

# Upgrading U.S.-Israel Strategic Relations?

# Public, Formal Agreements

- MOU (1979)
- MOU against Soviet threat or Soviet-controlled forces (1981)
- JPMG followed by joint planning, pre-positioning, exercises (1983)
- SDI Participation (1986)
- Major Non NATO Ally (1988)
- SOU on Arms/Technology Transfers (2005)

# History of Dialogues

- **Net Assessment-Plans Directorate (Agat)**
- **Political -- “P”/ MFA Director General**
- **Counterterrorism – NSC/NSC**
- **Strategic –Burns/Mofaz**

# *BEYOND FORMAL TREATIES*

- **U.S.-Israel Security  
MOA– 10/31/1998**
- **Clinton-Barak  
statement– 7/19/1999**
- **Bush Letter to Sharon  
– 4/14/2004**

# “Upgrade” Options

- **Formal Treaty**
  - **Unilateral Assurance or Mutual Defense?**
- **MOU**
  - **General or Limited to Defense Against Iran**
    - **Make Bush’s statements operational**
- **Long-Term Aid/Technology Understanding**

# ***Upgrade Advantages***

- ***Greater security and long-term viability***
- ***Enhanced deterrence and defense***
- ***Stability in U.S.-Israel Relationship***
- ***Reinforcement of forward-leaning Israeli diplomacy***
- ***Access to advanced capabilities***
- ***Export markets and interoperability***

# Pursue an Upgrade?

- Politically achievable?
- Worthwhile for U.S. and Israel?
- Repercussions of failure to reach agreement?

# ***Dilemmas: Impact? Can it Work?***

**Will a U.S. guarantee...**

- **undermine case for:**
  - independence of action
  - military assistance
  - retention of post-1967 territories
  - strategic capabilities
- **Impact Israeli self-reliance**
- **Deter threats**
  - Credibility
  - Relevance

# ***Dilemmas: Worth the Price?***

**Will a U.S. guarantee...**

- **Effectively lock in a commitment**
- **Jeopardize other U.S. interests**
- **Require offers to others**
- **Demand new Israeli obligations**

# Conclusions

- **Advantage to formality when objectives shared**
- **Less utility when either side has doubts**
- **Significant uncertainties**