

Speaking about the Unspeakable: U.S.-Israeli Dialogue on Iran's Nuclear Program

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS



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Despite the longstanding and ever-evolving "special relationship" between the United States and Israel, the two allies do not appear to have engaged in substantive discussions on key facets of their most pressing mutual concern, the Iranian nuclear threat. Specifically, there has been little if any dialogue on the possibility of military action if the diplomatic route comes to a dead end, nor on the possible means of living with a nuclear Iran should both countries decide to refrain from military action.

In this Policy Focus -- the second entry in The Washington Institute's series "Agenda: Iran" -- former Israeli deputy national security advisor Chuck Freilich explains the significant obstacles to such dialogue and proposes means of surmounting them. Most of these obstacles center on each country's concerns about how the other would interpret such discussions, and how these interpretations would in turn affect their ability and willingness to conduct diplomatic and military action, either independently or in tandem. Overcoming these concerns sooner rather than later is crucial if the United States and Israel are to effectively address the most important issue they have ever faced together.

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