



The Abraham Accords, through which Israel normalized its relations with the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Bahrain, Morocco, and Sudan in 2020 and 2021, are turning six years old. What is remarkable is not so much this anniversary as the fact that the agreements are still in place at all. They have survived the Hamas massacre of October 7, 2023, the Gaza War, the exchange of blows with Iran, and, most recently, the Mecca Pact of 2026. . What's next for the Abraham Accords?

By Mohamed Diwan 

The 1993 Oslo talks between Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) were conceived as a reconciliation project. The first step was to build trust; then the two societies would grow closer; and ultimately, security would be achieved. The Second Intifada brought this project to an end.

The Abraham Accords, which the Jewish state signed with various Muslim states six years ago, reversed the order: first, interests were to be reconciled; then, institutions. Social rapprochement is, at best, a long-term consequence of this approach. While this may be a weakness in the long run, it explains why the agreements have outlasted conflicts such as the Gaza War and the war with Iran.

Governments' Security Calculations

People often overlook the position of strength from which Israel was able to conclude these agreements: early warning systems, missile and drone defense, cyber capabilities, and access to one of the world's most robust innovation ecosystems. It was with these assets that the Jewish state paid for normalization with its Arab partners in the Accords. And it was a success: Between 2020 and 2024, Israeli trade with the partner states grew significantly, most notably with the Emirates. This was complemented by defense projects with Morocco. This development was thus made possible by Israel's capabilities, not by Arab goodwill.

The Gaza War was the toughest test the Abraham Accords have faced. Yet no partner country severed ties with Israel. The Emirates kept diplomatic channels open, trade continued at a subdued pace, and Morocco maintained its security cooperation. Bahrain came under considerable pressure but formally remained within the framework of the agreements.



Public Rejection

The Arab Opinion Index, which measures public sentiment in Arab countries, found that in 2025, 87 percent of respondents opposed official recognition of Israel. Only 6 percent would accept it, though most of these supporters make their approval contingent on the establishment of a Palestinian state.

On average, 44 percent of the population in Arab countries view Israel as the greatest threat to their own security—even more so than the U.S. and Iran. This shows just how deeply rooted the hostility toward the Jewish state is in Arab countries. Objectively speaking, this is inexplicable, especially since Iran maintains armed proxy organizations in various Arab countries and is undermining these states from within.

The fact that Israel is nevertheless perceived as the greatest enemy is the result of decades of state-sponsored discourse featuring anti-Semitic motifs, conspiracy theories, and the demonization of Israel in school textbooks, the media, and sermons. The rejection of the Jewish state—or of Jews as a whole—is thus largely endogenous. It predates the settlements and predates the State of Israel.

The Abraham Accords thus represent normalization at the governmental and business levels without the involvement of the general public in Arab countries.

Saudi Arabia Revises Its Anti-Semitic Narrative

Israel's Arab partners are increasingly recognizing that this is not enough in the long run. A new report by the Israeli nonprofit organization IMPACT-se shows that the Saudi curricula for 2024-26 are virtually free of anti-Semitic incitement. Passages that portray Jews as enemies of God, defame Zionism as a "racist European movement," or accuse Israel of arson at al-Aqsa have been removed. They have been replaced by texts on coexistence and critical thinking.

This is a step forward. It most likely stems not from a moral change of heart, but from Vision 2030, the major modernization and transformation program through which Saudi Arabia aims to modernize its economy, improve its international reputation, and gain room to maneuver for security and technology partnerships. Anti-Semitic textbooks are ill-suited for this purpose.



On their sixth anniversary, the Abraham Accords thus demonstrate that it is not only reconciliation that can make cooperation possible, but that the reverse is also true: the prospect of cooperation can lead to a reevaluation of a long-standing narrative. Israel's economic and military appeal thus has the potential to counter Arab anti-Semitism more effectively than any government statement. However, curriculum reforms take effect only over the course of generations, not within a single legislative term.

Two Future Scenarios for the Abraham Accords

The Abraham Accords could evolve in two directions. Either they will coalesce into a genuine security and economic framework. This would require Saudi Arabia's accession, closer involvement of Jordan and Egypt, and a U.S. administration that actively promotes this framework. Or the agreements will remain what they are today: a network of transactional relationships, useful for trade and technology, lacking social depth and increasingly overshadowed by competing alliances (see also: ["The Mecca Pact and Its Significance for Israel"](#)). A cold peace that lasts only as long as the numbers add up.

The future of the Abraham Accords depends on how the situation with Iran, the Palestinians, and the U.S. unfolds. Will the Palestinians be granted their own state—which, at this point, would amount to rewarding the terrorist attack of October 7, 2023? Will the U.S. continue to rely on Israel for its security policy in the Middle East, or will it form other alliances? The answers to these questions will also be decisive for the future of the Accords.

One thing is certain: Israel's qualitative military edge remains the foundation of the Abraham Accords. After all, in this region of the world, strength is a prerequisite for peace. The question, however, is: Is Israel's strength sufficient to transform today's "cold peace" into a stable, long-term order? In other words, an order that is not merely dictated by governments, but is based on a shift in mindset among the Arab population—as is now being attempted with the revision of school textbooks in Saudi Arabia.

After all, peace that depends solely on governments and is not supported by the people does not lead to stability in the Middle East. Six years of the Abraham Accords therefore represent a positive development, but they are not yet a guarantee for the future.



Six Years of the Abraham Accords: A Midterm Assessment

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