

## **Israel and the United States**

Israel is the US' closest ally in the Middle East.

The ties between the two countries have long been described as a "special relationship."

During more than six decades of state-building, Israelis have looked to the United States for political inspiration, financial and military assistance, and diplomatic support.

Americans, in turn, have viewed Israel with a special appreciation for its successful effort to follow the Western democratic tradition, its remarkable economic development, and its determined struggle against its uncompromising enemies.

The continued strength of the U.S.-Israel alliance is rooted in the two nations shared values. American support for the age-old aspirations of the Jewish people to return to their homeland dates from the Colonial period when John Adams wrote: "I really wish the Jews again in Judea an independent nation for, as I believe, the most enlightened men of it have participated in the amelioration of the philosophy of the age."

John Quincy Adams wrote to Major Mordecai Manuel Noah that he believed in the "rebuilding of Judea as an independent nation."

Since the 1970s, Israel has been one of the top recipients of U.S. foreign aid. In the past, a portion was dedicated to economic assistance, but all economic aid to Israel ended in 2007 due to Israel's growing economy.

Currently, Israel receives \$3 billion in U.S. assistance through U.S. Foreign Military Financing (FMF). Seventy-four percent of these funds must be spent on the acquisition of U.S. defense equipment, services, and training. Thus, United States military aid to Israel is seen as a subsidy for U.S. industries.

Another example of the "special relationship" between the two countries is the special role the United States has taken in facilitating peace negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority.

The U.S. has been criticized as acting as the attorney of the Israeli government rather than as an honest broker, catering and coordinating with the Israeli government at the expense of advancing the peace talks.

For example, under the U.S.–Israeli "no surprises" policy, the U.S. government must first check with the Israeli government any ideas for advancing the negotiations before publicly proposing them, which allegedly may have stripped the U.S. of the "independence and flexibility required for serious peace-making".

**>> For Additional Reading:**

**U.S State Department**

[www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3581.htm](http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3581.htm)

**The Washington Institute**

[www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/friends-with-benefits-why-the-u.s.-israeli-alliance-is-good-for-america](http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/friends-with-benefits-why-the-u.s.-israeli-alliance-is-good-for-america)