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## Is It Too Late for China's Israel Policy?

China gravely miscalculated the effect of its one-sided approach to the ongoing conflict on Israel. Now it may be too late for Beijing to make amends.

By Vasilis Petropoulos / October 18, 2024

On October 8, those closely monitoring China's foreign policy in the Middle East over the last year heard a statement that might well have bewildered them. Asked about the conflict in Gaza that had just hit the one-year mark the day before, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning replied, in part, that the "legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people need to be realized and the reasonable security concerns of Israel need to be paid attention to."

[...]

Israel responded accordingly. Government statements expressing disappointment soon gave way to threats targeting Chinese companies operating in Israel's ports and to flirtation with Taiwan, all aimed at sending a harsh message to Beijing. These moves were in sync with Israeli public opinion. **Recent polls** show that more than half of Israelis consider China unfriendly or hostile to Israel, with about a third of them adopting this view only after October 7, 2023.

Israel's disgruntlement with China is also illustrated by the sharp decline in their bilateral trade, although this can be attributed to other factors as well, such as the political instability in Israel and the across-the-board decrease of Israel's total imports in 2023 that came naturally after successive increases.

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*For full article:*

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