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Facts & Logic About the Middle East

September 28, 2021



Happy anniversary, Abraham Accords! Time for the U.S. to rejoin the party

Dear Friend of FLAME:

In a logical world, the United Nations—and especially the United States—would be loudly celebrating the first anniversary of the Abraham Accords.

This momentous agreement marked the first peace deals between Israel and any Arab nation in 26 years. The Accords between the Jewish state and the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain—followed by normalization agreements with Morocco, Sudan and then Kosovo—have spurred massive increases in trade, diplomacy and tourism.

After 73 years of Arab wars and calumny against Israel, we see the promise of an end to hostilities! A warm peace! You'd think such a miracle might deserve a Nobel Peace Prize.

Indeed, the new Middle East peace has opened phenomenal economic opportunities among Israel and Arab countries. Comparing the full year of 2020 with the first seven months of 2021, trade between Israel and Arab countries grew by 234%.

UAE-Israel trade skyrocketed from \$50.8 million to \$613.9 million—1,208%. Trade with Jordan jumped from \$136.2 million to \$224.2—40%. Egypt's trade shot up from \$92 million to \$122.4 million—almost 25%. Morocco's trade with Israel increased by 28% and Bahrain went from zero to \$0.3 million.

UAE economy minister Abdulla Bin Touq projects growth of economic ties to Israel to reach \$1 trillion over the next decade. In the last year, more than 200,000 Israelis visited the UAE—most flying direct to Dubai, where kosher food is readily available.

So why is the Biden administration now virtually ignoring this earthshaking breakthrough and its potential to realign Middle East geopolitics—particularly the formation of a bloc opposing nuclear-bound Iran?

The resistance seems to stem from Team Biden's overriding determination to a) fashion a new Iran disarmament deal and b) restore support to Palestinian

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This ad demands makers' intent to harm salute and operations of the Israeli affiliate in the "Occupied Palestinian Territories" is based on lies and bad faith toward Israel.

While Ben & Jerry's has often been accused of antisemitism, it is not until now that the "Occupied Palestinian Territories" is mentioned in their marketing materials. The ad is a clear attempt to mislead consumers and is a blatant lie. The ad is a clear attempt to mislead consumers and is a blatant lie. The ad is a clear attempt to mislead consumers and is a blatant lie.

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statehood. The additional fact that the Abraham Accords were initiated by the Trump administration, of course, doesn't help their digestive tracts.

As for Iran, Biden's State Department seems at pains—as was President Obama—not to exert too much pressure on Iran or ruffle its feathers.

But in the hands of the right negotiators, a growing front of Middle East—and Muslim—countries opposed to U.S. arch-enemy Iran should be good news. It only strengthens the American hand in attempting to bring the Islamic Republic to heel.

Given this momentum to ally with Israel—the Middle East's strongest military power—Saudi Arabia may soon join the alliance, especially with a bit of U.S. prodding. Surely, if Iran acquires nuclear weapons, Saudi Arabia will want them. In short, the Abraham Accords provide every reason for Iran to negotiate peace sooner rather than later.

Likewise, the Biden administration apparently wants to make nice with the Palestinians—who have roundly condemned the Abraham Accords. Palestinian president-for-life Mahmoud Abbas called them “a stab in the back.” No wonder, since this agreement killed the Palestinians' ability to hold an Arab peace hostage to their maximalist demands.

Indeed, the U.S. argument for the obstinate Palestinians to give up their sacred ambitions of expunging Israel from the region should only be fortified by fellow Arabs abandoning that mission after seven long decades. That war is over.

Unfortunately, despite the harmony of these foreign policy leverage points with Biden administration priorities, neither seems to resonate.

Instead, the U.S. is trying to woo Iran with offers to cancel crippling sanctions. It's trying to regain credibility with the Palestinians by restoring funding halted by the previous administration because Palestinian leadership uses the money to incentivize terrorists with its “Pay-for-Slay” program.

In fairness, Secretary of State Antony Blinken held a Zoom reception for the parties to the Accords at the State Department earlier this month to mark the anniversary of the diplomatic breakthrough. While Blinken mouthed commitments to “foster” ties and “deepen” relationships among Middle East nations, in truth, the administration has announced no specific plans to seize the opportunities.

Perhaps the biggest surprise among those rejecting the Abraham Accords were the progressive and liberal intellectuals, as well as some so-called experts. One would think that those who criticized Israel for “creating obstacles” to peace for so many years would embrace the Abraham Accords for creating unprecedented agreements in the region.

Rather, these naysayers were worried that their darlings, the Palestinians, were being sidelined, so they created all manner of excuses to slam the agreements. First, they tried to attack promises the U.S. made to the Arab side of the agreements, like the sale of F-35 fighter jets to the UAE, removing Sudan from sanctions and recognizing Morocco's control of the Western Sahara. Then they tried to attack the very nature of these states as autocratic and undemocratic—while ignoring their own long-standing, full-throated support for kleptocrat

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Mahmoud Abbas.

Nonetheless, it's clear that the Abraham Accords are flourishing despite pockets of opposition. While momentum has certainly diminished—largely a result of America's disengagement—the train has already left the station. Perhaps this explains Blinken's recent lip service, albeit low-key, in acknowledging the agreement's anniversary: "This administration will continue to build on the successful efforts of the last administration to keep normalization marching forward."

It's time for Biden and Blinken to put these words into action. The U.S. should press for more Arab countries to join the Accords, starting with Saudi Arabia and Oman, two countries that were reportedly on the verge of agreement before the Trump Administration was voted out of office. They should also be pushing for other American allies, like Indonesia, the largest populated Muslim country in the world to join the circle of peace and cooperation with Israel. All such movement would support U.S. interests.

I hope you will point out to friends, family, colleagues and your elected representatives that those who oppose the Abraham Accords are enemies of Israel and peace. The U.S. has to pick a side—by putting its full diplomatic weight into continuing the momentum built by (in Blinken's words) "the last administration."

Such a strategy would be good for the U.S., good for peace and security and good for the U.S.-Israel relationship. It is a simple win-win situation, and on its one-year anniversary, there is no better time to reverse policy, put politics aside and insert U.S. diplomacy firmly back into this successful process.

I hope you'll also take a minute, while you have this material front and center, to forward this message to friends, visit FLAME's lively [Facebook page](#) and review the P.S. immediately below. It describes FLAME's new *hasbarah* campaign—which exposes "Ben & Jerry's Bad Taste" and those who support boycotts of the Jewish state.

Best regards,

James Sinkinson

President, Facts and Logic About the Middle East (FLAME)

P.S. As you know, Ben & Jerry's recently announced that it would cease its contract with its Israeli affiliate because the affiliate refused to stop selling the company's ice cream in the ancient Jewish territories of Judea and Samaria. This move, championed by the company's anti-Israel board chair, is just the latest attempt to boycott the Jewish state—joining the BDS movement—which some 35 U.S. states consider illegal and anti-Semitic. To clarify this issue for the American people—including many Jews—FLAME has created a new *hasbarah* message called "[Ben & Jerry's Bad Taste](#)." I hope you'll review this convincing, fact-based paid editorial, which will run soon in the *Washington Post*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Chicago Tribune* and other media nationwide. It spells out why Ben & Jerry's should be held to account for this attempt to delegitimize the State of Israel. This piece will also be sent to all members of Congress, Vice President Harris and President Biden. If you

agree that this kind of public relations effort on Israel's behalf is critical, I urge you to support us. Remember: FLAME's powerful ability to influence public opinion—and U.S. support of Israel—comes from individuals like you, one by one. I hope you'll consider [giving a donation now](#), as you're able—with \$500, \$250, \$100, or even \$18. (Remember, your donation to FLAME is tax deductible.) To donate online, just go to [donate](#) now. Now, more than ever, we need your support to ensure that the American people, the U.S. Congress and President Biden stay committed to fighting anti-Semitic actions by individuals, politicians and commercial companies.

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