



## **Study: American Jewry Crucial for Israel's Security**

*A recent study by the Ruderman Family Foundation and the Institute for National Security Studies (INSS) highlights the contribution of American Jewish community to Israeli security and Israel's role in communal life in the US.*

**Boston, MA, DATE** – Alienation between Israel and the Jewish community in the United States has long-term ramifications for Israel's national security, a leading Israeli research institute recently found in a study released in English.

According to the research, the rift between Israel and the American Jewish community could cause long-term damage to Israel and to American Jewry. The growing gap erodes Israel's identity as the nation-state of the Jewish people, affects the security of the entire Jewish people and damages the internal cohesion of Jewish communities in the United States and Israel alike. It is therefore in the interest of both sides to strengthen the relationship– not only because of a moral imperative, but also due to the practical implications an irreversible tear could cause.

"Israel and American Jewish communities have their differences, but if they wish to remain strong and vibrant, they must learn to work together," said Jay Ruderman, President of the Ruderman Family Foundation. "We hope this research helps shed light on the fact that the relationship between the two sides is not only a moral impediment, but that it is crucial for Israel's national security and vital for the American Jewish community. It is time to broaden the conversation, so people understand this is an issue relevant in all fields of life. We must educate each side about the other, and encourage a constant, strategic dialogue between Israel and representatives of the American Jewish community."

"The relationship between Israel and the American Jewish community has been a central anchor in the ability of both communities to develop and prosper over the past 70 years, and it is vital not only to Israel's national security, but to that of the entire Jewish people," said Maj. Gen. (ret.) Amos Yadlin, Director of the INSS. "Today, the two communities are in need of an updated joint plan based on a profound understanding of how each can help the other meet the challenges of the present and the future."

The English publication includes central insights of a comprehensive research study conducted by the INSS in cooperation with the Ruderman Family Foundation. It was originally published as a 300-page book in Hebrew as the first attempt to analyze the relations between the two communities from a national security prism.



**Key findings of the research include:**

- Ever since Israel's inception, its relationship with the American Jewish community has been a key component in its national security, in relation to political and diplomatic support, as well as monetary aid when needed.
- Recent years have seen growing challenges for this relationship. Main factors for this change include: a generational gap between those who have never known Israel as a weak country in need; political differences in general and differences of opinion regarding the conflict with the Palestinians and views on President Trump; tensions stemming from Israel's treatment of non-Orthodox or more liberal streams of Jewish practice.
- While the Israeli leadership is often aware of the importance of the relationship, this awareness is not translated into policy-related actions or positions.
- Financial contributions to Israel continue to be high, with some \$2 billion (USD) given annually from American Jewry to different causes within Israel.

**Recommendations in light of the findings:**

- Increasing the awareness of, and knowledge about, the other side through education, creating opportunities for inter-personal exchanges, peer-to-peer meetings and a joint vision or project actualized together.
- Such a large national need requires that the government treat it accordingly, with Israel's elected leadership, government offices and public institutions doing what they can to better the relationship with American Jewry.
- The need requires a central platform or headquarters to provide coordination among the many existing projects, both in Israel and in the US. Only a broad and meaningful change can help reverse the negative trends in this important relationship.

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### **About the Ruderman Family Foundation**

The Ruderman Family Foundation believes that inclusion and understanding of all people is essential to a fair and flourishing community.

Guided by our Jewish values, we support effective programs, innovative partnerships and a dynamic approach to philanthropy in our core areas of interest: advocating for and advancing the inclusion of people with disabilities around the world; modeling the practice of strategic philanthropy worldwide; and fostering a more nuanced understanding of the American Jewish community among Israeli leaders and its public. RFF continuously works towards strengthening this relationship, including Knesset Missions in New York City and Boston to further educate Israeli politicians on American Jewry and a Ruderman-sponsored Master's program at the University of Haifa on American Jewish Studies.

The Foundation provides funding, leadership, expertise and insight in both the United States and Israel, with offices in both countries.

For more information, please visit [www.rudermanfoundation.org](http://www.rudermanfoundation.org)

### **About the Institute for National Security Studies (INSS)**

The Institute for National Security Studies (INSS) launches and engages in innovative, relevant, high-quality research that shapes the public discourse of issues on Israel's national security agenda, and provides policy analysis and recommendations to decision makers, public leaders, and the strategic community, both in Israel and abroad. As part of its mission, it is committed to encourage new ways of thinking and expand the traditional contours of establishment analysis.

INSS researchers are guided by the four core values of professionalism, relevance, intellectual independence, and teamwork. Adhering to the highest standards of research and analysis, they are engaged in exploring the most pressing issues of Israel's national security, and contribute through creative and innovative thinking to national security policymaking. Professional integrity and intellectual rigor underlie their work at INSS, as they seek to share ideas and learn from one another while retaining their belief in the value of their own ideas.

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