

Foreword

Israel, formally known as “The State of Israel,” was established on 14 May 1948, and has since played a pivotal role in international affairs, particularly in the politics of the Middle East and North Africa. Israel’s relations with its Arab neighbors have been tense for decades, and a lasting peace has never appeared more likely. Yet, we already live in a time of perpetual change, and naturally, the politics of Israel and the surrounding region of the Middle East and North Africa are not immune to this pattern. Realizing this, TPQ decided to focus on the Changing Dynamics of Israel’s Foreign Policy in its upcoming Fall 2022 issue.

Many new headings, with a specific reference to Israeli politics, have started to appear in Middle East and North African context. Israel and its Arab neighbors, often considered as “the enemies at gates,” are experiencing an intriguing phase of normalization of relations. The Abraham Accords, a historic agreement resulting from this process, were ratified on 15 September 2020. Since then, positive reports about the improvement of ties among Israel, the UAE, Bahrain, and Morocco have been steadily increasing. We at TPQ are firm believers in the significance of the Abraham Accords and plan to keep covering the topic as one of our primary areas of focus. The Abraham Accords will be the main topic of our upcoming roundtable organization, going to take place in Istanbul on November 30. This comes after a lengthy hiatus caused by the pandemic.

One of the main goals of this issue is to delve deeper into the possibilities the Abraham Accords present by analyzing the factors of improving ties between Israel and its neighbors. In this spirit, we have encouraged our contributors to highlight this in their work. Additionally, we discuss the changing dynamics of Israeli-Palestinian relations as well as Israel’s ties with other major regional actors such as Türkiye in this issue. The fourteen papers featured in this special issue of TPQ were written by a diverse group of internationally known scholars and public intellectuals who welcome your feedback and constructive criticism.

Eyal Zisser sees the signing of the Abraham Accords in September 2022 as a turning point in Israel’s place in the Middle East. He thinks the accords improved the atmosphere for cooperation in the areas of security and the economy by laying the groundwork for it. However, he claims that this change doesn’t do anything to fix Israel’s fundamental issues. His article is a brilliant work that aims to further evaluate these essential issues.

Gerald M. Feierstein says that Israelis and Gulf Arabs drew closer due to similar

worries of an aggressive and potent regime in Tehran, which bragged of its sway over four Arab capitals (Baghdad, Damascus, Beirut, and Sanaa). His excellent work focuses on regional issues that contributed to making of Abraham Accords. He likewise explores the Abraham Accords and discusses the geographical dynamics that contributed to its ratification.

Efraim Karsh argues that in the 85 years since the two-state solution was proposed (a Jewish state and a Palestinian Arab state living side by side in peace and security), no Palestinian Arab leader has shown true support for it. Therefore, he concludes that if Palestinian society does not experience a thorough revolution that sweeps the corrupt and repressive PLO and Hamas governments from power, it will remain a pipe dream. He considers a two-state solution as a delusion.

Maia Carter Hallward and Taib Biygautane believe that in 2020, numerous Arab governments announced U.S.-brokered full normalization accords with Israel, without any specific sacrifices on Israel's part vis-à-vis the Palestinians. According to them, these agreements, the Abraham Accords, signified a dramatic change in Arab-Israeli relations. Their great article looks at how the Abraham Accords were portrayed in the Israeli press.

We encourage you to learn more about the aspects of Changing Dynamics of Israel's Foreign Policy. On behalf of Transatlantic Policy Quarterly, I would like to express my gratitude to all of the contributors who committed a significant amount of effort and work. The TPQ team has had a great time putting together this special issue. An important acknowledgment goes to our premium corporate sponsor Yapı Kredi. In addition, we would like to thank our online sponsor, and the sponsor of this issue, Monaco Economic Board. We also like to thank our other sponsors Beko, Ford, Gordon-Blair, Halifax, Kalekim, TEB, The Ritz-Carlton, Tüpraş, Turcas, and Uluslararası İlişkiler Dergisi for their ongoing support.

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