha Strike:** In [2025](#), Israel attacked Hamas leadership in Doha, Qatar. For more details, read [CSA's Doha Attack Primer](#).
- In December 2025, the U.S., Israel, and Qatar conducted [trilateral meetings](#) aimed at improving relations between Israel and Qatar.
- **2026 Iran War:** During the 2026 Iran War, Iran [struck Qatar's Al Udeid Air Base](#) and energy infrastructure, with attacks on the Ras Laffan gas complex disabling 17% of the country's liquefied natural gas export capacity.

CSA Analysis: Qatar officially [states](#) that it will not establish full diplomatic relations with Israel until there is an Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement. While Qatar does actively and openly engage Israel in its role as a mediator, its relations with Iran and support for the Muslim Brotherhood make it an unlikely addition to the Abraham Accords in the near term.



Iraq

Likelihood of Joining Abraham Accords



Overview

■ Demographics:

- 95-98% [Muslim](#), an estimated 61-64% are Shia and 29-34% are Sunni
- Iraq is [ethnically](#) 75-80% Arab and 15-20% Kurdish

■ Language: [Arabic](#), Kurdish, (Turkmen (a Turkish dialect) and Syriac (Neo-Aramaic) are recognized as official languages where native speakers of these languages are present)

■ Energy Industry: The second largest oil producer in OPEC, Iraq's energy industry is [dominated by oil production and exports](#), which account for 90% of government revenues.

■ Key industries: petroleum, chemicals, textiles, leather, construction materials, food processing, fertilizer, metal fabrication/processing

■ Jewish Community: Jews have lived in Iraq since [722 BCE](#) and by 1917 accounted for [40%](#) of Baghdad's population.

- After Iraq's independence in 1932, its first Minister of Finance, Yehezkel Sasson, was [Jewish](#) and Hebrew was listed as one of Iraq's six [languages](#).
- Persecution accelerated in the 1930s and in 1941, Muslim rioters robbed and killed about 200 Jews in Baghdad and wounded as many as 1,000 more in a pogrom referred to as the [Farhud](#).

- In 1950, the Iraqi government passed a law that allowed Jews to leave if they gave up their Iraqi citizenship and assets. Iraqi Jews were [airlifted](#) to Israel and by 1952, the ancient population of Iraqi Jews went from 130,000 to 6,000.
- Today, a [handful](#) of Jewish citizens are believed to remain in federal Iraq. Some [100-250](#) Jews live in Iraq's Kurdistan Region, where the government welcomes Jews and even has a Jewish Affairs representative.
- **System of Government:** Iraq is a [federal parliamentary republic](#), with a prime minister appointed by the president ([a largely ceremonial figure](#)) and approved by parliament. Its constitutional framework includes [significant autonomy for the Kurdistan region](#).
- **Palestinian Population:** Iraq is home to [~14,000 Palestinians](#), who are forbidden from becoming citizens. This population was considerably larger before the 2003 U.S. Invasion.
- Through monarchy, military-led republics, Ba'ath party rule, and the post-2003 democratization era, Iraq has [always been consistent](#) in its policy against Israel. Iraq remains the only state that fought in the 1948 war and did not sign a subsequent armistice agreement with Israel.
- As the only Arab country to border Iran, Iraq has the deepest and [strongest ties to Iran](#) of all the Arab countries, except of course during the Iran-Iraq War. They share deep [religious and cultural](#) ties. [Both](#) the U.S. military and Iranian-backed paramilitaries existed in Iraq over the last two decades. Iran, an opponent of the Abraham Accords, is likely to influence the Iraqi government [against joining](#) it.

Iraq-U.S. Relations

- **Diplomatic Relations:** The U.S. recognized Iraq in [1930](#) and relations lasted until 1967 when Iraq [severed](#) diplomatic relations over the 1967 Arab-Israeli War.
- In 1984, diplomatic relations [resumed](#) until 1991 over Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.
- The U.S. removed Saddam Hussein in 2003, and [reestablished](#) diplomatic relations shortly thereafter.
- **2003-2011 U.S.-Iraq War:** The most recent U.S.-Iraq War has defined modern Iraqi-U.S. relations for nearly 20 years.
- **Military Cooperation:** The U.S. helped Iraq [defeat](#) the Islamic State group and has confronted [Iran-backed militias in Iraq](#) for nearly a decade, although tensions have decreased under the new Iraqi government.

Iraq-Israel Relations

- **Diplomatic Relations:** There are no diplomatic relations between Iraq and Israel, although [secret talks](#) have existed.
- **Criminalized Relations with Israel:** Iraq's parliament passed a law in 2022 [criminalizing](#) the normalization of relations with Israel and making communication with Israelis punishable by [death](#).
- **Energy Statecraft:** From 1934-1948, [a crude oil pipeline](#) operated between Kirkuk, Iraq into Jordan and ending at the [port of Haifa](#), Israel.
- **Wars with Israel:** Despite no shared border, Iraq and Israel have a [history of military conflict](#).
 - Iraqi forces fought alongside Arab forces against Israel in 1948, 1967 and 1973.
 - In 1981, the Israeli Air Force bombed Iraq's nuclear reactor.

- **Iran-Iraq War:** Israel supported Iran during the Iran-Iraq War during the 1980s.
- **First Gulf War:** During the First Gulf War in 1991, Iraq fired over 40 Scud missiles at Israel.
- Despite the fall of Saddam Hussein in 2003, Iraqi policy towards Israel [didn't change](#).
- In 2018, Israel launched a [virtual embassy](#) to Iraq, opening direct communication with Iraqi people. In 2019, smaller [secret delegations](#) of Iraqi influencers visited Israel.
- Israel has hinted that it acted in 2019 [inside Iraq](#) against Iranian militias.
- **Israel-Hamas War:** Although Iraq did not formally enter the war, Iran-backed militias, including Kata'ib Hezbollah, [attacked Israel and U.S. forces](#) in the region, with [some agreeing to halt attacks on Israel](#) in late 2024 following pressure from the Iraqi government.
- **2025 12-Day Iran War:** During the Israel-Iran 12 Day War in 2025, [Israeli aircraft flew over Iraq](#) from the west and returned home from the east, dropping fuel tanks over Iraq while in transit.
- Most of the hundreds of drones and cruise missiles launched by [Iran at Israel](#) [passed over Iraqi airspace](#).
- U.S. aircraft also [flew through Iraq](#) en route to striking Iran.
- Iraq's government [prevented](#) Iran-backed militias in Iraq from launching missiles and drones at Israel during the war.
- **Response to Abraham Accords:** In late 2025, a Chaldean (Iraqi) Catholic Cardinal used the word 'normalization' in a sermon and was [widely condemned](#) and threatened. Advocating for normalization of relations with Israel is [punishable by death](#) or life imprisonment in Iraq.

- **2026 Iran War:** In the 2026 Iran War, Israel was [revealed](#) to have been operating an airstrip in the Iraqi desert. A clash with Iraqi troops who discovered the base [resulted in the death](#) of an Iraqi soldier. The Iraqi government [hid the death for months](#) and continues to deny that the base was Israeli or that Israel was responsible for the death of the soldier.

Kurdistan-Israel Relations

- Israeli-Kurdish relations have deepened since Kurdish leader Mulla Barzani's 1968 and 1973 [visits](#) to Israel.
- Many Kurdish leaders have [visited](#) Israel and Israeli officials have visited the Kurdish region over the years, including the establishment of [Mossad bases](#) there as far back as the 1960s.
- In 1980, Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin [revealed](#) that Israel supported the Kurds "during their uprising against the Iraqis in 1965-1975."
- After the fall of Saddam Hussein, Israel supported independence for the [semiautonomous](#) Iraqi Kurdistan,
- **Energy Statecraft:** Israel has been the [top buyer of crude oil](#) from the Kurdish region.
- In [2005](#), the Kurdish president of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), Masoud Barzani, openly called for establishing diplomatic ties with Israel. Kurdish [officials](#) continued to travel to Israel and Israelis have quietly visited Kurdistan.
- In 2008, Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak [met publicly](#) with Iraqi President Jalal Talabani, a Kurdish leader, at a conference in Greece.
- **Public Opinion Polling:** A [2009 poll](#) in Iraqi Kurdistan found that 71% of Kurds supported normalization with Israel - long before the Abraham Accords.

- **Abraham Accords Response:** In 2021, over 300 attendees at a [conference](#) in the Kurdish capital of Erbil called for peace and reconciliation with Israel. The conference was quickly condemned by Iraq's President and Prime Minister.
- Kurdistan's political turmoil since its October 2024 parliamentary elections [has threatened its autonomy](#) and chances for independence.
- **2026 Iran War:** U.S.-Israeli plans to enlist the Kurds to join them in the 2026 Iran War [fell apart](#).

CSA Analysis: Iraq has opposed the State of Israel since its founding and remains technically at war with Israel. Its relatively democratic nature, Iranian influence, and independence from the Gulf states collectively prevent Iraq from joining the Abraham Accords in the near term. Public signs of rapprochement have not been seen in recent years.

Still, Iraqi Kurdistan - as a semi-autonomous state or its own independent country - has relations with Israel that could flourish into stronger, more public and official diplomatic relations. If Kurdistan is able to achieve independence, it would very likely join the Abraham Accords.

Yemen

Likelihood of Joining Abraham Accords



Overview

- **Demographics:** 99% [Muslim](#), an estimated 65% are Sunni and 35% are Shia
- **Language:** [Arabic](#)
- **Energy Industry:** Yemen's oil and gas industry, once responsible for [20% of GDP](#), has been [severely weakened by conflict](#), with disrupted oil exports and its [Balhaf LNG facility inactive since 2015](#).
- **Key industries:** crude oil production and petroleum refining; small-scale production of cotton textiles, leather goods; food processing; handicrafts; aluminum products; cement; commercial ship repair; natural gas production
- **Jewish Community:** A [vibrant](#) Jewish community lived in Yemen until the mid-20th century. The vast majority of Yemenite Jews emigrated to Israel in [Operation Magic Carpet](#) between June 1949 and September 1950. During this period, [over 50,000 Jews](#) migrated to Israel. [As of 2024, 5 Jews remained in Yemen.](#)
- **System of Government:** As a result of a civil war that began in 2014, Yemen remains divided between the Houthis and the internationally recognized and Saudi-backed Government of Yemen, the [Presidential Leadership Council](#).

[Bahrain](#) and UAE both joined the Saudi-led coalition against the Houthis in Yemen.

- **Palestinian Population:** Yemen does not have a significant Palestinian community. In August 2026, the UNHCR recorded [760 Palestinian refugees and asylum-seekers](#) in Yemen.
- In late 2025 and early 2026, the UAE-backed Southern Transitional Council (STC), which represents parts of southern Yemen that support separation from the rest of the country, launched a [major offensive](#), taking large swathes of Eastern Yemen. Saudi-backed forces [responded](#) with a counteroffensive which led to the dissolution of the STC and the reassertion of Saudi Arabia as the dominant anti-Houthi player.
- **2026 Iran War:** Yemen's Iran-backed Houthis [entered the war](#) with attacks on Israel in March 2026. By September, [their advances along the Red Sea coast](#) and renewed fighting with Saudi Arabia had further threatened shipping and intensified Yemen's humanitarian crisis.
- If a government backed by Abraham Accords countries UAE and Bahrain is able to return to power, it is possible that they will join the accords.

Yemen-U.S. Relations

- **Diplomatic Relations:** The U.S. [suspended embassy operations](#) in Yemen in 2015, but maintains diplomatic relations with Yemen's internationally recognized government through diplomats based in Riyadh.
- U.S. policy toward Yemen is largely a [subset](#) of policy toward Saudi Arabia and support for Saudi activity in Yemen.

- Generally, the U.S. is supportive of the Saudi-backed Government of the Republic of Yemen and actively opposes the Iran-backed Houthis.

Yemen-Israel Relations

- **Diplomatic Relations:** There are no, and never have been, formal relations between Israel and the Republic of Yemen (or any of its predecessor governments).
- Under Israeli [law](#), Yemen is an enemy state.
- **Criminalized Relations with Israel:** Yemen is a part of the Arab League boycott, although [enforcement has been more inconsistent](#) due to the civil war. In 2022, the Houthi rebels' government in Yemen passed [legislation](#) banning any normalization process with Israel, and criminalizing any contact with the Jewish state or its citizens.
- Activity in the 1990s suggested Israel and Yemen were approaching normalization, including the visit of Israeli-Arab Knesset members to Yemen, Yemen's participation in a March 1996 peacemaking summit in Egypt with Israel, and reports from 1999 about an alleged meeting between the Prime Minister of Yemen and the Director General of the Israeli Foreign Ministry.
- In [February of 2019](#), Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu publicly sat next to Yemen's Foreign Minister Khaled Alyemany at a U.S.-organized summit in Poland which led to small [protests](#) in Yemen.
- Leaders of the STC publicly [praised](#) normalization with Israel. The head of the STC said in [2021](#): "If we have a sovereign state, we can have a normalization of ties with Israel. When we have our own capital and have independence and

sovereignty, then we have the right to establish relations with Israel, this is our sovereign right.”

- The Iran-backed Houthis strongly oppose normalization and are in active military conflict with Israel.
- **Israel-Hamas War:** In [October 2023](#), the Houthi’s fired drones and missiles into Israel, joining fellow Iranian-proxies Hamas and Hezbollah in the war.
- In [2025](#), a Houthi official stated: “We believe Israel’s existence is illegitimate. Its end is a divine certainty. Israel is a criminal entity planted at the heart of the [Muslim] nation, built on murder, occupation, and the desecration of holy places.”

CSA Analysis: In a post-Yemeni civil war period, the Government of the Republic of Yemen may be open to normalization with Israel. The dissolution of the UAE-backed Southern Transitional Council (STC) and the withdrawal of the UAE from Yemen indicate that a post-civil war government’s stance towards Israel may be [less positive](#) than once hoped. **Nonetheless, as long as the country remains mired in civil war, normalization is highly unlikely.**



Iran

Likelihood of Joining Abraham Accords



Overview

■ Demographics:

■ [Muslim](#) (official) 98.5%, Christian 0.7%, Baha'i 0.3%, agnostic 0.3%, other 0.2%

■ [Ethnic groups](#) include Persian, Azeri, Kurd, Lur, Baloch, Arab, Turkmen, and Turkic tribes

■ [Language](#): Persian Farsi (official), Azeri and other Turkic dialects, Kurdish, Gilaki and Mazandarani, Luri, Balochi, Arabic

■ **Energy Industry:** Iran's [vast oil and gas resources](#), 12% and 16% of global reserves respectively, underpin an energy industry constrained by sanctions and underinvestment, with the ongoing war further [disrupting production and exports](#).

■ [Key industries](#): petroleum, petrochemicals, gas, fertilizer, caustic soda, textiles, cement and other construction materials, food processing (particularly sugar refining and vegetable oil production), ferrous and nonferrous metal fabrication, armaments

■ **Jewish Community:** The [Jewish community of modern day Iran](#) is one of the oldest, going back to the 6th century BCE.

- Just before the 1979 Islamic Revolution, 80,000 Jews lived in Iran.
- Since then, Jews faced persecution and execution which led most of Iran's Jews to flee the country. Today it is estimated 15,000 Jews live in Iran - the largest such community in the Middle East outside of Israel.
- **System of Government:** Iran is an [Islamic Republic](#) in which a president and parliament, elected from candidates approved by the Guardian Council, operate under the [control of the Supreme Leader](#).
- The Supreme Leader directs national policy and oversees the armed forces, while the President leads the civilian government and helps manage day-to-day operations.
- The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), a military institution reporting directly to the Supreme leader, also wields [significant economic and political power in Iran](#).
- Southern Iran borders the Gulf of Oman, the Strait of Hormuz, and the Persian Gulf. 20% of the world's oil consumed each year [travels through the Strait of Hormuz](#).
- **Holocaust Denial:** Iran's leaders repeatedly [question and deny](#) the Holocaust.
- The animosity between Iran and Israel since 1979, and the existential threat Iranian nuclear weapons pose to Israel, remain the source of [the most defining tension](#) and significant warfare in the Middle East.

Iran-U.S. Relations

- **Diplomatic Relations (prior to 1979):** The U.S. supported a coup in Iran in [1953](#) which brought the U.S.-friendly Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi to power and led to an [agreement](#) for U.S. oil companies to own part of the Iranian oil industry.

- Following the revolution in 1979, 52 Americans were taken [hostage](#) at the U.S. Embassy in Tehran. The U.S. [severed ties with Iran](#), sanctioned Iranian oil imports to the U.S., and froze Iranian assets.
- **State Sponsor of Terror Designation and Sanctions:** The [1983](#) bombing attack against American military personnel in Beirut led the U.S. to designate Iran as a [state sponsor of terror](#) the following year.
 - U.S. [sanctions against Iran](#) increased throughout the 1990s.
 - **2003-2011 U.S.-Iraq War:** Throughout the U.S. invasion of Iraq and Operation Iraqi Freedom, Iran supported [Shiite militias](#) in Iraq that attacked U.S. forces.
- The U.S. assassinated Qasem Soleimani, the commander of Iran's elite Quds Force of the IRGC in [2020](#), drawing attacks by Iran against U.S. bases in Iraq.
- **Israel-Hamas War:** Iran played a critical role behind the Israel-Hamas War (See [CSA Israel-Hamas War Report](#))
- When Iran attacked Israel in [2024](#) and [2025](#), the U.S. military helped Israel by intercepting drones and missiles launched by Iran.
- **2025 12-Day Iran-Israel War:** Following the 12-Day Iran-Israel War, the U.S. pursued negotiations with Iran.
- **2026 Iran War:** In early 2026, the U.S. and Israel launched a joint operation against Iran (further detail available in the [CSA Iran War Primer](#)), killing the Iranian Supreme Leader, in an attempt to [stymie Iran's nuclear ambitions](#) and [effect regime change](#). Iran's clerical regime [remains in power](#) and the war is ongoing.

Iran-Israel Relations

- **Criminalized Relations with Israel:** [All forms of interaction](#) with Israelis or Israeli entities are criminalized.
- **Diplomatic Relations (Prior to 1979):** Iran recognized Israel in [1950](#) and was regarded as an [ally](#) against Arab states.
- **Iran-Israel Energy Ties:** [Iran was Israel's largest supplier of oil](#) until the 1967 6-Day War.
- From 1975-1979, Iran supplied about 70% of Israel's oil.
- Israel-Iran (Pre 1979) Military Cooperation: Israel sold Iran [weapons and maintenance support](#) for Iran's air force and army.
- With Ayatollah Khomeini's rise, all relations with Israel [ceased](#).
- Iran then funded proxy militias throughout the Middle East to pursue their vision of destroying Israel.
- In the 1980s, Hezbollah grew out of Iran's [support](#) for Shiite militias in Lebanon.
- **Nuclear Weapons:** Iran's [pursuit of nuclear weapons](#) developed during the Iran-Iraq war in the 1980s.
- Iran partnered with [China and Russia](#) to support the program's research.
- Due to international sanctions which crippled Iran's economy, Iran negotiated with the U.S. and other countries the JCPOA of 2015 which paved the way for sanctions relief for Iran in exchange for the reduction of Iran's stockpile of enriched uranium and operational centrifuges.
- Throughout the 2000s, Israel acted covertly against Iran's nuclear weapons program, while Iran targeted Israelis around the world.

- In [2018](#), the U.S. withdrew from the JCPOA nuclear deal in part because it did not address Iran's growing missile programs and support for terrorism, which had continued unabated.

■ **Proxies and Sanctions:**

- Reimposed sanctions [cut Iranian oil exports](#) by more than half.
- Iran continued to arm and train terrorists in Lebanon (Hezbollah), Iraq, Syria, Palestinian territories (Hamas), and Yemen (Houthis).

- **US Terror Designation:** In 2019, the U.S. [designated](#) the IRGC as a terrorist organization.

■ **Israel-Hamas War:**

- In [2024](#), the indirect nature of Israel and Iran's confrontation became direct. This included: an Israeli air strike on an Iranian consular building in Syria killing two Iranian generals, Iran's launching of over 300 attack drones and missiles, Israel's assassination of a Hamas leader in Tehran and Hezbollah's leader in Lebanon, and Iran's launch of 180 ballistic missiles at Israel.

■ **2025 Iran 12-Day War:**

- In June [2025](#), Israel struck Iranian nuclear and military facilities which led to a 12 day war (read the [CSA Iran War 2025 Primer](#)), with Iran firing attack drones and ballistic missiles at Israel.
- The U.S. joined Israel in the war by attacking 3 Iranian nuclear sites with bunker busting bombs.
- This marked the first time that the U.S. military explicitly joined Israel in an attack on an enemy.

- **2026 Iran War:** Please see [CSA Iran War One Month Primer](#)

CSA Analysis: Unless and until a regime change in Iran occurs, Israel and Iran are not going to normalize relations.

