



Middle East Spotlight

Israel: A Year-End Review

As 2017 comes to an end, a look back at Israel's achievements over this past year is truly inspiring. Indeed, the tiny Jewish state made an out-sized contribution to the world. As we review but a small selection of her highlights in diplomacy, technology, culture and more, we can be proud of the role that Israel plays in the world and the role that we, as pro-Israel Americans, play in Israel's success.

This past year brought major diplomatic breakthroughs and contributions. Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India, a country with over 170 million Muslims, made history as the first Indian head of state to visit Israel since the two countries established formal diplomatic relations in 1992. In addition, two Muslim-majority countries—Senegal and Guinea—sent official envoys to Israel for the first time ever. Moreover, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu met with Malian President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, whose Muslim-majority country does not have diplomatic relations with Israel.

In addition, the privately-funded humanitarian organization IsraAID applied Israel's disaster-response experience to provide humanitarian assistance around the world, to include Germany, Greece, Jordan, Kenya, Liberia, Nepal, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Uganda and the United States.

Israeli technology continued to shine this year as well. The nation's SpacEL team was named one of five finalists in the multi-million dollar Google Lunar XPrize race to the moon. Separately, as part of an international research project, NASA launched a small satellite built by Israeli high school students into space from the Kennedy Space Center in Florida.

In medicine, an Israeli scientist developed an early diagnostic test for Parkinson's disease, for which she won the 2017 Kaye Innovation Award. And in transportation safety, Intel paid \$15.3 billion for Mobileye—an Israeli company that develops cutting-edge driver assistance technologies—the largest acquisition deal in Israel's history.

Israel made several notable cultural achievements: Israeli Gal Gadot became an international motion picture mega-star in the title role of "Wonder Woman," which set numerous box office records. Also, the Israeli student film "Roads" set the Guinness World Record for winning the most awards for a short film in the history of cinema.

And in sports, Israelis placed first in the European NASCAR Championship, first in judo at the Tashkent Grand Prix and Abu Dhabi Grand Slam tournaments, second at the Artistic Gymnastics World Championships, and sixth at the World Baseball Classic.

Israel may be a tiny nation, but it has a big heart and big achievements. In 2017, the state of Israel and her citizens inspired and improved the world by innovating and achieving against great odds.