

**The success of PM Benjamin Netanyahu's address to Congress is multi-faceted - opinion**

For Netanyahu, the visit was a missed opportunity for a reset with the Democrats, and with Republicans, it further cemented the increasingly close relationship.

By Chuck Freilich, Colin P. Clarke / July 30, 2024

Prime Minister Benjamin “Bibi” Netanyahu addressed the US Congress to shore up support among American lawmakers for Israel’s ongoing war against Hamas in Gaza. This was Netanyahu’s fourth address before Congress (unique among world leaders) and his second time addressing lawmakers at the invitation of Republicans and behind the back of a standing Democratic president. It was also his first visit to Washington during the Biden presidency.

The Washington Netanyahu arrived in was a very different place than the one he has addressed in the past. First, there was the assassination attempt against former president Trump. Then, the announcement by President Joe Biden, probably the most pro-Israel president in history, that he would not seek reelection and instead endorse his vice president, Kamala Harris, for the presidency.

Netanyahu’s visit had two overarching objectives. First, to use the prestigious platform of the US Congress in the attempt to restore his public standing in Israel, where his popularity continues to wane amid his catastrophic failure on October 7 and unwillingness, or inability, to secure a hostage and ceasefire deal with Hamas. And second, as a Republican ploy to promote divisions between Democrats and Israel in an election year.

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