

# **MEI FACTSHEET**

No. 07

Thursday, 23 June 2011

## **India-Israel Documents, Part 1**

### **WikiLeaks**

**[Note:** Unlike other democracies, India does not adhere to the 30-year principle of declassifying official papers. More than six decades after independence, most of the foreign policy documents are not available to researchers. Seen in this context, the few US documents released by *WikiLeaks* are extremely valuable. Hence the MEI@ND will publish these documents periodically and thematically. There will be constant updates with links to documents earlier published.

However, as part of its editorial policy, the MEI@ND standardizes spelling to make the text uniformly accessible and stylistically consistent.

Portions *not relevant to India or the concerned theme* are marked by this notation {...}. Portions omitted in the original are marked by either by ..... or xxxx or <> as they appear in the original.]

\*

#### **1. Year 2009: U/S Tauscher's December 1-2 Visit to Israel**

Reference ID	09TELAIVIV2757
Created	2009-12-22 09:22
Released	2011-02-09 21:00
Classification	SECRET
Origin	Embassy Tel Aviv

Classified By: A/DCM Marc Sievers, reasons 1.4 (b), (d)

1. (S) Summary: Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security Ellen Tauscher visited Israel December 1-2. U/S Tauscher focused her visit on setting the stage for a successful Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference (RevCon) in May 2010. She consulted with GOI interlocutors on potential strategy in addressing Egyptian insistence on pushing for the establishment of a nuclear weapon free zone (NWFZ) in the Middle East, as a way to divert attention from Iran to Israel. U/S Tauscher reiterated that the United States will not take any action to compromise Israel's security and would consult closely with Israel -- which GOI officials greatly appreciated. Nevertheless, U/S Tauscher said the United States is interested in exploring possible small steps involving Israel to address some of Egypt's NWFZ concerns regarding the lack of implementation of the 1995 resolution. GOI officials for the most part were critical of these tactics, questioning why Israel should be portrayed as part of the problem. They recommended a more direct approach to President Mubarak --thereby circumventing the Egyptian MFA -- in which Egypt is reminded that Iran is the regional nuclear threat. Other topics discussed include President Obama's arms control and non-proliferation agenda, the P5 1 process and Iran's nuclear program, the FMCT and CTBT, Jordan's plans for a nuclear reactor, and Israel's qualitative military edge (QME). End summary.

2. (SBU) U/S Tauscher met with National Security Advisor Uzi Arad on December 1. Arad was accompanied by NSC Senior Advisor and Nuclear Security Summit Sherpa Gil Reich. In a separate meeting on December 1, U/S Tauscher met with MFA Director General Yossi Gal, Deputy Director General for North America Baruch Bina, and Deputy Director General for Strategic Affairs Alon Bar. U.S. participants for the Arad and Gal meetings included Political Counselor Marc Sievers, T Senior Advisor James Timbie, NSC's Adam Scheinman, and political military officer Jason Grubb. U/S Tauscher met for dinner with Israel Atomic Energy Commission (IAEC) and MFA senior officials on December 1, including IAEC Director General Saul Chorev, Deputy Director General David Danieli, and Director for Policy and Arms Control Merav Zefary-Odiz, as well as MFA DDG Bar and Director for Arms Control Rodica Radian-Gordon. On December 2, U/S Tauscher met for breakfast with MOD Political-Military Chief Amos Gilad; U.S. attendees included Charge D'Affaires Luis Moreno, Timbie, Scheinman, and Grubb.

{...}

18. (S) Arad characterized these steps as "talking endlessly" -- that is "not progress," he said. He was uncomfortable discussing Israel NPT compliance, especially as Israel is not a party to the treaty. He also raised concerns regarding the definition of the Middle East NWFZ -- did it also include Pakistan, India and Iran, for example? Arad said such questions should be posed to Cairo -- if Egypt is willing to include Pakistan in its definition of a Middle East NWFZ, then we can take that as a signal that Cairo is ready for a serious conversation on the matter.

{...}

30. (S) Chorev described the FMCT as "very difficult" for Israel. Scheinman confirmed that negotiations would be based on the 2006 draft FMCT text, with an added verification regime that is being worked on -- he described the verification regime's definitions as "critical" in that regard. Danieli questioned the FMCT's added value, arguing that it would have little impact. He asked who was the FMCT's real target -- India, Pakistan or even Israel?

{...}

**WikiLeaks Link:** <http://www.wikileaks.ch/cable/2009/12/09TELAIVIV2757.html>

---

## **2. Year 2009: India Will Likely Continue to Support UNGA**

Reference ID	09NEWDELHI2342
Created	2009-11-19 12:57
Released	2011-03-25 01:00
Classification	CONFIDENTIAL
Origin	Embassy New Delhi

Classified By: POLCOUNS Uzra Zeya for Reasons 1.4 (B, D)

1. (C) The Indian Mission to the UN in New York will vote in favour of resolutions that reaffirm support for the three UN institutions devoted exclusively to Palestinian issues as New Delhi remains unwilling to review its policy on Israeli-Palestinian issues. On November 18, PolCouns conveyed Ref A points to Indian Ministry of External Affairs Joint Secretaries for UN Political (UNP) and UN Economic and Social (UNES) Divisions urging them to review their policy on the redundant and costly institutions and request their permanent representative to the UN Mission in New York to abstain or be absent when these and other UN resolutions with an anti-Israel bias came to a vote.

2. (C) In reply, Director of UNP Division, Sanjay Rana, told Poloff on November 19 that India would not change its position on such resolutions. Despite Delhi's ongoing consideration of such resolutions, the Indian Government has a "consistent and strong position" on the Israeli-Palestinian debate, Rana explained. He reiterated the statement made in early November by the Indian Deputy Envoy to the UN that "India's commitment to the Palestinian cause is complete." Poloff noted our objections to such resolutions stem largely from the fact that their one-sidedness only detracts from the institutional credibility of the UN and damages the peace process.

3. (C) Comment: Despite India's good relations with Israel, India's interests in fora like the UN are usually in lock-step with Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) countries, especially on issues related to the Middle East (Ref B). The Indian Government is likely to remain inflexible on its UN voting strategy through the 64th UN General Assembly and continue to support resolutions with an anti-Israel bias. Its aim is to stay in good favour with NAM countries which presumably would support India's candidacy for a non-permanent seat during October 2010 UN Security Council elections. End Comment.

ROEMER

**WikiLeaks Link:** <http://www.wikileaks.ch/cable/2009/11/09NEWDELHI2342.html>

---

### **3. Year 2009: India Will Not Support USG Position on Goldstone Report**

Reference ID	09NEWDELHI2227
Created	2009-11-04 13:29
Released	2011-03-25 01:00
Classification	CONFIDENTIAL
Origin	Embassy New Delhi

Classified By: POLCOUNS Uzra Zeya for Reasons 1.4 (B, D)

1. (C) PolCouns delivered reftel demarche on November 4 to Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) Joint Secretaries for UN Political (UNP) and UN Economic and Social (UNES) Divisions and emphasized the significance the USG would place on India's support for opposing a resolution based on the biased conclusions of the Goldstone report. UNES Under Secretary Abhishek Verma told Poloff during a conversation later the same day that India will retain the same position as it held in Geneva (Read: India will vote in favour of the resolution proposed by the Arab Group, the NAM, and the African Group), explaining that official positions on such issues take a long time to change.

2. (C) Comment: India is likely to continue to vote along with Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) countries on issues related to the Middle East as it seeks to build up support for its candidacy for a non-permanent seat in the run up to October 2010 UN Security Council elections. End Comment.

ROEMER

**WikiLeaks Link:** <http://www.wikileaks.ch/cable/2009/11/09NEWDELHI2227.html>

---

### **4. Year 2009: Indian Government Noncommittal on Goldstone Report**

Reference ID	09NEWDELHI1998
Created	2009-09-25 12:44
Released	2011-03-25 01:00
Classification	CONFIDENTIAL
Origin	Embassy New Delhi

Classified By: POLCOUNS Uzra Zeya for Reasons 1.4 (B, D)

1. (C) Poloff delivered reftel demarche to Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) Under Secretary for United Nations Economic and Social (UNES) Division Abhishek Verma on September 24. Verma explained this issue was being examined at senior levels within the Ministry and declined to offer a substantive response at this stage. Poloff emphasized to Verma that India's support for a balanced resolution, based on an unbiased approach to the Goldstone report, was of great importance to the United States.

2. (U) Post will continue to express our strong interest in this matter and will report progress septel.

ROEMER

**WikiLeaks Link:** <http://www.wikileaks.ch/cable/2009/09/09NEWDELHI1998.html>

---

### **5. Year 2009: Indian Charge in Riyadh on Saudi-Indian Relations**

Reference ID	09RIYADH1170
Created	2009-09-09 07:36
Released	2011-03-18 01:00
Classification	SECRET
Origin	Embassy Riyadh

Classified By: CDA Ambassador Richard Erdman for reasons 1.4 (B) and (D)

#### SUMMARY

-----

1. (C) According to Indian Charge d'Affaires Rajeev Shahare, the Saudi-Indian relationship has blossomed since King Abdullah's visit to India in 2006. The economic relationship has made great strides, and India hopes the political relationship will eventually follow suit. Bilateral sticking points include obstacles to business investment; poor treatment of Indian labourers in the Kingdom; differences of opinion regarding Israel and Pakistan; and concerns that Saudi funding could promote extremism in India's large Muslim community. A stronger Saudi-Indian relationship can bolster U.S. interests insofar as it enhances regional stability, supports political moderation, and advocates for more open investment and economic development. END SUMMARY.

{...}

#### SUPPORT FOR BOTH ISRAEL AND THE PALESTINIAN CAUSE

7. (C) The Saudis remain critical of India's good relations with Israel, and the Indian government finds it necessary to re-explain its position on its friendship with the Jewish state. ""We repeatedly remind them we were among the first to recognize a state of Palestine, with Jerusalem as its capital,"" and that the Indian commitment to the Palestinian cause remains unwavering. However, India must put its national interest first, and there are compelling pragmatic reasons for its relationship with Israel. ""We have 1.2 billion people to feed,"" Shahare said, noting Israel's expertise in the field of dry-land farming as an incentive for cooperation. He pointed to the Saudi media's description of an Indian-launched Israeli communications satellite as ""a spy satellite that would watch Arabs,"" as unfortunate.

{...}

ERDMAN

**WikiLeaks Link:** <http://www.wikileaks.ch/cable/2009/09/09RIYADH1170.html>

---

## **6. Year 2009: Codels Casey and Ackerman Meet with Defence Minister Barak**

Reference ID	09TELAIVIV1177
Created	2009-06-02 06:19
Released	2010-11-28 18:00
Classification	CONFIDENTIAL
Origin	Embassy Tel Aviv

Classified By: DCM Luis G. Moreno, reasons 1.4 (b, d)

1. (C) Summary: Post hosted two CODELS during the week of May 25: one from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee led by Senator Casey, the other from the House Committee on Foreign Affairs led by Congressman Ackerman. Both delegations met with Defence Minister Ehud Barak, who conveyed similar points on the Peace Process and Israel's concerns about Iran. End summary.

{...}

8. (C) In both meetings, Barak said "no option should be removed from the table" when confronting Iran and North Korea; engagement will only work in conjunction with a credible military option, he said. Barak said he was personally sceptical that engagement would lead to an acceptable resolution, and argued in favour of a paradigm shift to confront the triple threat posed by nuclear proliferation, Islamic extremist terrorism, and rogue/failing states. He said a strategic partnership with China, Russia, India, and the EU is essential in facing these threats. Barak argued that failure to prevent a nuclear-armed Iran would result in a nuclear arms race in the region as Turkey, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia look to acquire nuclear weapons.

{...}

**WikiLeaks Link:** <http://www.wikileaks.ch/cable/2009/06/09TELAIVIV1177.html>

---

## **7. Year 2009: Indian Views on Engaging Iran**

Reference ID	09NEWDELHI451
Created	2009-03-09 12:34
Released	2011-03-15 00:00
Classification	CONFIDENTIAL//NOFORN
Origin	Embassy New Delhi

Classified By: Acting POLCOUNS Lesslie Viguerie for Reasons 1.4 (B, D)

1. (C) Summary: Indian experts on the Indo-Iranian relationship describe it as stable but somewhat shallow. It is nurtured by both sides simply to maintain a friendly partner in

the region. Our contacts encouraged the U.S. to engage Iran bilaterally rather than use India or any other third party as an intermediary. Despite optimism by some on the potential political/security benefits of the Iran-Pakistan-India natural gas pipeline, an element of friction in our relationship. Post maintains its long-standing assessment that this is a project unlikely to come to fruition. End Summary.

2. (C) Comment: Much of India's Iran policy is designed for public consumption by the domestic Muslim and Non-Aligned Movement audience. We can expect that India will continue an active dialogue with Iran through high-level visits and working groups, at times in ways that are likely to appear to us as too much "business as usual." Still, it is indeed because U.S. and Indian interests in Iran are drawing closer than before -- from issues ranging from nuclear weapons to regional stability to the Israel factor -- that we can look to Delhi as a factor in our strategies on Iran. Post contacts seemed unanimous in asserting that India's Iran policy runs independently of its U.S. policy; however, they point out that when common interests converge, we can expect India to be supportive. The key, therefore, is to proactively work with India to highlight these interests. End Comment.

{...}

5. (C) However, despite official proclamations in Tehran and Delhi that the Indo-Iranian relationship is longstanding, stable and substantial, some experts here question the depth of the relationship. Bhadrakumar says the relationship has "atrophied", and Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) professor of Middle East studies, Dr. P.R. Kumaraswamy, refers to such high-level visits as nothing more than "goodwill visits," explaining that there is no real substance beyond their symbolic nature.

{...}

#### Using India's Leverage to Engage Iran, Israel

11. (C) Despite the belief held by many here that using India as an intermediary for dealing with Iran is not plausible, a few Indo-Iran watchers see some opportunities for the U.S.-Indian strategic partnership to be leveraged to encourage a less aggressive dialogue between Israel and Iran.

12. (C) Israeli cooperation with India has grown over the past decade. According to both Indian and Israeli press reports, Israel is overtaking Russia as the main defence supplier to India after breaking the \$1 billion mark in new contracts signed annually over the past two years, and the Indo-Israeli relationship, while still relatively young, might be ripe enough to incorporate dimensions other than defence sales. According to Kumaraswamy, India more heavily values its relationship with Israel than it does its relationship with Iran.

{...}

WHITE

**WikiLeaks Link:** <http://www.wikileaks.ch/cable/2009/03/09NEWDELHI451.html>

---

### 8. Year 2008: India Censures Israeli Strikes in Gaza

Reference ID 08NEWDELHI3248  
 Created 2008-12-29 12:52  
 Released 2011-03-15 00:00  
 Classification CONFIDENTIAL  
 Origin Embassy New Delhi

Classified By: POLCOUNS Ted Osius for Reasons 1.4 (B, D)

1. (U) The Government of India has over the last two days condemned the air strikes Israel carried out in the Gaza Strip and urged an "immediate end to use of force against Palestinian civilians in Gaza that has resulted in large number of casualties". The GOI statement, released by the External Affairs Ministry on the same day Israel launched the air strikes, follows India's past practice of publicly condemning Israeli actions for public consumption, yet privately protecting healthy bilateral relations.

2. (C) The Israeli Embassy in New Delhi was not surprised by the reaction from the Indian government. Israeli DCM Belotsercovsky told PolOff that considering the large Muslim vote bank that Indian politicians are trying to appeal to in the general elections - scheduled for April or May 2009 - India's response was "relatively moderate." The fact that the Indian Ministry of External Affairs also acknowledged the Palestinian's "cross-border provocations resulting from rocket attacks particularly against targets in southern Israel" was reassuring to Belotsercovsky, who said that although not happy with India's response, the Israelis were "not very much depressed" about it either.

3. (C) According to Congress Party MP Raashid Alvi, the Indian reaction to Israel's actions was "a routine, fill-in-the-blanks type statement" and nothing substantial should be read into it. India has very strong ties with Israel and needs its cooperation to counter terrorist attacks in the future. With Parliamentary elections around the corner, the ruling party feels it must make such statements to keep its Muslim constituency pacified, Alvi told PolOff.

4. (C) Comment: The Government of India again walks a tightrope influenced by its election cycle. It must convey to Israel that it understands Israel's current plight while doing its diplomatic duty to condemn what is seen by many here as oppressive tactics. From time to time Muslim leaders in India organize protests when they feel the GOI has not taken a strong enough stance against Israel during heightened periods of violence, and it is likely that by quickly condemning the air strikes, the Indian government felt it could pre-empt such demonstrations. End Comment.

MULFORD

**WikiLeaks Link:** <http://www.wikileaks.ch/cable/2008/12/08NEWDELHI3248.html>

---

### 9. Year 2008: U/S Rood Dialogue with Israel: Non-Proliferation

Reference ID 08TELAVIV1693  
 Created 2008-08-04 12:22



Released 2011-05-04 00:00  
Classification CONFIDENTIAL  
Origin Embassy Tel Aviv

Classified By: Classified by Charge d Affaires Luis Moreno for reason 1.4 (b) and (d).

1. (U) On July 16, Acting Under Secretary John Rood held a Strategic Affairs Dialogue with members of the GOI, including MFA, Israeli Defence Intelligence (IDI), and the Israel Atomic Energy Commission (IAEC). This is the last of three cables covering the dialogue, focusing on non-proliferation and arms control. The previous cables (ref A and B) discussed Iran and Syria.

{...}

9. (C) The GOI explained that they support civilian nuclear programs, but have been raising their concerns over controls with other countries, including France, Canada, the Netherlands, India, Japan, Germany, South Korea, and the UK. Israel is most concerned about indigenous conversion and online refuelling. Germany, notably, did not agree. Israel is also against additional research reactors in the region, which the IAEA seems to encourage, pointing out that there is enough research capacity. France and the UK both agreed.

{...}

**WikiLeaks Link:** <http://www.wikileaks.ch/cable/2008/08/08TELAIVIV1693.html>

---

### **10. Year 2008: 08NEWDELHI1972**

Reference ID 08NEWDELHI1972  
Created 2008-07-17 13:23  
Released 2011-03-27 01:00  
Classification SECRET  
Origin Embassy New Delhi  
Classified By: Charge D'Affaires Steven White for Reasons 1.4 (B and D)

1. (C) SUMMARY. Foreign Secretary Shiv Shankar Menon and his delegation departed for Vienna on July 17 to brief the 35 Board members of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and another 19 members of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) on the U.S.-India Civil Nuclear Cooperation Initiative. In Delhi, government officials responded positively to suggestions about how to address concerns emerging from Vienna, particularly the need to begin negotiating an IAEA Additional Protocol and for the IAEA to circulate India's (INFCIRC) already-public separation plan as an official IAEA document. Political horse-trading continued in anticipation of the special session of parliament to consider the confidence vote on July 21 followed by the vote itself on July 22. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader L.K. Advani each plan to host a dinner for supporters on July 20; the parties will presumably have to choose one or the other. An estranged Congress Party MP and three

Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) MPs publicly stated their intention to vote against the UPA, leaving the government still clinging to a slim majority. Small parties representing collectively about 20 votes find themselves with generous suitors; one party chief has reportedly succeeded in having the Lucknow airport renamed after his father. The unrequited Left continued its anti-government rant, but showed signs of internal strain. *Lok Sabha* Speaker Somnath Chatterjee refused to resign despite pressure from within the Communist party to do so and has made it clear that he was not in favour of the Left voting with the opposition BJP against the government, a position that seems to have resonance among comrades disinclined to face early elections. END SUMMARY.

{...}

Disagreements Among Comrades: Left Shows Signs of Strain - - -

14. (SBU) The Left continued its rant against the government. The Community Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M) Polit Bureau grouched that the Prime Minister's Office set a "dangerous precedent" by meeting industrialist Mukesh Ambani on July 14, during which Ambani reportedly offered help in securing Shiv Sena support for the UPA government. The CPI-M said the government's rejection of the use of force against Iran by Israel was "timely," but that it would only be credible if the government were to cut military ties with Israel.

{...}

WikiLeaks Link: <http://www.wikileaks.ch/cable/2008/07/08NEWDELHI1972.html>

### **11. Year 2008: Israel Polishing its Image—and its Hardware—in India**

Reference ID	08NEWDELHI892
Created	2008-03-28 09:39
Released	2011-03-19 01:00
Classification	CONFIDENTIAL
Origin	Embassy New Delhi

Classified By: PolCouns Ted Osius for Reasons 1.4 (B, D)

1. (C) SUMMARY. The recent strategic dialogue between Israel and India, while not producing any new agreements, was viewed as a positive step at greater cooperation and coordination between the two countries. Israel is taking steps to create a shinier image of itself as a friend of the Indian people, to match its image as India's premier supplier of defence technology. In the long term, Israel hopes to counter the effects of the Left's recently increasing attacks on the Indian government's closer ties to Israel.

END SUMMARY.

STRATEGIC DIALOGUE

2. (C) In a March 25 meeting, Israeli Deputy Chief of Mission Eli Belotsercovsky provided Poloffs with a readout of the March 10-11 India-Israel Strategic Dialogue. Belotsercovsky reported that although there were no announcements of new agreements or initiatives, Israel sees the fact that the dialogue took place in a cordial atmosphere as a sign of a healthy relationship. Additional Secretary (Political and International Organizations) Vivek Katju led the Indian delegation, which Belotsercovsky indicated was a pleasingly high level as far as Israel was concerned, and led discussions focused on Iran and nuclear non-proliferation in the region, Central Asia, Afghanistan, energy and the economy. Belotsercovsky cited dialogue on the issues of financing of narcotrafficking and money laundering as being particularly ripe for future cooperation. An added benefit of the discussions being held in Tel Aviv was increased awareness of India with a sector of the Israeli bureaucracy that heretofore didn't know much about India.

#### POSITIVE VIBES, BUT DEARTH OF ISRAEL INFO AMONG INDIANS

3. (C) Turning to Israel-India ties in general, Belotsercovsky told Poloffs that Israel was viewed more favourably by the Indian public than in the past, and that the Israeli government was taking steps to capitalize on the improved image. In focus groups in Delhi and Mumbai conducted by the Israeli Embassy, Indians regardless of status generally held favourable views of Israel, Belotsercovsky said, but had very limited knowledge about the country, even among educated professionals. The focus groups, results show that most Indians do not have enough information to possess a good understanding of Israel but view Israel overall as a friend to the Indian people. Belotsercovsky noted that their polling suggested many Indians actually see Israel as a model for dealing with Muslims, something the Israeli Embassy makes efforts to downplay.

#### INDIAN LEFTISTS OPPOSE CLOSER INDO-ISRAELI TIES

4. (C) Belotsercovsky said the purpose of conducting the public opinion research was to improve Israel's image in the India public while at the same time limiting attempts by India's Left parties to demonize Israel and counter its bitter rhetoric at Indo-Israeli cooperation on defence. Belotsercovsky postulated the Left's anti-Israel attacks were more frequent and voracious than any other time since formalization of relations in 1990.

5. (C) P R Kumaraswamy, a professor at New Delhi's Jawaharlal Nehru University, in a separate conversation with Poloff, agreed with Belotsercovsky's assessment, saying that in the past decade, India's Communist parties have criticized the government's strategic ties with Israel and judge this as a betrayal of the Palestinians and harmful to India's interests. According to Kumaraswamy, Leftists even argued that closer military ties were the result of the ""anti-Muslim agenda"" of Israel and the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). He noted that since December 2007, the parties of the Left, and Indian Muslims, have used the occasion of India's successful launch of a remote sensing satellite to lob a fresh barrage of vitriol at the UPA-led government, claiming that &India

is aiding the military efforts of Israel<sup>8</sup> and that the government is showing &unforgivable insensitivity to the Palestinians and Iran.<sup>8</sup>

6. (C) Despite the Left's critiques, Belotsercovsky pointed out that bilateral ties, buoyed by defence trade, are vibrant. The Indian government is the largest purchaser of Israeli arms, and Israel, already India's second largest arms supplier, could surpass Russia soon for the top spot. A few days after he publicly informed parliament of the USD 1.4 billion Barak missile cooperation with Israel in July 2007, Indian Defence Minister A K Antony told Indian media, ""Successive governments since 1992 have had defence ties with Israel. This is not new. And the relation is not ideological, but purely based on our security requirements.""

COMMENT: WE CAN LEARN FROM THE ISRAELIS, SUCCESS IN INDIA

7. (C) Comment: Israel appears to have some problems identical to--and other problems that are the opposite of--those the U.S. has in India: Whereas the U.S. polls positively with the Indian public on a regular basis yet still butts against entrenched scepticism in the bureaucracy towards closer relations with the USG, Israel faces a huge knowledge gap among the public yet sees India's government comfortably dismiss the Left's criticism of its launch of Israel's satellites and its skyrocketing purchases of Israeli defence technology. We will remain engaged with the Israeli Embassy and follow whether its public relations strategy to win hearts and minds has any success in swaying the general public while defusing attacks from India's Left. Israel's success in this area could yield strategies for the USG's own efforts at bridging the gap between the Indian public's enthusiasm and the government's scepticism of the U.S. Meanwhile, Belotsercovsky said that Israel welcomes increased Indian participation in the peace process, and is urging India to contribute to concrete projects and more people-to-people exchanges. If India and Israel, two of the strongest democracies in Asia, are able to solidify their relationship and move beyond missiles and satellites, that could be good news for U.S. interests between Tel Aviv and New Delhi. End comment.

MULFORD

**WikiLeaks Link:** <http://www.wikileaks.ch/cable/2008/03/08NEWDELHI892.html>

---

**12. Year 2007: Israel Pleased with Progress in Relations with India and China**

Reference ID	07TELAVIV3517
Created	2007-12-13 17:41
Released	2011-06-08 04:00
Classification	CONFIDENTIAL
Origin	Embassy Tel Aviv

Classified By: Political Counselor Marc Sievers, reason 1.4 (b) and (d)

1. (C) SUMMARY: On December 4, PolCouns and PolOff met with newly-appointed Deputy Director General for Asia and the Pacific (A/S EAP and SCA equivalent) Ruth Kahanoff to discuss Israel's relations with India and China. . . .

## China Has Great Respect for Israel

2. (C) Kahanoff said that relations with China had now completely recovered from several cold years following the “Falcon crisis” when Israel cancelled a military contract with China at the insistence of the United States. She said that military cooperation with China is now very minor and tightly controlled, with full transparency with the U.S. As a result of this incident, Kahanoff explained, Israel enacted new legislation on technology transfers which created a special committee in the MoD to review technology transfers and required the MFA to review these transfers, with the right to veto them. She noted that before the Falcon crisis, the MFA had no role in the transfer of military technology. She also added that all Israeli contacts with China take into account Israel's special relationship with the United States.

3. (C) She said China has tremendous respect for Israel and the Jews (which they often see as interchangeable), even if they do not always vote with Israel at the UN. The Chinese also see Israel as a laboratory of modern economic development, but are also interested in the kibbutzim as an example of “true socialism.” On Taiwan, Israel fully supports the one-China policy, although Israel maintains trade relations and political contacts with Taiwan and has hosted several high-level Taiwanese visits from Taiwan without problems from China. She described the relationship with China as expanding, reaching USD 4 billion in annual trade, and Israel will soon open a new consulate in Guangzhou. . . .

5. (C) Kahanoff emphasized that Iran has been the focus of political discussions with China, including the recent visit to Beijing by FM Livni. She believes Israel has had some success by arguing that Iran jeopardizes regional stability, which Kahanoff termed a key interest for China. Furthermore, because China wants to avoid a military strike on Iran, Israel has been emphasizing that tougher sanctions make a military strike less likely. Kahanoff believes China is moving on this issue, citing a Reuters report that Chinese banks have started to make credit letters very difficult for investments in Iran.

6. (C) On the Middle East peace process, Kahanoff thinks the Chinese want to get involved, but not too involved. China is sometimes critical of Israeli policy, but increasingly understands Israeli concerns. She said China's Middle East chiefs of mission were meeting in Amman over the weekend to discuss regional strategy. She pointed out that the Chinese recently appointed a special envoy, but he is an Arabic-speaking retired professional diplomat who does not speak English and carries little weight. Kahanoff theorized that having such a low profile envoy allows China to show commitment without risking alienating the Muslim world.

## India: Its Trade and Defence

7. (C) Kahanoff explained that the current relationship with India is dominated by defence cooperation and other trade. She noted that initially 95 percent of the trade between Israel and India was diamonds, but diamonds are now down to 70 percent, and

there is significant investment in real estate and businesses on both sides as both countries' economies continue to liberalize. The Bank of India has just opened a branch in Israel to support its investors. Trade is now at USD 2.7 billion per year with a goal to reach USD 5 billion in two years. . . .

8. (C) Despite these positive aspects, Israel is concerned about the lack of high-level visits and other exchanges with India. The last visit by an Indian Foreign Minister was in 2000, with a November 2007 visit called off at the last minute. Sharon was the last Israeli Prime Minister to visit India, in 2003, and no Indian Prime Minister has ever come to Israel. Giora Becher, MFA Director for South East Asia who also attended the meeting, added that visits were actually better under the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government.

9. (C) Kahanoff believes India is restrained in the relationship by its large Muslim population, their concern about relations with the Arab world, and lingering elements of the Non-Aligned Movement/Nehru ideology. . . . She also said the Muslim Vice President of India recently gave a speech attacking Israel, which she sees as a sign that India is still trying to find its place in the world.

{...}

#### Pakistan and Malaysia: No Progress

12. (C) Israel has also been reaching out to Pakistan and Malaysia. Kahanoff was pleased that Pakistan openly admitted to a recent meeting between their Foreign Minister and FM Livni in Istanbul. However, she lamented that it turned out to be an isolated incident with little enthusiasm from Pakistan for any follow-up, even low-key people-to-people exchanges. India is also concerned about Pakistan/Israeli contacts, so Israel has adopted a “no surprises” policy of keeping India informed if anything happens with Pakistan.

13. (C) Malaysia, she said, is a lot more complicated. While Malaysia has accepted providing visas to Israeli participants in conferences, Kahanoff described the process as very tough. Beyond this, Malaysia has resisted any other contact. . . .

JONES

**WikiLeaks Link:** <http://www.wikileaks.ch/cable/2007/12/07TELAIVIV3517.html>

---

### **13. Year 2007: U/S Burns' August 17 Meeting with Israeli Mossad Chief**

Reference ID	07TELAIVIV2652
Created	2007-08-31 12:45
Released	2011-05-19 23:30
Classification	SECRET
Origin	Embassy Tel Aviv

Classified By: Ambassador Richard H. Jones. Reasons: 1.4 (b) (d).

-----  
SUMMARY  
-----

1. (S) In an August 17 meeting, Israeli Mossad Chief Meir Dagan thanked Under Secretary Burns for America's support of Israel as evidenced by the previous day's signing of an MOU that provides Israel with USD 30 billion in security assistance from 2008-2018. {...}

**PAKISTAN: ISRAEL WORRIED ABOUT MUSHARRAF**

16. (S) On Pakistan, Dagan said that President Musharraf is losing control, and that some of his coalition partners could threaten him in the future. The key question, Dagan said, is whether Musharraf retains his commander-in-chief role in addition to his role as president. If not, he will have problems. Dagan observed that there has been an increase in the number of attempts on Musharraf's life, and wondered whether he will survive the next few years. Under Secretary Burns replied that South Asia has assumed vital importance in American foreign policy since September 11. The U.S. is committed to denying Afghanistan as a safe-haven for Taliban and Al-Qaeda activity. The USG will continue to support Pakistani President Musharraf, and is seeking to boost his military defensive capabilities. At the same time, the U.S. is encouraging Pakistan and Afghanistan to work with each other militarily. Turning to India, Under Secretary Burns noted that U.S.-Indian economic cooperation is growing, and that the USG is working effectively to reduce tensions between India and Pakistan.

{...}

**WikiLeaks Link:** <http://www.wikileaks.ch/cable/2007/08/07TELAIVIV2652.html>

---

**14. Year 2006: Olmert Tells Codel Specter He is Sceptical about Syria Absent Credible Signals**

Reference ID	06TELAIVIV5004
Created	2006-12-29 14:22
Released	2011-05-04 00:00
Classification	CONFIDENTIAL
Origin	Embassy Tel Aviv

Classified By: Ambassador Richard H. Jones. Reason 1.4 (B/D)

1. (C) Summary: Senator Arlen Specter (PA) briefed Prime Minister Olmert on President Assad's willingness to negotiate with Israel. Specter noted that Assad had expressed a willingness to exert Syrian influence over Hamas, and pledged to cooperate with the Hariri assassination investigation and UNSCR 1701 implementation. Olmert indicated that he expects a credible signal of seriousness from the Syrian leader before he would consider negotiations. Olmert stressed that his first priority is the Palestinian track, but he also indicated that he does wish to make peace with Syria. End Summary.

{...}

Iran

9. (C) Senator Specter asked Olmert for his assessment of Iran, sharing his own impression from meetings in India that the Indians are allies. Olmert stressed that Iran was a "moral issue of the highest priority." Olmert said the UN measures were "very important," but he thought that other measures could be taken as well, even if they are not all taken by the UN Security Council. {...}

**WikiLeaks Link:** <http://www.wikileaks.ch/cable/2006/12/06TELAIVIV5004.html>

---

**15. Year2006: IPSC PD IMO RES ECON DCM DAO AMB AID ADM RSO**

Reference ID 06TELAIVIV4604  
Created 2006-11-24 13:02  
Released 2011-05-19 23:30  
Classification SECRET  
Origin Embassy Tel Aviv

Classified By: Classified by Charge Gene Cretz. Reasons: 1.4 (b) (d).

1. (S) During a November 12 meeting, <> Chief Meir Dagan told Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism (APHSCT) Frances Fragos Townsend that USG efforts to designate Iranian banking facilities have proven effective and are forcing the Iranians to move their funds to banks in the Gulf States and the Far East. {... }

2. (S) Dagan said that Treasury Department designation of Iranian banking facilities has succeeded in its aims and has proven very effective. The Iranians are now preoccupied with this problem and trying to move funds to banks in the Gulf States and Far East, specifically India, China ((MLM: Dagan specifically noted Hong Kong)), Taiwan, and Singapore. He added that the Iranians are also encountering difficulties with European banks. Dagan urged the U.S. to continue to move in this direction. He noted that the <> has sent some of its own people to Europe to keep up the bank pressure on Iran. He said that Iran's economic situation is weak, and that this is causing bankers and the Iranian middle class to increase their criticism of Ahmadinejad and his regime. He said that they are increasingly concerned that Ahmadinejad's policies are going to lead Iran into "financial disaster." Dagan added that Credit Suisse, UBS and a number of Japanese banks have asked Iran not to do business with them anymore.

{...}

**WikiLeaks Link:** <http://www.wikileaks.ch/cable/2006/11/06TELAIVIV4604.html>

---

**16. Year 2006: India Balancing Relations with Israel and Hamas**

Reference ID 06NEWDELHI2227  
Created 2006-03-31 12:48  
Released 2011-03-15 00:00  
Classification CONFIDENTIAL  
Origin Embassy New Delhi



Classified By: DCM: Robert Blake for Reasons 1.4 (B, D)

1. (SBU) Summary: India is walking a tightrope as its defence and trade ties with Israel grow, even as the Hamas victory forces a delicate accommodation of popular Indian Muslim support for the Palestinians. As an emerging global power, New Delhi recognizes that it cannot afford to alienate either the Palestinians or Israelis, as this could endanger Indian defence interests or provoke a domestic backlash. Following the Israeli elections, New Delhi hopes to avoid being forced publicly to choose between its pragmatic strategic relationship with Tel Aviv and its sentimental attachment to the Palestinians. End summary.

#### INDIA & ISRAEL: ATTRACTION AND CAUTION

2. (SBU) India's bilateral relationship with Israel continues to flourish with growing defence ties, trade links and opportunities for high tech collaboration. However, with a large Muslim population that plays a critical role supporting the ruling Congress in national elections, India has historically supported Palestinians in multinational fora and considered itself a strong supporter of Palestinian self-determination. The Indian elite also sees a reflection of its own anti-colonization history in the Palestinian experience, causing New Delhi to maintain its rhetorical support for Palestinians even as its working relationship with Israel expands. While India opposes Hamas' radical ideology, the GOI puts a high value on being seen to support the legitimately elected Palestinian government. As India's strategic horizon expands there is a growing perception in New Delhi that if Arab nations like Jordan can keep their traditional ties with the Palestinians intact and at the same time build up new relations with Israel, India can do the same.

#### GOI SLOW TO REACT TO HAMAS VICTORY, THEN WAFFLES

3. (C) Israeli DCM Yoed Magen told us on March 14th that the Israeli Prime Minister's office tried to contact the Indian PMO to discuss the victory of Hamas after the January election but got "no response." Israeli NSA Maj. Gen. (Retd.) Giora Eiland, visiting India January 31-February 2, raised the issue with his interlocutors, including Indian NSA Narayanan and GOI Middle East Envoy C. Gharekhan. Gharekhan was silent on the Quartet statement during the first meeting, Magen reported, but the next day, after an Egyptian statement of support, Gharekhan stated that the GOI did not oppose the Quartet demands and would not expect Israel to negotiate with a group whose objective was to destroy Israel. Magen added that India would be unlikely publicly to endorse any demands on the Palestinian Authority by Israel because it would indicate political closeness with Israel.

#### BUSINESS AS USUAL WITH ISRAEL

4. (C) Despite Hamas however, the practical relationship between Israel and India continues to progress smoothly. Magen emphasized that commercial, agriculture and defence links between India and Israel were very positive. Nevertheless "there exists a distinct gap between India's commercial and political strategies". India and Israel plan

to negotiate a preferential trade agreement starting April 2006. According to media reports on March 30, India and Israel have also agreed to hold their first joint military exercise. This exercise in India will provide Israel with access to huge air space for combat exercise. This exercise when it happens, would mark a major uptick in the public profile of the Israel-India military relationship.

#### HAMAS SEES AN OPENING

5. (C) Speaking with PolCouns on March 17, special envoy Gharekhan underlined that he had made no decisions about when next to travel to the Palestinian territories. US concerns "will be a factor in my timing," Gharekhan added. Indian Minister of State for External Affairs, E. Ahamed finally provided a high-level (and unhelpful) GOI response to the Palestinian elections, telling media on March 26, "What was Likud before it came to power in Israel, Hamas is no different (sic)." He added that the reluctance of Israel to hand over territories was proving to be a "huge stumbling block" on the road towards peace. Israeli Ambassador David Danieli briefed the DCM on March 27 regarding Israel's frustration with the GOI's blandishments on talking to Hamas. Israel believed that such a dialogue would be "counterproductive," because it would "ease pressure on Hamas to moderate its position." The Israeli government had raised the issue with Additional Secretary (International Organizations) K.C. Singh, but Ambassador Danieli reported that he was in "listening mode" only. Hamas sees opportunity in India's waffling. Indian media on March 30 reported remarks made by Palestinian Authority Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh urging India to play an active role in the Middle East peace process since "India has been one of the leaders of the Non-Aligned Movement and has a sound recording of upholding democratic principles". Press reports also stated that he thanked India for its steadfast support for the Palestinian cause.

#### ACADEMICS SPLIT ON NEW DELHI'S NEXT MOVE

6. (C) Professor A.K. Pasha, Chairperson at the Centre for West Asian and African studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) told PolOff on March 20 that India still sees "a ray of hope that Hamas would moderate its radical views." He speculated that if Israel undertook military action it would be unrealistic for India to urge Hamas to refrain from violence. Although India would support cooperation between Israel and Palestine, the GOI will "not be the first" to endorse any moves." Pasha added that censuring the Hamas government would do no good to India in light of the strong support for the Palestinian people in Indian society.

7. (SBU) Fellow JNU Professor of West Asian Studies P.R. Kumaraswamy told PolOff on March 20 that the GOI would continue to wait until other states lay out their positions following Israeli elections before taking a position on Israeli-Palestinian relations. "India has never been the first to take a stand on Palestine issues," he noted, adding that the GOI would most likely avoid any bold statements unless violence "gets out of control." Kumaraswamy pointed out that despite widespread Indian sympathies for the Palestinians, the GOI was never close to Hamas because they were anti-Arafat. However, he noted that the Indian political Left sees Hamas as only another religious-

based party analogous to the Hindu nationalist parties in India and reasons as a result that it can be similarly accommodated.

8. (C) Anticipating Ahamed's later statements, Kumaraswamy speculated that if push came to shove, the GOI would rhetorically side with the Hamas government to placate domestic Muslim constituencies. However, he continued, India would more likely attempt to preserve its profitable relation with Israel by continuing to issue anodyne statements urging both sides to seek a negotiated solution to the conflict.

9. (C) Supporting Magen's observations, Kumaraswamy added that New Delhi does not want to say anything that might depict India as being 'friendly to Israel in public.' Kumaraswamy also suggested that India would likely continue its low-key assistance projects for Palestinians but keep interactions with Hamas to a minimum.

#### GOI FOLLOWING THE HERD YET AGAIN

10. (C) Despite the results of the Israeli elections, India has so far chosen to remain silent regarding Olmert's victory in Israel. In order to avoid ruffling Muslim sentiments within the country, India does not want to be among the first nations to respond to Olmert's victory. India will wait until other nations voice their opinions and only then may decide to speak up, if forced or if advantageous to do so, a feature typical of the GOI when it comes to reacting particularly about Middle Eastern issues, given the importance of the Muslim vote bank to the ruling Congress party.

#### COMMENT: GUTLESS IN PUBLIC

11. (C) New Delhi's initial reticence and Minister Ahamed's supportive statements for the Hamas government reflect the UPA's dependence on its Muslim constituency and the emotional resonance of the Palestinian issue here. While Ahamed's unhelpful comments highlight the GOI's weak spot on terrorism when it relates to Palestinians, Ahamed's statements should be taken in the context of his position as chief of the Kerala Muslim League as Kerala heads for state elections. The underlying straddle of meek statements about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict combined with full-steam-ahead engagement with Israel on practical and strategic matters is unlikely to change. We should not expect any public courage from India anytime soon when it comes to condemning Hamas or reacting on Olmert's recent victory. Pragmatism trumps moral clarity in Delhi's Middle East policy.

#### MULFORD

**WikiLeaks Link:** <http://www.wikileaks.ch/cable/2006/03/06NEWDELHI2227.html>

---

### **17. Year 2006: U.S.-Israel JPMG Follow-Up: Israeli Response to U.S. Proposed Defence Sales to Region**

Reference ID                      06TELA VIV1009  
Created                              2006-03-13 15:37

Released 2011-05-04 00:00  
Classification SECRET  
Origin Embassy Tel Aviv

1. (C) On March 2, Israeli MOD POL-MIL Bureau Senior Coordinator for Strategic Dialogues and Defence Cooperation Rami Yungman passed poloff the nonpaper in paragraph six --Israel's response to a U.S. presentation on proposed defence sales to the Middle East that was made at the January 11 U.S.-Israel Joint Political-Military Group (JPMG) meeting. Yungman said that the Israeli response fulfils one of the action items agreed by the U.S. and Israeli delegations at the JPMG.

{...}

4. (S) Yungman also noted that the Israelis are travelling to other countries for their annual Strategic Dialogues. Within the next few months, Israeli delegations will visit France, Germany and the UK. Turkey will send a delegation to Israel in July. The MOD was represented in a delegation that travelled to India for Israel's Strategic Dialogue with India in December. The Indians will send a delegation to Israel in September to follow up. Yungman said Israel also has talks that are not quite at the SD level -- but are similar -- with Jordan and Egypt. He added that Israel DefMin Mofaz would soon travel to Germany and Romania.

{....}

**WikiLeaks Link:** <http://www.wikileaks.ch/cable/2006/03/06TELAVIV1009.html>

---

### **18. Year 2006: Iran-IAEA: Israeli Atomic Energy Commission**

Reference ID 06TELAVIV688  
Created 2006-02-15 15:57  
Released 2011-05-19 23:30  
Classification SECRET  
Origin Embassy Tel Aviv

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

SUBJECT: IRAN-IAEA: ISRAELI ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION  
REVIEWS ISRAEL'S DISCUSSIONS WITH RUSSIANS

1. (S) In a February 7 meeting, Israeli Atomic Energy Commission (IAEC) Director General Gideon Frank told Ambassador Jones the following:

{...}

15 E

Israel believes that the U.S. could help other diplomats understand the IAEA's reports correctly. The Indians told IAEC staff member Merav Zafary recently that they do not have the information they need to justify a stronger position on Iran to the Indian public and their own political left. Frank and Levite complained that Norway is not being helpful at the IAEA, but they did not elaborate.

{... }

**WikiLeaks Link:** <http://www.wikileaks.ch/cable/2006/02/06TELAIVIV688.html>

---

### **19. Year 2005: India-Syria Relations**

Reference ID	05NEWDELHI6841
Created	2005-09-06 13:54
Released	2011-03-18 01:00
Classification	SECRET
Origin	Embassy New Delhi

Classified By: A/DCM Geoff Pyatt for Reasons 1.4 (B, D)

1. (S/NF) Summary: Indian West Asia Envoy Gharekhan's recent trip to Syria was focused on Iraq. India's broader interests in Damascus include Syria's influence on the Israel-Palestine conflict and Iraq, and the GOI's desire to burnish relations with the Muslim world. End Summary.

#### Gharekhan's Visit to Syria

2. (S/NF) Charge and PolCouns met Indian West Asia Envoy Chinmaya Gharekhan on August 10. In the course of that meeting, they inquired about his June trip to Damascus per Ref A. Gharekhan related that his meeting with Syrian Foreign Minister Shara was focused on Iraq, and India's desire to be involved in Iraq's future. Shara used the meeting as an opportunity to insist on Syria's innocence of charges that it has supported infiltration of insurgents into Iraq. Gharekhan told us that he conveyed to Shara India's message that words are not enough, but that Syria needs to show action in clamping down on fighters crossing the border -- not to appease the US, but to maintain good ties with the new Iraqi government.

3. (S/NF) Gharekhan commented that he was passing along Shara's statement ""for what it's worth,"" implying that he did not believe Syria's claims of innocence.

#### Gharekhan's Role in Policy

4. (S/NF) On August 31, Poloff quizzed retired Ambassador to Iran and Saudi Arabia Hamid Ansari, now a member of the Prime Minister's National Security Advisory Board, on Indian policy in the Middle East and Gharekhan's role. Ansari believed that Gharekhan acts as both envoy of the Foreign Minister and a source of policy input to the GOI on policy toward Syria. Gharekhan is sufficiently senior that he could report to the

Prime Minister, Foreign Minister or Foreign Secretary as he wished, Ansari said, but gave his opinion that he commonly reports to Foreign Minister Natwar Singh. However, Ansari added, the Middle East is sufficiently important to India that there is no lack of interest from the Foreign Minister and Foreign Secretary in making policy.

#### Indian Interest in Syria: Not Much?

5. (S/NF) In general, India's bilateral relations with Syria are very thin. India's interests in the Middle East are drawing more high-level attention in the GOI than in the past, but the foci of those interests are:

-- Gulf Cooperation Council countries, for their predominant share of India's oil supplies, and the large number of Indians working in those countries (Ref D);

-- Iran, which India sees as a growing energy source, an important balancing neighbour on Pakistan's opposite border, a Muslim swing state, and India's access point to Central Asia (Ref E); and

-- Israel-Palestine, both for India's growing strategic and defence relationship with Israel, and its historical rhetorical support for Palestinian statehood (important for domestic politics).

In contrast, Syria falls outside of any of the standard Indian areas of concern in the Middle East, and there are few, if any, shared interests. Our contacts tell us that India's prime concern with Syria is for its influence on the Israel-Palestinian conflict, where India is trying to carve out a role for itself, after recognizing New Delhi's increasing marginalization. The other current interest, as illustrated by Gharekhan's recent Damascus visit, is India's desire to find low-risk options for re-engaging on Iraq.

#### Why Engage Syria?

6. (C) Greater engagement with Middle East states, including Syria, fits into two broader goals of Indian foreign (and domestic) policy, particularly under the ruling UPA government. The UPA derives an important portion of its support from India's 150 million Muslims, and it came to power in May 2004 with a stated goal of recalibrating India's relations with the Muslim world, especially on the Palestinian question. Portraying itself as a defender of Muslims in India and a champion of the Palestinian cause, the UPA has made reinvigorating ties with Middle East and Muslim countries a high priority. The second goal is to rally support for India's perennial battle to be admitted in some status to the Organization of the Islamic Conference, which has been critical of India's Kashmir stance. Although both of these goals derive mostly from domestic electoral political considerations, rather than strictly foreign policy objectives, New Delhi has recognized that its lacklustre relations with Arab and Muslim states have become a foreign policy liability, and is working to rectify that (Ref D).

7. (S/NF) As part of these broader goals of deeper engagement in the Middle East, New Delhi has floated suggestions recently that it could play a mediating role in the Israel-Palestinian conflict, as a state with growing working relations with Israel and (at least) bona fides in the eyes of Palestinians (Note: Ref C reports on the latest disappointing India-Israel interaction. End Note). However, given its generally weak relations with most Middle Eastern countries and lack of gravitas, most dismiss this vision as unrealistic.

MULFORD

**WikiLeaks Link:** <http://www.wikileaks.ch/cable/2005/09/05NEWDELHI6841.html>

---

## **20. Year 2005: GOI Visitor Disappoints Israel**

Reference ID	05NEWDELHI6735
Created	2005-09-01 13:22
Released	2011-03-16 00:00
Classification	SECRET
Origin	Embassy New Delhi

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

Classified By: A/DCM Geoff Pyatt for Reasons 1.4 (B, D)

1. (S) Israel DCM Yoed Magen gave us an unexpectedly downbeat readout of the August 28 visit to Jerusalem by MEA Secretary East Rajiv Sikri, reporting that Sikri appeared SIPDIS more often to be the representative of the Palestinians, rather than India. The Israelis went all out for this visit, supplementing the formal Foreign Office talks (led by Deputy Director-General for Asia and Pacific Amos Nadai) with a call on Deputy Prime Minister Silvan Shalom. Magen reported that Indian Ambassador to Tel Aviv Arun K. Singh seemed shocked by Sikri's unreformed positions on issues like disengagement, adding that the Indian delegation appeared completely unmoved by changes sparked by Arafat's death, the Gaza withdrawal, and strengthened India-Israel ties. ""It was like nothing had changed,"" the Israeli DCM concluded.

2. (S) Because Sikri insisted that the draft joint statement should be datelined Tel Aviv (vice Jerusalem), the Israelis refused to issue any document. Magen also confirmed that the Israeli Embassy had been the source for a recent front page story and editorial in the pro-BJP Pioneer criticizing India for its failure to acknowledge the Gaza withdrawal. The MEA earlier rebuffed the Israeli Embassy when it asked for a statement on Gaza, saying that disengagement was only one step in a long process.

Comment: Profiles in Cowardice

3. (C) The contrast in public approaches between the NDA and UPA government could not be more stark. The continued old-think in MEA (Ref A) clashes with India's proposal

during the visit last week of Israel's Chief Scientist Eli Opper to expand the soon-to-be-established USD 2 million per year joint Indo-Israeli R&D fund to USD 25 million. (Note: The fund envisions supporting Indo-Israeli biotech, nanotech, space, water and alternative energy projects. End Note) It also stands in marked contrast to India's expanding defence trade with Israel. The GOI is willing to get down to business with Israel in defence, commercial, and scientific areas (Ref B). However, the foreign policy establishment remains mired firmly in the past as the Congress-led UPA ( beholden to India's 130 million Muslims for a chunk of its political support) continues to posture itself as the defender of Palestinian ambitions. The net result of this duplicity is that others have done more with Israel than the UPA.

4. (U) Visit New Delhi's Classified Website: [www.state.sgov/p/sa/newdelhi](http://www.state.sgov/p/sa/newdelhi)

MULFORD

**WikiLeaks Link:** <http://www.wikileaks.ch/cable/2005/09/05NEWDELHI6735.html>

---

### **21. Year 2005: Scene-setter for Admiral Fallon's April 13-16 Visit**

Reference ID	05NEWDELHI2550
Created	2005-04-05 14:21
Released	2011-03-28 01:00
Classification	SECRET
Origin	Embassy New Delhi

1. (C) Summary: Admiral Fallon, we welcome your upcoming visit to India, coming at a time of excellent relations in a fast maturing defence cooperation relationship. You also come soon after Secretary of State Rice's first visit last month, which has been characterized as the most successful visit of any US Secretary of State. Secretary Rice proposed a new and greatly expanded strategic relationship, specifically based on the US pledging to help India realize its vision to become a world power in the 21st Century. Secretary Rice proposed a number of new initiatives on her trip, including: starting a strategic dialogue to discuss global security problems, and regional issues such as disaster response planning (tsunami), and Nepal and Bangladesh. A newly launched defence initiative will assess India's defence requirements and areas for defence cooperation to include issues of defence transformation and advanced technology. She also proposed starting a high-level dialogue on energy security to include civil-nuclear issues, and a working group to strengthen space cooperation. The Secretary and the GOI also agreed that we will revitalize our economic dialogue to address legacy problems and establish conditions to enable robust growth in exports and investments. She also conveyed the President's invitation to Prime Minister Singh to visit Washington this summer. Secretary Rice also indicated that the US Government will authorize American firms to compete in a tender for the purchase of 126 multi-role combat aircraft, including the F-16 and F-18. This visit has produced the most substantial agenda for US-India cooperation ever. As the first senior level visitor following Secretary Rice, your views and public comments will be closely scrutinized by the media and GOI officials looking for clues as to how we will fulfil the Secretary's ambitious vision and how quickly we will move forward.



{...}

Israel

40. (C) Despite the return to power of India's traditionally pro-Palestinian Congress party, the robust Indo-Israeli relationship established under the previous government does not appear to have lost steam, at least privately. This is largely a result of India's growing reliance on Israel for military hardware, technology, and training, and Israel's streamlined and less public arms sales process. Although official figures are not available, Israel appears to be India's number two supplier of military hardware (behind Russia). Most recently, India signed a \$1.5 billion contract for three Phalcon airborne radars. Previous deals included infantry and special forces equipment, UAVs, aircraft avionics, Barak missiles, sensors for defence above the LOC, Green Pine radars, and assorted munitions. New Delhi is also considering acquiring the Arrow ATBM from Israel, and is a strong contender for a multi-billion dollar contract to upgrade and modernize the Indian Army's artillery. Recent reciprocal visits by top brass from both armies are paving the way for the first ever joint military exercises between the two countries which may be held in India some time in 2005. Publicly the UPA government has been less willing to embrace Israel than previous BJP government because of Congress' longstanding ties to the Palestinians.

{...}

**WikiLeaks Link:** <http://www.wikileaks.ch/cable/2005/04/05NEWDELHI2550.html>

---

**As part of the policy, the MEI@ND standardizes spellings and date format to make the text uniformly accessible and stylistically consistent. The views expressed here are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views/positions of the MEI@ND. Editor, MEI@ND P R Kumaraswamy**