

Israel's Military Cohesion, Preparedness Threatened as Judicial Reform Sparks Backlash

Keren Setton / August 14, 2023

As the Israeli government advances with its judicial reforms, the army's longstanding position above politics is being seriously challenged

The judicial overhaul launched by the Israeli government at the beginning of the year has plunged Israel into a major crisis, striking to the heart of what was the country's consensus: its military.

[...]

“What we are seeing is the use of military force with the purpose of harming military fitness in order to achieve a political goal,” said **Professor Kobi Michael, a senior researcher at the Institute for National Security Studies**. “The damage to military preparedness is enormous, but also this has harmed the status of the military within Israeli society and breached the trust between the political and the military echelon.”

“This harms Israel's deterrence because the debate is being held publicly, in front of its enemies,” **Michael** added.

On Monday, Israel's chief of the General Staff, Lt. Gen. Herzi Halevi, came under fire on social media for being weak in the face of dissent among military reservists. Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, who has voiced his discomfort with the coalition's policies in the past, backed him up.

“The people of Israel have benefited that in these complex times ... Halevi is leading the Israel Defense Forces,” Gallant posted on X (formerly known as Twitter).

On Sunday, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was briefed by the top military brass that reportedly warned him that the continued domestic conflict will harm the army's ability to defend Israel in case of a war.

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