
WHY IRAQ IS STARTING TO NORMALISE TIES WITH ISRAEL

29.01.2019

TRT World (28 January 2019)

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The Iraqi government has surprised everyone by warming up to the idea of a friendship with Israel.

Arab and Muslim countries around the world are increasingly normalising relations with Israel. Turkey, for instance, recognised Israel in March 1949 – before the Jewish States first birthday – and was the first Muslim-majority country to do so. As the Arab nationalist regimes lost war after war against Israel, Egypt and Jordan also normalised ties in 1980 and 1994 respectively.

More recently, tribal oil monarchies such as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates have increasingly warmed up to Israel and on a more public basis, with US President Donald Trump hailing the Saudis for helping Israel.

However, it seems that a new friendship is budding in the region between once old enemies who have clashed in battle on several occasions. Unusually, signs have been emerging from Iraq that the new regime in Baghdad, unlike Saddam Husseins, is willing to play ball with Tel Aviv.

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