



## **ABRAHAM ACCORDS: NORMALIZATION AGREEMENTS BETWEEN ARAB COUNTRIES AND ISRAEL**

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### **Abstract**

The Abraham Accords are the most important agreement in the Middle East between Israel and Arab countries, such as Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Morocco, and Sudan. The Abraham Accord has opened the gates of bilateral relations between Arab countries and Israel and has also changed the geopolitical dynamics in the Middle East. Until now, many previous studies have viewed the Abraham Accord as a strategic collaboration aimed at enhancing influence and countering the opposing power in the Middle East. As a result, this study presents a new perspective to examine another side of the Abraham Accord, namely its economic cooperation. This research uses a qualitative method to analyze comprehensively about the economic cooperation. The Abraham Accord is a potential platform to meet economic interests between countries. Economic interests are the main drivers in the ratification of the treaty. Strategic economic interests between countries are based on the same economic orientation that has the potential to open the door to other forms of intensive economic cooperation. Economic cooperation between Arab countries and Israel is focused on the economic diversification agenda that has an impact on economic growth and development between these countries. Theoretically, this research has implications for the existence of new approaches and perspectives in studying the Abraham Accord. As for practically, this research can be a reference in formulating policies related to the Middle East.

**Keywords:** Abraham Accord; Arab; Bilateral Cooperation; Israel; Middle East

## Introduction

Abraham Accords stand as one of the most crucial normalization pacts in Middle East between Israel and several Arab countries, such as Bahrain, United Arab Emirates, Morocco, and Sudan. Lately, Abraham Accord has opened the gateway of bilateral relationship between several Arab countries and Israel and also has changed geopolitical dynamics in Middle East. Abraham Accords was also brought out a strong signal of Arab countries and Israel's interest changes in Middle East (Hamdi, 2023). Since the ratification of the agreements, the Abraham Accords have been praised as a remarkable accomplishment in the history of the Middle East. Furthermore, Abraham Accord has contributed to the shifting of several Arab countries and Israel's dynamic relationships that emerged between both sides in decades (Ben-Shabbat & Aaronson, 2022.).

The Abraham Accords reflect the growing economic cooperations between several Arab countries and Israel. This Accords initiated a transformation in the bilateral economic relations and expanded collaboration in the Middle East region. The Abraham Accords became one of the significant agreements that served as a means for Arab countries and Israel to intensify development in the economic sector to fulfill the strategic interests of the two parties. Strategic economic interests can encourage strong bilateral relations between the two parties in a sustainable manner. The relations has an impact on the potential for economic growth and progress in the Middle East. In line with that the normalization of relations can also indirectly stabilize the region and strengthen cooperative relations between countries in the economic sector.

Many previous studies highlight Abraham Accords agreement. However, previous studies are only explain the deal in realism and security approach. Yossef (2023) in his research "The Regional Impact of the Abraham Accord", explained comprehensively about the impact of normalization pact on Israel and Arab joined-countries alliances in the Middle East. Yossef emphasizes that these alliances between involved parties become one of their counterbalance's strategy to confront Iran's hegemony in Middle East. The increase of Iran hegemony in Middle East claimed as an existential threat for all of the Abraham Accords joined-countries. Same goes with Çinkara & Coşkun (2023) in their study "Mapping the Genesis of the Abraham Accords: Elite Preferences, Rising Nationalism, and the Quest for Political Stability", see that the Abraham Accords were born from a desire of the Abraham Accords joined-countries to bolster regime security,

regional security and extend local transformations to the international domain. This study highlighted that Abraham Accords, become a response to Iran's growing influence in the Middle East and to counter Tehran's strategy of expanding its geopolitical influence and deepening its political hinterland. Arab countries and Israel, concerned about Iran's use of political division and regime instability to gain influence, formed regional alliances through the Accords. As mentioned above, previous studies focused solely on examining the Abraham Accord through realism studies and power-relation perspectives, which emphasized the formation of alliances, the enhancement of military power, and the stability and security interests.

These studies have not even considered the economic cooperation aspect of the agreement. Furthermore, they have not adequately captured the broader scope of the economy partnership that the agreement entails. In reality, economic interests play a crucial role in the ratification of the agreement and constitute a significant part of it. This study aims to fill this gap by adding an economic partnership perspective to the existing literature. This study will focus on economic partnership between Arab joined-countries and Israel in Abraham Accords. By explaining Abraham Accords in economic partnership perspective, this study will contribute to the novelty of research on the Abraham Accord and provide new perspectives and viewpoints on the agreement.

This study will use two main frameworks, national interest and liberalism. These frameworks are needed to elaborate the economic partnership between the joined-countries in Abraham Accords. Specifically, the national interest theory will examine the interest and motivation of the Abraham Accords for making the strategic cooperation in economic sector. Furthermore, this theory will also analyze economic security and regime survival in this strategic economic partnership in Abraham Accords. On the other hand, the liberalism theory will elaborate the aspect of collaboration and cooperation, interdependence, and mutual benefits on strategic economic partnership in Abraham Accords.

## **Literature Review**

### ***National Interest***

The theory of 'national interest' arose with the existence of the nation states on the world during the modern times. National interest is what the states seek to defend or accomplish

according to their interest. Consequently, it has a very significant relation with foreign policy to achieve its goals. The primary purpose of foreign policy is to regulate foreign relations to defend national interests and promote them to the best possible advantage. As the national interests of nations keep changing, their foreign policies also experience change. To accomplish their national interests, nations use various instruments including diplomacy, propaganda, imperialism, economic instruments, alliances, and war. The nation forms its foreign policy according to its national interests and uses its instruments accordingly. Nations mapping their courses in international affairs in accordance with their priorities, which also reflects their stakes in global politics, such as security, power, prestige, economic sufficiency, and self-preservation (Basu & Naaz, 2024). According to Donald A. Nuechterlein, in his theory of national interest, economic interests are also part of most-significant interests that primarily sought by states. Clearly, this economic interest should be directed to increase nations economic growth and developments (Rusdiyanta, 2022).

### ***Liberalism Perspective***

Liberalism theories emphasize how rules and institutions can help self-interested states achieve mutual interests, they see economic interdependence as an effective way for states to avoid war, and they argue that democracies enjoy more peaceful relations with other democracies now (Silverstone, 2022). Compared to the realism theory, liberalism focuses on the promotion of the rule of law and cooperation between nations. It emphasizes the role of international institutions (e.g., United Nations) and international law (e.g., International Criminal Court) in promoting peace and cooperation between nations. According to liberals, the global system can be transformed from an anarchic state to a more cooperative and peaceful one through the development of international institutions, the spread of democratic values, and increased economic globalization (Hamdi, 2023).

## **Research Method**

### ***Design***

To explain strategic economic partnership between the joined-countries in Abraham Accords, this article will use qualitative research approach, which is a post-positivist and predominantly inductive research method. Qualitative method is also focus solely on in-

depth analysis and meaning, making qualitative method is well-suited to elaborate complex issue and problems in research. In this study, the qualitative method will provide deep insights into strategic economic partnership in Abraham Accords. Strategic economic partnership in Abraham Accords is complex matter that need to be understand in a comprehensive overview and should be studied in a rich and deep analysis. This economic partnerships are also cases that need to be explored and examined through the qualitative method lens to obtain an inherent and comprehensive research result and discussion so that the research can be expected to become the primary reference for thoroughly examining that partnerships. This article employs a descriptive method which is an approach to analysis where the researcher stays close to the data, uses limited frameworks and interpretation for explaining the data, and catalogues the information into themes (Creswell, 2023).

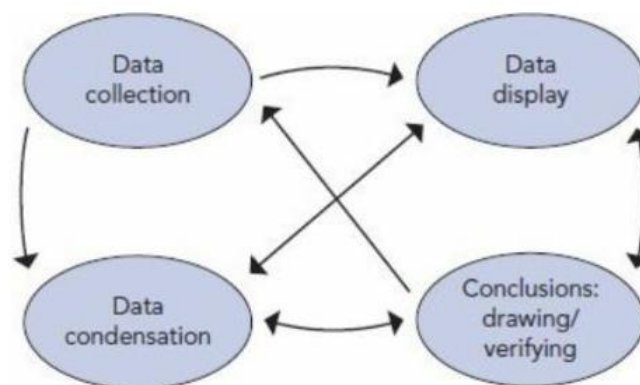
### *Unit of Analysis*

This article delves into the strategic interests of the countries involved in the Abraham Accord. It analyzes the accords as a primary tool for these nations to achieve their national objectives. Furthermore, the article explores the foreign policies of the countries that ratified the Abraham Accord, providing a comprehensive understanding of their strategic interests in this agreement.. Additionally, in the context of the Abraham Accord, this article will specifically focus on three key aspects: collaboration and cooperation, interdependence, mutual benefit. First, collaboration and cooperation. This article will delve into the in-depth collaboration and cooperation between the countries that have signed the Abraham Accord. Specifically, it will examine economic collaboration and cooperation between the countries that have signed the Abraham Accord and its significance for the countries involved. Second, interdependence. The article will explore the intricate interdependence patterns between the countries that participate in the Abraham Accord and analyze the crucial role that the agreement plays in fostering these patterns. Third, mutual benefit. This article will examine the mutual benefits that the participating countries accrue and assess their significance for the countries involved.

### *Data Collection*

In this study, the researcher conducted a literature studies to gather relevant data on the research's problems. The literature studies involves reading, comprehending, analyzing, and interpreting various data findings. The researcher obtained literature data from various sources, including journals, theses, dissertations, books, reports, and other contemporary news about the Abraham Accords and its strategic economic cooperation. This data collection technique, which include literature studies, has proven to be an effective method for answering research questions and formulating research hypotheses. This data collection technique with literature studies is used because literature studies have proven to be a superior technique in answering research. Literature studies can provide comprehensive and complete data, which can help researchers review and analyze research validly and credibly. This data can be used by other literature researchers, even if it has been collected by others (Zacky, 2022).

### *Data Analysis*



This article uses a data analysis technique, as elaborated by Miles and Huberman. This technique comprises four stages: (1) data collection; The initial phase in this data analysis technique involves data collection. This research utilizes literature studies by gathering diverse literature data, encompassing articles, journals, books, mass media, and audiovisual sources as the primary research data. In this study, the collected data serves as both a reference for previous research and the foundation for analysis and study; (2) data reduction; at this stage, we reduces the data collected during the first stage. Data

reduction involves summarizing, selecting, and sorting out the most significant information; (3) data display; in this study, the data presented is in the form of narrative text, supplemented by graphs and tables that enhance the analysis and substance of the research(Sugiyono, 2021).

The data has been reduced and structured in an organized manner to facilitate comprehension. Finally, the data is analyzed and studied in depth to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research results; (4) conclusion; conclusion is the part that answers the formulation and research questions. In this study, conclusions are drawn from data that has been meticulously analyzed using valid and credible evidence sourced from literature references. This rigorous approach ensures that the conclusions effectively address the research's objective(Sugiyono, 2021).

### ***Trustworthiness***

In this study, we employed Eisner's (1991) validity test, which focuses on credibility from a qualitative research perspective. Eisner's validity test standard comprises three processes: structural corroboration, consensual validation, and referential adequacy. To assess data validity, we employed structural correlation by utilizing various data types to support or refute interpretations, thereby establishing the credibility of data interpretation in this study. The weight of evidence plays a crucial role in demonstrating credibility through the analysis of diverse existing data. Subsequently, we conducted consensual validation by seeking opinions from other competent parties to evaluate the accuracy of the study's description, interpretation, evaluation, and thematic elements. Lastly, we emphasized referential sufficiency, highlighting the significance of criticism in shedding light on the subject matter and fostering more intricate and nuanced human perceptions and understandings(Sugiyono, 2021).

### **Result**

#### ***Highlighting UAE and Israel Relations in the Abraham Accords***

The normalization of the relations between the UAE and Israel affects the dynamic landscape of relations between the two countries, particularly in the economic sector. The UAE uses this agreement as a means of increasing economic cooperation as well as becoming Israel's largest trading partner in the Gulf region. With the ratification of the



Abraham Accords, the two countries can mutually increase their economic interests, notably in various sectors. The ratification of Abraham Accord was also brought by the change of foreign policy between the two countries. Israel, for example, had change its foreign policy especially in terms of cooperation with Middle East countries. In line with that, the change of its foreign policy resulting in two specific foreign policy, Periphery Doctrine and Israel's Middle East policy, which makes Israel deisolated itself and make collaboration with many Middle East countries. These two foreign policies make Israel ratified Abraham Accord and intensify its cooperation with UAE.

On the other hand, UAE was also directly changing its foreign policy. Before the ratification of Abraham Accords, as a part of Arab countries, UAE was also had the same foreign policy orientation with other Arab countries, thus, to not recognized Israel as a country and make any specific collaboration and partnership with Israel. But, in 2020, UAE has changed its foreign policy and declare bilateral relations with Israel. UAE's evolving foreign policy caused by the country economy orientation which want to increase trade and investment. Hence, it achieved by opening the gateway of partnership with Israel. UAE see Israel as the most strategic partner in Middle East. Thus, Israel powerful influence and economy development make UAE want to intensively collaborate with Israel to gain economic growth in its country (Rahmat, 2024).

The intense economic cooperation between the two countries has a direct impact on boosting free trade and open markets between them. Annually, their bilateral trade cooperation reached nearly US\$3 billion in 2023, driven by free trade agreements and various business cooperations. Tourism development also marks a remarkable transformation of the economic sector for the UAE. Normalization pact with Israel has accelerate revenue from the tourism sector (Hamdi, 2023). Since the normalization treaty with Israel, the UAE has seen an increase of 1 million tourists from Israel in 2023, facilitated by 106 weekly direct flights between both countries (Syed & Ahmed, 2021). This revenue has increased Israel's foreign exchange from the tourism sector. Israel's cooperation with the UAE strengthens its position in the Middle East, expands its regional partners, and provides access to trade and economic benefits. The UAE serves as a gateway for Israel to influence the Gulf region and access the Persian Gulf, as it is one of the strategic energy transportation and strategic sea trade routes. Access to strategic sea trade routes in the Persian Gulf can increase Israel's trade and economic activities,



particularly in the energy sector and the transportation of goods and services which contributes to Israel's high economic productivity (David & Even, 2020).

In this cooperation, Israel can also increase additional energy supplies by utilizing its collaboration with the UAE so that it can avoid a shortage of natural resources. The UAE also can become a strategic collaborating partner for Israel in the energy sector, particularly in utilizing the oil distribution pipeline, namely Eilat-Ashkelon, which is a strategic pipeline to carry out exports and imports in the hydrocarbon sector (Ben-Shabbat & Aaronson, 2022.). For the UAE, Israel is an important partner in the Middle East region. Israel plays a role in providing competent technological, military, and cybersecurity expertise so that the UAE can protect its regime and maintain the security of both countries. The UAE is undoubtedly one of the countries that focuses on digital technology as a basis for its post-oil economic reform.

Intensive cooperation between the UAE and Israel in the technology sector also includes the development of Artificial Intelligence (AI) which was recently developed by the Cham Weizmann Institute from Israel in collaboration with Muhammad bin Zayed University from the UAE (Abbas & Hareem, 2024). The development of AI technology is an essential aspect for the UAE in developing industrialization and a digital-based diversified economy. Israel is seen as a competent technology provider that can support the digitalization of the UAE, particularly in the economic sector. The Abraham Accords also mark the start of a cybersecurity collaboration between the UAE and Israel as a significant technological collaboration. The UAE views Israel as an attractive potential partner due to its unrivaled offensive and defensive cyber capabilities that can support the UAE. Israel's technological capabilities and attributes as well as its advanced technologies can secure the UAE's cybersecurity to a maximum extent.

Conversely, Israel views the UAE as a country with financial strength and enthusiasm for digitalization, making it a potential market for Israeli military technology and cybersecurity products. Cybersecurity is a primary profitable economic sector for Israel, exporting nearly US\$4 billion worth of related products and services globally each year. One well-known example of cooperation in this sector is the transaction of surveillance software. The most notable example is the UAE's purchase of Pegasus spyware owned by the Israeli company NSO Group. This cooperation is worth US\$80 million and is a significant revenue for Israel in this sector. In 2021, Tel Aviv and Abu

Dhabi launched the ‘UAE-IL tech zone’ supported by UAE-Israeli technology companies, private sectors, and the government. This project is supported by Synaptech, an Abu Dhabi-based company supported by Israel’s Avnon Group. This company announced a joint venture worth US\$100 million to develop strategic cybersecurity industries in the project. In supporting the creation of a competent cybersecurity system, this cooperation also involves knowledge exchange, professionals, and experts supported by UAE-based company EliteCISO, and Cyber Together Israel.

In addition, the UAE and Israel are also developing a joint project named “Crystal Ball”. This project is a digital platform project deployed to detect and prevent cyberattacks through intelligence-sharing and collaboration. Additionally, the UAE and Israel are also actively developing a collaboration in cloud computing. One example is the collaboration in the development of cloud computing technology initiated by the Emirati company G42. Collaboration in the technology sector between the two countries also reached the development of subsea cables. Subsea cables are high-technology undersea fiber optic cable projects that support technological infrastructure, mainly in building regional internet networks that provide high-strength internet connectivity. For Israel, the Cinturion cable collaboration project represents the potential for the co-creation of a new regional internet infrastructure with the UAE. Israel also views the cable as a tool to strengthen relations with UAE, gain much profit from the subsea cable project, and to form a close ties with many Gulf countries, especially Saudi Arabia.

For the UAE, the integrated Cinturion cable with Israel means broader domestic high-speed internet connectivity and cooperation with Israel to maintain connectivity resilience through Israeli cybersecurity technology (Hassib & Shires, 2024). In the context of the Abraham Accords, the UAE relations with Israel as a way to facilitate the interests of both countries to establish strong ties with the United States, particularly in the defense industry. Accessibility to advanced technology, in particular US military technology is an important aspect that makes the UAE intensify its strategic partnership with the US. (Cafiero, 2023).

### ***Bahrain-Israel: Intense Diversified Bilateral Economic Cooperation between the Two Countries***

The Abraham Accords also mark a significant change in Bahrain-Israel relations. Bahrain was previously a country that strongly opposed the normalization of relations with Israel. However, Bahrain's foreign policy in fulfilling its strategic economic interests in an effort to protect the regime from political instability has become a driving force for Bahrain to normalize relations with Israel. For Bahrain, bilateral cooperation with Israel is a means to increase its economic growth. Bahrain, a country with limited natural resources, continues to focus on its economic diversification and increase foreign investment. These diversification efforts are the main steps for Bahrain in developing its economy and increasing state revenues.

On the other hand, Israel's ratification of Abraham Accords was also the impact of its new foreign policy. Israel foreign policy encourage the country to escape from its isolation in Middle East. This "deisolation" foreign policy make Israel change its nation interests and by that, expand its bilateral relations with many Middle East countries (Rahmat, 2024). In this context, Bahrain and Israel have common interests, which are to encourage economic diversification. With the ratification of the Abraham Accords, the two countries can mutually increase their economic interests (Hamdi, 2023).

The Abraham Accords can make Israel one of Bahrain's strategic economic partners. Known as a country with a strong and established economy, Israel can play an essential role in encouraging new economic markets that can increase trade and investment for Bahrain. Bahrain views this normalization as an opportunity to increase economic cooperation with Israel, which has owned an established economic industry. It is noted that economic relations between Bahrain and Israel have succeeded in increasing various sector in economy after Abraham Accord. Approximately US\$7.5 million with Israeli exports to Bahrain amounting to US\$4 million in several sectors, such as the metal industry, chemical industry products, and electrical engineering machinery. The increase in trade between the two countries also influenced the growth of imported goods by US\$3.5 million (Middle East Monitor, 2022).

This increase reached its peak with a total trade of US\$20 million in 2021–2022 (Guzansky & Zalay, 2023). Exports and imports are also among the intensive economic cooperations between Bahrain and Israel. In 2021, there was a significant

increase in the volume of exports and imports between both countries. The volume of exports and imports between Bahrain and Israel had increased to US\$3.5 billion. The increase in the volume of exports and imports indicates that both countries are incredibly intense in establishing bilateral economic relations.. The massive trade between Bahrain and Israel is also an impact of the approval of the Free Trade Agreement which can encourage and trigger free trade between both countries. Bahrain and Israel utilize the potential of free trade as a ground for expanding business and trade in various sectors. Bahrain utilizes its economic cooperation with Israel to successfully reform its economic system which is based on the diversification of economic sectors (Ministry of Justice Israel, 2023).

In 2022, Bahrain's imports to Israel were also known to increase. This increase proves that there is a strong economic flow between both countries. The imports reached a record of US\$10.5 million; a significant increase in the import sector compared to the 2019 (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, 2023). Economic relations between the two countries indirectly encourage the development of tourism, aviation, land, and private sectors between both countries. It is noted that Bahrain has experienced significant growth, mainly in the private sector during its cooperation with Israel. Around 30 Israeli companies have been established in Bahrain and operate in various sectors, particularly in technology, logistics, and real estate (Cafiero, 2023). In addition, the tourism industry is also a potential sector in viewing and reading bilateral economic relations between Bahrain and Israel. Bahrain's tourism experienced an increase due to a heavy flow of tourists from Israel to Bahrain; from 0 tourists in 2019 to 2700 tourists in 2022. The agreement also impacts Israel's tourism sector, where the number of Bahraini tourists visiting Israel has increased. About 400 Bahrainis traveled to Israel. The increase in the tourism sector contributed to the rise in trade between both countries from US\$0 in 2019 to US\$12.7 million (Salman, 2024).

For Bahrain, Israel is also strategic partner that plays a role in providing competent technological and military expertise that can assist in protecting the regime and maintaining Bahrain's security. Bahrain is known to have made military arms trade deals worth more than US\$3 billion. Bahrain is also known to intensively trade military technology with Israel, amounting to 7% of the state's revenue in 2021 (The Cradle, 2022.). The arms deals are worth US\$790 million and overall arms exports from Israel to

Bahrain are known to have reached US\$11.3 million. These deals resulted in the increase of Israel's total global exports of high-tech weapons by US\$8.3 billion in 2020. This increase generated a significant increase in Israel's national GDP growth. Bahrain and Israel's cooperation in this sector is also known as one of the most extensive and most intensive. Having intensive bilateral economic relations with Israel can also unfold broader access to establishing ties with the United States. Accessibility to the latest technologies and the established economic market that the United States can provide can significantly make Bahrain's economic diversification efforts a success. Arms cooperation with the US is also an essential aspect of Bahrain's security and defense. Bahrain has entered into an arms deal with the US worth US\$4 billion that focuses on developing fighter jets and several other strategic weapons (Middle East Eye, 2022).

For Israel, strategic cooperation in the economic sector with Bahrain also represents a step into the economic market of the Arab world and to decrease its current isolation in the region. This cooperation also emphasizes the benefits of opening access to free trade and open markets and is a positive step in improving economic cooperation between Bahrain-Israel. By opening new markets and facilitating the transportation of goods and services in economic relations between both countries, this cooperation has the potential to increase the economic growth of Bahrain and Israel to the utmost. The improvement of relations with Bahrain as one of the influential countries in the Gulf region also has an impact on opening up access to the Persian Gulf as one of the central energy transportation systems and strategic sea trade routes. Access to strategic sea trade routes in the Persian Gulf can increase Israel's trade and economic activities, mainly in the energy sector and transportation of goods and services (Machmudi, 2021).

Bahrain also has the potential to become a strategic collaborator partner for Israel in the energy sector, particularly in utilizing the Eilat-Ashkelon oil distribution pipeline so that it can intensify relations between both countries. By establishing relations with Bahrain, Israel can gain a foothold in the Gulf region to its fullest extent. This relations will unfold opportunities for Israel to expand its economic relations with other Gulf countries. The economic diversification promoted by the Gulf countries can be a means for Israel to improve its economy, particularly in the investment, trade, tourism, export-import sectors, and the opening of potential private sector opportunities. (Ben-Shabbat & Aaronson, 2022).

***Israel's Cooperation with Non-Gulf Countries: Case Studies of Relations with Sudan and Morocco.***

Sudan has also officially normalized relations with Israel and signed the Abraham Accords. The agreement is considered by both Sudan and Israel as a means to advance their national interests, particularly in facing challenges and competition at the regional level. Both countries seek to secure their strategic interests. For Sudan, normalization with Israel can help Sudan protect economic aid. This becomes one of Sudan's main foreign policy, to ensure the supply of economic aids and foster economic growth to survive as a nation. Sudan's economic dependence on Israel has led to a significant interdependence pattern in its relationship with Israel. Economic interdependence plays a crucial role in shaping Sudan-Israel relations, particularly for Sudan itself. Sudan's economy is plagued by several civil wars, making it a failed state. Consequently, Sudan has become highly dependent on economic aid from Israel. Sudan views the Abraham Accord as a means to strengthen its domestic economy and ensure its survival as a nation. For Israel, cooperation with Sudan becomes one of its deisolation foreign policy. The implementation of this foreign policy aims to ensure that Israel can deisolate itself and make bilateral and multilateral relations with many Arab countries, especially with Sudan. Sudan-Israel cooperation will also foster economic cooperation, investment, and trade, particularly in the hydrocarbon sector (petroleum), where Sudan is one of the largest oil-producing countries in Africa (Hamdi, 2023). Economic cooperation with Israel is also an opportunity for Sudan to increase its economic growth and is an effort to stabilize the country's situation.

Israel also plays a vital role in providing access to military technology and the latest advanced weapons to Sudan. This can directly strengthen Sudan's military and economic strength. By establishing relations with Israel, Sudan can also intensively establish relations with the United States and other Western countries to gain cooperation and access to the economy, trade, technology, and weapons so that Sudan can strengthen its economic strength. Israel also uses its relations with Sudan to improve its position and decrease its isolation in the African region so that Israel gains access to trade and bilateral economic relations in the area. With the agreement with Sudan, Israel can also use this relationship as a means to gain access to Sudan's petroleum resources and secure Israel's

energy supplies. Israel can also utilize Sudan's immensely strategic geographical position due to its Red Sea coast to increase its influence in one of the strategic sea trade and transportation routes connecting the African and Asian continents (Hamdi, 2023).

Normalization of relations between Israel and Morocco strengthens their economies. It can provides access to new markets and increasing investment and trade between both two countries. Morocco's post-oil policy and Israel's de-isolation policy drive this normalization, focusing on economic diversification and industrialization to reduce hydrocarbon dependence and foster bilateral and multilateral relations. Furthermore, it encourages the ratification of the Abraham Accord, which initiates Israel-Morocco engagement to ensure the implementation of their national interests. Israel is seen as a strategic economic partner for Morocco, providing access to investment and trade platforms to enhance economic cooperation and develop its industrial-centric market (Chtatou, 2023).

As one of the countries with the largest economies in the world, Israel can be utilized as a partner in increasing the growth of Morrocco's domestic economy so that Morrocco can develop non-hydrocarbon industrial sectors. After the ratification of the Abraham Accords, economic relations between Israel and Morocco have been incredibly intensive. Economic cooperation and trade between the two countries reached US\$131 million in 2021, a significant increase over the past three years. This increase is also proven by the ambition of both countries to increase investment and trade targets to US\$500 million. The defense and security industries are also among the crucial sectors in Morrocco-Israel cooperation. Israel is an important and strategic partner to Morrocco, particularly in gaining access to military technology and innovation of the latest weapons. This cooperation is a crucial aspect for Morrocco in maintaining and improving its national defense and security. In developing defense technology, the collaboration is intensified in the development of the latest technology spy satellites. The development of this satellite is worth US\$1 billion and is manufactured directly by Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI). Morocco also signed a military technology project with one of Israel's weapons innovation companies called BlueBird Aero System, a drone manufacturing company primarily owned by IAI (Chtatou, 2023).

BlueBird Aero System has produced 150 WanderB and ThunderB UAVs to meet Morocco's air force arsenal and enhance its capabilities (Chtatou, 2023). Morocco is



highly focused on the development of air defense systems and has often collaborated with Israel in developing its systems and security. This collaboration is worth US\$450 million by purchasing Air Defense System Barak MX from Israel. Cooperation with Morocco in the security industries is certainly also beneficial for Israel in increasing its national revenue. Israel views Morocco as a country that has the financial strength and enthusiasm for military arms trade so that it can build a strategic economic market in sustainable military weapons in Morocco. Morocco's strategic agricultural sector is also attractive to Israel. Morocco is one of the Arab countries that has a potential agricultural sector; thus, this sector can be one of the sectors directed as a source of state revenue. Israel views Morocco's strategic agricultural sector as a means of increasing its strategic agricultural sector commodities and trade. In addition, the potential of this agricultural sector is also a benefit for Israel to increase the flow of intensive cooperation and investment with Morocco, particularly in the development of innovation and agricultural systems (Chtatou, 2023).

Morocco also views Israel as a potential partner, particularly in the development of its strategic agricultural sector. Israel's rapid technological innovation, mainly in its agricultural technology, makes cooperation with Israel a field for Morocco to increase the productivity of its strategic agricultural commodities. One of the cooperations was initiated by an Israeli company called Mehadrin. Mehadrin's agricultural cooperation focuses on the development and export of avocado farming as one of the essential commodities in Israeli trade. The Israeli avocado trade has reached international markets, such as in Europe (Chtatou, 2023). The development of this joint agricultural sector cooperation between Israel and Morocco also targets investment in the development of agricultural irrigation systems. The most obvious example is the Israeli and Bahrain joined-company, Netafim in Morocco. This company was established in Rabat in April 2017. Its specialty is the innovation of drip irrigation systems. Drip irrigation is the "DNA" of Israeli agriculture, and is an alternative to conventional irrigation (Chtatou, 2023).

The development of the tourism sector between both countries also has great potential and prospects. Morocco is taking advantage of the opportunity to normalize relations with Israel as a way to develop its tourism sector. Israel is a strategic partner to Morocco in developing tourism related to religious sites. One of Morocco's foreign

policies is to develop tourist destinations for Israelis. Morocco has established its country as an emotional tourist destination for Moroccan Jews from Israel. Around 50,000 Jews from Israel have traveled to Morocco. Israel considers Morocco attractive due to its Jewish history and pilgrimage sites. The tourism sector is seen as a mechanism to strengthen Israel-Morocco relations (Salman, 2024).

By intensifying its bilateral cooperation with Morocco, Israel also utilizes this agreement as a way to gain new allies in economic cooperation in the African region. Israel's influence in the African region also results in Israel's decreasing isolation in the area. In this case, Israel also benefits because it can use its normalization with Morocco as a means of opening access to economic markets, investment, and strategic natural resources in Africa. With the normalization of relations with Israel and the increasing proximity of Morocco to Western countries, Israel gains accessibility to natural resources, especially oil and gas. It can utilize the aforementioned strategic trade routes as a path for Israel's economic growth and activities due to their strategic positions and them being the main routes for intercontinental trade (Hamdi, 2023).

## **Discussion**

### ***Concepts Discussion***

#### **Nation Interest**

National interest, a concept that has gained prominence due to the rise of nation-states in the international arena, emphasizes strategic interests based on a country's foreign policy. Experts like Frankel and Roskin have both acknowledged the significance of national interests as a country's desired outcomes, encompassing aspects such as security, strength, economic welfare, values, and ideology. They agree that national interests shape state actions in international relations. While Frankel (1961) and Roskin (1994) share similar perspectives, they also have notable differences. Roskin's national interest primarily focuses on the state's strategic interests, whereas Frankel expanded on this theory. Frankel posits that national interest and foreign policy are interconnected, with foreign policy serving as a defining factor for a country's national interest. Moreover, foreign policy influences a country's political, economic, and military direction. Frankel also highlights the various instruments available to states in pursuing national interests, including diplomacy, alliances, economic measures, propaganda, and even war. National

interest, a multifaceted concept, has diverse interpretations and perspectives across various political theories like realism, liberalism, and constructivism. This diversity leads to strong definitions and approaches that differ significantly.

Burchill (2005) attributes this variation to a struggle of thought surrounding the concept. Political discussions have revived national interest as a theory and approach, offering multiple viewpoints. Frankel and Roskin's definition of national interest is particularly relevant in highlighting a country's interests. Their concept is interconnected and complements each other. Moreover, their analytical tools are robust, especially in examining cooperative relationships, as demonstrated in the article. These tools have practical implications for analyzing strategic interests in the economy, foreign policy, and the instruments employed by joined-countries in the Abraham Accord. The Abraham Accord, a recent agreement, aligns with the dynamics and implications of national interests and complex foreign policies between nations. The concept of national interest positions the Abraham Accord as an agreement that prioritizes changes in foreign policy, strategic interests, and the tools employed by countries, particularly Arab nations and Israel, which had previously maintained strained relations. This approach is particularly relevant in analyzing and examining the unique circumstances in the Middle East region, characterized by conflicts and powerful factions. It effectively demonstrates pragmatism in foreign interests and policies, as well as the instruments utilized by Arab countries, especially those that have made Israel a common adversary.

### **Liberalism**

Liberalism, often associated with realism and neo-realism, is a concept that emphasizes a softer approach to understanding the international world compared to realism. The contrasting nature of these theories further highlights this distinction. Like Burchill (2005) states, the debate and intellectual struggle between liberalism and realism reveal their unique perspectives and the significant influence of differing thought on liberal, realist, and neorealist thinkers. However, in this article, the author focuses on the elements of liberalism rather than exploring its differences or struggles with other approaches. The author acknowledges the strong influence of liberalism's origins on classical approaches like realism and neorealism. The opposing views of liberalism and anarchism, along with neorealism, have led to a world view dominated by war, conflict, power, and security.

This perspective, exemplified by liberalism, presents a unique approach. According to the author, liberalism emphasizes collaboration, cooperation, interdependence, and mutual benefit, even while acknowledging the existence of anarchism. However, liberalist thinkers offer a more positive interpretation of the anarchist world, suggesting that it holds the potential for global harmony. Unlike realism and neorealism, liberalism does not view war and conflict as inherent aspects of the international world. While competition and self-interest are acknowledged, liberalism approaches them positively, maintaining a focus on collaboration and cooperation which can gain global harmony.

Democracy and free trade are also considered theoretical foundations. In the liberal perspective, these two concepts can effectively prevent global wars and conflicts. Liberalism's viewpoint is valid because democracy and free trade are indeed remedies for the international world. The latter fosters attachment, interdependence, collaboration, and cooperation, as well as the value of mutual benefit. Consequently, the Abraham Accord is analyzed through this positive lens. The Abraham Accord is not merely an effort related to the conflict with Iran, a means to strengthen hegemony, or a way to achieve security from insecurity conditions, nor is it solely about consolidating strength. Instead, the Abraham Accord incorporates elements of a more "positive" approach. This approach positions the Abraham Accord as an endeavor to achieve global harmony through cooperation and collaboration between countries, its relationship with mutual benefit and interdependence. Liberalism can view this as a novel approach to examining the Abraham Accord, which is rich in its strong economic collaborative elements.

### ***Finding Discussion***

The Abraham Accord, a significant agreement in the Middle East, presents both positive and negative aspects. On the positive side, it resulted in a peace agreement between Arab countries and Israel, marking a significant step in rebuilding relations between Arabs and Israelis. However, on the negative side, the agreement has been criticized for potentially undermining the Palestinian cause in the region. Despite these concerns, the Abraham Accords have opened up opportunities for cooperation and collaboration among Middle Eastern countries. While it has a comprehensive impact on all participating nations, it is also reshaping the political landscape of the Middle East. This symbolic agreement between Arab countries and Israel, which has been plagued by strained relations for years,

is undoubtedly driven by economic factors. While previous studies, such as those by Yossef (2021) and Cinkara & Coskun (2023), suggest that the agreement also emphasizes hegemony, counterbalance efforts, and branding Iran as a primary reason for ratification, it is undeniable that economic considerations significantly influence the ratification of the Abraham Accord. The ratification highlights its pragmatic economic value. As mentioned by the previous author, the Abraham Accords encompass a plethora of economic agendas. The inclusion of economic factors in the Abraham Accords unites Arabs and Israel, two counterparts that have long lacked prospects for cooperation. The economy plays a significant role in the ratification of the agreement.

Smiliar to Camp David, this agreement holds significant influence. The influence of the Abraham Accord can be considered balanced with that of Camp David and has become a powerful inspiration for Arab-Israeli cooperation. Both agreements possess substantial power projections that could potentially reshape the political landscape of the Middle East. The Abraham Accord, a groundbreaking agreement, has the potential to transform the Middle East in an instant. It presents a dynamic and formidable new geopolitical landscape. Amidst escalating conflicts and high instability, the Abraham Accord has played a pivotal role in pursuing collaboration. However, the author remains skeptical about the prospect of genuine peace in the Middle East. Can the Abraham Accord serve as a lasting catalyst for peace? While it may not constitute a comprehensive peace agreement, the Abraham Accords represent the initial steps towards peace between Arabs and Israelis. This is because the agreement catalyzes positive changes in the Middle East.

## **Conclusion**

The Abraham Accord, a strategic agreement between Arab countries and Israel, has significantly impacted Arab-Israeli relations and reshaped the geopolitical dynamics of the Middle East. Beyond realism and power relations, the accord also emphasizes strategic economic cooperation. Economic interests were the primary driving force behind the accord's ratification. Arab countries, including Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Morocco, and Sudan, share strategic economic interests with Israel. These countries leverage economic cooperation with Israel to bolster and expand their economies. Similarly, Israel utilizes the Abraham Accord as a means to enhance state

revenues and foster economic growth. Based on theoretical review, both national interest and liberalism are theories that can contribute to the study and analysis of economic cooperation between Arab and Israeli countries in the Abraham Accord. These theories can examine the interests and forms of economic cooperation, their significance, mutual benefits, and interdependence, allowing for a comprehensive analysis of this economic cooperation. Furthermore, they can interpret the Abraham Accord as a mutually beneficial economic cooperation rather than merely a means of strengthening power and hegemony in the Middle East.

Regionally, the Abraham Accord has had implications for creating an economic cooperation and collaboration environment between Arab countries and Israel. It has become a turning point, encouraging various forms of economic cooperation between other Arab countries and Israel in the Middle East. Those cooperation has led to economic integration between Arab countries and Israel. Additionally, the Abraham Accord serves as a platform for Arab countries and Israel to implement and ensure post-oil policies, emphasizing diversified economic cooperation in various sectors. Furthermore, the Abraham Accord has reshaped the geopolitical landscape in the Middle East. Its existence has triggered a shift in the positions of actors in the region, contributing to increased regional stability. Future studies and research are necessary to fill the gaps in this study, particularly in terms of developing a theoretical framework and a new lens for studying the Abraham Accord.

### **Declaration of Interest**

We aware of the Intermestic: Journal of Internasional Relation's conflict of Interest policy and our obligations under it. We declare that to the best of our knowledge the information we have provided is true and correct. We undertake to advise Intermestic: Journal of Internasional Relation's in writing if a conflict or potential conflict of interest arises in the future and to stand down in any decision making process in which we may be compromised.

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