

Biden's Middle East Moonshot

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Reaching a Gaza ceasefire and Israeli-Saudi normalization deal will require intense, well-coordinated diplomatic efforts in a condensed timeline, but the administration can do it with help from the “Arab Quint.”

On July 21, President Biden dropped out of the 2024 presidential race, prematurely hastening the lame-duck period of his tenure. Most observers assume that he will not be able to accomplish much in the coming months. But Biden has made it clear that there is one priority he intends to pursue in his remaining time in office: an end to the war in Gaza and the restoration of American peacemaking in the Middle East. Those goals may seem unrealistic at the moment, especially after Israel's assassinations of top Hezbollah and Hamas leaders, against which Iran and Hezbollah have promised to retaliate. But as long as what follows is akin to past rounds that did not escalate to unrestrained conflict, Biden's coming exit frees him to concentrate on an Israeli-Saudi normalization deal that would likely be conditioned on an end to the war in Gaza. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is unlikely to resist an invigorated effort on this front. That may seem counterintuitive, but for several reasons, Netanyahu needs the Americans to take the initiative...

[Read the full article on the Foreign Affairs website. \(https://www.foreignaffairs.com/united-states/bidens-middle-east-moonshot\)](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/united-states/bidens-middle-east-moonshot) ❖

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