
Subject: Israel's Recognition of Somaliland
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Good morning. Following Israel's recognition of the Republic of Somaliland on December 26th, numerous experts and officials weighed in on the geopolitical significance and implications for the U.S. Ahead of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's meeting with U.S. President Donald Trump and an emergency UN Security Council session on the matter later today, please find some notable reactions and additional context below.

Global Support for Israel's Recognition of Somaliland

- Israel is the first country to officially recognize Somaliland.
- The recognition was formalized by PM Netanyahu, Foreign Minister Sa'ar, and Somaliland's President Abdirahman Mohamed Abdullahi with a joint declaration and agreement to open embassies and appoint ambassadors.
- The recognition comes with Somaliland's stated intention to accede to the Abraham Accords, signaling continuity with U.S.-brokered normalization efforts in the region.

Geostrategic Importance of Somaliland

- On the Gulf of Aden, near the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, and adjacent to the Red Sea - key chokepoints for global trade and security.
- Recognition provides Israel with a stable, democratic partner in a volatile region, countering Iranian and Houthi influence.

The Case for U.S. recognition of Somaliland

- Somaliland is a rare success story: stable, democratic, self-sustaining, and not reliant on international aid
- Somaliland has resisted Chinese intimidation, choosing instead to deepen relations with Taiwan – making it one of only two African nations with formal ties to Taiwan.
- AFRICOM Commander Gen. Dagvin Anderson visited Somaliland earlier this month, the latest in nearly a dozen War Department delegations
- This summer, Senator Ted Cruz called on the Trump Administration to recognize Somaliland, following a comment by President Trump indicating his team is also "looking into" the prospect of recognizing Somaliland.
- Chairman of the Select Committee on the CCP John Moolenaar and Chairman of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China Chris Smith are pressing the State Department to formally distinguish Somaliland from Somalia in its travel advisory.
- Earlier this year, Rep. Scott Perry introduced the Republic of Somaliland Independence Act, which would formally recognize Somaliland as an independent

nation and strengthen the bilateral relationship between the U.S. and Somaliland.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu: I announced today the official recognition of the Republic of Somaliland as an independent and sovereign state. Together with Foreign Minister Sa'ar and the President of the Republic of Somaliland, we signed a joint and mutual declaration. This declaration is in the spirit of the Abraham Accords, signed at the initiative of President Trump. I congratulated the President of Somaliland, Dr. Abdirahman Mohamed Abdallah, and praised his leadership and commitment to promoting stability and peace. I invited the President to pay an official visit to Israel. The President thanked me for this historic declaration and expressed appreciation for my achievements in fighting terrorism and advancing regional peace. I thank Foreign Minister Sa'ar, the Head of Mossad David Barnea and the Mossad, for their contribution to today's development, and I wish the people of Somaliland success, prosperity, and freedom. The State of Israel plans to immediately expand its relations with the Republic of Somaliland through extensive cooperation in the fields of agriculture, health, technology, and economy.

**Gideon Sa'ar,
Minister of**

Foreign Affairs of Israel: I was glad to speak just now with the President of Somaliland Abdirahman Mohamed Abdullahi, on this important day for both countries. Over the past year, based on an extensive and ongoing dialogue, relations between Israel and Somaliland have taken shape. Following the decision of @IsraeliPM Benjamin Netanyahu and the President of Somaliland Abdirahman Mohamed Abdullahi, today we signed an agreement on mutual recognition and the establishment of full diplomatic relations, which will include the appointment of ambassadors and the opening of embassies. We will work together to promote the relations between our countries and nations, regional stability and economic prosperity. I have instructed my ministry to act immediately to institutionalize ties between the two countries across a wide range of fields.

Ambassador Tibor Nagy, Former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Africa & Former U.S. Ambassador to Guinea and Ethiopia: Hooray! Israel recognizes Somaliland! A great first step. Can the U.S. and Ethiopia be far behind? Opens a new chapter in Horn political and economic dynamics! The house of cards isolating Somaliland is collapsing!



Dr. J. Peter Pham, Former U.S. Special Envoy to the Sahel & Great Lakes Regions of Africa: In his official statement greeting #Israel 🇮🇱's recognition of the Rep. of #Somaliland, President @Abdirahmanirro announces the "firm intention" of @Presidencysl_ & Gov't to accede to the historic #AbrahamAccords initiated by #USA 🇺🇸 under leadership of @POTUS @realDonaldTrump.

Nigel Farage, Member of UK Parliament & Leader of Reform UK: Somaliland deserves this status.

Joshua Meservey, Senior Fellow, Hudson Institute: Wow. A historic moment as Israel becomes the first country to recognize Somaliland. It almost certainly won't be the last. Recognizing SL's independence is recognizing simple reality, including that it isn't worthwhile to sacrifice relations with SL in hopes Mogadishu will emerge from its dysfunction.

Mark Dubowitz, CEO, Foundation for Defense of Democracies: For those mocking why Israel would engage Somaliland: look at the map. Somaliland sits on the Gulf of Aden, next to the Bab el-Mandeb—a chokepoint for global trade and energy. Across the water are Iran-backed Houthis firing on Israel & shipping. Somaliland offers stability, ports, intelligence access, and a non-Iranian platform on the Red Sea. Similar reason why the U.S. has a military base in Djibouti.

FOX News: Rep. Ilhan Omar's defense of Somalia's territorial claims and her opposition to the recognition of an independent Somaliland has been criticized as authorities ramp up investigations into alleged mass fraud in her home state. One analyst argued the corruption scandal allegedly involving Somali communities in Minnesota is relevant when contrasting failures in Somalia and the stability of Somaliland, an autonomous region that Omar has opposed recognizing.

Michael Rubin, Senior Fellow, American Enterprise Institute: President Donald Trump will meet with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on December 29, 2025, but the U.S. president appears reticent about recognizing Somaliland, as Israel did on December 26. Trump should reconsider. For reasons of U.S. national security, but also as he battles rampant Somali corruption in Minnesota and Rep. Ilhan Omar's efforts to undermine his own policies on assistance and immigration, he could make no better response than to recognize Somaliland independence.

Mark Levin, Podcast Host: We freedom loving Americans congratulate the free loving people of Somaliland on Israel's recognition of your independent and sovereign nation.

Wafula Okumu, former African Union official: The [African Union's] reaction is a missed opportunity to reward a beacon of stability in a volatile region and a failure to apply its own founding principles with wisdom and foresight. A closer examination of the AU's own records and the current leadership of the AU Commission reveals a position that is not only hypocritical but also deeply compromised by a clear conflict of interest.

Seth Frantzman, PhD, Adjunct Fellow at The Foundation for Defense of Democracies:

There are a lot of takes on Israel's recognition of Somaliland that see it as some kind of grand strategy and rivalries in the Red Sea sea that span the Middle East and Gulf of Oman somehow creating a massive puzzle of rivalries or "great game" that links Israel, UAE, Egypt, Sudan, Iran, Houthis, Saudi, Turkey, Qatar, and other powers... However, a lot of the strategic aspects of Somaliland could have been achieved without recognition; if Israel wanted X or Y quietly, all of that could have already been done. The UAE invested in the port of Berbera without recognition. Recognition is something else; it's about moving the needle on official policy or international ties for Somaliland. Unless it's some spur of the moment thing; it seems to be more than just some 3-D chess of Red Sea strategy and rivalry.

Amjad Taha, Analyst & Political Strategist: Congratulations to all Somalilanders. The world will and must recognize Somaliland as a model of democratic coexistence and stability in Africa, standing against the Muslim Brotherhood and Islamist jihadists in Somalia and across Africa. Israel's recognition of the Republic of Somaliland as an independent and sovereign state today is BRAVE, HISTORIC, and fully in the spirit of the Abraham Accords.

Asher Lubotzky, Senior Research Fellow, Israel-Africa Relations Institute: There is also a larger geopolitical dimension. Somaliland has positioned itself as explicitly opposed to Chinese and Turkish subversion in the Horn of Africa and as open to deeper integration with Western security architectures, including the Abraham Accords... Israel's recognition of Somaliland is therefore not an act of diplomatic symbolism but a calculated move grounded in security, geography, and political realism. It acknowledges facts on the ground that have existed for decades and aligns Israel with a partner whose interests increasingly converge with those of the US. Washington needs to follow suit.

Ahmed Fouad Alkhatib, Fellow, Atlantic Council (12/26/25): Somaliland: A New Country? Israel's recognition of the independence of the Republic of Somaliland comes with immense signals that will test Arab reactions and cohesion. The Territory's rulers and people have spent three decades building security, economic stability, international relations, and a political identity that is separate from the federal state of Somalia, a failed nation plagued by war, poverty, and instability. Somaliland's position in the Horn of Africa is unlike that of any other country, as it lies near the Bab al-Mandab Strait, the Gulf of Aden, Yemen, Ethiopia, and Djibouti. Israel will leverage its relationship with Somaliland to establish intelligence and military outposts that can further erode Houthis influence and power over maritime security, not to mention the ability to launch projectiles at Israel in case of future conflict.

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