



**2025**  
SEPTEMBER  
SPECIAL EDITION

# **The War of June 2025:**

A Clash of Civilizations or a Catalyst  
for a New Middle East?



**Dr. Azza Hashem**

Director of Al Habtoor Research Centre

Prepared by

**Ahmed Abouyoussef**

Researcher, Political Studies  
Unit

**Mostafa Ahmed**

Senior Researcher, Political  
Studies Unit

# Table Of Content:

Content	Number Page
Introduction	04
The "Clash of Civilisations":An Analytical Lens?	06
The "New Middle East" Concept: Evolution and Proponents	08
Contributing Factors to the New Middle East	13
Obstacles to Shaping the New Middle East	23
What's Next?	32
References	37

This publication is free and not for sale or distribution. It is prohibited to sell or distribute it inside or outside Egypt without written permission from the Al Habtoor Research Centre. The Al Habtoor Research Centre retains all intellectual property rights to the content.

As many regional and global powers rush to reshape the Middle East to serve their strategic interests, the past two years have been marked by a cascade of transformative and often tumultuous events. These include the Israeli army's large-scale invasion of the Gaza Strip following October 7, efforts to diminish Hezbollah's influence in Lebanon, the fall of the Assad regime in Syria, intensifying Israeli military operations against Iran, and most recently, a wave of Western countries intending to formally recognise a Palestinian state alongside Israel's announcement of plans for the annexation of the West Bank and a comprehensive occupation of the Gaza Strip. Together, these rapid developments not only underscore deepening conflict and instability but also actively fuel the emerging discourse about the "New Middle East", a strategic framework envisioned by key actors outside of the region that seeks to redefine the geopolitical, security, economic, and diplomatic order of the region. The intertwining of hard power manoeuvres, shifting alliances, and economic realignments signals a significant recalibration rather than a mere continuation of the status quo.

In 2025, the potential rise in Western recognition of Palestinian statehood reflects growing international dissatisfaction with existing diplomatic frameworks and a push to rethink longstanding regional issues, directly challenging Israel's traditional security and diplomatic calculus. Concurrently, Israel's authorised military plan to take full control of Gaza exemplifies a decisive shift toward hardening its territorial and security posture, marking an unprecedented phase in Israeli-Palestinian relations and regional politics.

The confluence of these developments amplifies the narratives and policies underpinning the New Middle East: a vision premised on assertive state-centric realignments, expanded normalisation efforts, a recalibrated balance of power, and an economy-driven model of regional transactions. This evolving order encompasses ambitions to diminish Iranian influence, redefine Palestinian sovereignty on new terms, and facilitate deeper economic and security integration among select regional actors.

---

---

Ultimately, these events serve both as catalysts and manifestations of the "New Middle East" discourse. They reflect a region in flux where entrenched conflicts and new diplomatic initiatives are simultaneously eroding old paradigms and opening pathways for a fundamentally restructured Middle Eastern landscape.

This paper critically explores how the recent rapid developments in the Middle East contribute to shaping competing visions of the region's future. It assesses whether the ongoing transformations reflect a deeper realignment driven by strategic state interests, expanding economic interdependence, and a recalibrated regional order that transcends historical cycles of conflict.

Specifically, the analysis considers if these changes primarily illustrate Samuel Huntington's "Clash of Civilisations" thesis—attributing post-Cold War regional conflicts to cultural and religious identity divisions—or if they instead represent a deliberate and calculated strategic effort to "reshape the Middle East" through redefined state priorities, shifting power dynamics, and newly forged regional and international alliances.



# The "Clash of Civilisations": An Analytical Lens?

Samuel P. Huntington's "Clash of Civilisations" theory, initially articulated in his 1993 article in *Foreign Affairs* and subsequently elaborated in his 1996 book, has influenced scholarly and political discourse on post-Cold War global conflict. Central to his argument is the proposition that cultural and religious identities, rather than ideological or economic factors, constitute the primary axes of contention in the contemporary world order. Huntington categorises humanity into several major civilisations while treating Israel as a distinct civilisational entity. He contends that political tensions and alliance formations increasingly manifest along the "fault lines" that separate these civilisations.

Within this framework, Israel occupies a distinctive civilisational position, characterised by its unique religious and historical heritage yet closely aligned with the West in political and cultural dimensions. This nuanced placement underscores the complexity of Huntington's civilisational model. Huntington's theoretical lens proves particularly pertinent in analysing the June 2025 conflict between Israel and Iran.

According to Huntington, Israel inhabits a unique civilisational space, culturally distinct but fundamentally allied with the West, whereas Iran represents a central actor within the Islamic civilisation. The 2025 conflict starkly exemplifies these civilisational identities fuelling geopolitical rivalry: Israel's intensive airstrikes and covert operations targeting Iranian nuclear and military infrastructure unfolded amid an intensifying ideological divide. Conversely, Iran's extensive retaliatory missile and drone campaigns, couched in rhetoric emphasising religious and cultural resistance, highlight the existential nature of the conflict as predicted by Huntington—a struggle in which each party perceives itself as safeguarding its civilisation's core values, with Israel defending Western order and Iran championing Islamic sovereignty.

The direct involvement of the United States intensifies the civilisational dimensions of this conflict. It substantiates Huntington's thesis of an emergent "Western versus Islamic civilisation" confrontation in critical geopolitical arenas.

Beyond the immediate hostilities, broader regional developments since late 2023 reinforce these civilisational narratives while concurrently catalysing strategic realignments encapsulated by the concept of the "New Middle East". Key events include Israel's extensive military response to October 7, efforts to weaken Hezbollah's influence in Lebanon, the unprecedented collapse of the Assad regime in Syria, heightened Israeli operations against Iranian proxies, and a notable surge in Western intent to recognise a Palestinian state. Parallel to these trends, Israel's formal declarations to annex the West Bank and implement a full military occupation of the Gaza Strip signify a resolute shift toward stringent territorial governance.

These intertwined developments reveal a dual dynamic at play: they embody Huntington's conception of a civilisational clash rooted in competing cultural and religious identities shaping conflict and alliance patterns; simultaneously, they demonstrate a deliberate strategic endeavour by state actors to recalibrate regional order through revised power distributions, emergent economic partnerships, and evolving national interests aimed at transcending cyclical violence.

Consequently, the June 2025 conflict and surrounding regional transformations cannot be understood solely as intractable cultural antagonisms. Rather, they represent a complex geopolitical contest wherein strategic state actors—including Israel, Iran, and Western powers—are actively redefining the Middle East's political, security, and economic architecture. The interaction between civilisational identity discourses and pragmatic strategic recalibration constitutes a central dynamic of the contemporary crisis, underpinning the broader "New Middle East" paradigm.

While Huntington's framework aptly centres cultural and religious dimensions of the conflict, it is critical to recognise the interplay with other decisive factors such as Israel's preemptive measures to hinder Iran's nuclear ambitions, overarching regional power struggles, and acute security imperatives. Thus, civilisational identities intersect with—and do not supersede—strategic and political motivations. The evolving Middle Eastern landscape increasingly reflects this confluence, where identity narratives both legitimise and amplify actions grounded in conventional state interests.

---

Building upon Huntington's insights, recent events may be situated within broader Western-led initiatives to reshape the region, often encapsulated in discussions of the "New Middle East". This vision, promoted by various Western policymakers since the early 2000s, seeks to reorder regional alignments and power balances in ways that principally advance Israel's security objectives. Iran and Israel's conflict thus not only exemplifies Huntington's predicted civilisational fault lines but also marks a pivotal moment in the continuing Western endeavour to engineer a regional realignment favourable to its strategic aims. The interplay between civilisational identity and political ambition revealed in these developments illustrates how such narratives can both incite and be instrumentalised by states pursuing regional dominance, especially as military conflicts are framed in existential rather than purely pragmatic terms.

## **The "New Middle East" Concept: Evolution and Proponents**

The concept of the "New Middle East" is largely a construct promoted by Western policymakers and intellectuals, rather than an idea originating from or widely discussed by the inhabitants of the region themselves. In fact, the term rarely appears in public discourse within the Middle East outside of geopolitical analysis or foreign policy discussions. Instead, it tends to surface prominently in Western narratives, often coinciding with the outbreak of new conflicts or as a retrospective justification for military interventions and strategic initiatives in the region. While people living in the Middle East are more focused on immediate social, economic, and political concerns, the "New Middle East" concept serves as a framework used externally to frame regional upheavals and attempts at reshaping power dynamics. This disconnects highlights how the notion remains more reflective of external ambitions and strategic rhetoric than of grassroots or regional consensus, with Middle Eastern populations prioritising pragmatic reforms and stability rather than grand, externally imposed visions of transformation.

---



Shimon Peres being the first to introduce the term, in his 1993 book *The New Middle East*, written while he was Israel's Foreign Minister, Peres outlined a forward-looking vision for reshaping the region. He imagined a future where the Middle East would move beyond its long history of conflict and enter a new phase marked by peace, regional cooperation, and economic growth. Central to his proposal was the redirection of resources, particularly the vast sums spent on military spending, toward development and modernisation. For Peres, peace between Jews and Arabs was not only possible but inevitable, provided it was built on mutual compromise. Achieving such peace, he argued, would bring an end to decades of hostility and pave the way for a more stable and cooperative regional order.

Peres's vision was not purely abstract; it was tied to tangible political developments, most notably the Oslo Accords, in which he played a key role alongside Palestinian figures such as Yasser Arafat, with U.S. and Norwegian mediation. The Oslo process marked an important step toward realising the idea of a "New Middle East", as it reflected a mutual commitment to peace and coexistence. Yet, Peres's vision went beyond resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. He emphasised the region's deep economic disparities, arguing that the stark gap in per capita income between Israel and many Arab states was a major source of instability. In his view, such inequality fostered radicalism and violence and reducing it through economic cooperation and shared development was crucial. He advocated for projects like the Red Sea–Dead Sea canal, which could provide electricity, stimulate tourism, and support agricultural growth, as examples of how regional collaboration could serve both peace and prosperity.



Archive photo of Shimon Peres signing the Oslo Accords alongside Yasser Arafat and Bill Clinton at the White House in the famous 1993 ceremony.

### **New Vision After 9/11**

After the September 11 attacks, the Bush administration set out to reshape the Middle East through a bold policy agenda, with the invasion of Iraq serving as the main tool for change. The goal was to build a peaceful and democratic region where long-standing conflicts would lose their relevance. In 2006, during the Lebanon-Israel war, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice introduced the idea of a “New Middle East”, replacing the earlier term “Greater Middle East”. This vision was heavily influenced by Western intellectual enthusiasm for reimagining the region in a way that aligned with American strategic interests, even broadening the region’s scope to include areas like the Caucasus and Central Asia.

However, the plan did not succeed as intended. Instead of fostering stability and democratic reform, it contributed to deeper divisions, rising sectarianism, and the growing influence of Islamist movements over liberal ones. In the end, the U.S. scaled back its efforts to promote democracy in the region. Hence, the term “New Middle East” came to reflect different attempts to drastically reshape the region’s political and strategic order, often shaped by the specific goals of those promoting it.

### **Deal of the Century**

In contrast to earlier visions for a “New Middle East” rooted in economic cooperation and mutual compromise, Jared Kushner’s approach during Donald Trump’s first term marked a striking shift in both ambition and design. As the chief architect behind the Trump administration’s “Peace to Prosperity” plan, unveiled in January 2020, Kushner sought to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict with what he described as a “realistic two-state solution”. His proposal offered a conditional and limited Palestinian statehood—granting Palestinians restricted sovereignty in Gaza and parts of the West Bank, but allowing Israel to retain sovereignty over all its settlements and the Jordan Valley, with East Jerusalem remaining under Israeli control.

Kushner framed the plan as an unprecedented opportunity: a \$50 billion regional investment programme and a promise of economic advancement, contingent on Palestinian acquiescence to stringent security and political prerequisites. He argued that the proposal preserved the possibility of Palestinian statehood in the face of expanding Israeli settlements, presenting the status quo as untenable for both peoples.

---

However, Palestinians broadly rejected the plan, viewing it as heavily biased in Israel's favour and fearing it would entrench territorial fragmentation and compromise national aspirations. Critics noted that the negotiations excluded Palestinian voices and imposed conditions widely regarded as insurmountable.

Kushner's vision thus stands as a pivotal—and polarising—chapter in the evolving discourse over the “New Middle East”, reflecting a move from earlier faith in regional integration toward a more transactional, and deeply contested, model of conflict resolution.

### Continuation of War

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is one of the most prominent advocates of the “New Middle East” concept, envisioning a regional transformation with Israel as the central dominant power. He seeks to leverage Israel's military and economic strength to shape the geopolitics of the resource-rich Middle East. Netanyahu frames the region's challenges—particularly Iranian influence—as existential threats to Israel's survival, emphasising the necessity of strong U.S. intervention not only to protect Israel but also to defend what he terms the “civilised world”.

However, this vision has been met with strong criticism, with detractors arguing that it is unrealistic and achievable only through extreme violence, including allegations of genocide, ethnic cleansing, and severe human rights abuses. Critics contend that Netanyahu's approach undermines the foundational principles of sovereignty, non-intervention, and peaceful coexistence, thereby threatening any prospect for genuine peace or cooperation in the region.

In parallel, U.S.-led efforts promote a different vision of the New Middle East centred on regional integration among allied countries. This strategy aims to realign alliances and foster normalisation agreements, potentially involving key states such as Saudi Arabia and even historically distant actors like Syria and Lebanon to continue the 2020 Abraham Accords.

This integration framework also encompasses ambitious infrastructure projects like the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC), a U.S.-backed initiative designed to link India, the Middle East, and Europe through enhanced trade, energy,



and digital networks, with Israel playing a central role. Similarly, cooperative groupings such as the I2U2—which unites India, Israel, the U.S., and the UAE—reflect ongoing efforts to strengthen regional collaboration under a broadly U.S.-aligned framework.

Netanyahu vividly articulated his vision for this New Middle East during his speech to the 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly. In a symbolic moment, he held up two maps representing a stark choice for the region: one bearing a “curse” and the other a “blessing”.



Netanyahu holding up a map of the Middle East during his UN speech, illustrating the changes he envisions (Reuters).

Notably, this map omitted any reference to a Palestinian state, while the colour blue, labelled “Israel”, dominated the entire occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip and extended as far as Iran. In his address, Netanyahu stressed the transformative potential of normalisation and peace with Arab states as a means to reshape the Middle East and counter the perceived threat posed by Iran and its allies.

He framed these regional tensions as existential threats to Israel’s survival and argued that strong U.S. involvement is critical not only for Israel’s security but also for defending the broader “civilised world”.

This speech encapsulated his strategy of positioning Israel at the centre of a new regional order, underpinned by alliances and security arrangements resting on shared geopolitical and cultural interests.

# Contributing Factors to the New Middle East

The Middle East is witnessing a major transformation shaped by the recent developments in the Middle East, including the war between Israel and Iran, the ongoing war in Gaza, the Abraham Accords between Israel and some Arab countries, the fall of the Assad regime, the defeat of Hezbollah in its recent war with Israel, the annexation of the West Bank, and Economic integration in the region. These events have severely weakened Iran and its network of proxies, known as the Axis of Resistance.

## The Fall of the Assad Regime

The collapse of the Bashar al-Assad regime in December 2024 marked a pivotal turning point in Syria's geopolitical landscape, ending over five decades of autocratic rule and creating a significant power vacuum that triggered a strategic reconfiguration of the country. The fall of Assad, which occurred after a swift offensive led by Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) and supported mainly by the Turkish-backed Syrian National Army, surprised many both domestically and internationally with the end of the Assad family's hereditary dictatorship that had lasted since 1971. This was a major strategic setback for Iran, as Syria had served as a crucial conduit for Iranian influence in the Levant, particularly in supporting Hezbollah in Lebanon.

Following Assad's fall, Israeli forces capitalised on the shifting balance of power by establishing control over a large "demilitarised buffer zone" within Syrian territory, allowing them to carry out airstrikes against Iranian interests safely over Syrian airspace. Israel's assertive actions against various state and non-state actors, including Hamas, Hezbollah, Iran, the Assad regime itself, and the Houthis, have consolidated its dominant role in the region. This newfound operational freedom has granted Israel significant strategic advantages, reshaping regional power dynamics in its favour.

The collapse of Assad's regime also critically weakened the so-called Axis of Resistance's Levant front. For Iran, the loss of its main access point into the Levant significantly undermines its ability to sustain and rebuild proxy forces such as Hamas and Hezbollah. Hezbollah, in particular, has been severely weakened by prior conflicts with Israel, exacerbating Lebanon's already precarious governance challenges.

The degradation of Iran's forward defence mechanisms and proxy networks in Syria and Lebanon represents a crucial shift toward curbing Tehran's regional influence, dramatically advancing the efforts of those seeking to redefine the Middle Eastern geopolitical order. Syria itself has assumed the role of the "strategic fulcrum" in the evolving regional order, where diplomacy, commerce, and security interests converge amid a complex struggle for influence between national and international actors.

This interplay reveals a paradoxical dynamic in the aftermath of Assad's fall. While dismantling an entrenched authoritarian regime opens the door for a new regional order, it simultaneously introduces new challenges and the potential for protracted conflict, particularly along sectarian lines. For some actors, the collapse of a hostile regime, despite initial instability and the rise of other problematic forces, is considered a necessary step toward reshaping the regional landscape according to their strategic interests.

### **Undermining the Axis of Resistance**

The conflict between Israel and Iran, featured direct, large-scale Israeli attacks targeting Iran's nuclear programme and conventional military infrastructure. On June 13, 2025, the Israeli Air Force launched five waves of airstrikes using over 200 fighter jets to hit approximately 100 targets, including critical nuclear sites like the Natanz Nuclear Facility. These strikes were accompanied by covert operations by Mossad to sabotage Iran's air defence and missile infrastructure. During the conflict, Israel assassinated several senior military commanders and nuclear scientists, significantly disrupting Iran's nuclear capabilities.

The conflict inflicted significant setbacks on the Axis of Resistance, which includes Hamas in Gaza, Hezbollah in Lebanon, the Houthis in Yemen, and various Popular Mobilisation Forces in Iraq. Observers noted that the Axis was severely weakened, suffering from disjointed coordination and a lack of centralised command.

The fall of Assad in Syria further deprived Iran of its primary access point into the Levant, critically undermining Tehran's ability to rebuild and coordinate proxy forces like Hamas and Hezbollah. Hezbollah, in particular, was heavily diminished after months of fighting the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF), contributing to broader governance challenges in Lebanon. This fragmentation exposed underlying fractures within the Axis, as many members prioritised local interests over loyalty to Iran, a phenomenon termed "proxy fatigue". Consequently, Iran's hub-and-spoke model of control over proxy groups has started to dissolve into a looser confederation that Tehran can no longer fully command. Strategically, Iran's defeat and the weakening of its proxies have forced a recalibration of its regional ambitions. Tehran appears to be shifting from an expansionist posture to prioritising regime survival, likely redirecting focus eastward towards Iraq and Yemen.

Despite substantial military and ideological blows, the Iranian regime has demonstrated remarkable resilience and institutional depth, absorbing the shocks without systemic collapse. Internal political divisions between pragmatic conservatives and hardliners suggest ongoing internal realignments rather than immediate disintegration. Thus, while the war delivered tactical gains for Israel and its allies, it did not fundamentally change the long-term strategic ambitions of the Iranian regime, resulting in a protracted struggle for regional influence rather than an outright strategic transformation or regime change.

## **Iran Without Mullahs**

Both Israel and the U.S. concur that the clerical mullah regime in Iran represents the central obstacle to Middle Eastern security. Israel-driven military and intelligence campaigns in 2025 mark a significant intensification aimed at regime destabilisation and possible removal, while the U.S. pursues a parallel but more measured path mixing pressure and diplomacy. This conjuncture underscores "Iran Without Mullahs" as a defining and active centrepiece of the broader "New Middle East" strategic vision.

Israel's strategic posture explicitly assumes that the fundamental transformation, or outright removal, of Iran's clerical regime is essential for achieving lasting regional stability and neutralising existential threats. The current government, led by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, has escalated military and covert operations targeting Iran's nuclear and military infrastructure as well as key regime figures.

Publicly, Israeli officials, including Netanyahu, have not officially declared regime change as the primary objective, instead focusing on dismantling Iran's nuclear and missile threats. However, behind the scenes and in political discourse, regime change is recognised as a potential and desirable outcome. Senior Israeli security officials assert that the survival of the mullah-led ideological core poses an ongoing danger, and only its removal could guarantee regime collapse. Plans and rhetoric hint at the possibility of targeting top leaders, including Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei—a marked shift from previous restraint. Israel's deep intelligence penetration of Iran, estimated to include dozens of covert operatives and extensive cyber capabilities, facilitates these strikes and undermines regime cohesion.

These military and intelligence actions are part of a broader strategy aimed at not merely delaying Iran's nuclear progress but fundamentally destabilising and potentially toppling its hardline theocratic leadership, which Israel views as the root cause of its regional hostility and proxy wars.

---



**The United States shares** the fundamental goal of countering the threat posed by Iran's current regime but adopts a somewhat more cautious and multifaceted approach focused on containment and diplomatic pressure. U.S. policy continues to impose "maximum pressure" through economic sanctions targeting Iran's nuclear programme, its ballistic missile development, and its network of proxy groups. Intelligence cooperation with Israel and regional partners is robust, supporting coordinated efforts to disrupt Iranian influence without directly endorsing overt regime change.

Washington's diplomacy pursues opportunities to encourage internal Iranian reforms or shifts in behaviour short of forcible regime removal, mindful of the risks of unplanned upheaval in Tehran. Negotiations resumed in early 2025 aimed at a nuclear peace agreement reflect a willingness to pursue a diplomatic track, although these talks collapsed amid escalating Israeli-Iranian hostilities and mutual distrust. While American officials do not publicly declare regime change as a policy objective, senior figures acknowledge privately that the removal of the hardline mullah regime could be an eventual outcome aligned with U.S. and Israeli interests. The U.S. balances this with concerns over regional stability and geopolitical risks, favouring a strategy that leverages economic sanctions, diplomatic isolation, and limited military threat as instruments to maximise pressure and constrain Iran's aggressive posture without direct military regime-toppling interventions.



## No Palestinian State

In 2024 and 2025, Israel dramatically accelerated its "de facto annexation" policy in the West Bank to unprecedented levels, shifting international attention even as the Israel war on Gaza dominated headlines. The scope of settlement expansion included the approval of over 15,000 new settlement units in 2025 alone, compared to less than 10,000 throughout all of 2024, and projections of up to 50,000 units by year's end. This expansion also entailed the legalisation of 13 previously illegal outposts in 2025 and the provision of state funding to around 70 existing outposts. Aside from construction, Israel actively denied building permits to Palestinians and carried out demolitions, resulting in what has been described as the largest land grab since the Oslo Accords. Plans were also approved to establish 22 entirely new settlements in the West Bank. The Israeli Finance Ministry allocated billions from the 2023–24 state budget for West Bank development, including nearly \$1 billion dedicated to road infrastructure, as well as funds aimed at controlling thousands of archaeological sites.

A significant shift occurred in the legal and administrative framework governing the West Bank's Area C, which constitutes over 60% of the territory. Authority over civilian governance in Area C was transferred from military commanders to civilian officials directly subordinate to Minister Bezalel Smotrich. This effectively extended Israeli civilian administration over occupied Palestinian land, representing a move closer to formal annexation without explicitly declaring it as such. This administrative change supports Smotrich's broader "Decisive Plan" to annex "Judea and Samaria" and institutionalise Jewish sovereignty on the ground.

The annexation effort aims to undermine Palestinian statehood by severing geographic continuity and control. It seeks to separate Palestinian east Jerusalem from the West Bank, fragment northern and southern Palestinian villages, and establish "uninterrupted Jewish sovereignty" across the Green Line. Israeli officials have openly stated that the new settlements are designed explicitly to prevent the realisation of a Palestinian state. This illustrates how major conflicts, such as the Israel war on Gaza, can strategically enable actors like Israel to advance long-term political objectives that would otherwise face considerable international and domestic resistance. The June 2025 war served as a catalyst accelerating the Israeli-centric "New Middle East" reality on the ground, one in which the two-state solution is increasingly undermined and Palestinian self-determination suppressed, aligning with Netanyahu's vision of an "Israeli rules-based regional order".

Despite widespread international condemnation and clear violations of international law, the annexation process has gained momentum amid limited international action. The United Nations has consistently reaffirmed the illegality of Israeli settlements. The U.N. Secretary-General's June 2025 report reiterated that all Israeli settlements "have no legal validity and are in flagrant violation of international law." Yet, annexation activities proceeded undeterred, partly because the Gaza conflict diverted global attention and transformed the concept of "security" into an unquestioned premise for these actions. This atmosphere of distraction and the redefinition of security imperatives allowed Israel to remove the last constraints on annexation efforts.

The annexation of the West Bank undermines the two-state solution, meaning that Palestinians might not be able to establish their sovereign state. Israel now operates fully under the assumption that no sovereign Palestinian state exists or will realistically emerge in the foreseeable future. This strategic reality heavily informs its current and near-future policies aimed at consolidating control over the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Notably, in 2025, the Israeli Knesset passed a symbolic, though politically significant, motion advocating for formal annexation of large parts of the West Bank and the Jordan Valley. This motion, supported by the ruling coalition led by Netanyahu and far-right figures like Smotrich, signals an intent to cement Israeli sovereignty, albeit lacking immediate legal enactment.

Israel continues to expand Jewish settlements significantly, approving the establishment of dozens of new settlements deep within the West Bank, which experts and human rights organisations view as a de facto annexation démarche that irreversibly diminishes any viable Palestinian territorial contiguity. This expansion is paired with increased security measures: extensive checkpoints, restricted Palestinian movement, and military operations aiming to contain and suppress Palestinians. The government also contemplated a comprehensive military plan akin to a full re-occupation of Gaza, reversing the 2005 disengagement, framing it as necessary to eliminate Hamas's influence and secure Israeli territory.

These steps reflect a prioritisation of security and territorial control over negotiations or concessions toward a full Palestinian state. Israel's position regards the absence of Palestinian statehood as a fixed condition shaping all regional interactions and diplomatic calculations, from normalisation efforts with Arab states to countering Iranian influence.

---

Officially, the U.S. maintains rhetorical support for a two-state solution but practically acknowledges the diminishing prospects of a viable Palestinian state emerging soon. U.S. diplomacy has become increasingly transactional, focusing more on regional stability, economic development in Palestinian areas, and curtailing unrest rather than aggressive pursuit of Palestinian statehood. This pragmatic approach is coupled with strong opposition to any unilateral moves by other countries to recognise Palestinian statehood, reflecting Washington's alignment with Israeli strategic priorities in this regard.

Washington continues to emphasise normalisation and cooperation between Israel and Arab states, relegating the Palestinian issue to a less central role, at least in the short term. It also uses its influence to try to manage the consequences of Israeli settlement expansion and annexation rhetoric, though without concrete policy measures to halt these trends.

### **Shifting Trade Routes and Economic Integration**

Israel leverages economic influence as a primary engine driving regional transactions, alliances, and normalisation. Central to this strategy are Israel's energy exports—especially from offshore natural gas fields like Leviathan and Tamar—and its burgeoning high-tech sector, which includes cybersecurity, AI, and advanced manufacturing. These resources provide Israel with significant leverage to create mutually beneficial economic partnerships, mainly with Gulf states such as the UAE and Saudi Arabia, following the Abraham Accords.

Israel also views its technology ecosystem and infrastructure investments as crucial assets to deepen integration into regional supply chains and joint ventures. Strategic economic cooperation helps Israel reduce reliance on military dominance alone and fosters political legitimacy and security through interdependence.

Positioning itself at the crossroads of emerging regional initiatives like the IMEC further enhances Israel's role. Israel's participation places it centrally in an economic corridor designed to boost trade efficiency, supply chain resilience, and investment flows across the region, counterbalancing China's Belt and Road initiative.

For the U.S., the economic dimension is central to its evolving Middle East strategy, signaling a shift from traditional military-centric engagement to fostering robust techno-economic partnerships across the region. The U.S. supports investments in technology, artificial intelligence, renewable energy, and infrastructure, with an emphasis on private-sector leadership and market-driven collaborations.

The U.S. actively backs initiatives like the IMEC and the I2U2 Group, which unites India, Israel, the UAE, and the U.S. in projects targeting food security, energy innovation, and advanced technology cooperation. These partnerships reflect a broader strategic effort to integrate the Middle East into global economic networks, enabling alternative supply chains less dependent on oil revenues or politically fragile bilateral trade agreements.

American diplomacy promotes regional economic integration as a foundation for long-term stability and influence, encouraging Gulf states to channel sovereign wealth funds into sectors such as green energy, logistics, and digital innovation. This economic interdependence is intended to embed cooperation into the region's development fabric, creating incentives to maintain peace and reduce conflict by making stability economically rewarding.

### **Broader Economic Context and Regional Initiatives**

-  The IMEC stands as a flagship initiative, aiming to reduce shipping times and harmonise trade rules, linking key countries through multimodal infrastructure.
-  The I2U2 Group reflects new quadrilateral cooperation focused on joint investments in food security, energy, and advanced technology.
-  Rapid growth in bilateral trade between Israel and Gulf states, especially post-Abraham Accords, underscores the role of economic ties as stabilising mechanisms.
-  Gulf states' sovereign wealth funds are increasingly invested in diversifying economies toward technology and sustainable development, balancing traditional energy reliance with future-orientated sectors.

Together, Israeli and U.S. policies converge on the idea that the economy—anchored by energy, technology, infrastructure, and integrated trade corridors—is the engine propelling the "new Middle East", transforming geopolitical relations into pragmatically interconnected economic partnerships.



# Opposing Factors of The New Middle East:

Despite major shifts shaping a new regional order, several powerful forces continue to challenge the emergence of a so-called "New Middle East". Public opposition across the Arab world, especially over Palestine, has placed pressure on political regimes to reconsider normalisation with Israel. At the same time, growing international recognition of Palestinian statehood, led by France and other Western states, is undermining Israeli expansionist policies.

Iran, though weakened, has shown remarkable institutional resilience, while Turkey is asserting its own regional vision in direct competition with Israel. Egypt has insisted that the two-state solution is the best way to maintain peace and end the Palestine-Israel conflict.

## Public Rejection Across the Arab World

The Arab Street has been characterised as an "unimproved and irrepressible thoroughfare of fury whose frequent itinerary has been known and feared for generations", underscoring its capacity for sustained and emotive political expression that resists suppression despite authoritarian constraints.

In the aftermath of the Israel war on Gaza and the subsequent conflict in June 2025, popular sentiment within the Arab world witnessed a pronounced decline in support for normalisation with Israel, accompanied by growing scepticism and unfavourable attitudes toward Israel's Western allies. This shift largely reflects public reaction to "images coming out of Gaza" and perceptions of ongoing "collective punishment of the Palestinian people".

Such imagery and narratives have intensified popular grievances, fuelling widespread indignation and opposition to diplomatic rapprochement with Israel.



This groundswell of popular opposition has effectively stalled normalisation efforts across the region, thereby constraining the ability of governments to unilaterally pursue such policies. While some state actors may now regard establishing formal relations with Israel as no longer constituting a “betrayal of the Palestinian cause”, public opinion frequently diverges from this.

This dynamic illustrates that public sentiment continues to wield significant influence, especially on emotionally resonant issues like Palestine. Evidence of this constraint includes the suspension of Saudi Arabia’s normalisation process and Egypt’s public posture against the displacement of Palestinians.

These developments challenge the top-down paradigm underpinning the “New Middle East” vision, which seeks to impose a regional order largely divorced from popular consent. Instead, any sustainable and legitimate “New Middle East” must reckon with, and address, the deep-rooted grievances and aspirations prevalent among the Arab populace, particularly with respect to Palestine. The intensification of the Israel war on Gaza have amplified the role of the “Arab Street” as a critical countervailing force to state-led normalisation, underscoring the inseparability of public sentiment and regional geopolitics.

### **Recognition of the Palestinian State by Western Powers**

The period surrounding June 2025 witnessed a growing fracture within the global diplomatic order concerning the Israel war on Gaza, marked notably by increasing criticism from Western capitals outside the United States in response to Israel’s military actions in Gaza. This shift in tone grew increasingly pronounced as humanitarian concerns intensified and diplomatic frustration mounted over the stalled peace process.

In July 2025, France became the first G7 country to officially announce its intent to recognise Palestine as a state. While largely symbolic, this move holds considerable diplomatic significance as it exerts added pressure on Israel by reaffirming international support for a two-state solution, a framework that, despite growing pessimism due to unfolding realities on the ground, remains the stated objective of much of the international community. France intends to formalise this recognition at the upcoming U.N. General Assembly session in September.

---



This development also reflects diverging stances among Western powers. The U.S. and Israel oppose recognition, arguing that it rewards terrorism and risks empowering what they characterise as “another Iranian proxy”. Conversely, other Western countries continue to support a two-state solution in principle but have refrained from formal recognition, emphasising the necessity of a Gaza ceasefire and the release of hostages as prerequisites. This divergence within traditional Western alliances, particularly among G7 members, signals an evolving and more nuanced international diplomatic landscape regarding Israel and Palestine.

By March 2025, a significant majority of United Nations member states, 147 out of 193, had recognised Palestine’s statehood, including major global actors such as Russia, China, and India, alongside numerous European countries. France’s recognition shifts the balance within the United Nations Security Council’s permanent membership, joining China and Russia in supporting Palestinian statehood and thereby leaving the United States in a diplomatic minority on this specific issue.

This growing Western alignment with broader international recognition indicates a clear departure from the longstanding U.S.-Israeli position, which conditions Palestinian statehood on negotiated settlements or rejects unilateral recognition altogether. The expanding international consensus thus places increasing diplomatic constraints on Israel’s policies, such as West Bank annexation, by raising the prospect of heightened international repercussions.

In addition to France’s planned recognition of Palestine, several other Western countries, particularly within Europe, have either already recognised Palestine or are showing signs of moving in that direction. Countries such as Ireland and Spain have formally recognised Palestine since 2024, joining around 11 European Union member states that acknowledge Palestinian statehood. This bloc is expected to grow, especially following France’s upcoming formal recognition at the United Nations General Assembly in September 2025. These moves place increased diplomatic pressure on countries like Israel by reaffirming international support for Palestinian sovereignty within the pre-1967 borders.

However, the situation varies among Western states. Italy, for example, while supportive in principle of Palestinian statehood, has expressed reservations about recognising Palestine unilaterally before a formal state is established. Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni has described early recognition as potentially "counterproductive", emphasising the need for simultaneous recognition of Israel by the Palestinians and a negotiated resolution. Similarly, countries like Germany continue to support a two-state solution but have not yet committed to immediate recognition, favouring conditions such as Gaza ceasefires and hostage releases to precede formal moves.

Thus, while France's decision is expected to rejuvenate the momentum for recognition among multiple European countries, including those like Ireland and Spain that have already acted, others, such as Italy, remain cautious. The differing stances reflect an evolving and somewhat fragmented Western diplomatic landscape on this issue, with growing divergence particularly within the G7 and EU. This trend complicates Israel's strategic objectives while signalling that international diplomatic pressure for Palestinian statehood recognition is increasing beyond symbolic gestures, contributing to a more multipolar and nuanced geopolitical environment.

### **The Resilience of the Mullahs**

Despite suffering severe setbacks in June 2025, the Iranian regime has shown a remarkable degree of resilience. Its core institutions absorbed the shock, recalibrated, and reasserted continuity in the face of military pressure.

This resilience is underpinned by overlapping institutional structures such as the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), the Basij paramilitary forces, the Assembly of Experts, and the Guardian Council. Together, these institutions embody a form of adaptive authoritarianism that accommodates internal competition and factionalism without endangering the system's overall stability. The targeted killings of senior IRGC commanders did not produce institutional paralysis; instead, successors were quickly appointed from established hierarchies, and the regime policy directions were reaffirmed promptly. Internally, the regime is battered and suffers from widespread unpopularity among the Iranian populace, primarily due to corruption, mismanagement, and the costs of its foreign adventures.

It faces significant political divisions, notably between pragmatic conservatives attempting to regain influence over foreign policy and hardline factions committed to an uncompromising ideological stance. Nevertheless, the government has maintained sufficient control over society through rigorous crackdowns and executions of dissenters, drawing on lessons from the Iran–Iraq War.

This historic conflict fostered a “siege doctrine” emphasising deep societal mobilisation and institutional redundancy, enabling the regime to absorb external shocks and sustain cohesion despite sanctions, sabotage, and military threats.

Looking to the future, the regime is expected to intensify its clandestine efforts to develop nuclear weapons and continue advancing its ballistic missile programmes. Strategic adaptations such as relocating nuclear facilities to fortified mountainous regions shield them from air attacks by Israeli or U.S. forces. Additionally, Tehran plans to shift the strategic axis of its resistance network eastward, focusing influence more heavily on Iraq and Yemen. These developments illustrate that military interventions and maximum pressure policies, while inflicting significant damage, have thus far been insufficient to effect a fundamental change in the character or strategic trajectory of the Iranian regime.

Consequently, the prevailing vision of a “New Middle East” premised on the collapse or complete neutralisation of Iran faces substantial challenges. Iran’s enduring institutional capacity to adapt and persist suggests a prolonged, rather than decisive, contest for regional influence. This reality underscores the complexity of Middle Eastern geopolitics, where resilience and recalibration of authoritarian states continue to shape the regional order.

## Turkey's Political and Military Role

Turkey is widely characterised as an "expansive and revisionist" regional power in the Middle East, leveraging its significant demographic base, expansive geographic reach, and military capabilities as NATO's second-largest army. Since 2015, Turkey has pursued an assertive strategy of cross-border operations under its doctrine of strategic autonomy, manifesting a more independent regional posture. Following the June 2025 war, Turkey finds itself in heightened competition with Israel, perceiving Israel's augmented regional power as a direct threat.

Diplomatic relations between Turkey and Israel have deteriorated sharply, marked by escalated rhetoric and mutual accusations, with Turkish President Erdoğan condemning Israel vehemently, including labelling it a "terrorist state," while Israeli officials have retaliated with harsh criticism. This rivalry evokes comparisons between Turkey and Iran as regional challengers to Israeli and U.S. interests.

In Syria, Turkey rapidly moved to deepen its influence after the Assad regime's collapse by allying with new political leaders and supporting former opposition figures. Turkey aims to shape Syria into a "client state", expanding its territorial control and establishing a permanent military presence, particularly collaborating with HTS to maintain a relatively stable northwestern front and prevent refugee flows. This expansionist posture visibly alarms Israel as it shifts power dynamics in its vicinity.

Beyond military and political manoeuvres, Turkey pursues ambitious energy goals. It seeks to expand its Exclusive Economic Zone via maritime boundary negotiations with Syria to gain greater control over Mediterranean gas reserves. Turkey aspires to lead Syria's energy recovery and integrate Syria into broader regional trade routes, such as the Arab Gas Pipeline, providing a less complex and cheaper alternative to offshore projects. This cascading set of ambitions positions Turkey as a burgeoning regional energy hub.

Collectively, these factors illustrate that the "New Middle East" is evolving into a multipolar arena rather than a simplistic bipolar confrontation between the U.S.-Israel and Iran. Turkey's strategic assertions, especially intensified by the power vacuum in Syria, contribute to a complex regional competition where multiple actors pursue independent and sometimes conflicting interests. This multipolarity poses significant challenges to any singular or hegemonic vision of the Middle East, underscoring the nuanced and dynamic geopolitical landscape currently shaping the region.

### **Egypt and the Gulf States Backing Palestine**

Egypt plays a pivotal role in opposing the proposed displacement of Palestinians from Gaza, firmly rejecting any relocation plans on legal, humanitarian, and geopolitical grounds. As a signatory to the Fourth Geneva Convention, Egypt emphasises that forced transfer of civilians from occupied territories constitutes a violation of international law. Politically, Egypt's rejection aligns with its commitment to a two-state solution based on Palestinian self-determination, as underscored by the unanimous Arab League support for Egypt's plan to rebuild Gaza without population transfer at the March 2025 summit. This resolute position constitutes a significant impediment to any "New Middle East" vision reliant on demographic engineering to resolve the Palestinian question.

The UAE has demonstrated a robust humanitarian commitment to Palestinians, notably through Operation Gallant Knight, launched in November 2023. Beyond immediate relief, the UAE drives critical infrastructure projects such as establishing desalination plants that supply potable water to over 600,000 Gaza residents, rebuilding essential utilities, and expanding food security programmes. These efforts reflect a comprehensive strategy to alleviate humanitarian suffering while supporting Palestinian rights within a complex political context. The UAE's humanitarian leadership complements its diplomatic advocacy for peaceful resolution and adherence to international law.

Saudi Arabia combines extensive humanitarian assistance with proactive political engagement in support of the Palestinian cause. Providing substantial funding for relief efforts, Riyadh leads diplomatic initiatives to secure broader international recognition of Palestinian statehood. It promotes a two-state solution grounded in U.N. resolutions, emphasising 1967 borders, the disarmament of militant groups such as Hamas, and east Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine. Saudi Arabia's opposition to Israeli annexation plans and settlement expansion substantiates its role as a key regional actor advocating for a just and comprehensive peace settlement. Qatar plays a vital role as both mediator with Egypt and provider of humanitarian aid. It has facilitated ceasefire negotiations between Hamas and Israel, brokered prisoner exchanges, and ensured sustained delivery of critical humanitarian assistance to Gaza despite political pressures. Qatar's diplomatic efforts prioritise international law and justice, vocally opposing settlement expansion and displacement that threaten Palestinian sovereignty. Its engagement illustrates a persistent commitment to addressing the Palestinian plight through negotiation and relief.

Collectively, Egypt, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar form a cohesive front resisting unilateral and externally imposed frameworks inherent in the so-called "New Middle East". By blending humanitarian support, diplomatic advocacy, and principled opposition to displacement, these states uphold the centrality of the Palestinian cause in regional stability and dispute resolution. Their actions impede the imposition of a one-sided regional order and underscore the enduring contested and multipolar character of the Middle East, where strategic interests and popular grievances continuously intersect.

---

In conclusion, the term "New Middle East" is fundamentally an external construct rather than an organic concept arising from within the region itself. Coined predominantly by Western powers, it has often served as a rhetorical device to legitimise military and political interventions in the Middle East. This terminology reflects geopolitical agendas more than indigenous perspectives, frequently framing the region through the lens of conflict and external interests rather than addressing local realities or aspirations. Consequently, the "New Middle East" can be understood primarily as a product of foreign strategic designs rather than a genuine expression of the region's internal dynamics or collective will.

The June 2025 conflict between Israel and Iran, prompts critical reflection on the applicability of Samuel Huntington's "Clash of Civilisations" framework to contemporary Middle Eastern dynamics. While civilisational and identity narratives were undeniably present, particularly in the conflict's framing by both Iran and Israel, the principal drivers were grounded in security considerations, strategic calculations, and evolving regional power alignments. Israel's preemptive military actions, the involvement of the United States, and consequential developments—such as the downfall of the Assad regime and the erosion of Iran's proxy network—indicate that this war is more accurately analysed through geopolitical and strategic prisms than through a strictly civilisational lens.

The emerging reality in the Middle East does not represent a cohesive or unified "New Middle East" but rather a contested, multipolar environment. Israel has consolidated its regional position through expanded normalisation efforts exemplified by the Abraham Accords, assertive military campaigns, and the annexation of parts of the West Bank—actions consistent with its vision of a regional order centred on Israeli strategic predominance. Nonetheless, this agenda confronts significant resistance.

Widespread public dissent across the Arab world, an increasing number of European states recognising Palestinian statehood, the enduring resilience of the Iranian regime, Turkey's ambitions, and Egypt's steadfast opposition to Palestinian displacement collectively obstruct attempts to impose a unilateral regional framework.

# What's next?

The region is now standing at the threshold of a new order. The old structures that once defined the Middle East, be it Arab nationalism, resistance movements, or the cautious balance of powers that managed to hold back open confrontation, are being dismantled. In their place comes a sharper, less forgiving landscape where power is concentrated in the hands of a few states, alliances are transactional, and the economy is weaponised as much as missiles and drones. The formation of the new middle east will have several consequences at different levels.

## Political Consequences

Politically, the region is entering an era where state interests take precedence over ideological commitments. The collapse of the Assad regime, the weakening of Hezbollah, and the fragmentation of Iranian influence have already shown the erosion of the old narratives that revolved around defiance and resistance. What is being built in their place is a model of state-to-state deals, normalisation agreements, and security alignments that leave little space for popular demands or ideological solidarity.

The Palestinian issue, long at the core of regional politics, is simultaneously being reshaped and marginalised. On the one hand, several Western countries have recognised Palestinian statehood, signalling an international frustration with the endless cycles of violence. On the other hand, Israel has entrenched its annexation policies, deepening settlement activity and extending control over both Gaza and the West Bank. This duality creates a paradox: diplomatic recognition abroad without genuine sovereignty on the ground. For Israel, this political reality is framed as irreversible; for Palestinians, it represents both delegitimisation and a potential spark for renewed popular uprisings.



At the broader regional level, alliances are realigning in ways unseen before. The Abraham Accords have already set a precedent for Arab-Israeli normalisation. What we are likely to see is the expansion of this framework, with more states moving toward quiet, if reluctant, cooperation with Israel in order to access economic and security benefits. Yet this trajectory will never be uncontested. Arab public opinion remains deeply sceptical, and in some cases outright hostile, to any normalisation, especially in the aftermath of repeated wars in Gaza and the images of devastation broadcast across the region. This means that while political elites may forge deals, they will do so under constant pressure from below, risking legitimacy crises.

The result is a fragmented political map: regimes pursuing integration with Israel and the West on pragmatic grounds, popular movements rejecting this order, and external powers exploiting these contradictions to insert themselves deeper into the region's affairs. This is not the birth of a stable regional order but the opening of a new phase of contestation where legitimacy will be contested both domestically and internationally.

### **Security Consequences**

Security dynamics are undergoing the most radical transformation. The Twelve-Day War between Israel and Iran was a turning point. For decades, the two countries fought through proxies—Hezbollah in Lebanon, militias in Iraq, and Hamas in Gaza. But the 2025 confrontation shifted the conflict into direct state-to-state combat, unleashing Israeli airstrikes on Iranian nuclear facilities and Iranian missile barrages on Israeli cities. While the war was short, its consequences are long-lasting. It demonstrated that the era of proxy containment is over; now the rivalry is naked, existential, and far more dangerous.

Iran may have been weakened by the loss of Assad in Syria and the diminishing capacity of Hezbollah, but it has not collapsed. Its ability to survive devastating strikes shows the depth of its institutions and its resilience. Instead of withdrawing from the scene, Iran is likely to recalibrate—shifting focus eastward into Iraq and Yemen, rebuilding networks that are less dependent on Syria and Lebanon. For Israel, this means that the security dilemma is far from resolved. What has been achieved is not permanent victory but a cycle of recurring confrontation, each one more destructive than the last.

The collapse of Assad's regime further complicates the picture. Syria is now a contested arena where Turkey, Israel, and other regional powers carve out zones of influence. Israel has established a buffer zone for operations against Iran, while Turkey seeks to turn northern Syria into an extension of its own strategic space. This competition makes Syria less of a state and more of a chessboard, a vacuum that will absorb rivalries for years to come. Lebanon, already on the brink of collapse, is left exposed with Hezbollah weakened, heightening the risk of renewed internal strife.

Perhaps the most alarming trend is the regional armament race. The wars of recent years have accelerated massive investments in military technology, advanced drones, missile defence systems, and cyber capabilities. Israel continues to rely on its edge in missile defence, satellite surveillance, and cyber warfare, but Gulf states are catching up, investing heavily in advanced Western and even Asian weapons systems. Turkey is rapidly advancing its domestic drone and defence industries, positioning itself as both a regional arms supplier and a military power. Iran, despite sanctions, continues to produce drones and missiles at scale, exporting them to allies and using them as tools of asymmetric deterrence.

This arms buildup does not represent deterrence in the traditional sense; instead, it institutionalises permanent insecurity. Every state now prepares for the next war, knowing that the last one has only delayed rather than prevented future clashes. The Middle East risks becoming a theatre of constant technological warfare, with drones, missiles, and cyberattacks replacing conventional battles, yet with no less devastating consequences for civilians. The result is not peace through strength, but instability through armament.

### **Economic Consequences**

Economically, the "New Middle East" is being structured around integration projects and trade corridors. The India–Middle East–Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) and the I2U2 partnerships are clear examples of how external powers, particularly the United States, envision the region's future. Israel's energy exports, Turkey's ambition to be an energy hub, and Gulf investments in technology and infrastructure all feed into this new order. The logic is simple: economic interdependence will make conflicts too costly to sustain.

Yet the reality is more complex. The benefits of this integration are selective and uneven. States that are part of the normalisation framework—Israel, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey—stand to gain. They will attract investment, modernise infrastructure, and solidify their political ties through economic leverage. But other states—war-torn Syria, fragile Lebanon, isolated Yemen—are excluded, deepening the divide between “integrated” and “marginalised” Middle Easts. The more fragmented the economic map, the more likely excluded populations are to resist or destabilise the system.

Furthermore, maritime disruptions in the Red Sea and Hormuz show how fragile this economic vision remains. Houthis in Yemen have already demonstrated the ability to choke global shipping lanes, forcing vessels to reroute around Africa at great cost. A single missile strike, drone attack, or naval skirmish can add billions to global trade costs, driving oil above \$100 per barrel and shaking the world economy. The Middle East’s geography remains both an asset and a curse: it attracts investment as a hub, yet it exposes global supply chains to instability.

Another dimension of the economic future lies in the weaponisation of technology and energy. Israel leverages its gas exports and technology sector to consolidate alliances. Gulf states channel sovereign wealth into renewable energy and artificial intelligence, seeking to diversify away from oil. Turkey seeks to monopolise energy corridors. In all cases, economic tools are being deployed as instruments of political power, not just development. This blurs the line between economics and security, making trade and energy as contested as territory.

### **The Armament Race in the New Middle East**

One of the defining features of the new regional order is the accelerating armament race. The wars of recent years—whether Israel’s campaigns in Gaza, the Twelve-Day War with Iran, or the battles that led to Assad’s fall—have shown that the Middle East is not moving toward disarmament or confidence-building measures. Instead, every state is rearming at unprecedented levels, convinced that survival depends on military superiority.

Israel already enjoys the most advanced military infrastructure, with missile defense systems, satellite intelligence, cyber capabilities, and a nuclear arsenal that remains an unspoken reality. The experiences of 2023–2025 have reinforced its determination to maintain this edge. New investments in drone warfare, space surveillance, and AI-driven defense systems are now central pillars of its strategy. Gulf states are following suit. Their wealth allows them to purchase cutting-edge Western and Asian systems—stealth aircraft, air defense platforms, and naval technologies. For them, the perceived threat of Iran, combined with opportunities to align more closely with the United States and Israel, justifies unprecedented levels of defense spending.

Turkey, meanwhile, is positioning itself as both a military power and an arms producer. Its drone industry, already battle-tested in Libya, Nagorno-Karabakh, and Syria, continues to expand. Turkey sees the armament race not only as a security necessity but also as an economic opportunity, turning itself into a regional supplier of cheaper yet effective alternatives to Western systems.

Iran, though weakened, will not stand idle. Sanctions have forced it to innovate domestically, focusing on drones, missiles, and asymmetric warfare technologies. Even after losing ground in Syria and Lebanon, Tehran will continue to expand its missile and drone programs, seeing them as the cheapest and most effective way to offset Israeli and Gulf superiority.

The central question is whether this armament race will increase or decline. The trajectory is clear: it will increase. Every regional actor has drawn the same lesson from the recent wars—that reliance on diplomacy or foreign guarantees is not enough. Only the possession of advanced weapons ensures survival, leverage in negotiations, and deterrence against rivals.

Yet this race carries profound risks. It institutionalizes instability by making future wars more destructive and more likely to escalate beyond control. The introduction of hypersonic missiles, AI-driven drones, and offensive cyber capabilities means that conflicts will not only be fought in the skies or on the ground but across digital, economic, and even space domains. The arms race thus transforms the region into one of the most heavily militarized zones in the world, where insecurity is not resolved but reproduced through constant preparation for the next conflict.

# References

1. Abou Shhadeh, Abed. "Why Western Visions for a 'New Middle East' Are Irrelevant." Middle East Eye, n.d. Accessed August 10, 2025.
2. Abouzzohour, Yasmina, et al. "Arab Public Opinion Under Pressure." Middle East Council on Global Affairs, December 12, 2024. Accessed August 10, 2025. [https://mecouncil.org/blog\\_posts/public-opinion-under-pressure/](https://mecouncil.org/blog_posts/public-opinion-under-pressure/).
3. Al Jazeera. "Israel 'Normalisation' Takes Back Seat as Trump Announces Saudi Deals." May 13, 2025. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/5/13/israel-normalisation-takes-backseat-as-trump-announces-saudi-deals>.
4. Al Jazeera. "Jared Kushner on 'Two-State' Solution: 'Let's Just Not Say It'." May 3, 2019. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/5/3/jared-kushner-on-two-state-solution-lets-just-not-say-it>.
5. Al Jazeera. "Mapping How Israel's Land Grabs Are Reshaping the Occupied West Bank." March 30, 2025. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/3/30/mapping-how-israels-land-grabs-are-reshaping-the-occupied-west-bank>.
6. Al Jazeera. "Palestinians Must Not Have Veto over Arab-Israel Deals, Netanyahu Tells UN." September 22, 2023. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/9/22/palestinians-must-not-have-veto-over-arab-israel-deals-netanyahu-tells-un>.
7. Al Kurd, Dana, Assessing the Abraham Accords, Three Years On, Arab Center Washington DC, August 31, 2023. Accessed 10 August 2025, <https://arabcenterdc.org/resource/assessing-the-abraham-accords-three-years-on/>
8. Al Qubaisi, Shamsa, and Najla Al Midfa. "Oil, Missiles and Power: The Geopolitics of the Iran-Israel Conflict." TRENDS Research & Advisory, June 26, 2025. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://trendsresearch.org/insight/oil-missiles-and-power-the-geopolitics-of-the-iran-israel-conflict/>.
9. Almog, Lior. "The Abraham Accords: A Stable Bridge in Unstable Times? An Assessment of the Accords and Their Role in Achieving Peace in the Middle East." International Relations and Political Journal (Euclid), no date. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://irpj.euclid.int/articles/the-abraham-accords-a-stable-bridge-in-unstable-times-an-assessment-of-the-accords-and-their-role-in-achieving-peace-in-the-middle-east/>.
10. Arab Barometer. "A Hidden Force in the Middle East: How Arab Public Opinion Constrains Normalization with Israel." n.d. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://www.arabbarometer.org/media-news/a-hidden-force-in-the-middle-east/>.
11. Arab Barometer. "MENA Publics and the Future of Normalization with Israel." January 2025. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://www.arabbarometer.org/2025/01/14619/>.
12. Arab Center Washington DC. "A Trump-Netanyahu New Middle East." n.d. Accessed August 10, 2025.
13. Arab Reform Initiative. "EU-GCC Relations in 2025: Will Actions Speak Louder Than Words?" n.d. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://www.arab-reform.net/publication/eu-gcc-relations-in-2025-will-actions-speak-louder-than-words/>

14. Badran, Tony, Strategic Geography Of The Middle East, Hoover Institution, June 27, 2019. Accessed 10 August 2025, <https://www.hoover.org/research/strategic-geography-middle-east>.
15. Baroud, Ramzy. "New Middle East": This Is Netanyahu's Real Goal in the Region." Middle East Monitor, June 26, 2025. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20250626-new-middle-east-this-is-netanyahus-real-goal-in-the-region/>.
16. Baroud, Ramzy. "New Middle East": This Is Netanyahu's Real Goal in the Region." People's World, n.d. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://www.peoplesworld.org/article/new-middle-east-this-is-netanyahus-real-goal-in-the-region/>.
17. BBC News. "Trump Releases Long-Awaited Middle-East Peace Plan." n.d. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-51288218>.
18. Ben Menachem, Yoni. "Destabilizing the Iranian Regime Includes Toppling Religious Leadership." Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, n.d. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://jcpa.org/security-officials-only-the-elimination-of-irans-shiite-clerical-leadership-can-bring-do>.
19. Boltuc, Silvia. "GCC Response to Israeli-Iranian Conflict and the Shifting Middle East Order." SpecialEurasia, June 17, 2025. Accessed August 10, 2025.
20. Brom, Shlomo, and Ofir Winter. "Turkey and Israel: Cooperation through Gritted Teeth." Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies, January 9, 2025. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://dayan.org/content/turkey-and-israel-cooperation-through-gritted-teeth>.
21. Cagaptay, Soner, and Deniz Yuksel. "Turkey and Israel Begin 2025 in a Position of Strength in the Middle East." Le Monde, January 9, 2025. Accessed August 10, 2025. [https://www.lemonde.fr/en/opinion/article/2025/01/09/turkey-and-israel-begin-2025-in-a-position-of-strength-in-the-middle-east\\_6736859\\_23.html](https://www.lemonde.fr/en/opinion/article/2025/01/09/turkey-and-israel-begin-2025-in-a-position-of-strength-in-the-middle-east_6736859_23.html).
22. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. "Saudi Pivot in the Turbulent New Middle East." December 5, 2024. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://carnegieendowment.org/sada/2024/12/saudi-pivot-in-the-turbulent-new-middle-east?lang=en>.
23. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. "The Abraham Accords After Gaza: A Change of Context." April 25, 2025. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2025/04/the-abraham-accords-after-gaza-a-change-of-context?lang=en>.
24. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. "What I Told Jared Kushner About His Middle East Peace Plan." February 7, 2020. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://carnegieendowment.org/posts/2020/02/what-i-told-jared-kushner-about-his-middle-east-peace-plan?lang=en>.
25. CNN. "Kushner Defends Trump's Middle East Plan After Palestinian Rejection." January 28, 2020. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://www.cnn.com/2020/01/28/politics/jared-kushner-trump-middle-east-plan-amanpour>.
26. Daily News Egypt. "Egypt's Firm Stance on Palestinian Relocation to Sinai: A Historical and Political Perspective." January 28, 2025. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://www.dailynewsegypt.com/2025/01/28/egypts-firm-stance-on-palestinian-relocation-to-sinai-a-historical-and-political-perspective/>.

27. DW. "Kushner Presents Middle East Plan to UN." February 7, 2020. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://www.dw.com/en/jared-kushner-presents-israel-backed-middle-east-plan-to-united-nations/a-52283370>.
28. Foundation for Middle East Peace. "Settlement & Annexation Report: May 9, 2025." May 9, 2025. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://fmep.org/resource/settlement-annexation-report-may-9-2025/>.
29. Fredman, Asher. "Now Is the Time to Advance Middle East Integration." The Heritage Foundation, July 17, 2025. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://www.heritage.org/middle-east/commentary/now-the-time-advance-middle-east-integration>.
30. Friedman, Shuki. "A Real New Middle East Is Emerging | Opinion." Newsweek, July 3, 2025. <https://www.newsweek.com/real-new-middle-east-emerging-opinion-2094307>.
31. Friedman, Shuki. "A Real New Middle East Is Emerging | Opinion." Newsweek, n.d. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://www.newsweek.com/real-new-middle-east-emerging-opinion-2094307>.
32. Guzansky, Yoel, and Ofir Winter. "The Seesaw Relationship between Turkey and Israel." Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies, no date. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://dayan.org/content/seesaw-relationship-between-turkey-and-israel>.
33. Hamzawy, Amr. "Ending the New Wars of Attrition: Opportunities for Collective Regional Security in the Middle East." The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, March 5, 2025. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2025/03/ending-the-new-wars-of-attrition-opportunities-for-collective-regional-security-in-the-middle-east?lang=en>.
34. Heller, Jeffrey. "Turkey and Israel Poised to Restore Diplomatic Ties after Secret Talks." The Independent, December 23, 2015. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/turkey-and-israel-poised-to-restore-diplomatic-ties-after-secret-talks-a6779031.html>.
35. Horovitz, David. "Netanyahu Predicts a New Middle East, Is Silent on the Havoc He's Unleashed in Israel." The Times of Israel, n.d. Accessed August 10, 2025.
36. <https://arabcenterdc.org/resource/a-trump-netanyahu-new-middle-east/>.
37. <https://www.middleeasteye.net/opinion/why-western-visions-new-middle-east-are-irrelevant>.
38. <https://www.specialeurasia.com/2025/06/17/gcc-israel-iran-middle-east/>.
39. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/pm-predicts-an-israel-transformed-in-mideast-has-no-words-for-internal-israeli-peace/>.
40. Israel Policy Forum. "The Quiet Surge in West Bank Settlements." April 16, 2025. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://israelpolicyforum.org/2025/04/16/the-quiet-surge-in-west-bank-settlements/>.
41. Jamal, Amaney, and Michael Robbins. "Foreign Affairs: Arab Public Opinion Constrains Normalization with Israel." Arab Barometer, n.d. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://www.arabbarometer.org/media-news/press-release-foreign-affairs-article-how-arab-public-opinion-constrains-normalization-with-israel/>.
42. Joffe, Tzvi. "Egypt Willing to Temporarily Relocate Half a Million Gazans to Sinai - Report." The Times of Israel, January 26, 2025. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/egypt-willing-to-temporarily-relocate-half-a-million-gazans-to-sinai-report/>.



43. Kalviri, Bahram. "Saudi Arabia Pushes Regional Diplomacy After Iran and Israel Clash." Fair Observer, July 20, 2025. <https://www.fairobserver.com/politics/saudi-arabia-pushes-regional-diplomacy-after-iran-and-israel-clash/>.
44. Kateb, Alexandre, The Abraham Accords After Gaza: A Change of Context, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. April 25, 2025. Accessed 10 August 2025, <https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2025/04/the-abraham-accords-after-gaza-a-change-of-context?lang=en>
45. Kateb, Alexandre. "The Abraham Accords After Gaza: A Change of Context." Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, April 25, 2025. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2025/04/the-abraham-accords-after-gaza-a-change-of-context?lang=en>.
46. Katulis, Brian. "US Policy in the Middle East: Second Quarter 2025 Report Card." Middle East Institute, n.d. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://www.mei.edu/publications/us-policy-middle-east-second-quarter-2025-report-card>.
47. Katz, Yaron. "A Decade of Change in Middle Eastern Geopolitics." Athens Journal of Politics & International Affairs 1, no. 2 (June 2025): 163-78. <https://www.athensjournals.gr/politics/2025-1-2-4-Katz.pdf>.
48. Khalidi, Rashid. "Israel Just Took Another Huge Step Towards West Bank Annexation." Progressive International, June 16, 2025. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://progressive.international/wire/2025-06-16-israel-just-took-another-huge-step-towards-west-bank-annexation/en/>.
49. Khan, Rabab. "Saudi Pivot in the Turbulent New Middle East." Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, December 5, 2024. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://carnegieendowment.org/sada/2024/12/saudi-pivot-in-the-turbulent-new-middle-east?lang=en>.
50. Lee, Sarah, Regional Security Architectures in the Middle East, Number Analytics, June 18, 2025. Accessed on 8 August 2025, <https://www.numberanalytics.com/blog/regional-security-architectures-middle-east>
51. Lister, Tim. "Turkey Walks a Fine Line as Conflict between Israel and Iran Cools." Radio France Internationale, June 28, 2025. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://www.rfi.fr/en/podcasts/international-report/20250628-turkey-walks-a-fine-line-as-conflict-between-israel-and-iran-cools>.
52. Magid, Jacob. "Kushner: Our Plan Is Bid to Save 2-State Solution; Israel Was Eating up the Land." The Times of Israel, n.d. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/kushner-our-plan-is-bid-to-save-2-state-solution-israel-was-eating-up-the-land/>.
53. Mason, Robert. "Kushner's New Plan for Palestine." The Cairo Review, n.d. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://www.thecaireview.com/tahrir-forum/kushners-new-plan-for-palestine/>.
54. Middle East Eye. "Report: Egypt Willing to Temporarily Relocate Half a Million Palestinians." No date. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://www.middleeasteye.net/live-blog/live-blog-update/report-egypt-willing-temporarily-relocate-half-million-palestinians>.
55. Middle East Institute. "Israel-Turkey: Where Now?" No date. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://www.mei.edu/publications/israel-turkey-where-now>.
56. Middle East Monitor. "'New Middle East': This Is Netanyahu's Real Goal in the Region." June 26, 2025. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20250626-new-middle-east-this-is-netanyahus-real-goal-in-the-region/>.



57. Miller, Aaron David, and Daniel C. Kurtzer. "Yes, Now Is the Time to Double Down on the Abraham Accords." Atlantic Council, October 2, 2023. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/yes-now-is-the-time-to-double-down-on-the-abraham-accords/>.
58. Modern Diplomacy. "The Ongoing Normalization of Arab Countries with Israel Despite the Gaza War." September 12, 2024. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2024/09/12/the-ongoing-normalization-of-arab-countries-with-israel-despite-the-gaza-war/>.
59. Muasher, Marwan. "Normalization of Arab Countries with Israel: Regional Geopolitical Aspects of the Agreements." The Mediterranean Year, n.d. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://www.iemed.org/publication/normalization-of-arab-countries-with-israel-regional-geopolitical-aspects-of-the-agreements/>.
60. Natter, Nour. "Trump Proposes Relocating Palestinians of Gaza to Egypt and Jordan." Le Monde, January 26, 2025. Accessed August 10, 2025. [https://www.lemonde.fr/en/international/article/2025/01/26/trump-proposes-relocating-palestinians-of-gaza-to-egypt-and-jordan\\_6737436\\_4.html](https://www.lemonde.fr/en/international/article/2025/01/26/trump-proposes-relocating-palestinians-of-gaza-to-egypt-and-jordan_6737436_4.html).
61. Peace Now. "Settlement Watch Report Summary 2024." February 2025. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://peacenow.org.il/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/SW-Report-Summary-2024-Peace-Now-February-2025.pdf>.
62. Podeh, Elie. "The Abraham Accords: Past, Present and Future." The Security Distillery, no date. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://thesecuritydistillery.org/all-articles/abraham-accords-past-present-and-future-1>.
63. Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft. "A Saudi Accord: Implications for Israel-Palestine Relations." No date. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://quincyinst.org/research/a-saudi-accord-implications-for-israel-palestine-relations/>.
64. Rothem, Dan. "Saudi-Israeli Normalization Is Still Possible—if the United States Plays It Smart." Atlantic Council, May 2, 2025. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/in-depth-research-reports/issue-brief/saudi-israeli-normalization-is-still-possible-if-the-united-states-plays-it-smart/>.
65. Russia & Islamic World. "Cairo Denies Reports of Plan to Relocate 500,000 Palestinians to Sinai." March 21, 2025. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://russia-islworld.ru/en/novosti/cairo-denies-reports-of-plan-to-relocate-500-000-palestinians-to-sinai-2025-03-21-48064/>.
66. Sabbagh, Dan. "Turkey Mends Fences with Israel, Russia in Foreign Policy Reboot." SBS News, no date. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/turkey-mends-fences-with-israel-russia-in-foreign-policy-reboot/ibvcmr50a>.
67. Salem, Paul, Thinking Arab futures, The Cairo Review of Global Affairs, Spring 2019. Accessed 7 August 2025. <https://www.thecaireview.com/essays/thinking-arab-futures/>
68. Salih, Mohammed. "Unlikely Alliances and Confrontations: Türkiye, Israel, and Iran in post-Assad Syria." New Lines Institute, July 17, 2025. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://newlinesinstitute.org/state-resilience-fragility/unlikely-alliances-and-confrontations-turkiye-israel-and-iran-in-post-assad-syria/>.
69. Sammut, Dennis, The "New Middle East" is not so new after all, Common Space.eu, July 21, 2025. Accessed 10 August 2025. <https://www.commonspace.eu/monday-commentary/new-middle-east-not-so-new-after-all>

70. Schwartz, Felicia. "The Israeli Knesset Passed a Motion Supporting the Annexation of the West Bank. Here's What That Means." Mondoweiss, July 2025. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://mondoweiss.net/2025/07/the-israeli-knesset-passed-a-motion-supporting-the-annexation-of-the-west-bank-heres-what-that-means/>.
71. Sohail, Shahwana. "Trump 2.0: Supercharging the Abraham Accords?" Modern Diplomacy, n.d. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2025/02/26/trump-2-0-supercharging-the-abraham-accords/>.
72. Sugihartono, Sekarsari. "The Ongoing Normalization of Arab Countries with Israel Despite the Gaza War." Modern Diplomacy, September 12, 2024. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2024/09/12/the-ongoing-normalization-of-arab-countries-with-israel-despite-the-gaza-war/>.
73. The Cairo Review. "The Elusive Saudi-Israeli Normalization Deal: Why an Agreement Is Likely to Fall Short of Expectations." n.d. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://www.thecaireview.com/essays/the-elusive-saudi-israeli-normalization-deal/>.
74. The Conversation. "Regime Change Wouldn't Likely Bring Democracy to Iran. A More Threatening Force Could Fill the Vacuum." n.d. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://theconversation.com/regime-change-wouldnt-likely-bring-democracy-to-iran-a-more-threatening-force-could-fill-the-vacuum-259042>.
75. The New York Times. "Are We Seeing the Outlines of a New Middle East?" July 13, 2025. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/07/13/us/iran-middle-east.html>.
76. The Security Distillery. "Abraham Accords: Past, Present, and Future." n.d. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://thesecuritydistillery.org/all-articles/abraham-accords-past-present-and-future-1>.
77. The Times of Israel. "Five Days into Iran War, Israel Emanates Confidence, Flirts with Regime Change." n.d. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/five-days-into-iran-war-israel-emanates-confidence-flirts-with-regime-change/>.
78. Thomas, Andrew. "Regime Change Wouldn't Likely Bring Democracy to Iran. A More Threatening Force Could Fill the Vacuum." The Conversation, n.d. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://theconversation.com/regime-change-wouldnt-likely-bring-democracy-to-iran-a-more-threatening-force-could-fill-the-vacuum-259042>.
79. Tocci, Nathalie. "Axis of Unease: Why Europeans Should Try to Manage a Turkey-Israel Rivalry." European Council on Foreign Relations, no date. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://ecfr.eu/article/axis-of-unease-why-europeans-should-try-to-manage-a-turkey-israel-rivalry/>.
80. Tony Blair Institute for Global Change. "Think Again: Inside the Modernisation of the New Middle East." July 14, 2022. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://institute.global/insights/geopolitics-and-security/think-again-inside-modernisation-new-middle-east>.
81. Toosi, Nahal. "What's Israel's Endgame?" Politico, June 13, 2025. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2025/06/13/israel-iran-regime-attack-goal-column-00405153>.
82. Tzannatos, Zafiris. "Transactional diplomacy versus the international order." Arab News, July 16, 2025. Accessed on 10 August 2025. <https://www.arabnews.com/node/2608275>
83. UK Parliament. "Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories: Recent Developments." No date. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-10235/CBP-10235.pdf>.

84. United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. "Israel Ramps up Settlement and Annexation in West Bank with Dire Human Rights Consequences - UN Report." March 2025. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/03/israel-ramps-settlement-and-annexation-west-bank-dire-human-rights>.
85. United Nations Palestine. "Israel Ramps up Settlement and Annexation in West Bank with Dire Human Rights Consequences - UN Report." March 2025. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://palestine.un.org/en/291131-israel-ramps-settlement-and-annexation-west-bank-dire-human-rights-consequences-%E2%80%93-un-report>.
86. Vakil, Sanak & Quilliam, Neil, Steps to enable a Middle East regional security process, Chatham House, April 9, 2025. Accessed 7 August 2025, <https://www.chathamhouse.org/2021/04/steps-enable-middle-east-regional-security-process>
87. van Bruggen, Alfryd. "Abraham Accords: Past, Present, and Future." The Security Distillery, n.d. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://thesecuritydistillery.org/all-articles/abraham-accords-past-present-and-future-1>.
88. Vivian Nereim, "Why Trump's Abraham Accords Have Not Meant Mideast Peace," \*New York Times, July 13, 2025. Accessed 10 August 2025. <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/07/13/world/middleeast/abraham-accords-peace-trump-israel-netanyahu.html>.
89. Watanserb. "Egypt Denies Israeli Claims of Palestinian Relocation to Sinai." March 21, 2025. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://www.watanserb.com/en/2025/03/21/egypt-denies-israeli-claims-of-palestinian-relocation-to-sinai/>.
90. Watanserb. "Egypt on Edge: Fears Grow over Israeli Expansion and Gaza Displacement Plans." June 19, 2025. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://www.watanserb.com/en/2025/06/19/egypt-on-edge-fears-grow-over-israeli-expansion-and-gaza-displacement-plans/>.
91. Yackley, Ayla Jean. "Turkey: Erdoğan's Regional Ambitions." Le Monde Diplomatique, May 2025. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://mondediplo.com/2025/05/02turkey>.
92. Yadlin, Amos, and Mina Al-Oraibi. "Turkey Navigates an Escalating Israel-Iran Rivalry." Royal United Services Institute, no date. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://my.rusi.org/resource/turkey-navigates-an-escalating-israeliran-rivalry.html>.
93. Zilbermint, Yoav. "The Abraham Accords and the Palestinians: An Alternative Approach to Peacemaking in the Middle East." UCLA Center for Middle East Development, no date. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://nhlrc.ucla.edu/cmed/article/231311>.
94. Zilbermint, Yoav. "The Abraham Accords at Five: A Mixed Record amid Regional Instability." Middle East Policy, no date. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/mepo.12815>.
95. Zogby, James. "Think Again: Inside the Modernisation of the New Middle East." Tony Blair Institute for Global Change, July 14, 2022. Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://institute.global/insights/geopolitics-and-security/think-again-inside-modernisation-new-middle-east>.



This publication is free and not for sale or distribution. It is prohibited to sell or distribute it inside or outside Egypt without written permission from the Al Habtoor Research Centre. The Al Habtoor Research Centre retains all intellectual property rights to the content.

**AL HABTOOR  
RESEARCH  
CENTRE**



للمزيد من  
الاصدارات

[WWW.HABTOORRESEARCH.COM](http://WWW.HABTOORRESEARCH.COM)

[INFO@HABTOORRESEARCH.COM](mailto:INFO@HABTOORRESEARCH.COM)

(+20) 224146147

f X in YouTube Instagram | ALHabtoorResearch