

## Tom Barrack Sketches a New Middle East Tailored to Israeli Priorities



U.S. Special Envoy to Syria Tom Barrack has unveiled a new political vision he describes as a blueprint for reengineering the regional order in the Middle East

after the Gaza war. His proposal centers on expanding normalization to include Lebanon, Syria, and Saudi Arabia what he calls the “pillars essential to achieving comprehensive peace” in the region.

In a lengthy post on his official X account titled “A Personal Perspective,” Barrack laid out what amounts to a diplomatic roadmap aimed according to him at transforming the Gaza ceasefire into a launching pad for a broader project of “economic peace” and “regional integration.”

He pointed to the October 13 Sharm El-Sheikh Summit attended by U.S. President Donald Trump and several Arab and Muslim leaders as a “turning point” for the region. In his view, the summit transcended a mere ceasefire agreement and evolved into a “partnership platform for reconstruction and development,” as well as a “bridge between East and West.”

What’s striking about Barrack’s vision is not its novelty but rather its continuity with a longstanding approach to reconfigure the region through a distinctly American-Israeli lens. His proposal aligns closely with the strategic objectives of Washington and Tel Aviv in the post-Gaza era, seeking to capitalize on the current geopolitical shifts to realign the balance of regional power.

While Barrack presents his proposal as a “humanitarian initiative for integration and prosperity,” observers argue it in fact reflects a persistent U.S. effort to reshape the Middle East both politically and economically in ways that entrench Western dominance. Normalization, under this model, becomes a tool to reproduce Israeli influence in the Levant under the guise of “partnership and sustainable peace.”

### The Sharm El-Sheikh Summit: A Defining Moment

From Barrack’s perspective, October 13, 2025, will be remembered as a pivotal moment in modern Middle Eastern diplomacy. He asserts that the summit wasn’t just a celebration of hostage releases and a ceasefire agreement, but a unified endorsement of Trump’s bold twenty-point plan for renewal, reconstruction, and shared regional prosperity.

He argues that, under Trump’s leadership, Arab, Islamic, and Western nations came together with a common goal: replacing stagnation with progress, and isolation with integration. “For the first time in a century,” he writes, “a genuine consensus emerged the realization that a region fractured by tribal and religious divides, and scarred by colonial legacy, can now weave a new fabric of cooperation.” What began as a ceasefire in Gaza has evolved, he says, into something more enduring: “the first building block in a renewed mosaic of partnership.”

In a striking departure from prevailing realities, Barrack claims that, under U.S. guidance, stability is no longer enforced through fear but built on shared opportunity; that peace is no longer a temporary halt in violence but a platform for sustainable prosperity.

### Syria: The Missing Piece of the Peace Puzzle

Syria emerges in Barrack's proposal as a crucial test for the resilience of this new regional order. A country ravaged by war and internal division, Syria represents the missing piece in the peace equation. No durable stability project can be realized, he argues, while one of the oldest cradles of civilization remains in ruins. Hence, the call to extend the "winds of reconciliation" northward to Damascus integrating it back into the Arab and regional fold.

Barrack sees the repeal of the Caesar Act as a pivotal step toward rebuilding Syria. The U.S. Senate has already voted in favor of lifting the sanctions, which he claims have shifted from a tool of moral pressure on the regime to an economic burden on ordinary Syrians. The House of Representatives is expected to follow suit. Once aimed at punishing tyrants, these sanctions now, he says, are stifling teachers, farmers, and traders striving for national revival.

From this foundation, Barrack envisions Syria as part of a broader vision to reshape the region through "expanded Abraham Accords," tying peace to development and economic integration.

Just as the Sharm El-Sheikh Summit laid the groundwork for a Gaza ceasefire, the next phase aims to extend the "dialogue rhythm" toward Syria and Lebanon an attempt to forge a new Middle East built on energy cooperation and shared prosperity, while minimizing the influence of disruptive forces, chiefly Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps.

In this light, lifting sanctions becomes not just a political move but a watershed moment in a regional transformation that seeks to replace conflict with development, and confrontation with peace.

### Lebanon: The Other Face of Peace

Barrack regards Lebanon as the other essential component of regional peace. The second pillar of any sustainable settlement, he contends, is the disarmament of Hezbollah and the establishment of direct security and border dialogue between Lebanon and Israel.

He asserts that the 2024 cessation of hostilities agreement failed due to the absence of an enforcement mechanism between the two sides, rendering the border calm "fragile and temporary," not a genuine peace.

Ongoing Iranian funding for Hezbollah and deep political divisions within Lebanon have, in his view, entrenched the deadlock. Disarming the group, Barrack insists, should not be seen as a concession to Israel but as an opportunity for Lebanon to reclaim sovereignty and attract international investment to revive its ailing economy.

The Biden administration, he adds, is pursuing a “carrots-not-sticks” approach, tying Gulf aid to measurable political and security reforms, while enhancing support for the Lebanese Army. He revealed that Washington had previously offered “diplomatic cover” to facilitate Hezbollah’s transformation into a civilian political party, but the plan collapsed amid Beirut’s political paralysis.

The plan warns that any delay in reforms or the upcoming elections could plunge Lebanon into another confrontation with Israel at a time when Iranian influence is waning in the region, tipping the scales, Barrack says, decisively in Tel Aviv’s favor.

He concludes that the path to expanding the Abraham Accords has become clearer after the Sharm El-Sheikh summit, with Saudi Arabia nearing official entry. This, he suggests, will encourage other Levantine nations to follow not through coercion but through the promise of prosperity and regional partnership.

### Sykes-Picot and the New Middle East

This isn’t Barrack’s first proposal to redraw the Middle East’s map. Four months earlier, he floated the idea of revisiting the Sykes-Picot Agreement, claiming it has outlived its usefulness and must be replaced.

He argues that the borders drawn by Sykes-Picot no longer hold significance for Israel, stating bluntly that Tel Aviv will take whatever steps it deems necessary to ensure its security “anywhere, anytime” even beyond its internationally recognized borders.

Clearly, Barrack’s remarks cannot be dismissed as merely “personal views.” They reveal a joint U.S.–Israeli vision to dismantle the existing regional order and transcend the concept of the nation-state, raising critical questions about the true nature of the “post-Gaza New Middle East” project.

This vision rests on two foundational pillars. First, the end of the Sykes-Picot era and the dissolution of national borders. Barrack sees the century-old maps as colonial relics that no longer reflect the region’s social and political realities making their revision inevitable.

Yet beneath its glossy rhetoric, this proposal effectively legitimizes Israeli expansionism under the pretext of “national security,” undermining the sovereignty of countries like Syria and Lebanon and ushering in a new era of

aggression cloaked in the language of “peace and prosperity.”

Second, it enshrines Israel’s security supremacy over regional sovereignty. According to Barrack, Tel Aviv’s security must guide all political and military arrangements in the region, with Israel retaining the right to act militarily whenever it perceives a threat.

This approach extends the doctrine of “Israeli hegemony,” aiming to impose comprehensive security and economic dominance. Buoyed by U.S. support and the deep divisions within the Arab world, this doctrine seeks to replace balance with deterrence and partnership with control.

### An Israeli-Fitted Regional Blueprint

As emphasized, Tom Barrack’s proposals cannot be viewed as independent diplomatic musings. They serve as a trial balloon for official U.S. thinking about the Middle East’s future. His repeated statements are a way to gauge Arab capitals’ willingness to embrace a sweeping plan to reshape the region around Israeli interests and U.S. priorities in what might be called the “post-Gaza Middle East.”

This vision rests on five interlinked strategic pillars that form the intellectual backbone of the U.S.–Israeli regional project:

**Eradication of Resistance:** Not just as an armed practice, but as a collective consciousness dismantling its ideological roots and criminalizing it politically and militarily. This includes the complete disarmament of resistance fronts, integrating them into the U.S.–Israeli security apparatus.

**Israeli Security as the Central Goal:** Neutralizing resistance paves the way for a Pax Israeliana peace enforced through Israeli dominance, with no need for mutual compromises.

**Institutionalizing Israeli Supremacy:** Through sustained military, economic, and political advantages, Israel becomes the unchallenged regional power capable of directing regional policies and exploiting resources from a position of superiority, not equality.

**Establishing a Regional Security System:** Under the banner of “peace and stability,” this Arab-Israeli framework would marginalize Eastern powers like Iran, Russia, and China while protecting U.S. interests via a new “strategic alignment.”

**Normalization as the Default:** The widening gap between Israel and its Arab neighbors, alongside structural Israeli superiority, makes normalization a given not a sovereign choice. The Abraham Accords become the new rule of regional engagement, not an exception.

As such, Israel shifts from being a historical anomaly to a central actor in the Arab regional system. Arab security and sovereignty priorities are redefined, replaced by a new formula: “peace through alignment,” not “land for peace,” as was the case in the 1990s.

In sum, Tom Barrack’s vision is a calculated repackaging of the “New Middle East” project that Washington and Tel Aviv have long sought to institutionalize since the early 2000s but now with a softer face and a pragmatic pitch.

It aims to turn regional conflict into coerced integration, stripping the Middle East of its historic resistance identity and redefining security, sovereignty, and development according to an “Israeli superior Arab subordinate” framework.

In this pragmatic light, the U.S. envoy’s proposal is no longer a passing diplomatic initiative it is a strategic roadmap meticulously crafted to reassert Western dominance and establish a new Middle East where Washington holds the reins and Israel controls the levers of power and progress.