

The 'Israeli'-Emirati Alliance: Geopolitical Impact on Africa

By [Andrew Korybko](#)

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The misleadingly described “peace” deal between “Israel” and the UAE will enable the self-professed “Jewish State” to use the latter’s military and civilian port infrastructure in the Gulf of Aden, thus challenging recent Turkish inroads in this part of the world and allowing Tel Aviv to project itself as a trans-regional power of significance, especially in East Africa and eventually everywhere else on the continent too.

From Diplomatic “Peace” To Military Partnership

[“Israel”](#) and the UAE finally formalized their hitherto not-so-secret ties earlier this week after agreeing to a misleadingly described “peace” deal brokered by the US. The author recently explained the regional strategic and soft power dividends that the self-professed “Jewish State” hopes to achieve through this development in his piece about how [“The US-Brokered Mideast ‘Peace’ Deals Aren’t What They Seem”](#), so this present piece will therefore discuss its most likely trans-regional geopolitical dividends. The UAE commands a vast empire of military and civilian ports across the world, but the most important jewels in its crown are found in the Gulf of Aden region, specifically in Eritrea, [South Yemen](#) (including the strategic Socotra Islands), and the internationally unrecognized Somali breakaway region of Somaliland. It’s therefore predicted that “Israel” will soon have access to these facilities for the purpose of projecting itself as a trans-regional power of significance.

“Containing” Turkey

Although Turkey hasn’t withdrawn its decades-long recognition of “Israel”, President Erdogan has recently presented himself as the most high-profile supporter of the Palestinians. He’s also at odds with the UAE since the Gulf State fears his ideological alliance with its Muslim Brotherhood foes, especially those based in nearby Qatar. For this reason, both “Israel” and the UAE have vested interests in “containing” the spread of Turkish influence, which they can attempt to do in East Africa by combining their military and other potential in and around the Bab el Mandeb chokepoint following their mutual recognition of each other. It’s unclear how this would play out in practice, but there’s no denying the impact that a more visible “Israeli” military presence in the UAE’s relevant ports would have on changing the regional narrative in all respects. If anything, it would at the very least boost “Israeli” prestige, both at home and in the targeted region, especially the African hinterland where the self-professed “Jewish State” has been silently expanding its influence over the past decade.

The African Angle

To explain, “Israel” already has considerable influence in East Africa, especially in Ethiopia, South Sudan, [Kenya](#), [Uganda](#), and [Rwanda](#). It naturally follows that it would like to expand its reach to the littoral region along the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden in order to entrench its influence in this larger space, hence the need for more closely cooperating with the UAE to that end. “Israel” and Eritrea already have relations with one another, but the UAE is the latter’s dominant partner since it uses its territory for waging the War on Yemen. The self-professed “Jewish State” can now “piggyback” on the its official ally’s military gains there to do the same, just like in South Yemen and Somaliland. Taken together, the military dimensions of the “Israeli”-Emirati alliance perfectly complement the diplomatic and economic ([agricultural](#), [electrical](#), [hydrological](#), [telecommunication](#)) influence that it’s already established to solidify its sway. The only “holdouts” are Sudan, which is already under the UAE’s influence after its military coup, tiny Djibouti, and Somalia, the last of which hosts a Turkish base.

Cultivating UN Support On The Continent

“Israel’s” trans-regional strategy with the UAE, using the Gulf of Aden as its springboard for expanding influence into Africa, is therefore twofold. Firstly, it hopes to “contain” Turkish influence in this part of the world, and secondly, it wants to leverage its predicted gains to recruit more diplomatic allies in the UN. That global body’s resolutions are superficial since they lack any enforcement mechanism, but they’re still an impressive soft power tool for shaping perceptions. Since the UAE is becoming more active in the African hinterland, both on its own independent initiative and to counter Turkish influence there, “Israel” hopes to combine their efforts to turn targeted states away from the Turks and towards the “Israeli”-Emirati alliance instead. Incentives such as loans and investments (in the earlier described spheres) could basically buy off corrupt governments there who have little to lose by siding with those two since it’s extremely unlikely that voting in support of “Israel” at the UN will set off a pro-Palestinian [Color Revolution](#) anywhere on the continent.

Concluding Thoughts

Many commentators have already extensively discussed the implications of “Israel” and the UAE’s mutual recognition on Mideast geopolitics, [but few](#) have asked what the future holds for Africa in this respect. The UAE is already the [predominant power](#) in the interconnected Horn of Africa-Gulf of Aden region, so it naturally follows that its “Israeli” ally will “piggyback” off the gains there to combine them with its existing accomplishments in the East African hinterland.

Together, “Israel” and the UAE might pool their efforts in order to seriously challenge Turkish influence on the continent, which has been spreading over the past decade despite most foreign observers being unaware of this fact except when it comes to North Africa. The overarching trend is that foreign powers — which include “Israel”, the UAE, and Turkey, but also the US, France, [India](#), [Russia](#), and [China](#) — are increasingly “scrambling” for Africa in order to improve their grand strategic prospects in the [emerging Multipolar World Order](#), and it’s only a matter of time before they clash.

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Andrew Korybko is an American Moscow-based political analyst specializing in the relationship between the US strategy in Afro-Eurasia, China's One Belt One Road global vision of New Silk Road connectivity, and Hybrid Warfare. He is a frequent contributor to Global Research.

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About the author:

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