



Middle East Spotlight

Israel's 70th Anniversary

On May 14, we will celebrate Israeli's 70th anniversary. This is a momentous occasion, not only for Israelis but for people around the world—virtually all of whom have benefitted in some way from Israel's existence.

Since its establishment in 1948, the Jewish state has provided an outsized contribution to humanity. From water, renewable energy and medicine, to intelligence, cyber defense and homeland security, Israeli advancements and innovations improve and preserve countless lives in Israel, America and around the world.

Israelis have brought cutting-edge water technology to drought-stricken Africa and California, administered natural disaster relief to Nepal and Houston, and supplied life-saving technologies used by U.S. service members serving overseas.

In just 70 years, the Jewish state has managed to produce 12 Nobel Laureates, among the highest number per capita in the world. Regularly ranked among the most innovative countries in the world, Israel has attracted major research centers of international companies including Apple, Google, Microsoft, Amazon and Facebook.

Despite perennial threats emanating from regional conflicts and hostile neighbors, Israel is ranked the 11th happiest country in the world, as well as sixth in the world in terms of its "health-adjusted life expectancy," according to the U.N.'s annual World Happiness Report.

For the past 70 years, the U.S.-Israel alliance has helped ensure Israel's security in a hostile region. This important bilateral relationship has also provided the United States with unparalleled intelligence and technological advancements that help keep Americans safe.

The U.S.-Israel relationship is about more than just security. In March, Congress appropriated money to establish a U.S.-Israel Center of Excellence in renewable energy and water innovation. This center will expand cooperation in these cutting-edge technologies that better our planet and people's lives.

In recent years, cooperation between Israel and some of its moderate Arab neighbors has reached previously unimaginable levels. While much of this cooperation remains unpublicized, to be sure, these new relationships represent an incredible achievement—catalyzed by a combination of Israeli ingenuity and innovation and a strong and unwavering U.S.-Israel partnership.

Given its tumultuous existence—a small nation surrounded by enemies—Israel's survival alone after 70 years would be worth celebrating. It is truly a blessing what this remarkable nation has been able to accomplish in such a short period of time, and against all odds.

In 1949, Winston Churchill declared, "The coming into being of a Jewish state in Palestine is an event in world history to be viewed in the perspective not of a generation or a century, but in the perspective of a thousand, two thousand or even three thousand years." Given Israel's miraculous first 70 years, we can only imagine what Israel will be able to accomplish by then.