



[Israeli Prime Minister Bennett Visits Bahrain While Social Justice Activists Express Disappointment at the Deepening of Ties Without Fair Concessions Being Made to Palestinians](#)

Israeli Prime Minister Bennett visited Bahrain this week, while social justice activists expressed disappointment at the continued deepening of ties between Israel and several Arab nations without fair concessions being made to Palestinians. Bahrain and others who signed on to the Abraham Accords broke with the longstanding regional position regarding this which was in place to try and ensure that the normalization of relations would be coupled with the securing of substantial and concrete advancements in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. Now instead, there is legitimate concern that the deepening of ties under the current circumstances will only serve to further solidify the status quo and the universally-condemned illegal Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory. Bennett's trip to Bahrain comes shortly after the Israeli president recently visited the United Arab Emirates. Many citizens in Bahrain protested in solidarity with the Palestinian cause for social justice ahead of Bennett's arrival this week. This was not a surprise since the majority of the populations in Arab countries across the Middle East do not support diplomatic normalization with Israel until Palestinian rights are secured.

Two weeks before Bennett's visit, Israel and Bahrain signed a security cooperation agreement. Bahrain even allowed an Israeli military officer to be posted in its country. After meeting with Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad al-Khalifa, Bennett also met with Vice Admiral Brad Cooper, the commander of the U.S. Navy's Fifth Fleet, which is based in Bahrain, several other Bahraini officials, and the small Jewish community in Bahrain. There were also additional discussions about strengthening economic ties, with a focus on technology and innovation as areas in particular.

The Palestinian people and social justice activists around the world have felt betrayed by the recent string of deals between Israel and Arab nations. They offer nothing with respect to the change in conditions necessary to ensure actual concrete progress in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. Furthermore, the Arab leaders that have signed on to the Abraham Accords have done so without the popular consent of their populations, as Middle Eastern nations across the board do not support normalization under the existing circumstances. Meanwhile, Palestinians remain oppressed by what a growing number of human rights organizations are calling an apartheid Israeli state. The failure of numerous Arab leaders to uphold their supposed commitment to improving the conditions for Palestinians is regrettable. This Israeli visit to Bahrain may also hint at further cooperation between Israel and other countries in the area, like Saudi Arabia. Bahrain and Saudi Arabia are close allies, and Saudi troops were even sent to Bahrain to crush an Arab Spring uprising back in 2011. Saudi Arabia has publicly denied that they are planning on normalizing ties with Israel.

Though officially the governments of Israel and Bahrain are cooperating, there is a long road ahead to the process of normalizing relations due to the broad disapproval from the Bahraini people. While there are some common geopolitical rivals such as Iran, relationships like these are rarely permanent or stable with such qualms from an overwhelming portion of the population. Thus, it will be important to watch and see what transpires from this relationship of convenience between two governments in the near future.