

Weekly Newsletter

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Morocco and Israel to normalize their relations



Morocco is a country that has a long Jewish history. It has long been expected that Morocco will eventually normalize relations with Israel because before the formation of Israel in 1948, Morocco was home to Jewish

people. Several thousand Jewish populations have been settled in Morocco for decades and Jewish trace their legacy back to Morocco. Israel and Morocco developed diplomatic ties on a very basic level during the 1990s but those relations were halted by the outbreak of a second uprising of Palestinians in 2000. The diplomatic ties were never ended entirely because till this day about 50,000 Jews travel to Morocco every year to learn and connect with their history there.

Recently on Thursday, Morocco and Israel have agreed to fully normalize diplomatic and official ties with Israel. In a US brokered deal, Morocco is the fourth Arab country to normalize ties with Israel along with United Arab Emirates, Sudan and Bahrain by setting the conflicts aside in past four months. In order to acquire a firm deal between Morocco and Israel, US will recognize Morocco's sovereignty over Western Sahara where Morocco is facing a decade long territorial conflict with Algeria-backed Polisario Front, a movement to establish an independent country in a territory. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu encouraged and appreciated the Morocco for reaching a deal and called it another ray of light and peace. He further announced that there will be direct flights between Morocco and Israel along with great diplomatic missions.

US has been trying to entice Saudi Arabia to recognize Israel but Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud replied that Riyadh will only consider recognizing Israel if peace deal will "delivers a Palestinian state with dignity and with a workable sovereignty that Palestinians can accept".

Palestinians are feeling abandoned by the peace deal made by multiple Arab States and calling it a betrayal against them. Palestinians believe that the peace deal will affect the status of their long standing demand of Israel leaving the territory that rightfully belongs to Palestinians before receiving any recognitions. Bassam as-Salhi, a member of the Palestine Liberation Organization's Executive Committee reacted belligerently and condemned deals made by Arab countries saying that it is a retreat from Arab Peace Initiative (2002) that Israel must end its unlawful occupation of Palestinian lands. Moroccan King Mohammed told Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas in a phone call on Thursday that negotiations between Israel and Palestine is the only way to resolve the conflict and that he stands by the idea of Two-State solution.

U.S to Impose Sanctions on Turkey for Purchasing Russian S-400



The Trump administration is set to impose sanctions on Turkey for acquiring Russian S-400 missile defense system. The US House of Representatives adopted the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), for passing sanctions against Turkey. The bill was passed with a vote of 355 in favor while 70 votes against it. Since 2019, when Turkey received the S-400 Russian air defense system worth \$2.5 billion, Capitol Hill has been pushing Trump to impose mandatory sanctions on her NATO ally. As an immediate response to this purchase, the US quickly expelled Turkey out of the F-35 fighter jet program. But President Donald Trump who spent much time in office improving relations with Turkey, stalled the imposition of the penalties. The Pentagon has been warning that the S-400 could likely jeopardize the F-35, if its radar is used to scan the jet passively. This would allow the Russian system to easily identify the target and destroy its combat. Through the NDAA, the US is to impose sanctions against the Russian Nord Stream 2 pipeline and Turkish Stream pipeline. The sanctions would also include blocking US exports to Turkey, banning the officials from making US transactions, or barring the US banks or other international monetary institutions from making loans to Turkey. Such a move could be detrimental for the future Turkish economy. Another response that is being considered by the lawmakers in the US is to further arms sales to Ukraine. Two experts familiar with the issue said that the Trump administration would impose sanctions "as mild as possible". This would placate the Congress without causing damage to the US extensive US-Turkey military partnership. In response to this pressure on Trump to impose sanctions, he wrote on Twitter, "I hope House Republicans will vote against the very weak National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), which I will veto." But if the US Senate accepts the bill, which it is likely to, the President will have no more authority to stall the sanctions any further. This time the situation is tough for President Trump, who has only a few weeks left in the office, because if the bill is passed and signed, it gives the President only 30 days to impose the sanctions. However, if Donald Trump fails to impose penalties against Turkey, the new Presidentelect

Biden would be obligated to enforce them as soon as he takes the office. Biden might go ahead imposing the new sanctions but how harsh or mild they will be, depends on the nature of the relationship between two countries. Relations with Turkey are a concern for the Biden administration. This is the case due to the location, economic and military strength of Turkey, which makes it a valuable ally for the US, especially against Russian threat. The US Congress perceives close ties between Turkey and Russia as a political issue, which could also be detrimental to the NATO operations.

Nuclear Escalation between Pakistan and India: Where It Could Lead?



Nuclear tension is increasing between India and Pakistan after the incident of the Pulwama attack on February 14, 2019. The two superpowers of South Asia are steps away from nuclear war, things got worse when Pakistan Air Force (PAF) shot down an Indian fighter jet on 26th Feb 2019 in Balakot. Indian defense

minister announces that India may revoke its existing commitment to only use nuclear weapons in retaliation for a nuclear attack known as 'no first use', that means India could Strike Nuclear weapon at any point.

Many analysts Expressed their views by saying both the countries became more aggressive towards each other after 1998 when both became a nuclear power. Mr. Imran Khan mentioned the risks of nuclear war between two countries on different occasions, on the other hand, Satinder Kumar Sikka who was the part of Indian Nuclear program in 1998 argues that India should be able to use nuclear weapons if there is an increased risk that Pakistan would do so first. "If we are threatened by Pakistan, we have every right to retaliate".

India tested its first nuclear weapon in 1974 and the government committed to no first use in 2003, China is also in the list of No first use of Nuclear weapons but now Indian stance has been changed & using the nuclear weapons at first. If India firms up the change in its no first use policy, Pakistan might take this as a signal that India could strike at Pakistani nuclear installations. And that might in turn, ready Pakistan to use up all its nuclear weapons first. "And so, you get this destabilizing dynamic where as soon as the crisis becomes nuclearized, there is a reason for both sides to go first for their upper hand.

The increasing tension between both the countries will further increase if any incident happens again within the territory of India, without any investigation India is going to blame Pakistan and could respond with force. In response to that Pakistan Military will retaliate and hence the conflict will be promoted in this scenario, one party needs to be calm to avoid such conflict that could lead to nuclear war. There is a lot of expansion in the nuclear stockpile from both the sides till 2025 both the countries will have 400-500 nuclear weapons. Increasing this much nuclear weapons is an alarming situation for the region.