

Break links with Israeli apartheid. Boycott Barclays, which invests and loans to firms supplying the Israeli military directly or via the US. Demand the University of Liverpool ends financial and academic complicity with genocide. Join the Merseyside Pension Fund divestment demo 5pm Tues 30 July B'head Town Hall.



West Bank annexation

While attention is focused on Gaza, Israel has renewed its long-term plan of annexing the West Bank, defying international law.

Last year, neutering the Supreme Court was aimed to remove one obstacle. As former Likud Justice Minister Yariv Levin had explained a decade earlier, *“A change in the legal system will allow us to take tangible steps on the ground that strengthen the process of advancing sovereignty.”*

Now Israel has quietly changed the governance of the West Bank to allow an expansion of illegal settlements, as promoted by self-professed *“fascist homophobe”* Bezalel Smotrich, the Finance Minister who also serves in the Defence Ministry.

An IDF order posted on 29 May transferred responsibility for dozens of bylaws from the military to civilian defence ministry officials led by Smotrich. The transfer reduces the likelihood of legal checks on settlement expansion and development.

In late June, the Security Cabinet agreed to legalize 5 settlement outposts, previously termed illegal by the government. All the settlements break the 4th Geneva Convention.

The Cabinet also approved plans for thousands of new West Bank settlement homes. Smotrich trumpeted the decisions.

Netanyahu clings to power

Israel's coalition government remains, but the national consensus for war has cracked and the boycott is impacting the economy.

On 29 June 130,000 took to the streets in Tel Aviv demanding an immediate truce deal to bring the captives home. *“The people understand that Netanyahu prolongs the war for personal reasons – reaching a deal would lead to early elections and end his rule,”* one unidentified relative said.

Earlier, IDF spokesman Daniel Hagari dismissed the shared fantasy of Netanyahu, Smotrich and Ben-Gvir of destroying Hamas. *“It's simply throwing sand in the eyes of the public,”* Hagari told Israeli TV in mid-June.

The Supreme Court ruling to end the exemption from military service for religious students opens another crack, as the coalition relies on two religious Zionist parties, both committed to the exemption.

The settler parties could also bring down Netanyahu. Smotrich denounced moves to boost electric power for a Gaza desalination plant. Ben-Gvir has threatened to bring down the coalition if it implements the UN Security Council Resolution on ending the war.

As the Israeli PM prepares to address the US Congress on 24 July, he may cling to power waiting for President Trump.

We abhor all attacks on civilians. The slaughter of Israeli civilians on 7 October by Hamas, and some by Israeli forces, does not justify the massive ongoing Israeli slaughter of Palestinian civilians.



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