



[The Anticipated Inclusion of Bigoted Jewish Supremacist and Extremist Itamar Ben-Gvir as a Minister in the New Israeli Coalition Government Draws Strong Displeasure from the Biden Administration and Others](#)

“The whole world is worried,” a statement even made and caught on a hot mic by Israeli President Isaac Herzog has relayed the feelings of many governments around the world. The strong concern and dissatisfaction are centered on the recently elected Israeli lawmaker Itamar Ben-Gvir, a bigoted Jewish supremacist, far-right, ultra-nationalist extremist, and the anticipated role that he will play as a minister in the new Israeli coalition government. The Biden administration in particular is holding back on dealing with Ben-Gvir at all, expressing its strong displeasure and even hinting that it might boycott Ben-Gvir, though this seems unlikely due to the domestic political ramifications. Some American politicians, like U.S. Senator Bob Menendez, have also expressed their serious concern, saying that forming a government that includes “extremist and polarizing individuals like Ben-Gvir” would harm U.S.-Israeli bilateral relations. Forms of resistance in the U.S. government will likely be by individuals and non-governmental organizations. Multiple other foreign governments and their representatives have also voiced their displeasure and are likely to take action to minimize relations with Ben-Gvir.

Ben-Gvir has a long history of deplorable behavior, including his support of Baruch Goldstein, who massacred 29 Palestinian worshippers in 1994. He openly supports the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians and lives in an illegal settlement where he actively advocates for the violent eviction of Palestinian residents from their homes. Ben-Gvir has also made multiple violent threats against former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. Just two weeks before Rabin was assassinated, Ben-Gvir was filmed holding an ornament taken from Rabin’s car, saying “we got his car and we’ll get him too.” In 2007, he was convicted in an Israeli court for inciting racism and support for a terrorist group. He has supported multiple Jewish extremists and supports the racist Kahanist ideology. Kahanism is an extremist Jewish ideology that states Arabs living in Israel are enemies of the Jewish people and advocates for the creation of a Jewish theocratic state. Ben-Gvir is part of the Otzma Yehudit party, which has partnered before with the Noam party, an aggressively bigoted and anti-gay group led by Bezalet Smotrich, a fellow fascist and racist.

The anticipated ministerial position of Ben-Gvir has also garnered pushback from other groups and entities. Jeremy Ben-Ami, the leader of J Street, tweeted that “Ben-Gvir & fellow ultranationalist Bezalet Smotrich raise the specter of a government willing to strip Israel’s Palestinian-Arab citizens of rights, weaken the judiciary, short-circuit Netanyahu’s legal charges & ratchet up intercommunal tensions and violations of Palestinian rights...this is a moment of truth and of choice...and to a vision of a world rooted in equality and justice.” The array of pushback and concern outlines how dangerous Ben-Gvir is seen to be by a host of entities, and the destructive role that he would play as a coalition government minister.

While U.S. Ambassador to Israel Tom Nides has said that he “intends to keep working with Israel’s government on the two countries’ shared interests and values,” impartial social justice observers have pointed out that the United States should not work with extremist far-right governments, especially those that employ people with a history of racism, violent extremism, and clear fascist tendencies. Not only is it morally wrong to allow people like Ben-Gvir any shred of legitimacy, it will also have vast negative political ramifications for the United States in the Middle East. Based on his deplorable track record, Ben-Gvir is likely to continue to enflame the situation in Palestine and play a damaging role in inciting and encouraging violence. He will also push for increased illegal Israeli settlements, another exacerbating factor that has prolonged the status quo of injustices in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Any form of American support for allowing this to transpire would trigger an intensely negative response amongst



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human rights and social justice activists. It is incumbent on the United States to champion values of freedom and justice around the world, and engaging with Ben-Gvir in any way would undermine our efforts and legitimize this type of bigoted brand of governance and oppression.