

The Current Challenges in the Middle East Demand a Joint United States-Israel Strategy

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Key Points in Dispute

An analysis of the relations between the United States and Israel reveals a set of basic common interests lying at the core of the special relationship. These interests rest on shared concepts and values with respect to democracy and liberalism, human rights and minority rights, the desire for peace and regional stability, and a general Western world view. These values underlie the United States commitment to Israel's security, translated into cooperation in diverse spheres and political and strategic coordination at the governmental, military, and intelligence levels in a broad range of matters.

Together with the basic common interests, however, differences and disputes concerning situational interests¹ have emerged in recent years, stemming from differing perspectives concerning the response to challenges and developments in the region. For example, while the United States and Israel have a common interest in denying Iran a nuclear capability, they disagree about the way to achieve this objective. Israel and the United States both want to eliminate the terrorist threat plaguing the Middle East and beyond and achieve regional stability, but they do not see eye to eye on the means to attain those goals. The (official) policy of both the United States and Israel supports a two-state solution on the Palestinian question, but the countries disagree about the Israeli government's policy on construction in the settlements and the urgency of solving the conflict. They also disagree about the negative Iranian involvement in the region, as well as the consequences of a settlement in Syria that leaves Assad in

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power, the growing influence of the Iranian-led Shiite axis, and the need to support Abdel Fattah el-Sisi's regime in Egypt. In addition to the sense of widening gaps between Israel and the United States, poor personal relations between the leaders of the two countries have worsened over the past year and included caustic exchanges.²

The United States in the Middle East

There are likewise differences between Israel and the United States on the role of the US in the Middle East; the American views were reflected in President Obama's speech at Cairo University in June 2009 ("a new beginning"), based on a call for mutual understanding and improvement of relations between the Muslim and Western worlds. The prevailing view in the Middle East is that the Cairo speech was the signal for the outbreak of the Arab Spring.

Some in Israel³ assert that Obama has a patronizing attitude toward the region, and judges respective actors with unequal criteria (on issues of

From the American vantage, Iran can become an agent of stability in the region, while from an Israeli perspective, Iranian fundamentalism will likely remain unchanged. Overall, it is necessary to devise a means of turning Iran, to the greatest possible extent, from a destabilizing factor into a positive element.

human rights and warfare in an urban environment, for example – harsh regarding Israel, and conciliatory regarding Saudi Arabia). Another criticism concerns the American strategy of appeasing the Islamic Republic of Iran and aiming not merely at détente with Iran, but even future cooperation with it; in other words, seeing Iran not as a generator of problems in the Middle East, but as the solution, at the expense of traditional United States interests in the Middle East, including support for Israel, Saudi Arabia, and the Gulf states; weakened Islamic extremism; and an ensured free flow of oil. Critics are alarmed that Obama does not keep his word, abandons his allies in the region at key moments (former Egyptian President Husni Mubarak; Israel and Saudi Arabia on the Iranian question; and the less extreme Sunni rebels in Syria), and makes threats that he does not

carry out, such as the threat to attack Syria if it used chemical weapons against the rebels.

According to Jonathan Rynhold, one can point to three types of American strategy in the region:⁴

- a. *The nonintervention school.* This view, typical of the Obama team and a few Republicans, holds that forces should be sent to the region on few occasions only. Intervention worldwide should decline, and military intervention should be used only in cases of a direct threat to the United States. Overall, the use of soft power is much preferred. The way to solve conflicts is through negotiations and deterrence. Israel is regarded as a burden because the conflict with the Palestinians provides an incentive for extremism in the Arab world, which generates hostility between the United States and the Arab world.
- b. *The assertive school.* According to this view, held primarily by Republicans, not all disputes can be settled through negotiations; it is sometimes necessary to demonstrate willingness to use American power and to use force. From this perspective, Israel is considered an essential partner that shares American values.
- c. *The centrist school.* The most prominent advocates of this position are Henry Kissinger and Dennis Ross. This school supports international intervention and the formation of alliances, with a balance between diplomacy and military force. This school also attaches importance to political processes for their stabilizing effect. In a speech at the US West Point military academy in 2014, President Obama endorsed the centrist view when he stated that the United States would no longer fight alone against international terrorism; it would seek broad and effective cooperation with countries afflicted by terrorism. The current campaign against the Islamic State, in the form of a local coalition supported by the United States, is an expression of the American doctrine.⁵

In an interview with Thomas Friedman in April 2015, President Obama specified what he regarded as the real threat to the Sunni monarchies – the internal theaters containing angry people, unemployed youth, extreme ideologies, and the lack of freedom of expression. He said that fighting terrorism was not enough; real movement toward change in these countries was needed. Obama added that the significant threat facing the countries in the region was not a possible Iranian invasion of their territory, but dissatisfaction among the local population given their current standards of living.⁶

Policy on Iran

A key issue that has damaged mutual trust between Israel and the United States involves the emerging relations between the United States and Iran

during and following the discussions about the nuclear agreement. Indeed, one recent assertion among American commentators (including David Rothkopf)⁷ is that under Obama, American relations have worsened with all Middle East countries except for Iran. It appears that Washington seeks to extend the cooperation with Tehran, thereby helping the reformists in Iran overcome the revolutionary extremists. The war against the Islamic State has led to coordinated spheres of operation between the US and Iran in Iraq and Syria, and even a United States blind eye to Iran's negative activity, such as Iran's assistance to Bashar al-Assad and ongoing support for Hezbollah, influence on the Iraqi government, and support for the Houthis in Yemen.

In the perspective of the US administration, the nuclear agreement will prompt some restraint in Iran's policy, thereby facilitating cooperation between Iran and the Sunni states against the Islamic State challenge.⁸ In order to mollify the United States' Middle East allies, President Obama emphasized that he regarded Iran's regional policy and its attitudes toward Israel and the Sunni states as extremely negative. He asserted that the agreement "certainly doesn't resolve all our problems with Iran," and the US will continue to act with its allies in the Middle East against Iran's destabilizing activities and support for terrorist organizations. Removing the nuclear issue from the equation, he argued, will put the United States in a better position to make demands of Tehran.⁹ Thus from the American vantage, Iran can become an agent of stability in the region, while from

an Israeli perspective, Iranian fundamentalism will remain unchanged. Until Iran recognizes Israel's right to exist and refrains from intervening in regional disputes, the use of proxies, and support for terrorist groups, it is necessary to continue to isolate it.

Israel should closely follow the international efforts to achieve a political settlement in Syria, and confirm that any settlement will not conflict with Israel's interests.

The Nuclear Issue

Once the nuclear agreement (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, or JCPOA) was announced, the US administration launched a campaign to persuade three main target audiences that it was the right move: Congress, the American public, and the Israeli

public. In an interview with Thomas Friedman, the President sought to clarify his strategy to prevent Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons, based on seeking dialogue and diplomatic solutions from a position of strength

that also rests on military capabilities. According to this logic, only a diplomatic solution will prevent Iran from becoming a nuclear power, while all alternatives are less effective. The military option will damage the program, but will strengthen those elements in Iran calling for nuclear arms for self defense. On the other hand, keeping the sanctions policy in place will lead to covert progress in the nuclear program.

The American answer to Israel's objections to the JCPOA, as indicated by Obama's remarks to Friedman, is that the United States understands the Israeli arguments, and has offered an official guarantee to stand by Israel's side in any scenario of attack against it. As far as Obama is concerned, this commitment should provide enough security for Israel in order to take advantage of "this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity." From Israel's perspective, the close and intensive exchanges of information between the countries have thus far prevented damage to the bilateral relations.

One of the risks pertaining to how the United States and Israel deal with this issue involves the rivalry between the two American political parties. Israel has always acted to obtain bipartisan American support on all matters of critical importance. In the campaign against the nuclear agreement, however, there was a clear tendency to rely on the Republican majority in both houses of Congress. The dispute between Israel and the United States on the Iranian nuclear question has become a highly charged partisan issue in the political competition between the Republican-controlled Congress and the Democratic president, to a great extent against Israel's traditional drive to preserve bipartisan support.

The Crisis in Syria and the Islamic State

The US involvement in Syria consists primarily of an ongoing aerial bombardment against the Islamic State, involvement – in coordination with Russia – in a process of reaching a ceasefire and a political arrangement, and military aid to some of the rebel organizations. This policy is carried out in the framework of a regional coalition, and US avoidance of direct and extensive involvement in the fighting. The goal of the aerial campaign is to curb the spread of the Islamic State, prevent it from expanding the territory under its control, and reduce its assets.

Until now, Syria has not been a bone of contention between Israel and the United States, because both countries share the view of the rival forces operating in this theater, and because of Israel's policy of non-intervention in Syria. At the same time, an arrangement that recognizes the dominance

of the Shiite axis led by Iran in Syria is likely to give rise to additional disputes between Israel and the United States. Along with the calls by the Republican presidential candidates for more resolute action in Syria, mainly against the Islamic State, some parties in the Israeli government are criticizing President Obama's lack of determination in the war against the Islamic State.¹⁰ According to this argument, the United States should be more involved in the fighting against the Islamic State, even though this means inclusion of ground forces in the fighting.

Negotiations with the Palestinians

Over the years, the United States has proposed a number of initiatives to promote the political process between Israel and the Palestinians, based on the concept of two states for two peoples.¹¹

Most US administrations have opposed the Israeli government's policy on the settlements, which they regard as establishing facts on the ground and complicating implementation of the two-state reality.

Israeli evidence that it has not abandoned its desire for a settlement with the Palestinians based on two states for two peoples is important. One possible way to ensure this is through transitional arrangements or Israeli measures coordinated with the Palestinians that in small steps will lay the foundations for consolidating the two-state reality.

For its part, the Israeli government has criticized President Obama's reneging on the promises made by former President Bush concerning the need to take into account the situation that has developed over the years in the territories, i.e., the settlement blocs, when determining the future border between Israel and a Palestinian state. Israel also opposes the American demand for a freeze on construction in Jerusalem and any additional freeze on construction in the settlements, following the 10-month freeze implemented in 2009 at the request of President Obama, which did not fulfill its declared aim and lead to a renewal of bilateral negotiations. Nevertheless, despite the disagreements, the United States has until now blocked any attempt at a resolution against Israel in the UN Security Council.

American skepticism concerning Netanyahu's support for the two-state solution has grown over the past year. This suspicion rose before the 2015

elections in Israel, when Netanyahu said that his Bar Ilan speech, in which he declared his willingness to accept a Palestinian state, was no longer relevant, owing to the security situation in the region. He later stated

publicly that if reelected as prime minister, a Palestinian state would not be established. Following his victory in the elections, Netanyahu attempted to modify what he said and claimed that he wanted a two-state solution that would be stable and sustainable, but that current circumstances made this difficult.¹² Netanyahu's statement while the polls were open about Arabs streaming to the ballot boxes heightened the tension and attracted much criticism, reflecting the US administration's dissatisfaction with the way the Israeli government upheld human rights and fulfilled democratic principles. This joins American concern over legislation sponsored by the Netanyahu government and right wing groups, which the American administration regards as inconsistent with liberal and democratic values.

Obama undertook to continue working with the Israeli government on all matters pertaining to military, security, and intelligence cooperation, but refused to say whether the United States would continue blocking unilateral Palestinian initiatives at the UN. During the interim period between the US presidential elections and the inauguration of a new administration (between November 2016 and January 2017), the US could refrain from vetoing Security Council resolutions laying the foundations for a Palestinian state and proclaiming that Israeli construction in the settlements is a violation of international law. Obama sees a direct connection between the issue of the settlements and regional stability, and believes that new construction fuels extremism and exacerbates instability in the Middle East.

The Result: A Crisis of Trust

To a great extent, the disputed points have poisoned personal relations between the two leaders over the past year, as was revealed more than once in the media. Underlying the tension between them is the sense of interference and even subversion on the part of each one in the internal affairs of the other country in order to undermine the standing of its leader. Experts on United States-Israel relations believe that:

Personal and emotional factors have taken control of United States-Israel relations, instead of values and interests. If the two countries do nothing to halt this harmful phenomenon, relations between them are liable to deteriorate. The United States is liable to abstain in UN votes on the establishment of a Palestinian state without negotiations, and to delay new military aid requests. Such measures can cause great damage to Israel's security and international standing.¹³

As President Obama sees it, Netanyahu has violated more than a few diplomatic rules guiding relations between the two countries, principally due to his controversial speech to Congress in March 2015.¹⁴ The Prime Minister's readiness to appeal to Congress, while ignoring clear signals to reject this move, aroused the ire of the President, his National Security Adviser, and the Secretary of State, who voiced astonishment and anger. According to a report on the American Gallup Poll website, support for the Prime Minister among Americans following his widely covered speech fell from 45 to 38 percent, while opposition to Netanyahu rose by 5 percent, from 24 to 29 percent. These changes are evident mainly among those identifying as Democrats, while the opinion of those identifying as Republicans remained unchanged.¹⁵ At the same time, at least in his public statements, the President carefully attempted to minimize the effect of Netanyahu's appeal to Congress on the bilateral relations, and stressed his willingness to increase security aid to Israel in a new memorandum of understanding (MOU).

A Joint Strategy

Against this background, the Netanyahu government should act now, in advance of the election of a new president, to formulate a joint strategy with the United States in face of the existing challenges in the Middle East. The joint strategy will be relevant for the new US administration because it is based on shared fundamental interests between the two countries, while identifying contested points and devising ways of reducing their negative effect. Extending political and security ties and making cooperation more effective on core issues can be achieved through full transparency between leaders, ongoing contacts, and avoidance of unpredicted measures that will take the other by surprise and thereby undermine it.

The proposed joint strategy rests on five anchors that address the leading disputed issues. Creating a consensus about them is likely to pave the way for a solution to other disputes, and to consolidate additional long term cooperation.

The First Anchor: The Essential US Role in the Middle East

Developments in the Middle East, including the conclusion of the negotiations between the United States and Iran, Russian military intervention in Syria, and the ceasefire understanding in Syria have underscored the leading role of the United States in settling conflicts in the region. Following the nuclear

agreement with Iran, it has also become more imperative than before for the United States to be attentive to its allies in the Middle East, who have expressed anxiety and frustration about the agreement and its ramifications. The goal must be to prevent the Sunni countries from arming themselves with nuclear weapons¹⁶ and overall, to avoid a nuclear arms race.

Jordan: Israel and the United States have a common interest in the survival and stability of the Hashemite kingdom, which is jeopardized by economic weakness, the Islamic State threat to its east and north, the burden of 1.5 million Syrian and Iraqi refugees, and other groups trying to undermine the kingdom's stability. The importance of Jordan's survival lies in its special role as an anchor of regional stability and a loyal ally of the United States and Israel, and as a key element for the establishment of a political settlement between Israel and the Palestinians.

Egypt. Solid relations between the United States and the el-Sisi regime, and an American commitment to preserve the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel are very valuable. One confidence building measure could consist of US-Israeli aid to the government in Egypt so as to establish effective rule, fight the Islamic State branch in Sinai, and halt the smuggling of weapons from Libya and Sudan into Egypt, and from there into Sinai and the Gaza Strip. These goals can be promoted through a joint US- European-Israeli effort, while helping Egypt seal its borders and devise tools for dealing with the Bedouin in Sinai, including the creation of jobs and alternative sources of income as substitutes for smuggling.

Against this background, the need to extend cooperation and strategic coordination between Israel and the US in dealing with the regional challenges has become clearer. Given the current events in the Middle East, along with the many risks, there are opportunities for cooperation between Israel and the Sunni Arab countries based on common interests (including blocking negative Iranian influence, fighting terrorism and jihad, and preventing smuggling). The United States is a key player that can help promote the opportunity for regional cooperation. One possible Israeli contribution to such cooperation is the sharing of security, technological, economic, and

Deepened special security ties and cooperation that is more effective can be achieved through an ongoing dialogue conducted with full transparency between the two leaderships, with avoidance of measures that will surprise and undermine the other side.

humanitarian-related knowledge with Sunni Arab countries in exchange for stable relations.

The Second Anchor: Policy on Iran and the Nuclear Issue

Regarding the JCPOA, Israel is dependent on the United States for implementation of a comprehensive and intrusive verification mechanism, including the development of joint intelligence capabilities and guarantees for enforcing the clauses of the agreement. In the event that provisions of the agreement are not fulfilled, the United States and Israel should devise a well-defined plan of operation and clear and coordinated measures in response to Iranian violations. Beyond the nuclear issue, an American demand that Iran halt its support for terrorism and subversive organizations throughout the Middle East is likely to be a US condition for normal relations and economic cooperation. Overall, it is necessary to devise a means of turning Iran from a destabilizing factor into a positive factor to the greatest possible extent, while reducing the potential clash between Tehran and Israel. The realization that ensured security will enable Israel to take decisions, including risks incurred in dealing with the Middle East challenges, should be kept in mind by the US administration.

For its part, Israel can undertake not to attack Iran as long as there is no violation of the terms of the JCPOA. Such a step can ease the tense relations between the countries, and prove to the United States that Israel is not acting from aggressive and arbitrary motives, and does not intend to sabotage forcibly President Obama's diplomatic accomplishment. Such a promise will not detract from Israel's national interest. Furthermore, if Iran does violate its commitments, Israel will have much greater legitimacy for action than it has now.

The Third Anchor: The Crisis in Syria and the Islamic State Challenge

Stopping the expansion of the Islamic State in Syria in particular and the region in general is an interest shared by the two countries. At the same time, Israel should ensure that this mission does not overly strengthen Iran and Hezbollah, which some in the Israeli leadership regard as the main threat to Israel.¹⁷ In a broader context, Israel should closely follow the international efforts to achieve a political settlement in Syria, and confirm that any settlement will not conflict with Israel's interests; this can be verified through dialogue with the United States. Israel must ensure that the United States takes its interests in southern Syria into account,

and provides assistance for the effort to maintain, together with Jordan, a sphere of influence that will strengthen the more moderate groups and prevent Shiite axis groups and Salafi jihad organizations from deploying in the Golan Heights.

The Fourth Anchor: Negotiations with the Palestinians

Past experience shows that Israel and the Palestinians have not managed to reach agreement on the core issues in a permanent status agreement. In addition, the confrontational conditions prevailing between Israel and the Palestinians – which have escalated with the stalled political process, continued settlement construction, recent disorders around the Temple Mount, seven months of knife stabbings and car-rammings, the regional upheavals, and the Islamic State, a source of inspiration for extremism – contribute to a profound sense of distrust between the parties and obstruct any prospect of a permanent agreement.

It appears that the United States has begun to lose hope of achieving an agreement, as indicated by Deputy National Security Adviser for Strategic Communication Ben Rhodes in a November 2015 statement, to the effect that the President did not foresee a renewal of negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians, and saw no chance of reaching a peace agreement by the end of his term in office in January 2017.¹⁸

Despite the growing difficulty, an Israeli guarantee showing that Israel has not abandoned its desire for a settlement with the Palestinians based on two states for two peoples is important. One possible way of ensuring this in the near future is through transitional arrangements or Israeli measures coordinated with the Palestinians that will gradually and in small steps lay the foundations for consolidating the two-state reality.

An Israel commitment to halting construction in the settlements outside the settlement blocs and Jerusalem is likely to calm the Americans by indicating that Israel has not abandoned the two-state solution. Israel can make its construction policy in the settlement blocs consistent with shaping a two-state situation by freezing construction in 92 percent of the area of the West Bank (which in all probability will be included in a future Palestinian state). This confidence building measure is likely to cause the United States to stop challenging the Israeli government by demanding a halt to construction in Jerusalem – something that runs counter to the consensus in Israel. Later, Israel can allow the Palestinians to build an economic infrastructure in Area C, amounting to 60 percent of the West

Bank, for the sake of improving the economic situation there, and to expand the Palestinian security apparatus leeway in exchange for stronger security coordination and better conditions for the Palestinian population in the West Bank.

The Fifth Anchor: Consolidation of the Security Agreements

Deepening the special security ties and making cooperation more effective can be achieved through an ongoing dialogue conducted with full transparency between the two leaderships, with avoidance of measures that will surprise and undermine the other side.

Revising the framework of understandings between the two sides is extremely important. Recently, with the consent of Prime Minister Netanyahu and President Obama, discussions have been held for broadening the memorandum of understanding (beyond the planned date in 2017) as a declarative and confidence building act for the future.¹⁹ The revised framework of understandings should be based on two foundations: defense and economics. In the security aspect, strategic coordination in bilateral security cooperation must be created, regional challenges marked, and a joint policy outlined to deal with them. The parties will then be able to formulate a proposal for an upgraded package of guarantees stressing long term US commitment to Israel's security. This type of aid could include joint development of weapon systems, increased advance stationing of American weaponry in Israel, and extension of the defense envelope against missiles and strengthening of its three layers – the lower layer through a deployment of forces and the Iron Dome system, the medium layer through the David's Sling system, and the upper layer through continued development of the Arrow missile system and cooperation in ballistic missiles defense (BMD). The agreement must provide a defensive solution in all theaters.

In the economic aspect, in the framework of the negotiations on the new memorandum of understanding, Israel asked the United States to increase its defense aid to \$4.5 billion a year.²⁰ At this stage, it is known that the US is ready to provide assistance of \$3.7 billion per year, including support for missile defense systems. It is recommended to reach an agreement with the current administration on the amount of aid, and not wait for the next United States president.

It is important to formulate agreements on how to preserve Israel's qualitative military edge, given the sales of advanced American weapons to Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states. In the long term, Iran's expected military

buildup following the agreement is liable to erode Israel's superiority. Furthermore, the upheavals in the Middle East act as a catalyst for a regional arms race, with various parties trying to upgrade their military capabilities. The result is an environment saturated with advanced weapons that can spread quickly from one theater to another and also fall into the hands of extremists, such as jihad organizations. This situation is liable to jeopardize the special regional status Israel has consolidated over the past decades.²¹

Conclusion

One of the essential elements of Israel's regional status as a military and economic power is its strategic relationship with the United States. Precisely the current period – one of regional upheaval, potential for negative consequences from the nuclear agreement with Iran, and Tehran's growing support for radical groups – increases the importance of strengthening relations between Israel and the United States and devising a joint strategy for the Middle East.

Preservation of the current state of affairs, not to mention a further deterioration in relations between the two countries, is liable to constitute a risk under three possible scenarios. The first is a delay in US military aid to Israel.²² The second is the possibility of the United States not using its veto power against one of the UN Security Council resolutions concerning Israel – which could lead to the passage of a resolution with grave consequences for Israel and its security. The third is the creation of new alliances and the strengthening of United States relations with other players in the region whose national interests do not converge with Israel's, such as Iran and Turkey. Israel has limited capabilities for dealing successfully with a range of challenges at once. It is therefore essential to achieve closer strategic understandings with the United States.

From the United States perspective, Israel is a valuable actor, given its regional uniqueness as a stabilizing element; its position in the forefront of the fight against Salafi-jihad radical extremism; its ability to provide immediate aid to the US allies in the area such as Jordan and Egypt; and the possibility that it could also play a positive role in mediation and communications between the United States and another important power of regional importance – Russia.

Basic interests rest on common conceptions of values, together with a shared aspiration to bring about regional stability in face of the difficult

current challenges. These interests should be kept in mind by the leaders of the two countries, whoever they may be.

Notes

- 1 The two types of interests are mentioned in the theoretical literature of educational psychology. A situational interest is defined as a spontaneous and fluid interest shaped according to individual and temporary situations and links. In contrast, a basic interest is more permanent, and rests on well established and long term values and norms. See Gregory Schraw, Terri Flowerday, and Stephen Lehman, "Increasing Situational Interest in the Classroom," *Educational Psychology Review* 13, no. 3 (2001): 211-24, <https://www.msu.edu/~dwong/CEP991/CEP991Resources/Schraw-SituationalInterest.pdf>.
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- 6 Thomas Friedman, "Iran and the Obama Doctrine," *New York Times*, April 5, 2015, <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/06/opinion/thomas-friedman-the-obama-doctrine-and-iran-interview.html>.
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- 8 Friedman, "Iran and the Obama Doctrine."
- 9 "Remarks by the President on the Iran Nuclear Deal," American University, August 5, 2015, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2015/08/05/remarks-president-iran-nuclear-deal>.
- 10 As indicated by the remarks by Minister of Defense Moshe Ya'alon in an interview at the Saban Forum in Washington on December 4, 2015, <http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/markaz/posts/2015/12/05-yaalon-israel-isis-syria-iran-threats>.
- 11 The United States has at times taken measures that were not coordinated with Israel, such as recognition of the PLO as a legitimate organization representing the Palestinians (late 1988), during the period between the

- term of President Ronald Reagan and George Bush Sr.'s entry into the White House.
- 12 William Booth and Greg Jaffe, "Netanyahu Steps Back from Full Opposition to Palestinian State," *Washington Post*, March 19, 2015, <http://goo.gl/9f0GN7>.
 - 13 Amir Tibon, "The Deterioration in Israel-United States Relations – The Dangerous Scenarios for Israel," *Walla*, October 29, 2014, <http://news.walla.co.il/item/2797049>.
 - 14 Satloff, "Save Them from Themselves."
 - 15 Jeffrey M. Jones, "Americans' Views of Netanyahu Less Positive Post-Visit," Gallup, March 11, 2015, <http://www.gallup.com/poll/181916/americans-views-netanyahu-less-positive-post-visit.aspx>.
 - 16 For example, see "Arab Press Harshly Criticizes Obama Administration for Allying With Iran, Turning its Back on Arab Friends, Leading Region To Disaster," MEMRI, March 23, 2015, <http://www.memri.org/report/en/print8489.htm>.
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