

Analysis

Herzog heads to Washington on high-stakes mission to keep US-Israel fissure in check

Israel's domestic fight intensifies as the Biden White House continues to blast Netanyahu's coalition, but there are signs that the president is visiting DC at just the right time

By Lazar Berman / July 18, 2023

After positioning himself for months as a peacemaker mediating Israel's warring political camps, President Isaac Herzog took off for Washington early Tuesday to try to bridge another chasm that seems to be growing wider with each passing week.

[...]

"This is one of the deepest, maybe the deepest crisis, in the history of the US-Israeli relationship," argued **Chuck Freilich, a former deputy national security adviser and now a senior fellow at the Institute for National Security Studies** in Tel Aviv.

"Biden is a true friend of Israel," he continued. "I think he is simply appalled by what he sees."

It is not merely the specific policies the White House is publicly lambasting, though Washington has been vocally critical of moves to expand settlements, Israeli military actions that put civilians in the crossfire, and the lack of consensus on the government's plan to remake the judiciary.

Rather, argued **Freilich**, the president is casting doubt on Israel's basic character as a democracy.

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