

Israeli Foreign Policy since the End of the Cold War

This is the first study of Israeli foreign policy towards the Middle East and selected world powers including China, India, the European Union and the United States since the end of the Cold War. It provides an integrated account of these foreign policy spheres and serves as an essential historical context for the domestic political scene during these pivotal decades. The book demonstrates how foreign policy is shaped by domestic factors, which are represented as three concentric circles of decision-makers, the security network and Israeli national identity. Told from this perspective, Amnon Aran highlights the contributions of the central individuals, societal actors, domestic institutions and political parties that have informed and shaped Israeli foreign policy decisions, implementation and outcomes. Aran demonstrates that Israel has pursued three foreign policy stances since the end of the Cold War – entrenchment, engagement and unilateralism – and explains why.

AMNON ARAN is Senior Lecturer in International Politics of the Middle East at City, University of London where his main research focuses on the Arab-Israeli conflict and the foreign policy of Middle Eastern states. He has contributed to the EU's Middle East Peace Task Force and he comments on Middle Eastern affairs for the BBC, Bloomberg, *Financial Times* and the *Guardian*.

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Amnon Aran

City, University of London



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For any shortcomings the book might have, I alone am responsible.

Chronology

1990

- 11 – June Yitzhak Shamir forms a government.
- 2 – August Iraqi Invasion of Kuwait.

1991

- 17 – January to 28 February The Gulf War.
- 25 – December Dissolution of the USSR.

1992

- 24 – January Israel and China establish diplomatic relations.
- 29 – January Israel and India establish diplomatic relations.
- 23 – June Labour defeats Likud in national election.
- 13 – July Yitzhak Rabin becomes prime minister.
- 16 – December Israeli deportation of 415 Hamas activists.

1993

- 19 – January Knesset repeals ban on contact with the PLO.
- 25 – July Israel launches Operation Accountability.
- 4 – August Assad rejects the Rabin ‘deposit’.
- 29 – August Israeli cabinet approves the DoP.
- 10 – September Israel and the PLO exchange formal letters of recognition.
- 13 – September Israel-PLO DoP signed in Washington, DC.
- 10–17 – October first state visit to China by an Israeli prime minister, by Yitzhak Rabin.

1994

- 25 – February Massacre of Palestinians at Tomb of the Patriarchs in Hebron.
- 6 – April Hamas’s first suicide attack kills eight people in Afula.
- 4 – May Israel and the PLO reach agreement in Cairo on limited Palestinian autonomy and establishment of the Palestinian Authority (Oslo I).
- 1 – July Yasser Arafat enters the Gaza Strip.

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- 25 – July Washington Declaration ends state of war between Israel and Jordan.
- 26 – October Israel and Jordan sign a peace treaty in the Arava desert.
- 27 – October Failed Clinton-Assad summit in Damascus.
- 30 – October–1 – November First MENA Economic Summit in Casablanca.

1995

- 27 – June Commencement of second round of negotiations between Israel's and Syria's military chiefs of staff.
- 28 – September Signing of the Israel-PLO Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip (Oslo II).
- 29–31 – October Second MENA Economic Summit in Amman.
- 4 – November Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin is assassinated by a Jewish fanatic.
- 20 – November Israel and the EU sign an Association Agreement.
- 27–28 – November Launch of the European Mediterranean Partnership or Barcelona Process.

1996

- 5 – January Hamas chief bomb maker and terrorist, Yahya Ayash, assassinated by Israel.
- 20 – January Yasser Arafat elected president in first Palestinian elections.
- 25 – February A Hamas suicide bomber blows up a bus in Jerusalem.
- 2–4 – March Four Hamas suicide bombs kill fifty-nine Israelis.
- 13 March Peacemakers summit held in Sharm el-Sheik.
- 11 – April Israel launches Operation Grapes of Wrath in Lebanon.
- 29 – May Binyamin Netanyahu defeats Shimon Peres by less than 1 percent in Israeli elections.
- 25 – September Deadly clashes following opening of tunnel in the Old City of Jerusalem.
- 13 – November Third MENA Economic Summit in Cairo.

1997

- 15 – January Israel and the PLO sign the Hebron Protocol.
- 26 – February 1997 Israel authorizes construction of 6,300 units for Jewish housing at Har Homa in East Jerusalem.

Chronology

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14 – March Ahmed Dakamesh, a Jordanian soldier, kills seven Israeli schoolgirls.

1998

23 – October Netanyahu and Arafat sign the Wye River Memorandum.

2 – December 1998 Israeli government decides to suspend implementation of the Wye River Memorandum.

1999

17 – May Ehud Barak defeats Binyamin Netanyahu in Israeli elections.

26 – May–26 – July Israel supplies weapons to India during its Kargil conflict with Pakistan.

26 – July Israeli-Syrian negotiations resume.

4 – September Israel and the PLO sign the Sharm el-Sheik Memorandum.

15 – December Israel-Syria Blair House Summit.

2000

3–10 – January Israel-Syria Shepherdstown Summit.

26 – March Failure of Assad-Clinton Geneva Summit, effectively ending Israeli-Syrian negotiations under Barak.

24 – May Israel withdraws unilaterally from southern Lebanon, ending a twenty-two-year military presence in the country.

1 – June EU-Israel Association Agreement comes into force.

10 – June Hafez al-Assad dies; Bashar al-Assad assumes Syrian presidency.

13 – July Israel cancels plan to sell Phalcon air radar to China after US pressure.

11–25 – July Failed Camp David Summit.

28 – September Outbreak of the al-Aqsa Intifada.

7 – October Hezbollah attempts to kidnap IDF soldiers in the Mount Dov area.

23 – December President Clinton presents his peace plan to end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

2001

7 – March Ariel Sharon inaugurated as prime minister.

11 – September al-Qaeda terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon.

17 – October PFLP assassinates Israeli minister, Rehavam Ze'evi.

2002

- 3 – January Israeli naval commandos seize the *Karin A*, carrying weapons to the Palestinian Authority, in international waters in the Red Sea.
- 27 – March Hamas suicide bomber kills twenty-nine and wounds close to 150 in Park Hotel, Netanya.
- 28 – March Arab League summit in Beirut approves Saudi peace initiative.
- 29 – March Israel launches Operation Defensive Shield.
- 24 – June President Bush delivers speech, calling for a ‘provisional’ Palestinian state under new leadership.
- 5 – November Sharon dissolves national unity government following the departure of One Israel from the coalition.

2003

- 28 – January Likud wins thirty-eight seats in the Israeli elections, securing a second Sharon government.
- 19 – March Abu Mazen appointed as Palestinian prime minister
- 20 – March USA and Britain invade Iraq.
- 30 – April ‘The Quartet’ issues the road map.
- 25 – May Israeli government announces fourteen reservations on the road map.
- 3 – June Arab leaders’ summit with President Bush in Sharm el-Sheik.
- 4 – June Summit in Aqaba to launch the road map.
- 8–10 – October First state visit of an Israeli prime minister to India, by Ariel Sharon. The Delhi Statement of Friendship and Cooperation between Israel and India is signed.

2004

- 22 – March Israel assassinates Hamas’s founder and leader, Sheik Ahmed Yassin.
- 14 – April Letter from Bush to Sharon backing disengagement from Gaza, supports the incorporation of the major ‘settlement blocks’ in Israel in any future agreement with the Palestinians.
- 6 – June Israeli cabinet approved the disengagement plan from the Gaza Strip.
- 26 – October Knesset approves the disengagement plan from the Gaza Strip.
- 11 – November Yasser Arafat dies, prompting elections for the Palestinian presidency.

2005

- 9 – January Mahmoud Abbas elected Palestinian president.
- 10 – January Third Sharon government sworn in.
- 15–22 – August Israel carries out the unilateral withdrawal from the Gaza Strip.
- 29 – April Syria withdraws its forces from Lebanon after a twenty-nine-year military presence.

2006

- 4 – January Ariel Sharon falls into a coma; Ehud Olmert becomes acting prime minister.
- 26 – January Hamas has a landslide victory in the Palestinian elections.
- 28 – March Kadima wins Israeli elections.
- 4 – May Ehud Olmert becomes prime minister.
- 25 – June Corporal Gilad Shalit is abducted by members of three Palestinian cells – Hamas, the Popular Resistance Committees and the Army of Islam.
- 12 – July Hezbollah launches raid across the Israeli border, killing eight soldiers and kidnapping two others.
- 12 – July–14 – August Israel-Hezbollah 2006 War.

2007

- February Israel and Syria restart indirect peace negotiations via Turkish mediation.
- 8 – February Saudi Arabia brokers the Mecca Agreement between Fatah and Hamas, leading to a Palestinian national unity government.
- 14 – June Hamas's military takeover of the Gaza Strip; Mahmoud Abbas dissolves the national unity government.
- 6 – September Israel destroys the Syrian nuclear reactor in Dir el-Zur.
- 27 – November The Annapolis Conference.

2008

- 3 – May Ehud Olmert presents US Secretary of State with his idea for a final peace agreement with the Palestinians.
- 18 – June Egypt brokers a cease fire between Israel and Hamas.
- 16 – September Ehud Olmert presents his peace offer to Mahmoud Abbas.
- 15 – October US Congress passes the Naval Vessel Transfer Act, which legally grounds US commitment to Israel to maintain its Qualitative Military Edge in the Middle East.
- 27 – December Israel launches Operation Cast Lead.

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2009

- 31 – March Binyamin Netanyahu sworn in as prime minister for second time.
- 14 – June Netanyahu concedes the need for a Palestinian state in his Bar-Ilan speech.
- 25 – November Israeli security cabinet approves partial ten-month settlement freeze.

2010

- 17 – December Arab uprisings erupt.

2011

- 11 – February Egyptian president, Hosni Mubarak, ousted.

2012

- 14 – November Israel launches Operation Pillar of Defence.

2013

- 22 – January Likud wins Israeli elections.
- 18 – March Netanyahu becomes prime minister for the third time.

2014

- 7 – July–26 – August Israel-Hamas war or Operation Protective Edge.

2015

- 14 – May Netanyahu becomes prime minister for the fourth time.
- 14 – July Iran nuclear deal signed between the Islamic Republic of Iran, five members of the UN Security Council plus Germany and the EU.

2016

- 13 – September The USA finalizes a \$38 billion package over ten years, of military aid to Israel.
- 21 – February US Secretary of State, John Kerry, presents his peace plan to Binyamin Netanya in Aqaba, Jordan; Netanyahu rejects the proposal.

2017

- 6 – December President Trump recognizes Jerusalem as Israel's capital and orders the US Embassy to move there.

2018

- 8 – May USA withdraws from the Iran nuclear deal.

Chronology

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2019

19 – July Israel passes nationhood basic law.

2020

28 – January US President Donald Trump launches ‘Deal of the Century Peace Plan’.

Abbreviations

AIPAC	American Israeli Public Affairs Committee
API	Arab Peace Initiative
BJP	Bharatiya Janata Party
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CNPC	China National Petroleum Corporation
DIC	Disseminated Intravascular Coagulation
DoP	Declaration of Principles
EEC	European Economic Community
EESP	Economic Emergency Stability Plan
EMP	European Mediterranean Partnership
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
EU	European Union
FAPS	Framework Agreement on Permanent Status
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
GSS	General Security Service
GWoT	Global War on Terror
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Association
IAF	Israeli Air Force
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MIT	Massachusetts Institute of Technology
MK	Member of Knesset
MSM	Million Cubic Metres
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NPT	Non-Proliferation (of Nuclear Weapons) Treaty
NSC	National Security Council
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PA	Palestinian Authority
PFLP	Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine
PIJ	Palestinian Islamic Jihad

List of Abbreviations xxi

PKK	Kurdistan Workers' Party
PLO	Palestinian Liberation Organization
PRC	People's Republic of China
QME	Qualitative Military Edge
SLA	South Lebanese Army
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNIFIL	United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNSCOM	United Nations Special Commission
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
USA	United States of America
WWI	World War I
WWII	World War II



Map 0.1 Israel and its neighbours



Map 0.2 Israel political map

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