



Academic Paper

The Palestine Issue and the New Foreign Policy Team



Prof. Dr. Walid 'Abd al-Hay

February 2021



Al-Zaytouna Center for Studies & Consultations

The opinions expressed in all the publications and studies are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of al-Zaytouna Centre.

The Palestine Issue and the New Foreign Policy Team

Prof. Dr. Walid ‘Abd al-Hay

Introduction

A number of institutions participate in US foreign policy-making whether in the White House, State Department, National Security Council, US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Department of Defense, or in foreign relations committees in the Senate and Congress, as well as in informal bodies such as pressure groups and public opinion. It is known that the US foreign policy has its own rules, regulated by the US constitution, and its powers are parceled out to both the executive and legislative branches. It is also the outcome of bargaining between these institutions on the one hand, and local and international institutions and powers, on the other hand.

During his term, former President Donald Trump made a shift in the US foreign policy. For it was, before him, camouflaged by international law, democracy and human rights, particularly during the Democrats’ terms and in some of the Republicans’ terms. However, under Trump, it was value-free approach to an “America First” foreign policy, on the one hand, and less institutional on the other.



In this article, we will discuss the “most prominent” new leaders, who will formulate and implement the US foreign policy in the Middle East, defining their most important orientations, then identifying their points of convergence and how this will be reflected on the central features of the US foreign policy in the Middle East during the four coming years.

First: Members of the New Team

1. President Joe Biden¹

A psychodiagnostic case study of Biden's personality was made, relying on the "Millon Inventory of Diagnostic Criteria" (MIDC) scale, which includes 170 sub-indicators of 12 scales of personality, covering five main attribute domains:

- a. Expressive behavior (speech and body language).
- b. Interpersonal conduct (practice).
- c. Cognitive style (ideas and thinking method).
- d. Mood (the degree of emotional and affective stability).
- e. Self-image (level of narcissism).



Joe Biden

This study concluded with the most noticeable characteristics of Biden's psychological side, namely:

- a. Accommodating: 81.8%
- b. Outgoing: 68.4%.
- c. Ambitious: 62.5%.
- d. Dominant: 50%.

Based on the cut-off score guidelines in the MIDC manual, all of Biden's scale elevations are within normal limits, his full-scale total was 33 out of 53 (62.3%).

In another study,² the analysis of the psychological aspect of Biden's personality concluded that in his foreign policy, Biden will be open and listen to the advisors and officials, and besides being a conciliatory and consensual leader, he does not have a major project to shape the international system accordingly. Also, he responds to changes, but lacks the will and cognitive consistency to achieve his policy goals.

We can add to the above another dimension in Biden's character. Biden faced personal trauma, which seem to have affected him. At 29, a few weeks after his election to the US Senate in 1972, his first wife and their daughter were killed, while their two sons were critically injured in an auto accident. In 2015, his son Beau died of cancer, which prompted Biden not to seek the presidency in the 2016 elections. Beau was married to a Jew as is his sister Ashley, which gives Joe a familial connection to the Jewish people.³

The final aspect of Biden's personality is his long political experience. Biden spent 36 years in the Senate where he held many key roles, including the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. This qualifies him to revive the old political culture which fell to the sidelines and was replaced by a more confrontational and polarized political system.

Moving to the political interpretation of these studies, it is necessary to note that the political establishment remains relatively inhibitory to the role of the psychological characteristics of the ruler, especially if he tends to go too far. However, neglecting the personal dimension of the leader may lead to misleading results; for the letter on Trump's personality signed by 35 US psychiatrists, psychologists and social workers, a few days after he took office, which we have discussed in a previous paper, showed high accuracy in diagnosing his political behavior.⁴

Based on Biden's personality analysis in the model referred to above, his political behavior in general can be expected as follows:

- a. Biden will be more conciliatory and compatible with the internal environments (with Republicans, religious extremists and racist groups), and with the external environment (regionally and internationally). Also, his administration will be more stable regarding the staff (completely unlike Trump). He will be less inclined to animosity with the international community, as well as with allies and opponents. This suggests that he will gradually reduce tensions with China, Iran, Venezuela and North Korea, while being more understanding of the demands of his allies in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), particularly in defense spending. This can also be seen in his return to the World Health Organization (WHO) besides other international bodies, the Paris climate accord, the tendency to extend START III treaty with Russia and to stop building the wall with Mexico, in addition to cancelling travel restrictions for certain countries... Yet, this conciliatory inclination will be make him susceptible to his opponents' exploitation, such as the influence of internal lobbies like the Israel lobby or other interest groups, especially if they smartly approach



him, and this applies to other countries when dealing with his administration.

Accordingly, the Arab side, specifically the Palestinian resistance, must present a more coherent image, and even have “rational stability,” to face the repercussions of the peace settlement based on the “Deal of the Century.” It should also give the impression that it is able to “escalate” tension in the region through strengthening its relations with the allies (Iran, Syria, Hizbullah and Yemen), sending negotiators and diplomats to both China and Russia, and even carrying out some military operations in the 1948 occupied territories or the West Bank, “in a thoughtful manner consistent with the behavior of the Biden administration.”

- b. It appears that the Pentagon and the arms companies will be more aggressive than the “new conciliatory president,” because tension in the region reinforces the continuation of arms purchases.
- c. The first period of Biden’s presidency will be clearly directed to the inside, especially in four sectors: following-up the repercussions of the Covid-19 pandemic, reducing racial and media tensions inside the US, helping the economy recover and addressing the ramifications of Trump’s Senate impeachment trial.
- d. Biden will tend to restore the US role in international organizations and will be less hostile towards the United Nations (UN), human rights committees and reports, and international organizations and agreements. His response will be as much as the other parties pressure him.
- e. The weight of the Democratic Party in the Congress, along with its conciliatory inclination toward a section of the Republicans, may relatively support Biden’s ability to make domestic and foreign strategic decisions.



Consequently, we conclude:

Biden may be tempted to provide a balanced response in each time a country or a party gives the impression that “it will be a greater source of trouble for him.”

Concerning Biden’s position on the Palestine issue, his statements and psychological analysis provide us with the following aspects:

a. Criticism of settlements: Biden has announced, on several occasions, his opposition to building settlements in the 1967 occupied territories, which makes him different from Trump who was not concerned about this issue and was even closer to legitimizing them. Here, we must recall a previous clash between Biden and former Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin when Biden informed him that the expansion of West Bank settlements would endanger support for foreign aid to Israel, to which Begin replied, “Don’t threaten us with slashing aid.” Notably, Biden declared his sympathy with Israel on many occasions, and even described himself as a “Zionist.”⁵



Menachem Begin

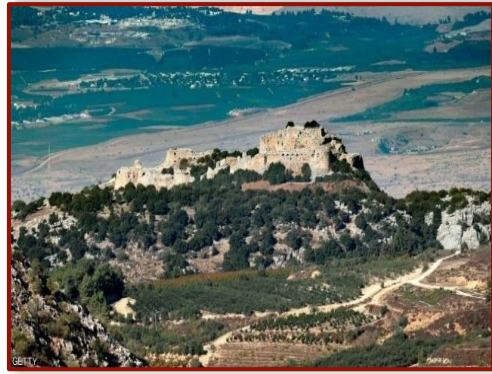
b. He will be more reluctant to return the US embassy to Tel Aviv: Biden realizes that this move will elicit a strong reaction from Israel, the Israel lobby and a wide range of evangelicals and racists in the US. With the absence of Arab pressure, Biden will not be concerned with the reactions, if he turned a blind eye to keeping the embassy in Jerusalem. However, he may reopen the office of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) mission in Washington, which Trump has previously closed.

c. The nuclear agreement with Iran: According to general statements and positions, a prospective return to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) high on the new US President’s agenda, especially since Barack Obama’s supporters within the Democratic Party will work on that. However, the risk in these potential negotiations lies in linking the US return to the agreement and making concessions to Iran—especially regarding lifting sanctions—to some Iranian policies in the region, including curbing the Iranian role in the Palestine issue.



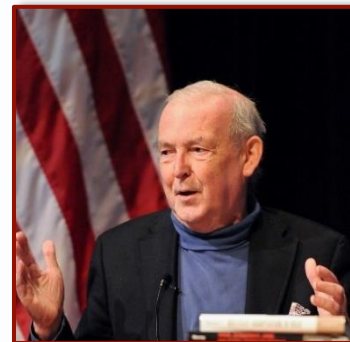
d. Biden will continue to promote normalization: Statements by Biden and quite a few of his political team (as we shall show) indicate that he perceives normalization as a catalyst for establishing political stability in the region, and that it enables the Palestinian negotiator to bargain more with the Israeli side.

e. The US support for annexing the Golan will not continue: Trump’s stance on annexing the Golan to Israel contradicted all declared US policies in this regard. It is more likely that Biden will not accept this exception at the expense of the prevailing traditional US policy, especially in his Democratic Party. However, he will not neglect the possibility of offering concessions on the Golan issue in return for Syria to forego some aspects of the Palestine issue.



f. Based on Biden’s speeches, he has criticized the Gulf states in the areas of human rights and the Yemen war. Therefore, we expect the Gulf states to turn to more normalization and rapprochement with Israel, hoping to win the support of the Israel lobby in the Congress and the American media, so that these American criticisms would be disregarded. This will further complicate the matter on the Palestinian side. Moreover, Biden’s branding Saudi Arabia a “pariah state” is a matter of concern for the Kingdom, which may be pushed to appease Israel.⁶

g. Interestingly, some important members in the current administration, as we will see, urge Biden to focus away from the Middle East to East Asia, a matter many American researchers have addressed, especially after the sharp decline in US dependence on Gulf oil and the increasing US-Chinese competition in the Pacific region, in addition to the US defense burdens and its imperial overstretch, as described by Paul Kennedy. Such a move would have a positive as well as negative impact on the Palestine issue.⁷



Paul Kennedy

2. Vice President Kamala Harris⁸

Kamala Harris, who is of Afro-Asian origins, is charismatic, ambitious and attractive, which gives her the ability to lead and urge others to respect her, although sometimes she seems impatient. Her husband, lawyer Douglas Emhoff, is a Jew, and this may affect her political orientations, especially since the American media indicated he is pro-Israel.⁹



Kamala Harris

As for her known political positions, a number of studies have revealed the following:

- a. Harris is very close to pro-Israel lobby groups, especially the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC).
- b. She supports the continued military and political assistance to Israel.
- c. She co-sponsored a Senate resolution criticizing President Obama's refusal to veto a Security Council resolution condemning Israel's settlement policies in the West Bank.
- d. She is an advocate of continuing the campaign against antisemitism.
- e. She opposes the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) campaign.
- f. She supports the two-state solution provided that it is agreed upon by the parties themselves at the negotiating table, and that a resolution to this conflict cannot be imposed by outside parties.
- g. She believes that when any organization delegitimizes Israel, one must stand up and speak out against it.
- h. She believes taking unilateral action to annex the West Bank would be a mistake and would jeopardize the peace process.

3. Secretary of State Antony Blinken¹⁰

Blinken served as Deputy National Security Advisor from 2013 to 2015 and as Deputy Secretary of State from 2015 to 2017. He was born to Jewish parents. During Biden's election campaign, he opened channels with the Israel lobby groups, and his most prominent positions are as follows:



Antony Blinken

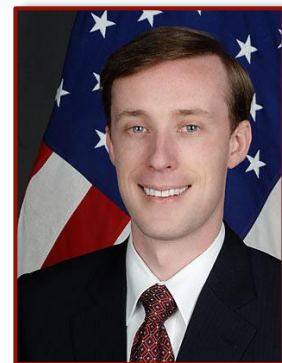
- a. In contrast to many US diplomats, Blinken does not have a hostile perception of the UN, but rather advocates activating its role, something that does not resonate well with Israel. Notably, he stated that he will

staunchly support Israel at the UN, which means he supports the revitalization of the UN role in various issues except in the Middle East.

- b. Blinken is a prominent advocate of not conditioning aid to Israel on policy choices, which weakens the US ability to pressure Israel to pursue certain policies, and liberates the Israeli decision-maker.
- c. He supports keeping the US embassy in Jerusalem.
- d. He opposes the BDS movement.
- e. He opposes Netanyahu's settlement building policy, but does not propose any counter policy.
- f. He tends to keep the Israeli-American differences out of the limelight, which means the US negotiations in the Middle East will have backchannel talks.
- g. He is very supportive of the two-state solution.
- h. He supports returning to negotiations with Iran, without resorting to military force.
- i. He is a prominent advocate of arming the Kurds in Syria, and has criticized Trump's withdrawal of US troops from northern Syria.

4. National Security Advisor Jacob Jeremiah Sullivan¹¹

Sullivan is the youngest in Biden's foreign policy and national security team (44 years). He has worked at the State Department and the US National Security Council with both Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama. He was also a national security advisor to the then Vice President Joe Biden and among the senior advisors to the US government for the Iran nuclear negotiations. He is less inclined to ideological foreign policy and sees that hard power does not necessarily secure gains.



Jacob Sullivan

His most notable foreign policies are:

- a. The restoration of international alliances and partnerships that were neglected or spurned under Trump.
- b. There is a great deal of congruence with the policies of Secretary of State Blinken making their combination one of the strongest.
- c. He was instrumental in negotiating the Iranian nuclear deal and launching the secret talks with Iran in Oman in 2012 that paved the way for the nuclear deal; accordingly, he will be leading the efforts to re-enter the deal with Tehran with the aim of dissuading it from possessing nuclear weapons. However, his demand in 2009 that the US administration support the Iranian opposition (the

Green Movement opposed to President Ahmadinejad) indicates that he may contact the Iranian opposition to pressure Iran.

- d. He brokered the Gaza ceasefire that ended Operation Pillar of Defense in 2012. Some Israeli circles have apprehension about his stances towards the Palestinians when compared to other American politicians, especially in his view of the Palestine issue as the cause of instability in the Middle East.
- e. He is one of the harshest critics among Biden's team to the human rights violations in Saudi Arabia and Egypt, and the lack of democracy there. Therefore, he may recommend to suspend arms sales to Saudi Arabia.

5. Defense Minister Lloyd Austin:¹²

Biden described his defense minister that he reacts well under pressure. "He is the person we need in this moment," Biden wrote. Austin would be the first Black leader of the Pentagon, and despite his 41-year experience in the Army, he has never held a political position. However, his military experience is very important, which includes leading troops in combat in Iraq and overseeing US military operations throughout the greater Middle East as head of Central Command.



Lloyd Austin

It is possible to identify his perception of the Middle East through some of his participations in academic seminars. He thinks that the Middle East:¹³

- a. Is chaotic, volatile and tumultuous.
- b. Has individuals and groups coalescing around ethnic and sectarian issues, rather than national identity.
- c. Has Arab political regimes with structural defect, including extremism, corruption, unemployment and tyranny.
- d. Must be entrusted to the people of the region to reach stability, and that the US military interventions in the region did not give the desired results. Austin has a deep-seated belief in the efficacy of diplomacy, and thinks the Saudis would lose in Yemen and become more dependent on US intelligence assets in their fight.

e. Austin has a “great relationship” with Israeli Defense Minister Benny Gantz, and when the former was the head of the US Central Command (CENTCOM), Israel was in the US European Command (EUCOM). Austin has always had a keen interest in Israel and wanted a close relationship with it. At the end of Trump’s term, Israel has moved to CENTCOM, paving the way for Austin to increase his cooperation with Israel, not to mention that Arab normalization would facilitate that, too.

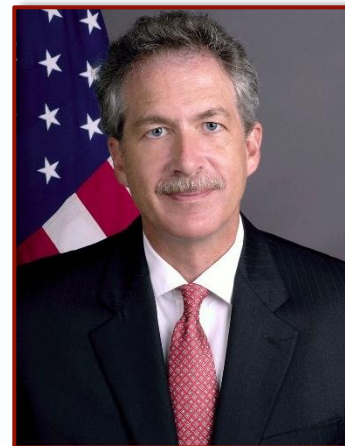


Benny Gantz

f. Austin has warned that Iran engages in malign activity through support to proxy actors, such as Lebanese Hizbullah and Hamas, considering it a threaten to the sovereignty and security of Israel.

6. Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) William Burns:¹⁴

William Burns served as the US ambassador to a number of countries, including Arab countries, and speaks Arabic fluently. He is the president of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, and previously served under five presidents and ten secretaries of state.



William Burns

William Burns has long argued that the nuclear deal actually makes Israel safer, despite Netanyahu’s long-standing, vocal objections to it. He was highly critical of the Trump administration’s policies. In his recent book, he advocates back channel diplomacy, which he previously used through the CIA when arranging a ceasefire in Gaza, persuading former Libyan President Muammar Gaddafi to abandon his nuclear project, concluding the nuclear agreement with Iran, and strengthening his country’s relations with India. He strongly criticized Trump’s policies without mentioning his name except in the last chapter of his book. He stresses that America’s post–Cold War “unipolar moment” is a transient phase and that the US, like other global powers, will experience a retreat that must be taken into consideration, and it should not be overly dependent on its “hard powers” in its international relations.¹⁵

Burns has criticized President Trump’s decision to withdraw US troops from Syria, considering it “betrayal of the Kurdish partners.” He considers

that the US moment as the singular dominant outside player in the Middle East has faded, but it still has a solid hand to play. It has to lower its expectations for deep transformation in the Middle East, and put more emphasis on diplomacy backed up by military leverage, instead of the other way around.

Burns believes that the US allies in the Middle East are exaggerating its ability to shape the situation in this region. His vision of the Middle East is as follows:

- a. The Middle East matters less to the US, which faces more consequential geopolitical challenges elsewhere, particularly the Asia-Pacific region.
- b. That doesn't mean, of course, that the Middle East doesn't matter at all to US interests anymore, there are still several familiar core interests: ensuring freedom of navigation and access to hydrocarbons in the Gulf; guarding against a regional or external hegemon who might endanger the security of long-standing friends; and working with others to prevent the emergence of terrorist groups with reach beyond the region, or the spread of weapons of mass destruction.
- c. The US needs to recalibrate its relationships with the Gulf countries on the basis that they must have serious political and economic modernization, end the catastrophic war in Yemen, stop meddling in political transitions in places such as Libya and Sudan, and agree to find a way back to an updated nuclear deal with Iran.
- d. Burns found it "hard to see how Israel's long-term security interests, let alone its future as a Jewish democracy, are served by the emergence of a one-state solution, with Arabs in the majority in the land Israel controls from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean. In that circumstance, Hashemite Jordan, a sturdy partner of the United States for many years, could be collateral damage, with the Israeli right reviving its efforts to export Israel's demographic problem to the other side of the Jordan River." However, he considered the two-state solution "a vestigial hope."
- e. Europe remains a natural partner for the US in the Middle East—but an effective partnership will require the US to listen more and the Europeans to take on even more responsibilities.

7. The US Ambassador to the United Nations Linda Thomas Greenfield:¹⁶

The new US ambassador to the United Nations (UN) has little experience in Middle East affairs, for her experience is mainly in Africa and international organizations. This makes her hostile view of the UN not a continuation of the traditional US positions, especially in the State Department.

Thomas-Greenfield is expected to be guided by Biden, the Secretary of State and National Security Adviser at the UN Security Council.

Their position is in favor of alliances with like-minded states such as those in Europe, which is bad news for Israel. For these countries are in favor of concessions to Iran, and they believe that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is the major source of all problems in the Middle East. This would push the settlement of the Palestine issue forward, which Israel is trying to avoid in the current circumstances.



**Linda Thomas
Greenfield**

8. US National Security Council's Coordinator for the Middle East and North Africa Brett McGurk¹⁷

The experiences of the Coordinator for the Middle East and North Africa at the National Security Council Brett McGurk are in building coalitions against ISIS and in handling the Iraq issue. He was a key participant in the negotiation of Iraq's interim constitution and a senior advisor to Ambassador Ryan Crocker in Baghdad. He worked in a number of positions related to Middle Eastern affairs in the Obama and Bush administrations, and he is considered:



Brett McGurk

- a. An outspoken advocate of US military presence in Syria and a staunch detractor of the Turkish government.
- b. One of the most extreme against the armed Palestinian resistance, especially Hamas and Islamic Jihad.
- c. He considers the normalization agreements between Israel and Arab countries "warrant broad US support."

- d. Concerning Iran, he said that it is important to consider how best to protect US interests and maintain pressure on Iran without further increasing the risks of an unpredictable conflict.
- e. He shares Biden’s team their dissatisfaction with the Saudi policy in Yemen.

Second: The Outlook for US-Middle East Policy Under Biden’s Team

It is believed that the high staff turnover in the Trump administration (40 of the upper-level administration officials, most of whom were related to foreign policy in one way or another)¹⁸ will not be repeated in Biden’s administration, given the existing circumstances and Biden’s experience and balance, compared to Trump’s pathological narcissism, a diagnosis echoed by a large number of American psychiatrists and psychologists. This means that the new administration will have a more stable staff structure and more consistent policies.

It is noted that from 1947 (the establishment of Israel) until 2020, the US was presided by 13 presidents; 7 Democrats and 6 Republicans. During the same 73-year period, 17 wars or major battles erupted between the Arabs and Israel; 9 during the Democratic terms (53%) and 8 during the Republican terms (47%). This indicates that there is a very slim difference between the two parties in supporting the aggressiveness of Israel, as explained in the following table:

The Israeli-Arab Wars and Major Battles During the US Democratic and Republican Terms (Prepared by the author)

	War	Democratic	Republican
1	1948– Establishment of Israel	Harry Truman	
2	1956 – Tripartite Aggression		Dwight Eisenhower
3	1967 – Six Day War	Lyndon Johnson	
4	1968 – Battle of Karameh	Lyndon Johnson	
5	1969 – War of Attrition		Richard Nixon
6	1973 – October War		Richard Nixon

7	1978 – Israeli Invasion of Southern Lebanon	Jimmy Carter	
8	1982 – Lebanon Invasion		Ronald Reagan
9	1987 – First <i>Intifadah</i>		Ronald Reagan
10	1993 – Lebanon War	Bill Clinton	
11	1996 – Lebanon War	Bill Clinton	
12	2000 – Second <i>Intifadah</i>	Bill Clinton	
13	2006 – Lebanon War		George W. Bush
14	2008 – Gaza War		George W. Bush
15	2012 – Gaza War	Barack Obama	
16	2014 – Gaza War	Barack Obama	
17	2018 – Gaza War		Donald Trump
18	Total	9 Wars	8 Wars
19	Percentage (%)	52,94	47,06

The previous table indicates that the hypothesis of the correlation between peace and the US Democratic administration is not consistent with the historical trend of conflicts in the Middle East. The rate of wars between Arabs and Israel during Democratic terms is higher than that during Republican terms, which makes the tone of the political discourse of the new US administration a bit deceiving.

If we exclude the Low Probability-High Impact events or risks, the US policy is affected by the internal changes that we referred to in the introduction of this study, international changes, especially the policies of the central powers in the global system, and regional changes, especially regional active powers such as Israel, Turkey, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, etc.

Concerning Biden's foreign policy team, we notice the following:

1. Most of the team comes from political and legal backgrounds.
2. The rate of their consensus in is high, which means a stable administration with coherent strategy.
3. Most of them have strong links with Israel, which helps this team to absorb any tensions that may arise between Israel and the US.
4. Biden, Burns, Blinken and Sullivan may be the most influential in US foreign affairs.
5. The control of the Democrats over the House of Representatives on the one hand, and their achievement of balance with the Republicans in the Senate on the other hand, would make the Biden administration more capable of making decisions.



The common policies between US policy makers and the decision-makers may be defined as follows:

1. Life may return to the two-state solution, where discussions on a Palestinian state may range between being less than a viable state and more than a self-rule, living side by side with Israel.
2. Tightening the noose on resistance forces would continue, probably not militarily—although it may be used from time to time to support diplomatic activity. Pressure may range between “exerting pressure or delaying matters,” on the one hand, and luring with aid incentives, on the other hand. Regional states may be employed in the process.
3. The activities of the BDS movement may be restricted in the US, and in the countries most affected by US positions.
4. The continued settlement building in the West Bank may face more US opposition, however, there may be discussions concerning the land swap option, or facilities at the airport, port, or in land transportation for transporting and bringing in aid, trade and others.
5. It is unlikely that the US embassy will be returned to Tel Aviv.
6. The US may reconsider the decision to recognize the annexation of the Golan Heights to Israel.
7. The US will encourage more normalization between Israel and the Arab countries, but without overt pressure, like Trump did.
8. Secret diplomacy, or backchannel talks, will be a major feature of the Biden administration’s policies, especially on the most sensitive issues. It is a feature favored by most of his political team.
9. The negotiations between the US and Iran concerning the Iranian nuclear program will most likely take place, and their results of these talks will have the greatest impact on the alliances in the region, especially the US-Israeli relations and the US-Gulf relations. However, the changes in the Israeli and Iranian governments after the upcoming elections (Iran in February 2021 and Israel in March 2021) may also have an impact on these talks. The US team will most likely show some understanding of some of the Iranian demands for the following two reasons:
 - a. Most of Biden’s team do not prefer military confrontation and do not want the tensions with Iran worsen. So
 - b. Some of Biden’s senior staff share the notion that the Middle East’s degree of importance to the US has declined, in comparison to its importance in the post-World War II period until the end of the Cold War.

10. The Gulf states, especially Saudi Arabia, will be pressured by the US for some reform, especially political reform, however, without jeopardizing US interests.
11. US relations with global powers (China, Russia, and the European Union) will be less strained, and these new understandings will be used to pressure Middle East countries. However, US understandings with both Russia and China may experience some tension, especially concerning human rights and democracy issues.



12. The United Nations may be more effective in the next period, especially since Biden's team do not share Trump's administration position towards it.
13. There will be attempts to resolve the Kurdish issue, which would make the Syrian-Turkish rapprochement an imperative for their interests, so as to face the US and Israeli support of the Kurdish demands.

Based on the above, the Biden administration will try to exploit some cracks in the resistance axis walls, using the carrot and the stick strategy to extract concessions that make the US strategy viable. Nevertheless, the US-Israeli relations may suffer some "short-term tensions" over the US-Iranian relationship, the UN and the range of concessions to establish a Palestinian entity.

All of the above indicates that the Palestinians of the resistance axis must prepare for more pressure, which may not be necessarily military, rather economic, political, and media pressures, mixed occasionally with a military one. For they are required to accept the policies of the Palestinian Authority, in particular recognizing the Oslo Accords in one way or

another, which is very dangerous. Meanwhile, the Palestinian Authority will try to pressure the US to accelerate the implementation of the Oslo Accords.

All of the above provides a visualization of the Middle East scene and the bilateral US-Middle East interaction. However, this scene needs to be linked to the US-Global powers scene and their expected reactions to the above developments, which we will address later in another study.



- ¹ *The Washington Post* newspaper, 9/12/2020, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2020/12/09/biden-israel-saudi-arabia-middle-east>; Anne Marie Griebie and Aubrey Immelman, “The Political Personality of 2020 Democratic Presidential Nominee Joe Biden,” Working Paper No. 1.0, Unit for the Study of Personality in Politics, College of Saint Benedict and Saint John’s University, August 2020, https://digitalcommons.csbsju.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1131&context=psychology_pubs; The Power of America’s Example: The Biden Plan for Leading the Democratic World to Meet the Challenges of the 21st Century, <https://joebiden.com/americanleadership>; Heather Hurlburt, “Inside Joe Biden’s Foreign-Policy Worldview,” *Foreign Policy* magazine, 15/1/2021, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/01/15/joe-biden-foreign-policy-relationships-united-states>; and *Israel Hayom* newspaper, 8/11/2020, <https://www.israelhayom.com/opinions/back-to-the-clinton-era>
- ² L. S. Etheredge, “Personality Effects on American Foreign Policy, 1898–1968: A Test of Interpersonal Generalization Theory,” *American Political Science Review* journal, 72(2) 1978, pp. 434–451; and S. G. Walker (ed.), *Role Theory and Foreign Policy Analysis* (Duke University Press, 1987), pp. 161–198.
- ³ Views on Israel of U.S. Presidential Candidates 2020: Joe Biden, site of Jewish Virtual Library, <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/views-on-israel-of-u-s-presidential-candidates-2020-joe-biden>
- ⁴ Walid ‘Abd al-Hay, Academic Article: Trump’s Tour in the Arab Region and Its Future Implications, site of Al-Zaytouna Centre for Studies & Consultations, 1/6/2017, <https://eng.alzaytouna.net/2017/06/01/academic-article-trumps-tour-arab-region-future-implications-dr-walid-abd-al-hay/#.YBuyBiORrs0>
- ⁵ Views on Israel of U.S. Presidential Candidates 2020: Joe Biden, site of Jewish Virtual Library, <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/views-on-israel-of-u-s-presidential-candidates-2020-joe-biden>
- ⁶ *The Washington Post* newspaper, 9/12/2020, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2020/12/09/biden-israel-saudi-arabia-middle-east>
- ⁷ Joshua A. Parker and David A. Anderson, “The Reality of the So-Called Pivot to Asia,” *InterAgency Journal*, Command and General Staff College Foundation Press, Simons Center for Interagency Cooperation, Vol. 7, Issue 1, Spring 2016, pp. 5–14, <https://thesimonscenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/IAJ-7-1-Spring2016-5-13.pdf>

- ⁸ Views on Israel of U.S. Presidential Candidates 2020: Kamala Harris, Jewish Virtual Library, <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/views-on-israel-of-u-s-presidential-candidates-2020-kamala-harris>; and Anne Marie Griebie, Aubrey Immelman and Yitao Zhang, “The political personality of 2020 Democratic vice-presidential nominee Kamala Harris,” Working Paper No. 1.0, Unit for the Study of Personality in Politics, College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University, September 2020, http://digitalcommons.csbsju.edu/psychology_pubs/131
- ⁹ *The Washington Post*, 11/1/2021, https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/doug-emhoff-kamala-harris-husband/2021/01/11/30ec038a-50e5-11eb-83e3-322644d82356_story.html
- ¹⁰ Site of The Times of Israel, 24/11/2020, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/where-blinken-stands-on-jewish-issues-from-immigration-to-israel/>; site of Cleveland Jewish News, https://www.clevelandjewishnews.com/jns/biden-s-foreign-policy-appointments-and-what-they-might-mean-for-israel/article_c1a63f48-33e5-578a-9d1f-43a10ac87c3b.html; *The New York Times* newspaper, 31/1/2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/31/opinion/to-defeat-isis-arm-the-syrian-kurds.html>; and Jacob Kornbluh, A closer look at Biden's foreign policy team, site of Jewish Insider, 24/11/2020, <https://jewishinsider.com/2020/11/biden-blinken-foreign-policy>
- ¹¹ *The Jerusalem Post* newspaper, 24/11/2020, <https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/israel-can-sleep-easy-with-bidens-top-foreign-policy-picks-analysis-650147>; *Politico* newspaper, 27/11/2020, <https://www.politico.com/news/2020/11/27/jake-sullivan-biden-national-security-440814>; site of *algemeiner*, 19/1/2021, <https://www.algemeiner.com/2021/01/19/questions-for-incoming-national-security-advisor-jake-sullivan/>; and *Politico*, 3/4/2015, <https://www.politico.com/story/2015/04/hillary-clintons-secret-iran-man-116647>
- ¹² *The Times of Israel*, 9/12/2020, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/biden-pitches-retired-general-lloyd-austin-for-us-secretary-of-defense>
- ¹³ *The Middle East in Transition*, A Brookings Center for Middle East Policy, United States Central Command Conference, Washington, D.C., 22/7/2015, <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Centcom-Proceedings-FINAL.pdf>; Mark Perry, “Lloyd Austin Isn't Who You Think He Is,” *Foreign Policy*, 16/12/2020, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/12/16/lloyd-austin-isnt-who-you-think-he-is/>; *The Jerusalem Post*, 8/12/2020, <https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/will-austins-appointment-see-israel-move-from-eucom-to-centcom-651479>; and Statement of General Lloyd J. Austin III Commander U.S. Central Command before the House Armed Services Committee on the Posture of U.S. Central Command, 3/3/2015, site of The U.S. House of Representatives, Document Repository, <https://docs.house.gov/meetings/AS/AS00/20150303/103076/HHRG-114-AS00-Wstate-AustinUSAL-20150303.pdf>
- ¹⁴ *The Times of Israel*, 11/1/2021, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/biden-taps-veteran-diplomat-william-burns-to-head-cia/>; *Haaretz* newspaper, 12/1/2021, <https://www.haaretz.com/middle-east-news/.premium.HIGHLIGHT-biden-william-burns-cia-director-where-iran-policy-israel-1.9441607>; and William J. Burns, “An End to Magical Thinking in the Middle East,” site of Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 8/12/2019, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2019/12/08/end-to-magical-thinking-in-middle-east-pub-80520>, cited from *The Atlantic* magazine.
- ¹⁵ William J. Burns, *The Back Channel: A Memoir of American Diplomacy and the Case for Its Renewal* (Random House, 2019), pp. 112–146, 293–236, and 388–424.
- ¹⁶ Site of Cleveland Jewish News, https://www.clevelandjewishnews.com/jns/biden-s-foreign-policy-appointments-and-what-they-might-mean-for-israel/article_c1a63f48-33e5-578a-9d1f-43a10ac87c3b.html; and Jacob Kornbluh, A closer look at Biden's foreign policy team, site of Jewish Insider, 24/11/2020, <https://jewishinsider.com/2020/11/biden-blinken-foreign-policy>
- ¹⁷ Site of Stanford News, 11/1/2021, <https://news.stanford.edu/thedish/2021/01/11/biden-picks-brett-mcgurk-for-middle-east-role-at-the-national-security-council/>; site of Middle East Eye, 8/1/2021, <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/biden-appoints-staunch-turkey-critic-brett-mcgurk-national-security-council>
- ¹⁸ Site of British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), 15/12/2020, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-39826934>

