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Shifting Geopolitics: The Gaza War and the Contours of a Nascent Middle East Security Community

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Abstract

The Gaza War, though geographically contained, served as a powerful accelerant within a pre-existing trend for an ongoing regional transformation in Middle Eastern security dynamics. This article argues that the conflict did not merely reflect, but actively propelled a shift toward state-centric security cooperation and the systematic sidelining of non-state actors. In doing so, it catalysed the development of a nascent Middle East Security Community (MESC), drawing on Karl Deutsch's concept of security communities. Motivated by converging regime security imperatives, key regional actors including Israel, Egypt, Jordan, and the Gulf monarchies have intensified institutional collaboration through mechanisms such as the Abraham Accords and normalisation initiatives. The war underscored a growing consensus around pragmatic conflict management; wherein ideological divisions are increasingly subordinated to shared interests in regional stability and counter-militancy. While structural and political obstacles to deeper integration remain, the conflict marked a pivotal moment in the consolidation of interest-driven and intergovernmental security architectures, signalling a regional realignment grounded in mutual preservation rather than ideological affinity. Copyright © IIUM Press.

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