

# Change Has Not Come to the Middle East

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## ABOUT THE AUTHORS



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**Given the region's notorious difficulty, it would be tempting for President Trump to pivot elsewhere, but America's pressing foreign policy interests will likely draw his administration to the Middle East once again.**

**A**t first glance, it would appear that the Middle East President Donald J. Trump now faces is far different than the region which confronted President Barack Obama in 2009. The Arab uprisings of 2011 swept away the leaders of Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen, and Libya. Civil war has rent apart and depopulated Syria, once the cosmopolitan heart of the Arab world. The so-called Islamic State has carved out a terrorist quasi-state straddling Iraq and Syria, albeit one that is rapidly shrinking. The Israeli-Palestinian peace process is experiencing its most prolonged lull since the 1993 Oslo Accords. And the once rapidly-escalating Iran nuclear crisis has been paused by the negotiation of the "Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action" -- the only one of these developments for which Obama likely desires credit. Yet the real story in the Middle East is not how much things have changed, but -- when one digs a bit deeper -- how little...

**[Read the full article on the Cipher Brief website. \(https://www.thecipherbrief.com/article/middle-east/change-has-not-come-middle-east-1091\)](https://www.thecipherbrief.com/article/middle-east/change-has-not-come-middle-east-1091)** ❖

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