The war in Iran and American interest

written by Ruth Pines-Feldman | 10.03.2026
From Washington’s perspective, the war against Iran marks a turning point in its relations with its allies in the Middle East.

Trump’s Board of Peace collides with the reality of Hamas’s power in Gaza

written by Prof. Kobi Michael | 10.03.2026
As long as Hamas is not disarmed and ceases to be an effective and present governing entity in Gaza, the technocratic government has no real chance of establishing alternative governance.

How Trump turned insults into tools of US diplomacy

written by Prof. Kobi Michael | 10.03.2026
By replacing restraint with public humiliation and pressure, Donald Trump reshaped US diplomacy and replaced norms that governed alliances and global order for decades

Israel can ease tensions with Qatar, but only if Doha stops supporting Hamas

written by Noa Lazimi | 10.03.2026

A trilateral meeting of the United States, Israel, and Qatar was held Sunday as part of an American initiative to jumpstart a process aimed at easing tensions between Doha and Jerusalem, against the backdrop of efforts to advance Phase B of President Donald Trump's plan for Gaza. The meeting was attended by US Middle East envoy Steve Witkoff, Mossad director David Barnea, and a senior Qatari official.

Following Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's apology in September, Qatar is seeking to solidify its image as a constructive mediator and launder its reputation despite its ongoing support for terrorism. This comes amid statements from Doha declaring that "Qatar will not take part in funding the reconstruction of the Gaza Strip," arguing that "we will not sign the checks that rebuild what someone else destroyed."Beyond strengthening their already elevated international standing – bolstered significantly by their central role in Trump's "points plan" – the Qataris are keen to further tighten their ties with Washington, which grants them extensive security benefits, including a defense agreement anchored in a presidential order.

Improving relations with Qatar

If the process of rapprochement progresses and such meetings continue, Israel must make it clear that any advancement depends on concrete steps from Doha. Every move toward improved relations with Qatar must be conditioned on the cessation of all support for Hamas – direct or indirect – and on a complete halt to any promotion of interests aligned with the organization's goals. Only under these terms can Israel ensure that any emerging diplomatic dynamic serves its strategic interests rather than granting further legitimacy to actions that endanger it and destabilize the region.

It is important to recognize that behind the scenes, Qatar – together with Turkey –

continues to shape developments in the Gaza arena. The close ties maintained by Doha and Ankara with Hamas serve their own strategic interests, granting them channels of influence and leverage.Israel should be concerned by attempts from both countries to engineer mechanisms that would hollow out the very idea of disarming Hamas, as reflected in several recently published initiatives, including proposals to store the organization's weapons rather than dismantle them.

Taking action against terrorism

Under current conditions, Israel should seize the momentum created by ongoing legal efforts in the US to outlaw the Muslim Brotherhood – currently limited to Lebanon, Jordan, and Egypt – and work with Washington to extend such designations to the organization's branches in Qatar and Turkey.

In addition, the United States could require the Qatari government to take legal action against entities operating on its soil that are involved in funding organizations already designated by the US as terrorist groups. Qatar must also commit to ending anti-Israel propaganda on its Al Jazeera media network and cease providing a safe haven to senior Hamas operatives who continue to reside there.
Regarding Gaza, Israel should work to curb Qatar's attempts to expand its footprint in the Gaza Strip under the guise of humanitarian projects, which risk functioning as a civilian façade for Hamas's governing mechanisms. Furthermore, Jerusalem should firmly oppose any "soft" model – promoted by Doha and Ankara – of disabling or placing out of use (decommissioning) Hamas weaponry, such as transferring arms to the Palestinian Authority or storing them under supervision.
Instead, Israel must insist on the complete and total dismantling of Hamas's military capabilities (disarmament). In close coordination with the United States, Israel must make clear to Qatar and Turkey that it will not permit any arrangement – direct or indirect – that enables Hamas to remain standing.Published in The Jerusalem Post, December 10, 2025.

Why Kazakhstan joined the

Abraham Accords despite longstanding Israel ties

written by Joseph Rozen | 10.03.2026
With full diplomatic relations with Israel already, other interests prompted Kazakhstan to join the historic pact.

This is what ‘globalize the intifada’ looks like

written by Arsen Ostrovsky | 10.03.2026
Two Israeli embassy staff members were shot dead in Washington, D.C. This is what happens when the West demonizes the Jewish .state

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Trump’s swashbuckling regional diplomacy offers opportunities

written by David M. Weinberg | 10.03.2026
More than any other country, Israel was hit this week by Trumpian whiplash; by the checkbook diplomacy conducted in blitzkrieg fashion by US President Donald Trump in the Middle East.

There was something unseemly about the extravagance and opulence that marked Trump’s visit to Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the UAE. There was something childish in President Trump’s enthusiasm for the glitzy gifts and sycophantic love that Arab rulers heaped on.

There was something unnerving in his chummy acceptance of mega-cash and a jumbo jet from the Hamas-supporting, Al-Jazeera-bankrolling Emir of Qatar. There was something unruly in the way he enthusiastically embraced Syria's new president, Ahmed al-Sharaa (AlJolani), a former al-Qaida commander, complete with quite cavalier sanctions relief for Damascus.

And there was something smarmy about Trump's assertion that America would use all these ties for Israel's benefit.

Politicos and journalists fretted all week that Trump's turbo-charged trillion-dollar dealmaking with oil-rich Gulf nations put Israel at diplomatic disadvantage. They asserted that Israel was being left out or left behind in Trump's wheeling and dealing.

The uneasy feeling is compounded by other moves Trump has taken in recent weeks which might suggest distance between Washington and Jerusalem. This includes the lightening announcement of direct nuclear talks between Washington and Tehran, and the concomitant flood of statements suggesting that the US would settle for drawdown, not full dismantlement, of Iran's nuclear and missile military juggernaut.

There was the abrupt Trump decision to call-off the American military campaign against the Houthis in exchange for a Yemeni pledge not to anymore attack US ships; a pledge to ceasefire that clearly does not include Israel.

And then there was Steve Witkoff and Adam Boehler's negotiation with Hamas to release American-Israeli hostage Edan Alexander. The release is a blessed thing, but the impression that this was done over Israel's head and at the expense of hostages who are "only" or "just" Israeli – is problematic.

And all-of-a-sudden everybody in the world is talking about rehabilitating Syria and investing in Gaza without a dime of consideration for devastated southern or northern Israel.

In short, it is hard to escape the sinking feeling that Israel just has not been invited to Trump's party.

BUT THIS is a wrong and ruinous misreading of the strategic picture. Israel still has an indispensable and prominent place in the wild and wooly Mideast of

Donald Trump. Trump already has and surely will yet support moves that are critical to Israel's security and prosperity.

A more positive reconsideration of the strategic picture starts with recognition that Trump's visit was mainly about business deals to boost American fortunes, stemming from his urgent need to demonstrate economic achievements. This explains his enthusiasm for the insanely rich Gulfies. It does not mean dismissal of Israel.

It is true Israel does not have shiny toys or trillion-dollar business ventures with which to boost Trump, but it has other demonstrable and no-less-valuable advantages to America.

Trump surely understands that without Israel's decapitation of Hezbollah, the Assad regime in Syria (backed by Iran and Russia) would not have fallen. Trump surely understands that without Israel's destruction of Iran's air defense system the ayatollahs would not have been willing to even talk to him. Tenacious Israeli victories paved the way for Trump to cash-in.

Trump surely also understands that Israel's (still incomplete) evisceration of Hamas and other terrorist groups of Moslem Brotherhood ilk in Judea and Samaria too – evidence the horrible terrorist murder this week of Tzeela Gez – is critical to Saudi and Emirati security and to broad regional stability.

Without this there will be no better future for Palestinians, and the Saudis will have less reason to respect and partner with Israel. Thus, Trump unapologetically has massively resupplied Israel with weapons and backed dramatic plans to depopulate Gaza of the bad guys.

So, while Israel may have seemed absent from Trump's swing through the region, it was not. In fact, President Trump promoted the Abraham Accords, demanded condemnation of the Hamas invasion of Israel at every step of the way (right in the face of Qatari and Syrian leaders), and talked toughly about Iran.

Equally important, Trump did not plaint about "Palestine" and the two-state delusion; did not moan about Israeli military operations in Rafah, Jenin, the Bekaa Valley (Lebanon), and Derra Province (Syria) – unlike the blessedly passe Biden-Harris team; and did not wail about gas for Gazans and outrageously threaten Israel with economic sanctions – unlike French President Emmanuel Macron.

Throughout, Trump emphasized peace through strength. The message was clear. Trump's America is seeking sovereign partners who carry their own weight and increase America's safety, strength, and prosperity across the globe.

This presents excellent opportunities for Israel. This country holds great regional strategic advantage and military strength. If it seizes the moment to act decisively in its own interests – which clearly are America's interests too, in the main – it will garner Trump's support. This is particularly true regarding Gaza and Iran.

However, if Israel hesitates or wilts, Trump will lose interest or patience or both. And then he may go off in his own capricious directions, over Israel's head and without due consideration of Israel's perspective.

Again, Trump has not abandoned Israel; he is daring Israel to act daringly. He wants Israel to be the regional hegemon that it must be.

In other words, object not to Trump's swashbuckling regional diplomacy. Complain, if you will, about Israeli procrastination and irresolution. The ball is in Israel's court, and Trump is waiting for Jerusalem to serve with full force.

SO WHY isn't this assessment widely heard? Because the political opposition to Prime Minister Netanyahu and the mainstream media which slavishly serves it drive a false, nasty narrative of Israeli malfeasance; that Jerusalem has wrecked relations with Washington, and that Netanyahu has fallen out of Trump's good graces.

Pundits and politicians gleefully pattered-on all week about Israel being downgraded. They could barely disguise their *schadenfreude* at Netanyahu's supposed sidelining. They purposefully misconstrued Trump's diplomacy to pile on Bibi yet again.

Don't believe it. Instead, demand that the Government of Israel act expeditiously to take advantage of the strategic windows of opportunity that President Trump holds open for Israel and the region.

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With Trump, there is an historic opportunity in Gaza

written by Gilad Erdan | 10.03.2026

The President has already demonstrated his willingness to break past conventions and adopt creative solutions. The prime minister, for his part, must bring new ‘out-of-the-box’ ideas to the table. This is how the ticking time bomb in Gaza can be defused.

Trump administration 2.0 demands new rules of engagement

written by Gilad Erdan | 10.03.2026

The support Hamas received after October 7 necessitates making it clear that a Palestinian state will not be established alongside Israel. We must engage President Trump in creative solutions, such as the ‘Emirates Plan.’

A historic chance to dismantle the ‘axis of evil’

written by Gilad Erdan | 10.03.2026

The fall of the Assad regime, combined with Israel’s decisive blows against Hezbollah, Hamas, and the Houthis, presents a historic opportunity. With a bold

US president open to innovative initiatives, there is now a chance to fundamentally alter the Middle East. By dismantling the Iranian regime, this moment could pave the way for normalization between Israel and the broader Arab and Muslim world.

The key to achieving this transformative change lies in demonstrating strength against surrounding enemies, proving Israel's strategic value to the United States, building a coalition of moderate states, and setting a clear national goal: applying all possible pressure – including a credible military threat – to overthrow the Iranian regime, ultimately consigning it to history alongside Assad's regime.

President Donald Trump enters the White House committed to ending wars, not starting them. However, he is also prepared to strengthen US allies in the Middle East – foremost among them, Israel – so they can defend themselves. American support will weaken the Iranian-Chinese-Russian axis, fostering sustainable stability and expanding the Abraham Accords.

Trump's recent statements about the Middle East reflect his principles: distinguishing between allies and adversaries, valuing nations that achieve victories and weaken their enemies, and rejecting endless wars with heavy casualties on both sides.

Israel must act decisively to achieve its objectives against its adversaries as swiftly as possible. In Gaza, Israel needs to dismantle Hamas as a military and governing force, ensuring that humanitarian aid entering the Strip does not fall under its control. Simultaneously, any violation of the ceasefire by Hezbollah should carry a heavy price.

Israel must also demonstrate its strategic value to the US, aligning with Trump's "America First" agenda. This can be achieved through close cooperation with Washington to advance new regional military and economic frameworks alongside Abraham Accords states and other regional partners, creating a counterweight to China's expanding influence in the Middle East.

Israel must operate from a position of strength, courage, and uncompromising dedication to its vital interests. Analysts urging Israel to make concessions to the Palestinians in exchange for US support in normalization agreements risk portraying Israel as weak – a liability, not an asset, to Washington.

Reshaping the Middle East requires addressing the regime in Tehran. Israel must adopt this as a bipartisan national objective. Just as Western intelligence agencies failed to predict developments in Egypt, Syria, and Gaza, they may similarly overlook Iran's next steps. One day, the world could wake up to an Iran armed with nuclear warheads. As an ambassador to the US and UN, I engaged with representatives from regional states, including those lacking diplomatic ties with Israel, and they all recognized that Iran is the root of the problem.

Today, with Assad's fall, Iran is weaker than ever. Three of its pillars – Assad's regime, Hezbollah, and Hamas – have been crippled, and the Houthis have also suffered significant setbacks. Israel has demonstrated its ability to strike Iran's strategic assets, leaving it exposed to further aerial attacks.

Now is the time to complete the task, with US support. This involves launching a maximum-pressure campaign – economically and diplomatically – against Iran. Sanctions must target critical sectors, including energy, finance, defense, and automotive industries. Simultaneously, support for Iranian opposition groups should be bolstered, ensuring their access to encrypted communication and uninterrupted internet connectivity.

If this pressure does not bring about dramatic change or regime collapse, Israel must convince its ally that the only path to stability, peace, and prosperity in the region lies in delivering a devastating blow to the Iranian regime. Jerusalem and Washington would need to target a range of sites across Iran, from nuclear facilities to strategic government and military assets, and economic hubs such as oil facilities and ports.

Beyond Iran, it is essential to address other actors supporting radical terror and spreading hatred and antisemitism, starting with Qatar. It is unacceptable for the US to condemn Hamas for holding American citizens hostage while the same organization operates its financial empire from Doha, a US-designated ally. Nor can Qatar's media outlets continue spreading venomous anti-Israel propaganda while Trump works to strengthen the Abraham Accords.

Efforts should target government, private sector, and civil society leaders to compel Qatar to make a clear choice: end all support for terror and incitement, expel Hamas operatives, and cease aiding the organization, or face designation as a terror-supporting state and sanctions isolating it from the global community.

To ensure a bright future for Israel, citizens and the Jewish diaspora must unite around one transformative goal: the fall of Iran’s regime. This moment is closer than ever.

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