

**Trump 2.0 will again bring normalization to the Middle East - opinion**

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By Yoel Guzansky / Nov. 10, 2024

The election of Donald J. Trump to the presidency brought relief to many Arab regimes. Before the elections, senior Arab officials were cautious about expressing a preference for any candidate, for obvious reasons, but it is believed that many favored Trump over Kamala Harris. Trump's re-election is good news for Arab states but in many ways also for Israel. Here is why.

First, several key Arab leaders had prior familiarity with Trump and his team. Strong personal ties were formed with leaders like Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the president of the United Arab Emirates, and Mohammed bin Salman, Saudi Arabia's crown prince and de facto ruler. Throughout his campaign, Trump referred to bin Salman as a "friend" and showered him with praise.

Second, during his previous term, Trump had a clear policy of non-interference in the domestic affairs of foreign countries. Notably, he once referred to Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi as "my favorite dictator." It is anticipated that a second Trump administration would continue this approach, refraining from criticizing regimes on issues like political freedom and human rights, aligning with these regimes' preferences.

Third, there is an expectation, especially among Gulf states, that Trump would adopt a tougher stance on Iran than his predecessor, Joe Biden. Iran's growing confidence and that of its proxies – as evidenced by Hamas's attack on October 7 – are viewed by many in the Gulf as linked to the relatively lenient approach the US took toward Iran under the Biden administration.

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