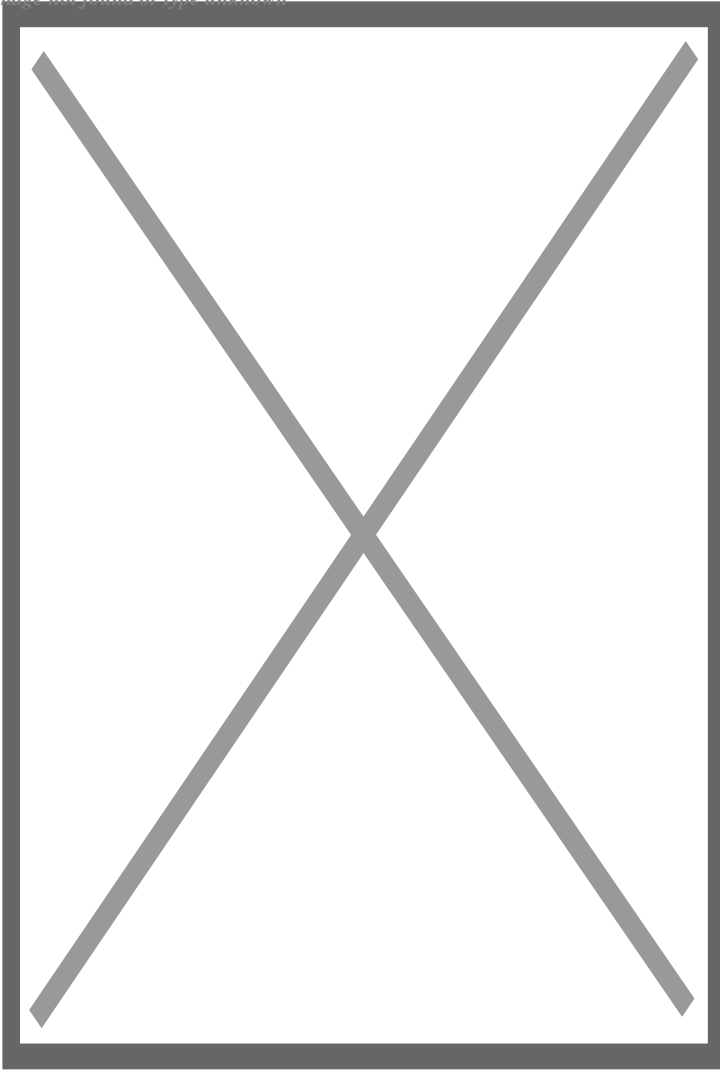


Blinken claims Saudi-Israel normalization still possible

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Port-au-Prince, September 6 (RHC)-- U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken claims that a normalization deal between Saudi Arabia and Israel is still possible before President Joe Biden exits the White House in January next year.

Blinken told a news conference on Thursday at the US Chief of Mission Residence in Port Au Prince, Haiti that "the ceasefire is an essential prerequisite to being able to move forward with normalization."

"Second, as we've discussed, is a credible pathway for a Palestinian state. A lot of work would have to go into that," he said. "But given all the work that we've done, the United States has done with Saudi Arabia over the last year in terms of what would be required between us, given the fact that both Israel and Saudi Arabia, and in conversations with us, have expressed clearly that it's something they'd like to pursue, I think if we can get the ceasefire in Gaza, there remains an opportunity through the balance of this administration to move forward on normalization," Blinken said.

Back in 2020, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Sudan, and Morocco entered US-brokered rapprochement deals with the Israeli regime. Washington has also reportedly been trying to add Riyadh to the list in a bid to bolster regional support for Tel Aviv, its most cherished ally.

In July 2023, the Biden administration announced that a deal for the regime and Saudi Arabia to normalize relations might be on the horizon following National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan's talks with Saudi officials in the kingdom's port city of Jeddah.

In September, though, the kingdom was reported to have informed the United States of its decision to suspend all negotiations on the potential rapprochement due allegedly to the Israeli cabinet's unwillingness to make any concessions to the Palestinians.

A month later, following the onset of the regime's yet-ongoing war on the Gaza Strip, the Reuters news agency also reported that Riyadh was "putting US-backed plans to normalize ties with Israel on ice."

Last month, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman reportedly said he feared facing "assassination" if he pursued normalization of the kingdom's relations with the Israeli regime.

American news magazine Politico revealed the matter in a column published on August 14, citing the crown prince's recent conversations with U.S. lawmakers.

Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman reportedly fears facing "assassination" for pursuing normalization of the kingdom's relations with the Israeli regime.

"The Saudi royal has mentioned to members of Congress that he's putting his life in danger by pursuing a grand bargain with the US and Israel that includes normalizing Saudi-Israeli ties," according to the article.

"On at least one occasion, he has invoked Anwar Sadat, the Egyptian leader slain after striking a peace deal with Israel, asking what the US did to protect Sadat," it added.

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