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UNDERSTANDING THE PRESENT

THE ABRAHAM ACCORDS

The historic peace agreements that are
changing the Middle East

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WHAT ARE THE ABRAHAM ACCORDS?

The Abraham Accords are a series of historic treaties normalising diplomatic relations between Israel and four Muslim Arab States: the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Bahrain, Sudan* and Morocco. The agreements were facilitated by the U.S. Administration between August - December, 2020. In the span of five short months, these four states joined Egypt and Jordan in making possible a future of peace and prosperity in the Middle East.

The agreements were called “The Abraham Accords” in honour of Abraham - the patriarch of Judaism and Islam, the national religions of the states involved. The Abraham Accords ushered in a new era of peace, together with cultural, security, economic and environmental cooperation at a grassroots level. They also strengthened ties between Israel, Jordan and Egypt, and advanced Israeli relations with Saudi Arabia. While the devastating October 7th War harmed efforts to negotiate more peace deals, expanding the Abraham Accords remains a major priority.

(PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK)



LEADERS AND DIPLOMATS FROM ISRAEL, BAHRAIN, THE UAE AND THE USA DURING THE SIGNING OF THE ABRAHAM ACCORDS



ISRAEL'S PAVILION IN UAE EXPO 2020 PHOTO BY SHUTTERSTOCK



PHOTO BY FLASH90

* Due to political instability in Sudan, leading up to a devastating civil war which began in 2023, it is unclear how the agreement with Israel will be implemented.

THE ABRAHAM ACCORDS ARE BASED ON THREE AREAS OF COMMON INTEREST:

1. MUTUAL SECURITY CONCERNS

Including the threat posed by Iran's regime to all the countries involved.

2. DEVELOPMENT OF KEY SECTORS

Investment, security, transport, communications, finance, energy, tourism, high tech, health and environmental sustainability.

3. SETTING A PRECEDENT FOR PEACE

Leading the Middle East in a vision of peace and stability.



A major engine promoting these interpersonal connections is the Tolerance Project, a decade-long initiative launched by the UAE government to make Arab-Islamic culture in their country more open and tolerant. The UAE declared 2019 a “year of tolerance,” intending to establish “communication and coexistence in society.” The UAE announced that their “model



of tolerance to the world” demonstrates an “openness to other human cultures.”

The Abraham Accords are a major defeat to efforts by Western anti-Israel activists to isolate Israel economically and diplomatically, culturally and militarily through the “Boycott, Divest and Sanctions movement

(BDS). While BDS still embraces the “Axis of Resistance,” the Abraham Accords point in another, more constructive and hopeful direction – peace, coexistence and cooperation between all peoples in the region.

* Due to political instability in Sudan, leading up to a devastating civil war which began in 2023, it is unclear how the agreement with Israel will be implemented.



ISRAEL



The State of Israel is the only Jewish state in the world and the only proven democracy in the Middle East. It is situated on the south-eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea and the northern shore of the Red Sea. At only 75 years old, modern Israel has become one of the world's leading technology and innovation hubs, assuming the moniker of the "Start-Up Nation." The Jewish State shares thousands of years of history with its Arab neighbours. Egypt, the Palestinian Authority, Jordan, Mauritania, Bahrain, the UAE, Sudan and Morocco all enjoy formal relations with Israel, overcoming Arab League boycotts to coordinate on aid, security, investment and in other areas.

THE UAE

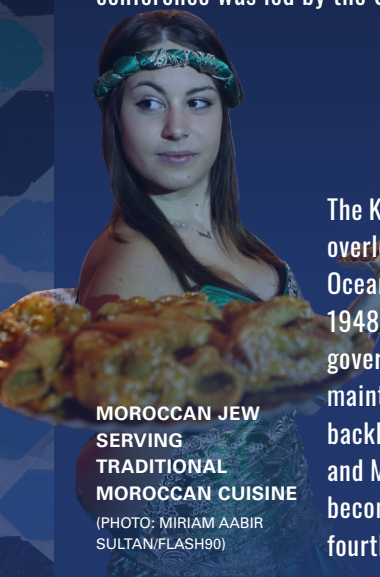


The United Arab Emirates is an elective monarchy formed from a federation of seven emirates in the eastern Arabian Peninsula, consisting of Abu Dhabi, Ajman, Dubai, Fujairah, Ras Al Khaimah, Sharjah and Umm Al Quwain. The Accords formally ended the UAE's participation in the Arab League boycott of Israel, which had been in place since Israel's establishment in 1948. The agreements were a result of years of secret cooperation, mainly around security concerns posed by Iran's regime and diversifying both countries' economies. In 2015, Israel opened an international diplomatic office, which was frequented by Mossad Chief Yossi Cohen.

BAHRAIN



The Kingdom of Bahrain is an island country in Western Asia. It is situated on the Arabian Gulf and comprises a small archipelago of 83 islands centred around Bahrain Island, which makes up most of the country's landmass. There was extended, quiet, cooperation between Israel and Bahrain, with King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa denouncing the Arab League boycott of Israel in 2017. The Kingdom and Israel signed a pre-emptive declaration of peace preceding 2020 when Bahrain hosted the "peace to prosperity" conference. The conference was led by the U.S. Administration and boycotted by Palestinian leaders.



**MOROCCAN JEW
SERVING
TRADITIONAL
MOROCCAN CUISINE**

(PHOTO: MIRIAM AABIR
SULTAN/FLASH90)

MOROCCO



The Kingdom of Morocco is the westernmost country of North Africa, overlooking the Mediterranean Sea to the north and the Atlantic Ocean to the west. It had a well-established Jewish community until 1948, when many Jews were expelled or fled to Israel. The Moroccan government has made efforts to preserve Jewish history and had maintained secret relations with Israel for some time, despite the backlash from other Arab countries. On 10 December 2020, Israel and Morocco agreed to establish diplomatic relations, with Morocco becoming the sixth Arab League member to recognise Israel and the fourth in the space of four months.

SUDAN



The Republic of Sudan is Africa's third largest country, located just south of Egypt with a coast on the Red Sea. Its capital, Khartoum, was the site of the infamous Arab League decision to reject Israel's advances for peace following the Six-Day War, declaring: "no peace, no recognition and no negotiation" with Israel. After a revolution ended the thirty-long military dictatorship in 2019, relations slowly improved with Israel. Israel and Sudan signed a normalisation agreement in October 2020. However, due to political instability in Sudan, including a devastating civil war which began in 2023, it is unclear how the agreement with Israel will be implemented.

ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

- In 2021, the Gulf-Israel Green Ventures (GIGV) project was signed by the UAE's United Stars Group to bring Israeli green tech to the UAE and Gulf region.
- The UAE's Mubadala Petroleum signed a memorandum of understanding to buy 22 percent of Israel's Tamar oilfield in the Eastern Mediterranean.
- The UAE and Israel will collaborate to develop green hydrogen generation in Israel to produce more green energy.
- In 2020, the Chief Executive of the Supreme Council for Environment of Bahrain met virtually with the Director General of the Israeli Ministry of Environmental Protection, discussing collaborative potential.
- Israel's Mekorot National Water Company signed an agreement with Bahrain's Water and Electricity Authority, vowing to provide Bahrain with desalination technology to make brackish water drinkable.
- The 'Morocco-Israel: Connect to Innovate Forum' was held in Casablanca, bringing Moroccan and Israeli business leaders and policymakers together for the first time.
- Agreements between Morocco and Israel were signed in fields including agrifood-tech, water tech, climate tech, human capital, logistics, and more.
- A bilateral technology and business conference convened in Morocco and addressed the nations leading corporations.
- In 2022, Israel's Marom Energy united with Morocco's Gaia Energy, purchasing 30 percent of its shares towards investing \$1.2 billion in renewable energy.



SECURITY

- Israel and its neighbours share regional security concerns, including the Iranian regime funding terrorist groups and potentially developing nuclear weapons.
- In July 2022, Israel's Minister of Defence revealed that Israeli security officials have had 150 defence-related meetings with Gulf allies since normalisation.
- Israel is reportedly working to create a security alliance with Arab states which would connect and potentially integrate air defence systems across the region.
- Israel has sold its Iron Dome advanced air defence system to the UAE.
- Israel has sold \$250 million worth of electronic and signals intelligence equipment to the UAE, with the two nations cooperating closely in areas of cybersecurity and big-data analysis.
- Israeli firm DarkMatter is based in the UAE and employs veterans of Unit 8200, the Israeli Defence Force's Intelligence Corps.
- Israel's Minister of Defence and his Bahraini counterpart have signed a defence cooperation memorandum.
- Bahrain disclosed its intention to purchase radar and anti-drone systems from an Israel Aerospace Industries affiliate company.
- Bahrain hosts operations for CENTCOM, a US military coordination umbrella organisation for the region that Israel joined in 2021.
- Israel's Defence Ministry has announced that three military observers took part in 'African Lion 2022' in Morocco, the first joint military exercise of its kind.



**PRIME MINISTER
YITZHAK RABIN,
DISGUISED IN A WIG
FOR A STRATEGIC VISIT
TO MOROCCO, 1975**

(PHOTO: GOVERNMENT
PRESS OFFICE)



**ALDAR HEADQUARTERS, ABU DHABI,
DARKMATTER BASE OF OPERATIONS**

(PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK)

- Israeli-Moroccan security cooperation has been ongoing for 60 years and is considered significant for Morocco's stability throughout its history.
- After the crowning of Hassan II in 1961, the Mossad (Israel's secret intelligence unit) trained the kingdom's intelligence services.
- In the summer of 2022, the IDF Chief of Staff, Israel's Police Commissioner, the head of the intelligence division and the head of the foreign affairs unit all visited Morocco.
- Israeli and Moroccan Justice ministers signed a memorandum on legal cooperation in July 2022.

CULTURE

- Since 2020, direct flights have been established between Tel Aviv and Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Manama, Rabat, Casablanca and other major Arab cities.
- In 2021, the President of Israel was invited to a ceremony in the UAE where Israel's national anthem, Hatikva, was officially recited for the first time in the Gulf.
- The Gulf-Israel Woman's Forum was established by Israeli and Gulf state leaders to 'unite women from the Middle East in sisterhood, culture, friendship and business.'
- In 2021, the Department of Culture and Tourism in Abu Dhabi announced the organisation of the first virtual Emirati and Israeli filmmakers' event - the annual 'Qattara Cinema.'
- The Emirates News Agency and Israel's Tazpit Press Service signed an agreement to strengthen professional ties.
- In 2019, Dubai's first Jewish Community Centre was established.
- After a Jewish Bahraini businessman and councillor financed the reconstruction of Bahrain's synagogue, Bahrain's Crown Prince offered to make a financial contribution.
- Bahraini government officials and major business leaders recently attended the first Israeli Independence Day event in the Gulf Region.
- Sharaka (an NGO established by Bahrainis, Emiratis and Israelis) organised for nine Bahraini businessmen, activists, and officials to visit the Western Wall in 2021.
- The Chief Rabbi of Jerusalem met with Bahrain's king before joining other religious world leaders for an unprecedented summit.
- In 2022, representatives from Morocco, Israel, Bahrain, and the United Arab Emirates signed the 'Culture and Sports for Peace' agreement.
- In November 2022, the Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth Ephraim Mirvis, toured the UAE, meeting Shaykh Abdallah bin Bayyah and other leaders. No UK Chief Rabbi has been there in over 300 years.
- The Israeli Andalusian Orchestra performed two concerts in Morocco at the end of March 2022 in collaboration with the Moroccan Association of Andalusian Music.
- The Abrahamic Family House of Abu Dhabi, UAE, is set to be finalised in 2022 - housing three religious spaces: a mosque, a synagogue and a church, together on a secular visitor pavilion in the spirit of coexistence.

**INAUGURATING THE EMIRATI
EMBASSY, TEL AVIV**

(PHOTO: MIRIAM ALSTER/FLASH90)



TRADE & ECONOMY

- The UAE and Israel signed a comprehensive economic partnership agreement in May 2022, supporting sectors such as hospitality, financial services, distribution and construction. The agreement proposes a bilateral trade increase of more than \$10 billion over the next five years and is one of more than 60 memorandums of understanding signed between the two states.
- The UAE and Israel are natural trade partners: the UAE requires quantities of medicaments, electrical machinery, measuring, analysing and controlling equipment, fruits and nuts; all exported in large quantities by Israel.



SCREENSHOT: THE ECONOMIST

- The UAE's economy minister announced that the country is looking to strengthen its business ties with Israel to \$1 trillion over the next decade.
- The Europe-Asia Pipeline Company (EAPC) reached a deal with the MED-RED Land Bridge Ltd (MRLB), with Emirati and Israeli companies collaborating in the storage and transfer of oil products between the Red and Mediterranean Seas.
- Erel Margalit, chairman of Jerusalem Venture Partners (JVP), received an invitation to speak to the Bahrain Economic Development Board (EDB).
- In February 2022, the Israeli Economy Minister met with Morocco's industry and trade ministers in Rabat. The two nations have signed a trade and investment cooperation agreement.
- There are provisional plans to begin bringing foreign workers into the fields of nursing and construction from Morocco to Israel.
- Since July 2022, Israeli citizens have been eligible for e-visas to Morocco.
- Israel hopes to increase its annual trade volume with Morocco to \$500 million.

THE FUTURE OF THE ABRAHAM ACCORDS

Since the signing of the Abraham Accords in 2020, a peace deal between Israel and Saudi Arabia has been a major goal of international diplomacy.

While it did not formally join the agreements, Saudi Arabia has allowed Israeli flights to enter its airspace and held talks with Israel about threats from Iran's regime and other regional security issues. Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has said that Israel is, "a potential ally, not an enemy." Shortly before the October 7th massacre, he expressed optimism about the prospect of an agreement.





(PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK)

While the devastation of the October 7th War slowed this momentum, expanding the Abraham Accords remains a priority for Israel, Saudi Arabia, the United States, the UK and others. Key issues that remain unresolved include Saudi-U.S. cooperation regarding security and nuclear energy, as well as Israeli-Saudi disagreements regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

If an agreement is reached, the possibilities for economic cooperation are immense. There is a proposal to create a thriving trade route from ports in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Bahrain to ports in Israel and Egypt, via Saudi Arabia. Moreover, Israel's strengths in areas such as cybersecurity and water management can help Saudi Arabia advance its own economic goals.

Should Saudi Arabia formalise ties with Israel, it could pave the way for other nations, such as Indonesia, to follow suit. This would be monumental, given Indonesia's status as the world's most populous Muslim-majority country. Since the fall of the Assad regime, some factions in Syria have also openly called for peace with Israel.

As of 2025, the Abraham Accords continue offer a powerful alternative to the hatred and violence that have taken far too many lives across the Middle East.





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