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Deal between Israel and Saudi Arabia is 'absolutely possible,' says ex-Mossad chief

Yossi Cohen, citing 'personal knowledge' of potential dealings, strikes optimistic note, as senior Netanyahu aides said to be headed for Washington

By Lazar Berman / 28 May 2023

Against a backdrop of measured optimism from Jerusalem over the chances of a normalization deal between Israel and Saudi Arabia, **former Mossad chief Yossi Cohen** said Sunday that such an agreement was "absolutely possible."

Speaking at the **Institute for National Security Studies**, Cohen — Israel's top spy from 2016-2021 — said, "in my opinion – and here I am leaning on personal knowledge on the topic — it is absolutely possible."

"There is indeed in the Middle East a new era in which brave leaders… know how to create normalization," he added.

There has been a flurry of reports that US-brokered talks between Jerusalem and Riyadh on starting direct flights for Hajj pilgrims are in advanced stages.

A flight deal could have the potential to lead to a wider normalization deal — which has long been sought by Israel but largely rejected by the Saudis.

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