Tomorrow's Affairs
Analysis of today
Assessment of tomorrow

By: TA | AP Brief

Eisenkot announces a shift away from Netanyahu's policies



Gadi Eisenkot, the politician tasked with forming a new Israeli government, pledged on Tuesday to reverse many of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's policies as the new parliament was sworn in.

The pledge sets the stage for a consequential month of legislative action and coalition negotiations.

Eisenkot, a former military chief, has up to six weeks to form a government that would end the tenure of Israel's longest-serving prime minister.

While it remains unclear whether Eisenkot will be able to forge a coalition government, the new Knesset can enact legislation in the meantime. Netanyahu's opponents now control a solid majority in parliament.

Eisenkot's bloc introduced a series of bills at the start of the legislative session that target Netanyahu and his policies.

They include launching an official government-led inquiry into the Hamas-led Oct. 7, 2023, attacks, setting term limits on the position of prime minister and overturning changes the outgoing Netanyahu-led government made to limit the powers of the judiciary.

It was not immediately clear how quickly or far those bills would advance in the weeks ahead.

Competing calls for unity

The former general, who campaigned as a no-nonsense straight shooter, reiterated that his goal was a government that all Israelis could trust, not one that represents only certain factions.

"We will act for all citizens of Israel, those who voted for us and those who did not, out of deep commitment," Eisenkot said ahead of the Knesset swearing-in ceremony.

Netanyahu has sought to undermine the certified election results after his bloc fell short of a majority. He has repeated unsubstantiated claims that Arab-led parties"stole" the elections.

> Eisenkot's bloc triggered a process to install a new parliamentary speaker

In a speech following Tuesday's ceremony, Netanyahu reiterated his claim that Arab politicians, who represent a minority comprising 20% of Israel's population, cannot be trusted.

He attacked Jewish opposition leaders who have signaled a willingness to partner with Arab parties to form a government.

Eisenkot has left that possibility open if the parties meet several conditions, including accepting Israel's identity as a Jewish state and declaring Hamas a terrorist group.

"I ask you: Are you prepared to be dependent on those whose goal is the destruction of the Jewish state?" Netanyahu said.

Eisenkot said Netanyahu's speech was "divisive" and "hate-filled," adding: "I am now even more convinced that he is unfit to remain in office for even one more minute."

He later said he had canceled a meeting with Netanyahu's Likud party planned for Wednesday because of the speech.

Eisenkot's bloc also triggered a process on Tuesday to install a new parliamentary speaker as they kicked off work on their legislative agenda.