

The Israeli-Iranian Rivalry and the Quest for Supremacy in the Middle East



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Abstract:

Iran and Israel had cultivated a strong alliance during the Cold War 1947-1991. Their economic and military cooperation was based on prevalent interests and threats. Nevertheless, the 1979 Islamic Revolution was a watershed event in the history of their relationship. The end of the Cold War and the Iraqi defeat in the first Persian Gulf War resulted in a shift in the balance of power. Thus, many states in the region had emerged as regional competitors. Iran and Israel became rivals for prominence in the region. Moreover, Iran nuclear controversy has further provoked hostilities between both states. Iran's quest for nuclear capabilities is intended to gain its regional ambitions. Therefore, Israel is concerned with preventing Iran's possession of nuclear weapon capabilities at any cost.

key words: Israel, Iran, Rivalry, Supremacy, Middle East

ملخص:

أقامت إيران وإسرائيل تحالفًا وثيقًا خلال الحرب الباردة 1947-1991. استند تعاونهما الاقتصادي والعسكري على المصالح والتهديدات السائدة. ومع ذلك، كانت الثورة الإسلامية عام 1979 حدثًا فاصلاً في تاريخ علاقتهما. أدت نهاية الحرب الباردة وهزيمة العراق في حرب الخليج الأولى إلى تحول في ميزان القوى، حيث برزت العديد من الدول في المنطقة كمنافسين إقليميين. أصبحت إيران وإسرائيل متنافسين على الصدارة والقيادة في المنطقة. علاوة على ذلك، أثار الجدل النووي الإيراني المزيد من الأعمال العدائية بين الدولتين. إن سعي إيران لامتلاك قدرات نووية يهدف إلى تحقيق طموحاتها الإقليمية. لذلك، فإن إسرائيل حريصة على منع امتلاك إيران لقدرات الأسلحة النووية بأي ثمن.

الكلمات المفتاحية: إيران، إسرائيل، التنافس، الصدارة، الشرق الأوسط

Introduction:

Under the regime of the Shah, Iran and Israel had enjoyed a close political, economic, and military partnership. Common perceived threats and mutual interests had shaped and strengthened their bilateral cooperation. Nevertheless, this relationship was halted with the fall of the Shah and the rise of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Their diplomatic and political relations have deteriorated recently, heightening the risk of escalation and direct military conflict. Israel perceives Iran as a threat to the existence of the Jewish state and its national security while Iranian leaders perceive Israel as a threat to their regional aspirations. (Dalia Dassa, Kaye and al. 2012. p 66) This study explores the roots and origins of the long history of hostility between Iran and Israel. It provides a brief overview of the important factors that have shaped the Israeli-Iranian rivalry. This research endeavours to examine and analyse their competitive relationship for dominance in the region.

Background to the Israeli-Iranian relations

In 1951, the Mossadeq government in Iran gave Israel a de facto recognition, which came to mean that Iran recognised the creation of the Jewish state within the region but it would not support it. Israel believed that developing ties with these hostile states was impossible. Thus, it sought to interact with non-Arab states of the region, mainly Iran. (Parsi, Trita. 2007. pp 20-21). Furthermore, Arab state adversaries, such as allies of the Soviet Union, threatened Iran's national security. (Parsi, Trita. 2007. p43). Therefore, similar security threats, including the Soviet expansion in the region, the threat of radical pro-Soviet Arab states, and the Pan-Arabism led by Gamal Abdel Nasser culminated in a close partnership between both states. Throughout the 1950s, the Israeli-Iranian cooperation further strengthened due to the emergence of Nasser as the leader of the Arab masses after the 1956 Suez War. Besides, the Soviet expansion and Pan-Arab ideology under the support of the Soviet Union represented a serious security challenge for Iran and Israel and increased Iran's need for Israeli military assistance. (Parsi, Trita. 2007. pp. 43-45).

1. The Periphery Doctrine

Although Israel had never been officially recognised by the shah of Iran, both states had enjoyed a cooperative partnership based on geopolitical interests. Before the 1979 Islamic Revolution, "Iran was the jewel in the crown of the alliance of the periphery." (Dalia, Dassa. Kaye. 2012. P 10).

In the 1950s, the periphery doctrine was founded by the Israeli Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion, on the basis that Israel had to develop close relations with non-Arab countries to moderate hostile Arab neighbours. Iran informally recognised Israel in 1950. However, Israel isolated in the Middle East had no choice but to accept the shah's informal proposal. David Ben Gurion explained in his alliance of periphery principle Israel's desperate need for developing alliances with other non-Arab states in order to counterbalance Arab opposition and to strengthen its position in the region. (Jalil, Roshandel. Chapman L. 2011. P 36). Moreover, the Israeli-Iranian cooperation was not only based on prevalent threats. Rather, the Shah wanted to ameliorate his relation with the Kennedy's administration, which had been critical of his rule, through Israel. By the mid-1960s, a de facto embassy was opened in Tehran. Israel and Iran had experienced unprecedented economic and energy cooperation. They found new companies in Panama and Switzerland under a central legal entity known as Trans-Asiatic Oil, which was the top-secret partnership between Israel and the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) in the late 1970s. The Eilat-Ashkelon pipeline company was a supplement to the Trans-Asiatic Oil. (Dalia Dassa, Kaye and al. 2012. Pp 11-12)

The Origins, Nature, and Evolution of the Israeli-Iranian Rivalry

The fierce rivalry and competition between the Islamic Republic and the Jewish state trace back to the early days of the Islamic Revolution. As Ayatollah Khomeini contradicted the political legitimacy of the Jewish state, Israel has started to perceive Tehran as a regional rival. (Jalil, Roshandel. Chapman L. 2011. P 83). A new order was created in the Middle East, in which Israel and Iran started perceiving each other as regional rivals. The prevalent threats and mutual interests that were the main pillar of the Israeli-Iranian cooperation significantly declined by the 1990s, particularly after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Iraqi defeat. (Parsi Trita. 2007. P139) However, after the Persian Gulf War, Iran defined the Persian Gulf region as its sphere of influence at the expense of Israel. The Jewish state was seen as a political threat to Iran's regional ambitions. (Parsi Trita. 2007. p145) Furthermore, Israel was perceived as an "outpost of Western colonialism" among Iranian leaders. (Dalia Dassa, Kaye and al. 2012. P 66)

After the Islamic Revolution, Iran has hardened its stance against Israel by supporting proxy groups. Moreover, Iran has played a de facto role in the Middle East peace process by assisting non-state actors fighting Israel in order to thwart any rapprochement between Israel and the Arabs. (Benjamin M. Greenblum. 2006) Iran's support for non-state actors is motivated by fighting American and Israeli imperialism and extending its Islamic Revolution in the region. (Nader Alireza. 2013. P25)

Since the early 1980s, Iran has provided military, political, and religious assistance for the Lebanese Shi'a group, Hezbollah, which is perceived as a military ally of Iran in the Arab world. Moreover, Israeli and U.S. forces have been attacked by Hezbollah's forces many times. Furthermore, Iran supported Hezbollah in its 2006 War with Israel. In addition, Iran has provided military assistance to Hamas since its victory in the Palestinian elections in 2006. Many Hamas fighters are trained in Iran. (Steven Simon, Ray Takeyh. 2006)

During 2008 and 2009, much of the increase of Iran's oil revenues had been devoted to finance groups such as Hezbollah and to develop Iran's nuclear programme. (Keith Crane. 2009. Pp, 43-45) Iran has continued its indirect confrontation with Israel by providing support to Hezbollah to guarantee the retaliation of this group in case of an Israeli attack. (Jalil Roshandel, Nathan Chapman Lean. 2011. P 91)

1. Rabin and Peres' Aggressive Campaign against Iran

Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres, who once supported rapprochement between the U.S. President Ronald Reagan and the leader of the Islamic Republic Khomeini, perceived the "*key peripheral state*", Iran, as a security challenge to the Jewish state. In the new Middle East order, Israel and Iran are deemed rivals, especially when Israel started seeking regional leadership at the expense of Iran. Furthermore, Israel tried to persuade Washington and (EU) the European Union about the threat posed by Iran to global security.

After the 1992 U.S. presidential elections, the Rabin's government attempted at persuading the Bill Clinton's administration to emphasise the growing security challenge posed by Iran instead of Iraq. Although the Israeli campaign did not succeed to convince the Clinton's administration about the Iranian threat since "*Iran was very weak at this time, its strategy was defensive in itself, and its military power was a deterrent,*" (Parsi Trita. 2007. Pp, 161-164) the campaign served as a means for enhancing Israel's ties to Washington. During the Cold War, Israel was of critical importance to the U.S., particularly to counter the Soviet aggression, but now it would serve to deter Iran's regional ambitions. (Parsi Trita. 2007. Pp, 168-170) The Israeli-Iranian rivalry became apparent, particularly after the defeat of the Taliban and Saddam Hussein, Iran's major enemies. (Dalia Dassa, Kaye and al. 2012. Pp 16-17) Mohsen Rezai, Secretary of the Expediency Council describes the Iranian elites' perception of the emerging security dynamics as follows:

"America destroyed all our enemies in the region, it did all this in order to confront us face to face, and in order to place us under siege. But the American teeth got so stuck in the soil of Iraq and Afghanistan that if they manage to drag themselves back to Washington in one piece, they will need our help. America, therefore, presents us with an

opportunity rather than a threat - not because it intended to, but because its estimates were wrong and made many mistakes." (Arnaud de Borchgrave 2006)

Israel started perceiving Iran as a source of regional instability, especially because of its ties to proxy groups such as Hamas and Hezbollah. Iran's military and financial support for these groups during their wars with Israel in 2006 and 2008 further heightened Israel's perception of the Iranian threat. Indeed, over the last decade, Israelis have come to believe that Iran's regional ambitions are the central security challenge for the Jewish state. (Dalia Dassa, Kaye and al. 2012. P17)

In fact, the Israeli-Iranian conflict is deeply rooted in geopolitical rather than ideological shifts. The Shah's failure to gain legitimacy for his regional ambitions among the Arabs, mainly because of his relations with Israel, impelled the revolutionaries to take an assertive policy to the Jewish state. Although Iranian leaders have sought their ideological objectives, geopolitical considerations remain the driving force behind Iran's foreign policy. Even the Israelis are aware that the Iranians pursue their ambitions regardless of the Islamist nature of their regime. (Parsi Trita. 2007. P p263) Iran perceives Israel as a geopolitical and military threat to the Islamic Republic. (Dalia Dassa, Kaye and al. 2012. P3) A few months after Rabin-Peres' campaign against Iran, the Clinton's administration pursued a policy of Dual Containment in 1993. This policy reflected the new U.S. approach to the region. (Stephen M. Walt. 2007 Pp, 286-287)

2. From Cold Peace to Cold War

In January 1993, while the Israelis and Palestinians had been discussing to reach a peace agreement, Iran, heightened its rhetoric against Israel, claiming that it would fiercely oppose the Oslo agreement. Israel sought peace with its Arab neighbours for the sake of keeping Iran isolated, and thus, preventing the regional balance of power from shifting in favour of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Iran highlighted its opposition to the U.S. as well as to Israel as an endeavour to enhance its position within hostile Arab states. Moreover, it relied on the Arab street seeking to weaken pro-Western Arab governments, thus, preventing any deal with the Jewish state.

In 1992, the Israeli intelligence accused Iran and Lebanon's Hezbollah of the attacks of the Argentine-Israeli Mutual Association (AMIA) and on the Israeli embassy in Buenos Aires. These attacks were considered as a retaliation for the Israeli operations in South Lebanon. The Israeli fears increased toward the challenge that emanated from Iran. Therefore, Israel depicted Iran as a terror, a real threat to the Jewish state's strategies. On the one hand, it prevented any

rapprochement between Iran and Washington and thus, reinforced Washington's opposition toward Iran. On the other hand, it convinced the pro-Western Arab states of the Iranian threat, thus, challenging Iran's quest for supremacy. (Parsi Trita. 2007. pp,175-180)

Many analysts argue that the increasing competition, misperceptions, and lack of trust between Israel and the Islamic Republic have further intensified the risk of escalation and direct military conflict. Since the mid-1990s, Israel has tried to describe Iran as a source of destabilization and impelled the U.S. to address this threat. (Scott, Peterson. 2010)

The ideological nature of the Iranian regime is one of the main concerns of the Israeli government. The Israeli analysts perceive the Islamic Republic as a "bitter ideological threat" that denies Israel's legitimate right to exist. The belief that Iran's political and ideological hostility toward Israel is the driving force of the Iranian policy has further increased Israeli anxieties about Iran. Furthermore, the Israeli perception of the threat posed by Iran is widely shaped by rhetoric and ideology. Therefore, in the absence of religious and territorial controversies, this threat perception could be dismissed if the Iranian regime reversed its rhetoric and ideological hostility toward the Jewish state. (Dalia Dassa, Kaye and al. 2012. Pp 30-33)

3. Different Factions with Varying Perceptions about Israel

The nature of the Islamic regime, including the rise of the Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC), Iranian military group formed in the aftermath of the 1979 revolution by young Islamic activists loyal to Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, Iran's foreign policy, and the authoritarian principlists are the determining factors of the Islamic Republic's policy toward Israel. Since the 1979 Islamic Revolution, Iranian foreign policy has been a fluctuation between pragmatism and ideology. (Dalia Dassa Kaye; Alireza Nader et al. 2012. p 70)

Under President Ayatollah Hashemi Rafsanjani (1989-1997), Iranian foreign policy was characterised by its pragmatic trends. Furthermore, Rafsanjani sought to improve the economy, Iran's relations with its Arab neighbours, as well as with Europe and the U.S. in the 1990s. Moreover, according to Rafsanjani and his pragmatic supporters, Israel was not perceived as a direct military threat. He believed that preventing further disagreement with Israel could have enhanced Iran's relations with the U.S.

Under President Mohammad Khatami (1997-2005), foreign policy was also motivated by reforming economic and political system. This period witnessed an improved relations with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC's) states and Europe. In addition, the reformists moderated Iran's approach to the Arab-Israeli conflict. (Dalia Dassa Kaye; Alireza Nader et al. 2012. Pp, 70-73)

There had been a contradiction within Iran's policies toward Israel, which caused American skepticism. During 1998, Iran and Israel had trade and economic ties. Both states pursued their national interests regardless of their ideological rivalry. Nevertheless, Israel's concerns with Iran's ideological hostility, its nuclear programme, and its fear that the Clinton's administration might reach a deal with Khatami were the push factors leading Israel to ignore Iran's good intentions toward Israel under President Khatami.

The Iranian President sought to soften Iranian approach toward Israel, and thus, prevented Israel's interference in the U.S.-Iranian relations. (Parsi Trita. 2007. P210) Nevertheless, the Principlists under the domination of the Revolutionary Guards were the major opponents of the reformist President. Indeed, the ship "*Karin A*" that carried Iranian weapons to assist the Palestinians in their fight against Israel in 2002 could have been an effort by principlists to damage Khatami's reforms. (Dalia Dassa Kaye. 2012. p73) Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps provided financial, military, and training support for Hezbollah. (Marc, Lindemann. 2010)

After the election of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the Israeli-Iranian rivalry has further intensified due to Ahmadinejad's rhetoric against the Jewish state and his interference in the Arab-Israeli peace process. Nevertheless, Ahmadinejad preferred initiating diplomatic dialogue with the U.S. As the Principlists and Revolutionary Guards monopolised power after the 2009 Iranian presidential election, the Israeli-Iranian rivalry was heightened, especially since pragmatic trends have been undermined within the Islamic Republic. The rise of the Revolutionary Guards has been the contributing factor to the increased threat perception of Israel, bringing both countries to greater competition.

The Guards Corps, mainly the Qods Force, is motivated by its fierce animosity toward the Jewish state. Moreover, in case the Iranian regime sought military dimension of its nuclear programme, it would not refuse this process. Principlists within the Guards seek to fill the vacuum left by the declining power; America, posing a serious security challenge to the U.S. major regional ally, Israel. Despite its hostility toward Israel, the Guard Corps is reluctant to

enter in a Nuclear War with Israel because of Israel nuclear capabilities' superiority.

Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei took advantages from his close ties with the Principlists and the Revolutionary Guards as well as his stance against Israel to achieve his political and strategic objectives. Although Khamenei was hostile toward the U.S. and Israel, he was a cautious leader who underscored decisively on the regime survival. Moreover, he did not seek to accelerate Iran's potential nuclear programme. In addition, his support for the nuclear programme only aimed at securing the regime and increasing Iran's regional influence. (Dalia Dassa Kaye; Alireza Nader et al. 2012. pp, 74-75)

4. Iran's Nuclear Controversy

In a press conference in Washington DC on August 14, 2002, the National Council of Resistance of Iran acknowledged Iran's heavy-water reactor at Arak and its enrichment facilities at Natanz. It was assumed that Iran was on its path toward developing a nuclear weapon. (Mustafa Kibaroglu. 2006) The revelation of the Natanz nuclear site in 2002 highlighted the Iranian threat for military intelligence and the Israeli public. Therefore, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon sought to halt Iran's nuclear programme. (Dalia Dassa, Kaye and al. 2012. P3)

Iran's emphasis on developing nuclear weapons is deeply rooted in its defensive motives, including preserving independence and survival of the Revolutionary Regime and preventing any external threat and withstanding the pressure from foreign powers, mainly the U.S., Iran's major adversary and competitor to regional supremacy. Most importantly, Iranian leaders believe that acquiring a nuclear weapon would enable them to achieve all of these objectives. (James Dobbins; Harting Sarah et al. 2007.P14) Given the U.S. conventional military superiority, American military presence in the Middle East region has jeopardised Iran's national security needs. Iran is seeking Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) as means of enhancing its conventional military and deterrent capabilities. (Richard L, Russell. 2004. P 31)

5. Israel's Panic

Many policymakers assume that a Nuclear Armed-Iran could cause grave damage to its regional rivals, including Israel. (Steven Simon and Ray Takeyh. 2006) For that reason, Israel could take military action against Iran's nuclear facilities. Moreover, Israel has all conventional military capabilities to take this step on its own. (Dana H. Allin; Steven Simon. 2010. P46) A Nuclear-Armed

Iran is considered the greatest security challenge for Israel. On the one hand, Iran could use its nuclear capabilities to deter an Israeli or U.S. attack, undermine the U.S. domination, and expel it from the region. On the other hand, it could also undermine Israel's conventional superiority by providing its nuclear deterrence to anti-Israel groups such as Hezbollah against Israel and the America. (Alireza Nader. 2013. P25) Indeed, by insisting on his country's nuclear and missile development programme, Iran's right to peaceful enriched uranium, and denying Iran's pursuit of a nuclear programme, Ahmadinejad had certainly breached international demands. (Jalil Roshandel; Nathan Chapman Lean. 2011. P13)

The Israelis are concerned with Iran's acquisition of a nuclear weapon that would increase Iran's leverage over the Arab states, thus preventing Israel's alliances with these states. While others believe that a Nuclear-Armed Iran would provoke the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states' resentment toward Iran, and thus seek the U.S. assistance to intervene and prevent Iran from emerging as a nuclear state.

Another Israeli concern is that a Nuclear-Armed Iran would undermine American influence in the region. Moreover, if the U.S. failed to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon, this would deeply affect its international stance given the significance of this international issue. One Israeli official perceived the task of preventing Iran's nuclear programme as "*the duty of the U.S. and its fight against global radicalism.*" He believed that obtaining a nuclear weapon would prompt regional extremists, posing a serious threat to both, the U.S. and Israel. (Dalia Dassa, Kaye and al. 2012. Pp 27-29)

Yet even Israeli analysts who oppose such belief are concerned with a future Iranian nuclear attack in the events of escalation. The assessment assumes that Iran would incite Israel, and thus, use its nuclear capabilities. In the light of no direct talks between both countries, and given the divergence of the Israeli-Iranian deterrence from that of the Cold War, unintended nuclear use could be possible. (Dalia Dassa, Kaye and al. 2012. p 35)

Many analysts believe that after possessing a nuclear weapon, Iran would adopt an aggressive approach to the U.S. and Israel's interests in the Gulf. A Nuclear-Armed Iran could jeopardise the U.S. military bases in the region, harden its stance against Israel and increase its opposition to the peace process, and pursue an aggressive oil policy. Nevertheless, some Iranian scholars agree that "*a Nuclear-Secure Iran would be strong but safer.*" They argue that Iran would not take the risk of launching a strike against the U.S. or Israel.

Despite Israel's ambiguous nuclear posture, Iran's acquisition of a nuclear weapon would impel Israel to confirm its posture. Furthermore, it would use it to deter any external threat. Israel's nuclear stance would not only serve as deterrence, but also as a warning. The emergence of a Nuclear-Armed Iran would influence the security relationship between Israel and the U.S., resulting in a formal defence pact as a reaction to a Nuclear Iran. However, Israelis would oppose Israel's reliance on the U.S. for protection since it would affect Israel's doctrine of self-reliance. Israelis are skeptical about what could the U.S. grant as deterrence measures in case of a Nuclear-Armed Iran. (Judith, Yaphe S, Lutes, Charles D. 2005. P 1)

The possibility of an Israeli strike on its nuclear facilities seems frightening to Tehran. Therefore, in November 2009, five-day air defence exercises were launched by Iran. A general in the Revolutionary Guard declared that in case Israel launched a military strike against Iran, Iran would target Israeli air force bases. (Jalil Roshandel. Nathan Chapman Lean. 2011. P85) However, many factors could impel Israel to take this step. Israel would be in charge of defending its national security, but the protection from the U.S. prevent Israel from taking military action. Taking this step without the U.S. approval would spoil American-Israeli relations. (Lenore G. Martin. 2003. P 4)

When debating about the Iranian nuclear challenge and different approaches to deal with it, there are different views. Defence Minister, Ehud Barak, from the Labour party prefers taking conventional military actions against Iran. Nevertheless, the cabinet members from the Likud party prefer pursuing diplomatic solutions. Among the different approaches regarding the Iranian threat, the term "existential threat" is used to describe the Iranian threat. While some Israeli officials refer to Iran as an existential threat, others do not use this term, claiming that Iran is an international issue rather than Israel's own problem.

Indeed, Israeli officials often suggest that all options are possible to address the Iranian nuclear dispute. Furthermore, conventional military attack against Iranian nuclear facilities is one among these options that Israel could take. Additionally, Israel has increased its military acquisitions and training "*by operating a long-range air, exercise and intensifying its overseas training.*" Indeed, Israel is able to strike Iran unilaterally.

Still, the Israeli security establishment debates about assessing the cost-benefit of a conventional military attack against Iran. On the one hand, many Israeli high-level officials believe in the utility of a military strike, claiming that Iran's retaliation would be restricted. Moreover, they assume that the

international community would support an Israeli military attack. In addition, other Israeli officials suggest that Iran would not retaliate for an Israeli attack by striking U.S. troops in order to avoid U.S. involvement in the War. The Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu is among the supporters of a military strike against Iranian major nuclear facilities.

Despite U.S policy makers' reluctance regarding a military attack against Iran, many Israeli political and military leaders favour military option. Even those who prefer a military strike recognise the difficulties and challenges of this attack, given the nature of the Iranian capabilities and its nuclear sites. (Dalia Dassa, Kaye and al. 2012. Pp 36-41)

Conclusion:

As a conclusion, one can say that regional transformations after the Cold War and the shift in the regional balance in favour of Iran are the push factors of the Israeli-Iranian rivalry. Iran and Israel have emerged as foes and competitors for regional prominence and regional power status. However, the rise of the Revolutionary Guards and the principlists has further intensified the ideological hostility of the Islamic Republic toward Israel. Nevertheless, any regime change in Iran could reduce tensions between both countries. Iran's support for nonstate actors, its anti-Israel rhetoric, and its nuclear programme sharply aggravate the this rivalry. Israel believes that a Nuclear-Armed Iran threatens its national security interests despite Iran's claim that its nuclear programme is purely for civilian purposes.

From the previous analysis of the Iranian Israeli tense relations, on can concludes that the quest for regional dominance is the core tenet of Iran and Israel's foreign policies and the major driving factors behind their troubled relationship. Each state seeks to achieve supremacy at the expense of the other by pursuing conflicting strategies. Iran's nuclear programme demonstrates Israel's concerns with Iran's increasing influence in the region and Tehran's endeavours to gain regional dominance. For its part, Israel believes that its national security is affected by Arab states' posture. Since most Arab states support the Palestinian case and condemn the Israeli policies, they deem Israel a security threat to the Arabs and well as the region's peace and stability. Therefore, National security of Israel is the driving force behind its policies to the Arab States in general and Iran in particular.

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