Over the past four and a half decades, Israel has concluded peace agreements with various of its former adversaries.

The first peace treaty concluded with Egypt in Washington in 1979 was groundbreaking. Egypt thus recognized Israel’s right to exist. The treaty was signed by the then Israeli Prime Minister Menahem Begin and the Egyptian President Anwar as-Sadat. It was preceded two years earlier by Sadat’s historic visit to Israel with a moving speech in the Israeli parliament, the Knesset.



Historic handshake between Rabin and Arafat, brokered by Clinton, at the signing of the Oslo Accords in 1993, a symbol of the failed peace process in the Middle East conflict © Vince Musi The White House

The peace negotiations between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), which began in Oslo and led to the signing of the first agreement between the two parties in Washington on 13 September 1993, were also historic. According to this agreement, Israel recognized the PLO as the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinians. In return, the PLO promised to remove all passages calling for the annihilation of Israel from its charter. It is still unclear whether this has happened, as no new version of the charter has been published

since then. Negotiations continued until 2000/2001. No agreement has yet been reached on a separate Palestinian state.

Shortly after the start of negotiations between Israel and the PLO, the peace treaty with Jordan followed in 1994. In addition to the recognition of the State of Israel by the Hashemite Kingdom, the main issues were a settlement of the common border and water rights for Jordan in connection with the Jordan River.

It took more than twenty years before the next peace agreement was reached. In September 2020, Israel signed the so-called “Abraham Accords” with the United Arab Emirates (including Dubai and Abu Dabhi) and Bahrain under the leadership of the USA. In this agreement, the three parties agree to cooperate, particularly in the areas of business and science, as well as to work together in the fight against radicalization and for peace, progress and prosperity. Economic cooperation was initiated immediately after the signing of the Abraham Accords and has been continuously expanded ever since.

No peace has yet been achieved between Israel and Saudi Arabia. In the recent past, the two sides have been working towards normalizing mutual relations. However, talks led by the USA had to be put on hold for the time being due to the war in Gaza. As a result, the Palestinian terrorist organization Hamas has achieved its goal of preventing a rapprochement between Israel and Saudi Arabia with the terrorist act of 7 October 2023 for the time being.