

## Israeli army says it will not take orders from extremist security minister

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A special report by Israeli TV Channel 12 revealed that outgoing Israeli army Chief of Staff (CoS) Aviv Kochavi informed Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of his decision not to follow orders issued by his coalition ministers. Kochavi's words were in reference to ministers Bezalel Smotrich and Itamar Ben-Gvir, who have been granted extended power by Netanyahu under the coalition deal to influence the Israeli army's chain of command.

The outgoing CoS elaborated in his recent phone call with Netanyahu that he will only answer to Minister of Defence Yoav Galant and will resist orders from elsewhere. Kochavi will oppose Smotrich and Ben-Gvir's commands and ensure they will not be implemented.

This situation is expected to create a lot of confusion since Smotrich has been given a role within the Ministry of Defense as a minister who oversees the government's activities in the occupied territories.

[...]

The air force officers considered it a threat that would "destroy Israel's democracy," and end the "co-existence of the Israeli community."

"We are on a very slippery slope of the politicization process of civil-military relations or the military, generally speaking," said the former Director-General of Israel's Ministry of Strategic Affairs, **Kobi Michael**.

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