

The Times of Israel

Analysis

Mubarak kept peace treaty but shunned deeper ties with Israel

Israeli ex-envoy says Egyptian leader didn't make major efforts to advance agricultural, cultural cooperation; expert says he was keen on advancing Israeli-Palestinian peace

By [Adam Rasgon](#) 25 February 2020

Immediately after Egyptian president Anwar Sadat was assassinated in October 1981, then-vice president Hosni Mubarak announced that Egypt would continue to respect “all treaties, charters and international obligations” it had agreed to.

[..]

Ofir Winter, an expert on Israeli-Egyptian relations, said that Mubarak preserved “the basic elements of the peace treaty,” but also kept his distance from Israel.

Winter, who is a research fellow at the **Institute for National Security Studies** think tank, pointed out that Mubarak never made a formal state visit to Israel during his tenure as president.

“He only went to Rabin’s funeral in 1995 and he stated that he had specifically come on a personal visit to offer his condolences to Rabin’s wife,” he said, referring to prime minister Yitzhak Rabin, who was assassinated in Tel Aviv by a Jewish extremist.

“He always said that there needs to be a peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinians before he can make a state visit,” **Winter** said.

Other Arab officials, including then-Jordanian king Hussein, also attended Rabin’s funeral.

Levanon highlighted that, under Mubarak, Egypt significantly restricted the operations of the Israeli Embassy in Cairo.

“We were not allowed to make any direct contact with [Egyptian] ministers or members of parliament,” he said. “The doors were essentially closed to the embassy to communicate with many people.”

Winter, however, noted that Mubarak was keen to engage with both Israel and the Palestinians on issues related to the peace process.

“It was very important for him to encourage progress in the peace process,” **Winter** said. “He wanted that so he could argue that Egypt did not achieve a separate agreement with Israel but rather one that has paved the way for a broader peace including with the Palestinians.”

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