

A word of caution: China-Israel ties and Beijing's Middle East role - analysis

US-China tensions and China's recent decision to embrace a 25-year deal with Iran have raised eyebrows over Israel's continued relationship with Beijing.

By Seth J. Frantzman / Published: Sep. 1, 2023

In the last two decades, Israel-China relations have improved amid Beijing's deepening interest in the Middle East and its emergence as a global power. However, US-China tensions and China's recent decision to embrace a 25-year deal with Iran have raised eyebrows.

Trade with China has improved. **A June article at INSS [Institute for National Security Studies] by Tomer Fadlon** notes that "trade relations between Israel and China have been consistently and continuously trending upward, especially when it comes to goods." In 2022, trade amounted to \$17.62 billion, compared to \$11.83b. in 2020.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has signaled an interest in going to China. In 2018, China's vice-president Wang Qishan came to Israel for a four-day visit.

Beijing recently brokered Saudi Arabia-Iran reconciliation, and it has been behind the push to expand groups like BRICS and the SCO into the region. China has also expressed some interest in brokering peace between Israel and the Palestinians.

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