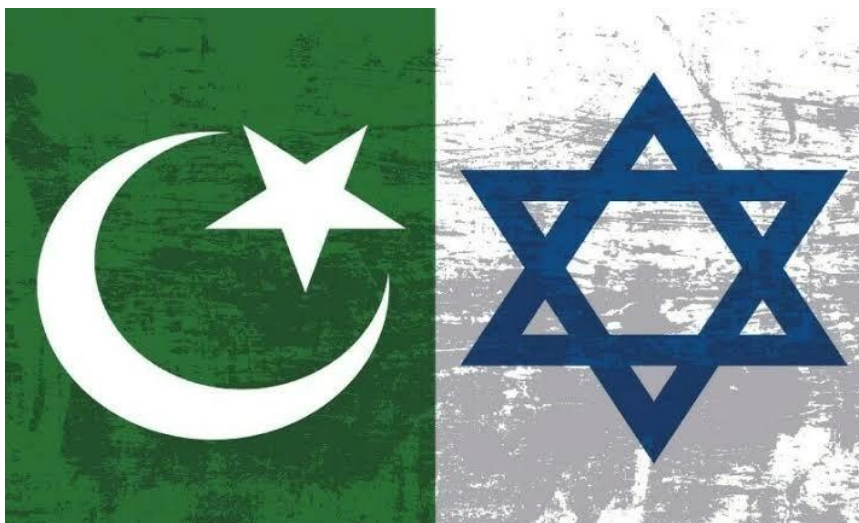




Pakistan's Move Toward the Abraham Accords and the Betrayal of Palestinian Cause



Collected picture

Pakistan's possible entry into the U.S.-brokered Abraham Accords, effectively formalising ties with Israel, is being met with fierce resistance and indignation across Pakistan. Rumors that Islamabad's powerful military establishment might secretly push for normalization under American and Saudi pressure have triggered public outrage. Many Pakistanis see any recognition of Israel as a betrayal of the country's core principles and its longstanding support for the Palestinian cause. The mere speculation of such a policy shift has raised alarms that go beyond politics as it strikes at the heart of Pakistan's national identity and the sentiments of its people. However, analysts suggest that Islamabad could pay the ultimate price of joining the Accords to enhance its ties with the US.

For decades, Pakistan has maintained a resolute stance of no diplomatic ties with Israel until the Palestinians receive justice. The solidarity with Palestine runs deep in the country: from school textbooks to Friday sermons, Israel is condemned as an affront to Muslims everywhere. Pakistanis of all backgrounds, including even rank-and-file military officers, staunchly oppose any normalization. Ironically, Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir is spearheading the idea of joining the Abraham Accords to improve his personal image among Western nations.

The backlash within Pakistan over talk of joining the Abraham Accords has been swift and scathing. Islamist parties have mobilized crowds to preempt any softening of the country's Israel policy. In early October 2025, the conservative Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) staged mass rallies in Karachi, with protesters chanting against Israel and denouncing its onslaught in Gaza. JI's chief Hafiz Naeemur Rehman thundered that any paradigm shift in Pakistan's Palestine policy "will not be tolerated at any cost," explicitly warning the government against entering the Abraham Accords. Such rhetoric reflects a widespread public view that recognizing Israel would amount to siding with an alleged "oppressor."

When reports circulated on social media about secret talks between Pakistan and Israel, Minister for Religious Affairs, Sardar Muhammad Yousaf, hastily reaffirmed the official line. He said, "There has never been, and will never be, any recognition of Israel," calling Israel an "illegal state" and condemning its oppression of Palestinians. Such statements aimed to quash speculation and reassure the public that no secret deal was afoot.

Pakistan's mainstream opposition parties are united in rejecting the idea of normalizing ties with Israel. Politicians from the religious right to the center-left have all echoed that accepting Israel is unthinkable and against Pakistan's very ethos. Leaders from the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) and Jamaat-e-Islami liken Israel to a dagger stabbed in the chest of the entire Muslim community, and insist that yielding on Palestine would destroy Pakistan's moral stand on other issues like Kashmir. Even figures in the ruling coalition know there is no public appetite for a policy U-turn on Israel. To them, dropping the pro-Palestine posture now, under American pressure, would feel like surrendering Pakistan's dignity.

Critics of potential normalization argue it would yield little benefit while inflicting grave damage at home. They point out that Pakistan stands to gain no significant security or economic advantage from ties with Israel. Instead, it would sacrifice its own "national ideology," which has been a binding force for Pakistan. Observers warn that if the military or government attempted to push through recognition of Israel behind closed doors, the cat would be out of the bag, unleashing widespread domestic repercussions and chaos once exposed. Indeed, Pakistan's society has a track record of vociferous street protests on the Palestine issue. Crowds routinely burn American and Israeli flags in anger, seeing a nexus of the US, Israel, and India allegedly conspiring against Muslim nations.

In late 2025, the US courted Pakistan as part of a broader Middle East strategy. Washington floated a 20-point Gaza war "peace plan," and unprecedented U.S.-Pakistan interactions took place on the sidelines of the UN. Pakistan's then-prime minister appeared to

welcome the initiative, grateful for moves toward a Gaza ceasefire. But this tentative support immediately provoked fierce backlash at home, with many Pakistanis equating endorsement of Trump's plan with an implicit recognition of Israel. Faced with uproar, Pakistani officials backpedaled. Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar publicly objected that the final U.S. plan was "not ours," revealing that changes had been made to the draft Pakistan originally agreed to. Critics accused the current administration in Islamabad of "surrendering" to Washington's agenda and betraying the Palestinian cause.

Beyond Pakistan's borders, the prospect of its inclusion in the Abraham Accords has raised eyebrows and concern across the Muslim world. The Palestinian leadership and people would view a Pakistani deal with Israel as a grievous setback. Palestinians often cite Pakistan as one of their true allies on the global stage, noting how Islamabad championed their rights even before many Arab states did. For Pakistan to reverse course now would be a betrayal of its historic legacy of mutual solidarity and brotherhood, which has bonded it closely with Palestinians. It would send a dispiriting message that even the lone nuclear-armed Muslim nation has acquiesced to what many in the Middle East see as an unjust status quo. Regional rivals like Iran would likely seize upon such a move to lambaste Islamabad for abandoning the Palestinian cause.

The ongoing debate, fueled by reports of U.S. pressure and backdoor dealings, has been dominated by deep criticism and warnings of dire consequences if the policy changes. Critics insist that Islamabad must not forsake the Palestinian struggle. The Pakistan Army, too, is aware that forcing a pro-Israel shift could fracture its ranks and public support. As one observer noted, any Pakistani leader seen as bartering away the nation's pro-Palestine commitment for short-term favors would face angry people and an enduring stigma of treachery. For now, Pakistan's government is silent on the idea of joining the Abraham Accords, pledging support to the Palestinian cause. However, it is not the end of the road, as Pakistan could buckle under pressure from the West, tearing at the country's social fabric, and isolating its leaders, leaving a legacy of bitterness that no tactical gain could ever justify.

