

Dani Charles, CEO and co-founder of Charles Bernard Ventures, and a fellow in New America's Cybersecurity Initiative, participated in the [Sasakawa USA 2018-2019 In-Depth Alumni Research Trip](#) to Japan. In this paper, Charles outlines the relationship between Japan and Israel, particularly in how it relates to cyber, innovation, and technology, and recommends avenues in which the United States can extend its role as a supporter in the relationship.

Chutzpah meets Monozukuri: A Look at the Japanese-Israeli Cyber Relationship

Dani Charles

Executive Summary

This paper examines the changing ties between Japan and Israel, with a particular focus on the expanding Japanese-Israeli cyber relationship, the opportunities and challenges associated with this expanding relationship, and the role the United States can play in furthering this relationship. The findings of this paper are the product of extensive research as well as discussions with a wide-range of experts, both in-person and remotely, in Washington D.C., San Francisco, Tel Aviv, and Tokyo.

The paper's title encapsulates two key cultural markers for Israeli and Japanese society. *Chutzpah*—which in Yiddish loosely translates to a combination of audacity, brashness, and brazenness—is a perfect descriptor for Israeli society. These characteristics have driven Israeli innovation, and helped position it as the so-called *Start-Up Nation*, boasting the largest number of start-ups per capita in the world.¹ *Monozukuri* roughly translates to making things, but more generally refers to Japan's excellence in manufacturing. It is a perfect descriptor for the discipline, dedication, and attention to detail that is a hallmark of Japanese society, and the reason why Japanese companies like Mitsubishi, Honda, Toyota, and others have become synonymous with dependability and reliability.

These characteristics inform both the challenges and opportunities for an expanded relationship in cyber. As this paper highlights, Israel and Japan are vastly different countries, with drastically different approaches to cyber as well as vastly different cultures of innovation and business. While these differences can be viewed as a challenge to expanded ties in cyber, they should also be viewed as an opportunity, as the two countries and their respective governments, populations, and businesses have complementary skills and capabilities. Take Israeli innovation and combine it with Japanese attention to detail (put differently, combine Israeli *chutzpah* with Japanese *monozukuri*), and it could lead to unparalleled capabilities not only in cyber but also in other emerging technical domains.

To that end, this paper will detail the history of the Japanese-Israeli relationship, and will highlight the expansion of government-to-government (G2G) and business-to-business (B2B)

¹ <https://innovationisrael.org.il/en/contentpage/innovation-israel>

ties in the last half-decade, with a particular focus on those pertaining to cyber, innovation, and technology. Next, the paper, will present the challenges facing these ties, key among them the Tel Aviv-Tokyo Divide and Israel's relationship with China. Finally, the paper will discuss the possible U.S. role and interests in helping to further expand the relationship, and will offer a number of recommendations to include:

- U.S. funding for trilateral security initiatives
- Establishment of a Japan-Israel Innovation Network Hub in the U.S.
- Host U.S.-based seminars that bring together Israeli and Japanese entrepreneurs
- Establish VC-backed trilateral hackathons

Background on Japan-Israel Bilateral Relations

Japan and Israel have not enjoyed strong bilateral ties historically. Though Japan formally recognized Israel in 1952, its relationship with Israel was viewed through the lens of its relationship with the Arab world. For decades, Japan, apprehensive of harming ties with the oil-rich Arab nations, never made much of an effort to expand G2G or B2B ties. It was not until the 1990s that a Japanese Prime Minister visited Israel (Tomiichi Murayama in 1995²) and Japanese automakers decided to enter the Israeli market, and this development directly correlated to advancements in the peace process and a loosening of the Arab oil boycott.

Despite the progress in the 1990s, the relationship was still underwhelming throughout the 2000s; only in 2014 did the relationship begin to make a dramatic shift. This dramatic shift can be seen in the growth in trade between the two countries, which in 2014 rose by nearly 10% to \$1.75 billion³. That same year marked two major business milestones: the visit of the Japanese Business Federation, Keidanren, to Israel in February 2014, and the acquisition of the Israeli messaging app Viber by the Japanese company Rakuten for \$900 million that same month. Both events signified a transformation in the nature of the Japanese-Israeli relationship, one that can be attributed to a variety of geopolitical factors. The first is the Arab Spring, which began in 2011 and signaled the instability of some of Japan's traditional Arab trading partners. That, coupled with a decrease in the price of oil and an increase in U.S. production, reduced some of the historical fear of harming relations with Arab nations by improving relations with Israel.

Arguably though, the biggest catalyst for the shift was the relationship forged between Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. In 2014, Abe hosted Netanyahu in Tokyo⁴; Netanyahu reciprocated in 2015 when Abe visited Israel⁵. These visits came on the heels of an incident in February 2014, whereby more than 200 copies of *The Diary of Anne Frank* were vandalized across libraries in Tokyo.⁶ A month later, Abe visited the

² https://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/press/pm/murayama/m_east.html

³ <https://www.timesofisrael.com/after-decades-of-distance-japan-seeks-closer-ties-with-israel/>

⁴ <https://mfa.gov.il/MFA/PressRoom/2014/Pages/PM-Netanyahu%27s-remarks-at-his-meeting-with-Japanese-PM-Shinzo-Abe-12-May-2014.aspx>

⁵ <https://mfa.gov.il/MFA/PressRoom/2015/Pages/Japan-Israel-Joint-Press-Release-20-Jan-2015.aspx>

⁶ <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2014/feb/21/anne-frank-books-vandal-attacks-tokyo-libraries>

Anne Frank house in Amsterdam⁷, and a year later, he also visited Yad Veshem, the World Holocaust Remembrance Center⁸. While such a visit is customary for a state visit to Israel, nevertheless it can be viewed in the context of Abe's outreach not only to Israel, but also the U.S. Jewish and pro-Israel communities. Three months after his visit to Yad Veshem, Abe visited the U.S. Holocaust Museum in Washington D.C.⁹ Six months after that, Abe hosted a delegation from the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) at the Prime Minister's Office in Tokyo.¹⁰

While the relationship between Netanyahu and Abe was instrumental in accelerating the G2G relationship, the ties have been further formalized through Minister-level meetings and memorandums. The first such memorandum was a Joint R&D Memorandum of Cooperation between the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) and the Israeli Ministry of Economy, signed during then-METI Minister Toshimitsu Motegi's visit to Israel in July 2014.¹¹ During that same visit, Minister Motegi attended and spoke at the first ever Japanese-Israeli Business Forum, which was hosted by the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) and included attendees from 27 Japanese businesses and 70 Israeli businesses.¹² The concurrent government meetings, memorandum, and business forum further formalized the G2G relationship and paved the way for a more expansive B2B relationship.

July 2014 saw additional activities: Japan and Israel signed an MOU Concerning Cooperation on Industrial Research and Development, the Japanese Minister for Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC) made his first visit to Israel to discuss strengthening Information and Communications Technology (ICT) relations, and members of the Japanese Diet visited with counterparts from the Israeli Knesset.¹³ The flurry of activities continued into the fall of 2014, with the visit of the Japanese Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) to Israel in October. This led to a Memorandum of Cooperation Concerning Scientific Cooperation that was signed in January 2015.¹⁴

Since 2014, there have been many additional G2G visits and meetings, both at the Minister and sub-Minister levels, as well as additional memorandums. In July 2015, for example, METI and the Israeli Ministry of Economy held a Japan-Israel Economic Dialogue in Tokyo, where representatives from both countries discussed how to promote bilateral investment and trade as well as cooperation in R&D, cyber security, and venture policies.¹⁵ In May 2017, the two ministries had a Minister-level Economic Policy dialogue in Israel, which included discussions

⁷ <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2014/03/20/national/politics-diplomacy/abe-to-visit-anne-frank-house-after-vandalism/>

⁸ https://japan.kantei.go.jp/97_abe/statement/201501/1209486_9912.html

⁹ <https://www.jta.org/2015/04/28/united-states/japans-prime-minister-visits-u-s-holocaust-museum>

¹⁰ https://japan.kantei.go.jp/97_abe/actions/201510/30article2.html

¹¹ https://www.meti.go.jp/english/press/2014/0709_01.html

¹² https://www.meti.go.jp/english/press/2014/0709_01.html

¹³ <https://mfa.gov.il/MFA/PressRoom/2015/Pages/Japan-Israel-Joint-Press-Release-20-Jan-2015.aspx>

¹⁴ <https://mfa.gov.il/MFA/PressRoom/2015/Pages/Japan-Israel-Joint-Press-Release-20-Jan-2015.aspx>

¹⁵ https://www.meti.go.jp/english/press/2015/0803_02.html

around promoting R&D and cybersecurity collaboration, expanding research into Artificial Intelligence (AI), and accelerating B2B communication.¹⁶

A number of other important meetings and MOUs have occurred since the expansion of Japan-Israeli G2G and B2B relations in 2014, to include ones specifically related to cyber. Those are highlighted in the following section of this report. The two countries have also signed formal agreements, such as the February 2017 *Agreement for the Liberalization, Promotion, and Protection of Investment*.¹⁷ Moreover, at present, the two countries are reported to be in the process of negotiating a free trade agreement.

Japan and Israel: Relationship with the United States

A background on Japanese-Israeli bilateral relationships would be incomplete if it did not include mention of the United States. Economically, both countries are reliant on the United States and its market. For both countries, the United States is and has been the largest trading partner for the last half-century.

Both countries also enjoy close political and military ties with the United States. The United States and Japan are treaty allies bound by the *Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security Between the United States and Japan*. As part of this security treaty, the United States maintains a significant military presence in Japan (roughly 50,000 American troops). This presence has guaranteed Japan's security and acts as a key deterrent against aggression by adversaries such as China and North Korea, while allowing the United States to maintain influence in East Asia.

Legally, the United States considers Israel a "major non-NATO ally," a designation shared by Japan and a handful of other nations. The U.S.-Israel relationship, however, extends far beyond such a designation. The United States was the first country to recognize Israeli independence in 1948 and has been a guarantor of Israeli security since the 1960s. Since the 1970s, Israel has been one of the top recipients of U.S. foreign aid; it currently receives \$3.8 billion in annual U.S. military aid as part of an MOU signed between the two countries in 2016.¹⁸ Much like with Japan, Israeli forces regularly conduct joint military exercises with their American counterparts, and while the United States does not maintain a significant military force in Israel, the U.S.' strong relationship with Israel is seen as a key strategic asset for promoting American interests and influence in the Middle East.

Lastly, the relationships of both Netanyahu and Abe with President Donald Trump are considered to be very close (the same could not be said of Netanyahu's relationship with President Barack Obama). This closeness extends beyond the U.S. executive branch to the U.S. Congress as well, where both Abe and Netanyahu have given addresses to Congress (both in

¹⁶ https://www.meti.go.jp/english/press/2017/0508_003.html

¹⁷ <https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/files/000224705.pdf>

¹⁸ <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/14/world/middleeast/israel-benjamin-netanyahu-military-aid.html>

2015).¹⁹ This is an honor bestowed upon only a handful of foreign leaders, and truly signifies the importance of the U.S.-Israel and U.S.-Japan relationships.

Expanded Japanese-Israeli Relationship in Cyber, Innovation, and Technology

Establishment of JIIN: Bridging the Tel Aviv-Tokyo Divide

As political and commercial ties between Japan and Israel have expanded, so too has collaboration in areas such as cyber, innovation, and technology more broadly. This has occurred concurrently on both G2G and B2B levels: in November 2014, a Japan-Israel working session on R&D cooperation, cyber cooperation, and trade investment promotion was held during the visit of Israeli business leaders—headed by the Director-General of the Prime Minister's Office—to Japan.²⁰ That same month, Japan and Israel held its first G2G dialogue on cybersecurity in Tokyo.²¹

By 2017, these working dialogues had morphed into a formal collaboration in cyber and innovation, both G2G and B2B. The establishment of the Japan-Israel Innovation Network (JIIN) in November 2017 was at the center of this collaboration.²² JIIN's mission is to create opportunities for innovation and collaboration, by accelerating Japanese-Israeli B2B communication through exchanging business delegation and event information, supporting business matching, and providing information on governmental program support. In Japan, JIIN is comprised primarily of METI, the Embassy of Israel, Keidanren, Keizai Doyukai, the Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (JCCI), the Japan Association of New Economy (JANE), JETRO, and the New Energy and Technology Development Organization (NEDO). In Israel, JIIN is comprised primarily of the Ministry of Economy, the Embassy of Japan, the Manufacturers Association of Israel (MAI), the Israel-Japan Chamber of Commerce (IJCC), the Israel Export Institution (IEI), and the Israeli Innovation Authority (IIA).

JIIN's first plenary meeting was held in late 2017 in Tokyo. In 2018, JIIN facilitated the networking of over 1,000 companies through 50 events, nine business missions, and 41 business seminars. In January 2019, JIIN held its second plenary meeting in Israel as part of METI Minister Hiroshige Seko's visit to Israel minister-level meetings and the Japan-Israel Business Forum.²³ At the plenary, JIIN decided to open a "JIIN Hub" in Tel Aviv to provide hands-on support to companies developing business in Japan and Israel.²⁴

The JIIN Hub is critical to overcoming a key challenge in the expanding Japanese-Israeli relationship in cyber, innovation, and technology: the Tel Aviv-Tokyo Divide. Israel and Japan have very different cultures, which inform their approaches to cyber, innovation, and

¹⁹ Abe: <https://www.c-span.org/video/?325576-2/japanese-prime-minister-shinzo-abe-addresses-joint-meeting-congress>

Netanyahu: <https://www.c-span.org/video/?324609-2/israeli-prime-minister-benjamin-netanyahu-address-congress>

²⁰ <https://mfa.gov.il/MFA/PressRoom/2015/Pages/Japan-Israel-Joint-Press-Release-20-Jan-2015.aspx>

²¹ <https://mfa.gov.il/MFA/PressRoom/2015/Pages/Japan-Israel-Joint-Press-Release-20-Jan-2015.aspx>

²² https://www.jetro.go.jp/israel/topics/_416823.html

²³ https://www.meti.go.jp/english/press/2019/0117_001.html

²⁴ https://www.meti.go.jp/english/press/2019/pdf/0117_001a.pdf

technology. Israel is defined by a culture of innovation that is directly tied to Israeli society, which, for a variety of historical and geopolitical reasons, is highly educated in technical sectors as well as risk-tolerant and accepting of failure. In contrast, while Japanese culture stands out for its attention to detail and quality, Japanese culture is generally risk-averse, and failure is less acceptable. This divide also extends to business, where cultural differences impact the pace, structure, and formality of business: whereas Japanese business culture is formal, bureaucratic, and hierarchical, Israeli business culture is informal and fast-paced. Consider this contrast: an Israeli government official or business leader in a meeting may be using their iPhone under the table, while the Japanese official or CEO sitting opposite them may have never used a personal computer in their life (the Japanese Minister in charge of cybersecurity recently admitted to never having used a personal computer).²⁵

This divide introduces significant B2B challenges, and as more Japanese companies (NEC, Sampo, Sony, Softbank, Murati, etc.) set up shop in Israel, overcoming this divide will be critical. It is also worth noting that in addition to the cultural Tel Aviv-Tokyo Divide, there is also a physical one: there are no direct flights between Israel and Japan (a direct charter flight will commence in September of this year).

A JIIN Hub and direct flights will go a long way, but they alone will not be sufficient to promote Japan-Israeli B2B collaboration. The conclusion of this report offers additional recommendations for ways to further overcome this divide.

Beyond JIIN

Beyond JIIN, other Japanese government organizations also have jurisdiction over cyber and innovation, and have worked to expand the G2G cyber relationship in their domains. For example, in November 2018, Israel's National Cyber Directorate and the Japan's MIC signed an MOU for Cybersecurity Cooperation.²⁶ That same month, the Japanese Ambassador in charge of Cyber Policy at MOFA led a delegation to Israel for the Fourth Dialogue on Cyber Issues between Israel and Japan.²⁷ At the Dialogue, Japan was represented by MOFA, NSS, the NISC, MIC, MOD, and the Embassy of Japan in Israel. The Israeli side, by contrast, was represented by the Israel National Cyber Directorate and the Ministry of Defense. This highlights another challenge facing the relationship, which is that the jurisdiction over cyber is much more decentralized within the Japanese government than it is in the Israeli government. This difference is less of an issue when the relationship is being promoted from the top (Abe and Netanyahu), but could become more of an issue in a post-Abe or post-Netanyahu era, the latter of which may be fast approaching given the results of the most recent Israeli election. That said, both countries have done a very good job of establishing broad MOUs and working relationships at the ministry-level, which should help the relationship to continue to grow beyond the current political leadership.

²⁵ <https://www.cnbc.com/2018/11/15/japans-minister-of-cybersecurity-admits-hes-never-used-a-computer.html>

²⁶ <https://www.timesofisrael.com/Japanese-Israeli-sign-cybersecurity-cooperation-accord/>

²⁷ https://www.mofa.go.jp/me_a/me1/il/page23e_000532.html

The Giant Panda in the Room

One challenge that not only exists today but will likely extend beyond the current political leadership is Israel's relationship with China. Over the past few decades, Israel has cultivated a relationship with China, one that is primarily economic but that has also expanded into the security domain. This has been a friction point, not only with Japan but with the United States as well, with prior Israeli military technology sales to China having come under intense U.S. scrutiny. More recently, Israel awarded a Port of Haifa (where the U.S. Navy docks) contract to a Chinese firm²⁸ and was reportedly entertaining Chinese bids for 5G networks in Israel, a move that led the Trump administration to warn Israel to limit ties with China or risk a decrease in security cooperation with the United States.²⁹

The concerns over Israel's relationship with China are shared by Japan, which views China as a regional rival and adversary. As such, part of the Japanese calculation of expanding its relationship with Israel is to counter the Israeli-Chinese relationship. Certainly, this relationship will continue to be a friction point as the Japanese-Israeli relationship grows, but the G2G and B2B relationships may also position both countries to have more frank conversations about these concerns, and incentivize them to further align their respective security strategies.

The Role of the U.S. in Expanding the Relationship

The Case for an Expanded U.S. Role

The potential for further alignment of security strategies, especially as it relates to cyber, is one of the areas where the United States is well positioned to support the expansion of the Japanese-Israeli relationship.³⁰ As previously noted, the United States enjoys strong security cooperation with both Israel and Japan, and trilateral security cooperation, especially in the cyber domain, aligns perfectly with the 2018 U.S. National Cyber Strategy which calls for—among other multilateral efforts—an international cyber deterrence initiative.³¹ Therefore, the United States can and should play a pivotal role in furthering security cooperation in areas such as cyber and emerging technology. From a business perspective, the United States similarly enjoys strong economic ties with both Israel and Japan, and likewise can and should play an important role in bridging the Tel Aviv-Tokyo divide. Within this B2B context, it is important to note that while American and Israeli business interests as they relate to Japan are often aligned, other times they are in conflict, as Israeli companies can be competitors to American companies with similar capabilities/offerings. The key to mitigating this risk/challenge will be identifying areas where there isn't as much competition and where there is ample incentive for cooperation and partnership. One such area could be Japan's Society 5.0 initiative, which is focused on advancements in emerging technology—AI, the Internet of Things (IoT), and Big

²⁸ <https://www.timesofisrael.com/has-israel-make-a-huge-mistake-letting-a-chinese-firm-run-part-of-haifa-port/>

²⁹ <https://www.axios.com/trump-netanyahu-israel-china-security-cooperation-243ea932-765b-490f-9002-9744192b8905.html>

³⁰ Perhaps as an omen to future trilateral cooperation, it seems appropriate that the first plenary meeting of the JIIN was hosted at the Tokyo American Club: https://www.jetro.go.jp/en/jetro/topics/2017/1711_topics3.html

³¹ <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/president-donald-j-trump-is-strengthening-americas-cybersecurity/>

Data—to overcome social challenges such as a decrease in the productive-age population, aging of local populations, and energy and environmental issues.³² Japan has a wealth of health and medical data (from a universal health care system) as well as operating data from numerous manufacturing facilities, which presents a ripe opportunity for both U.S. and Israeli businesses to deploy and even improve their emerging tech solutions.

Recommendations

Beyond Japan’s Society 5.0 initiative, it is worth exploring some more specific areas and ways in which the U.S. government and U.S. organizations can play a role in expanding the Japanese-Israeli relationship in cyber, innovation, and technology. One area where the U.S. government can play a more active role is with funding for trilateral security initiatives. For example, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) could fund trilateral R&D among U.S., Israeli and Japanese companies and/or academic institutions to solve homeland security—and specifically cyber—challenges. This model already exists in a bilateral capacity: DHS has funded joint R&D initiatives with the Netherlands³³ and, most relevantly, with Israel.³⁴ Either as part of this or separate from it, JIIN could also explore opening a JIIN Hub in the United States to further collaboration between JIIN and U.S. organizations, government and non-government alike.

Beyond the U.S. government, U.S. businesses and organizations can and have been playing a role in expanding the relationship. For example, this past February the U.S.-Japan Council co-hosted an event with the American Jewish Committee in Atlanta, “Trilateral Japan-U.S.-Israel Advancements in Artificial Intelligence and Big Data Advancements,”³⁵ and the year prior both organizations co-hosted an event in Los Angeles, “U.S.-Japan-Israel Innovation Summit: Emerging Partnerships and Opportunities.”³⁶ These events are a testament to the fact that the notion of expanding the trilateral relationship is already gaining traction, but these events can and should go further than raising awareness.

Organizations like these and others (e.g. U.S.-Israel Chamber of Commerce, Japan Automobile Manufacturers Association, etc.) should work to co-host multi-day, innovative and original events: for example, one could be a seminar that brings together Israeli and Japanese entrepreneurs and businesses to network with counterparts and learn about the respective business cultures; another could be a hackathon that brings together joint U.S.-Israeli-Japanese teams to ideate and develop proof-of-concept solutions to challenges relevant to all three countries. The hackathon would be judged a trilateral venture capital (VC) team, that would evaluate not only the technical merits of the solutions but also the go-to-market strategies for both the U.S. and Japanese markets. The winning concept would be eligible to receive early-stage funding from sponsoring VCs. Not only would such an event have the potential to yield trilaterally-impactful technologies, but the hackathon could also be used to study team

³² https://www.japan.go.jp/abenomics/_userdata/abenomics/pdf/society_5.0.pdf

³³ <https://intelligencecommunitynews.com/dhs-st-and-dutch-partners-award-2-5m-for-cybersecurity-rd/>

³⁴ <https://www.birdf.com/hls-call-for-proposals/>

³⁵ http://www.usjapanCouncil.org/trilateral_japan_u_s_israel_advancements_in_artificial_intelligence_and_big_data_analytics

³⁶ http://www.usjapanCouncil.org/usji_olympics_event

dynamics and produce best practices for improving Israeli-Japanese interpersonal business relationships, best practices that could be shared with Israeli and Japanese companies doing or looking to do business in each respective country.

This type of event, while certainly original, is not without precedent. *No Venture No Victory* is a current program that sends young Japanese entrepreneurs who are involved in technology-based startups to Israel for an intense entrepreneurial training. The most recent cohort included seven entrepreneurs in the fields of cybersecurity, AI, and IoT, who spent 20 days in Israel in December 2018. Programs like these and the ones proposed above enable the relationship to grow, help bridge the Tel Aviv-Tokyo divide, and serve the economic and security interests of Japan, of Israel, and ultimately of the U.S. as well.

Conclusion

In spite of the challenges highlighted in the paper—Israel’s relationship with China, the Tel Aviv-Tokyo divide, asymmetric bureaucracies—nevertheless, the Israeli-Japanese relationship in cyber, innovation, and technology is perfectly positioned for significant and impactful growth in the near term. For 2019, Israel has set a goal of 1 billion in exports to Japan, 30 new Japanese investments and five new Japanese offices in Israel,³⁷ and with Tokyo 2020 around the corner, there is massive potential for Israeli companies to expand their presence in Japan. As Minister Seko recently said, “we need Israeli support in cyber-security, especially ahead of the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, and are looking forward to fruitful cooperation.”³⁸

Still, Israel and Japan remain vastly different countries, with drastically different cultures of innovation and business. While this can be viewed as a challenge and rightfully so, it must also be viewed as an opportunity, as the two countries and their respective governments, populations and businesses have complementary skills and capabilities. Take Israeli innovation and combine it with Japanese attention to detail (put differently, combine Israeli *chutzpah* with Japanese *monozukuri*), and it could lead to unparalleled capabilities not only in cyber but also in other emerging technical domains. This can only happen if Israel and Japan continue to expand their G2G and B2B relationships, and if the U.S. government and U.S. businesses take a more active role in aiding this expansion, through initiatives such as those highlighted above. Expanding these ties in cyber and beyond will yield exponential economic and geopolitical benefits, not only for Japan and Israel, but also for the United States.

³⁷ <https://www.timesofisrael.com/israel-sets-target-of-1-billion-in-exports-to-japan-in-coming-year/>

³⁸ <https://mfa.gov.il/MFA/InnovativeIsrael/Economy/Pages/Israel-and-Japan-launch-new-cyber-security-collaboration-11-May-2017.aspx>

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Charles previously co-taught a graduate-level cyber 101 workshop at Georgetown University's Security Studies Program, and was also previously a National Security Fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracy. He has spoken publicly on cyber issues in a number of capacities, including as a guest speaker at the Commonwealth of Virginia's Veterans Cyber Initiative, and as a panelist at the American Society of Travel Agent's Premium Business Summit as well as its Global Convention.

Charles received his M.A. from Georgetown University and his B.A. from Emory University, where he graduated Summa Cum Laude.

Author's Note

The genesis of this report dates back to December 2017, when I traveled to Japan as part of the [Sasakawa USA Emerging Experts Delegation \(SEED\)](#) Program in partnership with Center for a New American Security (CNAS). The theme of our program was innovation and cybersecurity. Our delegation met with Japanese experts in Tokyo, Osaka, and Kyoto to discuss shared cybersecurity challenges, the emerging innovation ecosystem in Japan, and ways to deepen U.S.-Japan cooperation around these topics. The itinerary included visits to and meetings with a variety of government organizations, including the National Center of Incident Readiness and Strategy for Cybersecurity (NISC), the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC), the National Institute for Information and Communications Technology (NICT), the Information-technology Promotion Agency (IPA), the C4 Systems Planning Division (J-6) of the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF), and the Cyber Security Policy Planning Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA).

In most of our meetings, we were typically greeted with presentations including: background on the organization, their efforts vis-à-vis cybersecurity, and their collaboration with U.S. counterparts. What was striking was that a number of the presentations also included mentions of collaboration with Israeli counterparts. It became clear that this government-to-government (G2G) collaboration between Japan and Israel was not an anomaly but rather a trend, one that these Japanese organizations were eager to highlight. What was not clear, however, was the source of this collaboration, whether it was sustainable, and whether or not it extended beyond these organizations to other government and non-government entities.

I decided to research this further, and in support of that Sasakawa USA graciously provided me with the opportunity to return to Japan in November 2018 as a participant of its [In-Depth Alumni Research Trip](#). My in-person interviews during the trip with government officials as well

as both Japanese companies working in Israel and Israeli cyber companies working in Japan inform the core conclusions of this paper. It is my hope that this paper will spawn additional research, and that its recommendations help further not only the Japanese-Israeli bilateral relationship, but also, more broadly, the U.S.-Japan-Israel trilateral relationship.