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Biden Needs to Tear Down Bureaucratic Walls and Refocus Middle East Programs

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Apr 1, 2021

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Also published in *The Hill*

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With few exceptions, the U.S. government has pursued Arab development, Israeli-Palestinian engagement, and Arab-Israel normalization as three separate, walled-off tracks, which no longer makes any sense.

A new reality stands before us: With the Abraham Accords, half the Arab population of the Middle East and North Africa now live in countries with formal diplomatic relations with Israel. But top-down diplomatic achievements will remain thin and fragile without real, bottom-up substance: people-to-people cooperation in populous Arab states that brings tangible benefit to the society, not just to elites. Several existing U.S. programs to promote Arab development, civil society, political pluralism, and labor rights need now to be integrated with the principle of Arab-Israeli civil partnership. Yet the Biden administration must overcome bureaucratic routines and outdated mission segregation if it wants to increase the prospect of achieving its policy aims...

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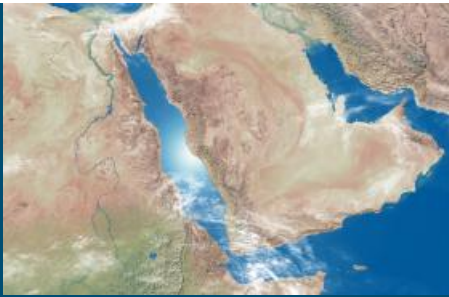


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