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Analysis of today
Assessment of tomorrow

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The departure of Netanyahu's government is not a risk for Israel but an opportunity for the country's goals

The government of Benjamin Netanyahu has become a burden for the goals it set after the October 7 terrorist attacks by Hamas, for which it initially won the support of the nation.

Almost 4 months after the start of the operation in Gaza, the Israeli PM and his far-right partners have less capacity to deal with the multiple crises.

PM Netanyahu has been rapidly losing credibility with his partners by blocking complex peace initiatives that have the strong support of the US and significant Arab regional states.

For any country, a change of government would represent an extreme risk when conducting a war operation. However, Israel could be an exception because such a risky move for others would, in its case, provide scope for a favourable outcome.

According to a recent survey, more than half of Israelis believe that Netanyahu is guided by "personal interest" during the military campaign in Gaza, and only one-third believe that he has been working for the good of the country.

The war has put divisions aside

Hamas' October attack on Israel came at a time when the right-wing Netanyahu government had already been running out of solutions to a deep internal crisis.

At that point, the nation put aside deep political divisions. It united around the effort to return the kidnapped hostages, leaving Netanyahu in the saddle to spearhead the ensuing military operation.

> Amid the war against Hamas, the Supreme Court has done its job

However, the widespread belief among Israelis that his motives for conducting and successfully ending the anti-Hamas campaign are no longer national but personal, has become an actual political demand for which the PM and his partners have no convincing answer.

On the anniversary of Netanyahu's government, the Supreme Court annulled controversial judicial reform laws that sparked one of the country's biggest political crises and marked the first year of the right-wing cabinet.

Amid the war against Hamas, the Supreme Court has done its job, putting an end to the dispute between the government and the vast number of Israelis who have opposed the political suppression of the judiciary for the past year.

The power and symbolism of the Supreme Court's decision

With respect to this decision, the court did not ask for a delay under the pretext that the country was at war, fearing that could bring about new divisions.

On the contrary, the strength of that decision lies in the fact it was made during the war, and its announcement on the very anniversary of Netanyahu's government, as a kind of "verdict" on its one-year rule was symbolic.

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Finance Minister and one of the hardliners in Netanyahu's cabinet, Bezalel Smotrich, accused the Supreme Court of making an "extreme and divisive" decision.

His warning of the danger of division in Israel is demagogic, and sounds like a forced excuse for a series of controversial government moves over the past year.

The divisions and tensions it caused

undoubtedly contributed to Hamas's decision to attack Israel last October, assessing that defence capabilities were reduced due to the political crisis.

Patience is at an end

The Israeli operation in Gaza is about to enter its fifth month, and many have lost patience in expecting its successful outcome. For the over-lengthy uncertainty over the fate of the kidnapped and their families, Netanyahu is logically the most responsible as the head of the government and the war cabinet.

For the citizens, projections indicating that the action in Gaza could last for months cause barely acceptable anxiety regarding new victims among soldiers, but also among civilians, due to missile attacks by Hamas.

Netanyahu has also been distressed by the disruption of maritime traffic through the Red Sea due to attacks on merchant ships by the pro-Iranian Houthis. Israel's port of Eilat on the Red Sea has seen activity drop by as much as 85% due to the disruption.

Even though the bulk of Israel's sea trade is carried out through ports on the Mediterranean, they too have been affected by the Red Sea crisis due to the increasing number of companies bypassing the Red Sea and the Suez Canal, which lengthens delivery time and raises the cost of transport.

In the absence of a realistic goal, we will end up mired in the Gaza quagmire - Ehud Barak

The Prime Minister's increasing burden is his refusal to cooperate on initiatives for a cease-fire in Gaza, the release of hostages, and plans for the management of the Strip in the post-conflict period.

Netanyahu has already expressed strong opposition to the US position to move towards the completion of Palestinian statehood, with all security guarantees to Israel that the attacks will not be repeated.

Regardless of the vast political experience and pragmatism that has kept him in the arena for decades, the prime minister has lost the basic sense of statesmanship to find a solution among realistic, not ideal, options.

“In the absence of a realistic goal, we will end up mired in the Gaza quagmire, fighting simultaneously in Lebanon and in the West Bank, eroding American backing and endangering the Abraham accords and the peace agreements with Egypt and with Jordan”, warned former Prime Minister Ehud Barak, demanding early elections in the country.

If it moves towards the elections, Israel will not jeopardise the goals it has set at the start of the operation in Gaza. Its institutions, including the military, can function successfully even during the transition of political power.

The Supreme Court has demonstrated that power with a recent decision, which hit Netanyahu's cabinet hard, halting his project of ruling over the judiciary by political power.

The departure of the prime minister and his ultra-right cabinet, in favour of pragmatic policies advocated by Netanyahu's opponents, would remove blockages in communication with foreign partners, without which Israel cannot expect long-term peaceful and favourable solutions.