



Israel, Greece and Cyprus: In Search of New Synergies

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: On 22 December 2025, Israel, Greece and Cyprus had their tenth trilateral summit in Jerusalem. The three countries are endeavoring to steadily expand their cooperation, and the timing of the recent event is telling. Athens's and Nicosia's pragmatic approach to Jerusalem during the Gaza war and the Israel-Iran war served their national interests, and they are pursuing agreements with both the Israeli defense market and the energy sector. The Cypriot and Greek presidency of the EU in 2026 and 2027 can serve as an opportunity to recalibrate EU-Israeli relations following a period of disagreement and strain.

The tenth trilateral summit of Israel, Greece and Cyprus, which took place in Jerusalem on 22 December, showcased the continuing commitment of the three countries to the expansion of their collaboration. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu hosted his Greek counterpart Kyriakos Mitsotakis and Cypriot President Nikos Christodoulides in an effort to revitalize the trilateral mechanism. [The ninth trilateral summit](#) took place on 4 September 2023 in Nicosia, and the regional order has changed a great deal in the two years since. Israel responded to the terrorist invasion of 7 October 2023 by engaging in wars on multiple Middle East fronts, including a 12-day war with Iran. Despite the multidimensional and complex character of all these conflicts, Israel managed to show its power and resilience.

Both Greece and Cyprus continued to value their strategic partnership with Israel even as the Jewish State was being roundly condemned and vilified. Unlike the EU member states that chose to condemn Israel for the war in Gaza, Athens and Nicosia took a mild and balanced approach. Premier Mitsotakis has been able to prioritize what he perceives as Greece's national interests and fend off criticism from other parties. Nikos Androulakis, the leader of the main opposition PASOK party, did not hold back in his excoriation of Israel in the context of the war in Gaza, inaccurately using the terms "[ethnic cleansing](#)" and "[genocide](#)" to describe Israel's conduct during the war and eliding that both terms in fact apply to Hamas's assault on Israel, as well as to its ongoing plans for that country. On 16 October 2025, Androulakis called Netanyahu a "[butcher](#)" and demanded that Mitsotakis apologize for aligning Greece's interests with those of Israel. Similarly, the parliamentary spokesperson of PASOK, Dimitris Mantzos, spoke of a "[live-streamed genocide](#)" and wondered "[what strategic partnership might endure the pain of this bloodshed](#)". Interestingly, it was the former leader of PASOK, George Papandreou, who laid the foundations for the Greek-Israeli friendship while serving as prime minister in 2010.

During the Israel-Iran war of June 2025, Greece and Cyprus served as hubs for Israeli civilians unable to return to their country. Planes belonging to Israeli airlines [were stationed at Greek and Cypriot airports](#), and [the aircraft serving Prime Minister Netanyahu and President Isaac Herzog departed for Athens](#) after Operation Rising Lion was launched on 13 June. When the conflict ended, the Greek and Cypriot authorities coordinated with the Israeli government to implement Operation Safe Return to facilitate the repatriation of Israelis. Former Knesset member Gadeer Kamal-Mreeh praised Greece and Cyprus in a *Jerusalem Post* commentary [in which he argued that the two countries had stepped up to help Israel - with actions, not just with words](#) - at a time of serious crisis.

In the sphere of defense, Greece and Cyprus have looked favorably towards the Israeli market for years. Greece is now finalizing an agreement with Israel [to purchase 36 PULS rocket artillery systems for \\$757.84 million](#). The Greek Parliament and the Government Council for National Security have approved the budget for the purchase, [according to a press release from Elbit, the PULS manufacturer](#). Cyprus reportedly [deployed Israel Aerospace Industries' Barak MX](#) air defense system last September and [is eyeing new military deals with Israel](#) to equip its National Guard. In addition to the arms transactions, Jerusalem, Athens and Nicosia [are expected to conduct joint drills in 2026](#). In the past, Greek-Israeli

exercises in the area between Israel and the island of Crete have [allowed Israeli pilots to engage in bombing exercises and to rehearse the kind of aerial refueling necessary to cover a distance equal to that separating Israel from Iran's Natanz nuclear enrichment facility.](#)

Israel, Greece and Cyprus are all apprehensive about Turkish tactics in the Middle East and the Eastern Mediterranean, a common concern that facilitates dialogue. Jerusalem is of course primarily concerned about Ankara's attitude toward Hamas and presence in Syria, while Athens and Nicosia are more focused on Ankara's policies in the Aegean and the Eastern Mediterranean as well as on the Cyprus question. Israel, Greece and Cyprus support the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC), which bypasses Turkey, though IMEC will inevitably have limitations. The Turkish market is too big to be ignored, and the Corridor is still lacking tangible investments.

Energy also brings the three countries closer. Last November, Israeli Energy and Infrastructure Minister Eli Cohen [put the idea of the East Med pipeline back on the table.](#) Cohen made the comment on the sidelines of a ['3+1' Energy Ministerial Meeting in Athens](#) that was also attended by US Energy Secretary Chris Wright. Although the East Med pipeline project remains expensive and technically difficult, attention is being directed towards a connecting of Israeli gas fields and LNG facilities in Cyprus. Israel is keen on selling its natural gas to Cyprus. The Energean company, which is drilling in Israeli waters, has [proposed the construction of a subsea pipeline from its Floating Production Storage and Offloading \(FPSO\) to Cyfield's planned power generation facility in Cyprus.](#) According to Reuters, [the cost will be around \\$400 million,](#) while the capacity of the new pipeline will be 1 billion cubic meters a year. Theoretically, Israel, Greece and Cyprus remain committed to the Great Sea Interconnector project, but [the Cypriot government seems to be having second thoughts about its viability.](#) Athens and Nicosia have openly disagreed on this matter over the past few weeks.

Last but not least, Israel, Greece, and Cyprus are expected to improve coordination in accessing EU Horizon programs and other external funding sources. When the European Commission proposed, in July 2025, to partially suspend [Israel's integration into the European Innovation Council,](#) Greece and Cyprus were among the EU member states to oppose the idea.

The trilateral Jerusalem summit welcomed the Cypriot presidency of the Council of the EU for the first semester of 2026, and Greece will hold the EU presidency in the second semester of 2027. The next two years should be a good opportunity to recalibrate EU-Israel relations under the aegis of Cyprus and Greece as well as to intensify the European fight against antisemitism.

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