

Public Legitimacy as a Necessary Condition for a Peace Process: A Test of the Third Netanyahu Government

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Public Legitimacy and Peace Processes

The life span of any government is determined in part by the public legitimacy it enjoys.¹ This argument seems self-evident with a democratic regime, in which the public chooses the government directly and has the power to replace it. However, even authoritarian regimes need public legitimacy in order to function and maintain their status.² Indeed, public legitimacy is not equivalent to political support. Legitimacy links a certain action with the norms, values, laws, and identity of a given society, and conversely, places a boundary to distinguish between actions that are consistent with the society's system of values and norms and actions perceived as being outside this framework. Within the totality of activities that the society permits as legitimate, various sectors can give political support for different actions, even when they are contradictory. For example, in Israel there are those who support the idea of increasing child allowances or drafting ultra-Orthodox Jews into the military, and those who espouse opposite ideas. There are supporters of the free market and supporters of the welfare state. To some extent these ideas contradict each other, but they are all deemed legitimate – even if not universally supported – in Israeli society today.

The connections between granting legitimacy and providing political support are complex. It is easier to mobilize political support for an idea or an action whose legitimacy is not contested, and vice versa: one of the ways to undermine political support for a particular action is to render it

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illegitimate. Similarly, the granting of far reaching political support can legitimate an action that was until then perceived as illegitimate.

In order to advance a peace process, the government and its leaders need both political support and legitimacy at every stage, albeit in differing configurations and degrees at various points. More specifically, the government's pursuit of a peace process comprises several stages that differ in times, partners, goals, and objectives, although there is some overlap and interface between them. This complex process can be presented schematically in simplified fashion as a linear progression that begins with a decision to engage in negotiations and presumably continues with the negotiations themselves, the signing of an agreement, and the implementation of the agreement. The political process of peacemaking takes shape through interaction with a social process that reflects the connection and relations between the societies in conflict. A process of reconciliation between the societies and a change in basic attitudes and beliefs toward the other side will enable progress in the political process, while a social process laden with lack of trust, stereotypes, fears, and the absence of familiarity and mutual recognition, and characterized as a struggle instead of a partnership, will hinder progress.

A peace process is not an isolated, short term event, and society does not bestow legitimacy on its leaders to advance this process in a unidirectional, continual, or autonomous fashion. Public legitimacy empowers leaders during the various stages of negotiations – not to mention enables the implementation of an agreement the moment it is achieved.³ The range of possible actions by the leader is limited by the range of actions that have received public legitimacy.

If the decision making and policy shaping process was ever the exclusive province of the leader, this is no longer the case, as there are now partners – among them critics, opponents or supporters, and partners in actual practice – and many other contributing elements, including public opinion, the media, and the leader's political party. Consequently, leaders find it more difficult than in the past to mobilize the political support they desire. During the preliminary stages of the process of negotiating for peace, the leader must obtain legitimacy, and throughout the entire process, must act to influence the public's perception so that the other side is perceived as a potential partner and not only as an enemy.

Without such a change in perception, society and its leaders will have a difficult time overcoming obstacles and crises that arise during the process

because of actions by opponents of an agreement or as a result of difficulties finding an agreed formula for the issues under discussion.⁴

Reshaping the Boundaries of Legitimate Action: Lessons from the Past

Experience shows how leadership can lead to a change in public legitimacy and thereby encourage political support for a change in policy. It also shows how broad political support for a leader enables him to bring about a reshaping of the boundaries of legitimacy and as a result, a change in policy. The political act of peace is a major deviation from the boundaries of the dominant discourse established during the years of clashes and wars, and the leader's ability and actions are critical for implementing such a change. For example, French President Charles de Gaulle took advantage of the blank check he received from the public and pursued a course opposite to the public's conventional premises, in order to create public legitimacy and eventually mobilize political support for France's pullout from Algeria. Throughout the process, he worked within the boundaries of the legitimacy granted to him by the French public. By force of leadership, he used the political support he received in order to redraw those boundaries and to work within them for a drastic change in his country's policy.⁵

A closer and perhaps even clearer example are the actions of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, who consciously and intentionally led to a change in Egyptian public legitimacy to enable him to negotiate a peace agreement with Israel after several wars and years of hostility. Although his government, unlike Western democracies, did not depend on the direct political support of the public, Sadat recognized the need to effect a change in public legitimacy in order to allow a change in policy. His historic visit to Israel served as a key measure in changing the legitimate rules of the game. However, he did not stop there, and despite an opposition that worked to deny the legitimacy of the peace process, he launched an extensive media campaign to change the Egyptian public's position so that it would support peace and reconciliation.⁶

In other instances, it is not the political leadership that leads the effort to redraw the boundaries of legitimate action, but rather, other actors in the political-social-public sphere. In turn, the official and authorized leadership may be compelled to accept the new boundaries, sometimes even supporting them and eventually adopting them. For many years, for example, it was illegitimate and illegal for Israelis to hold contacts with

the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). Social and political actors, originally from the political and media fringe, began to hold contacts with the PLO, and some even went to jail for this. However, the political leadership subsequently began to adopt the contacts that were fostered through think tanks and civil society, authorizing them post factum and joining in the effort to create legitimacy for such actions among the Israeli public.

A leader does not need public legitimacy from a society with which he has no contact. However, a peace process is not a unilateral process, and entering into negotiations with the leaders of another society opens another circle in which legitimacy plays a role. A leader and his government would do well to recognize the needs of the leader with whom they are holding negotiations to receive legitimacy for the peace process from his respective constituents. Moreover, the leadership of one side can play a role in mobilizing or damaging public legitimacy for the leadership of the other side and for the peace process. Sadat's visit to the Knesset was a major step in mobilizing public legitimacy among the Egyptian people to support the peace agreement, and at the same time, it also mobilized public legitimacy in Israel, and as a result, political support for the leadership and the peace process.

In the history of relations and negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians, there are also many examples of actions by a leader or the leadership from one side damaging the public legitimacy of the peace process in both societies. One instance is Yasir Arafat's comments to his audience and to the Muslim world in which he compared the Oslo Accords to the Treaty of Hudaibiyah. While one can argue about whether it prepares Muslim hearts for an agreement or damages the legitimacy of that agreement, either way this comparison was damaging to the legitimacy given by the Israeli public to the country's leadership to hold negotiations with Arafat.⁷ On the other hand, not only has Israel's continued construction in the settlements over the years not been in keeping with an effort to mobilize domestic public legitimacy for the peace process; it has also damaged the PLO leaders' public legitimacy to hold negotiations with the Israeli leadership. Also relevant are the dozens of dismissive or threatening statements made by leaders of both sides toward the other side, meant to gain the sympathy of their public and political support at home. These statements were destructive in terms of building legitimacy for a process of rapprochement.

The Test of the Netanyahu Government

In terms of public legitimacy for the peace process, the third Netanyahu government, which entered a round of talks with the Palestinians in late July 2013, was on shaky ground. The government began the negotiations when neither the Israeli nor the Palestinian public was hopeful about the success of the peace process, trusted one another, or lent domestic political support for progress in the process.⁸ In order to advance in the various stages of the peace process from this point, the third Netanyahu government ought to have invested efforts and resources in mobilizing public legitimacy for the move. Based on this premise, what follows is a review of the government's related activities and decisions and statements by central government figures. It examines steps taken – and steps not taken – by the government and its efforts in the context of mobilizing public legitimacy for the peace process.

The Decision to Enter Negotiations

The Netanyahu government's entry into negotiations with the Palestinians meets the theoretical framework at the basis of this article, namely, that there was legitimacy and a great deal of political support among the Israeli public for entering into negotiations with the Palestinians and attempting to find a political solution. The Prime Minister both responded to and benefited from this legitimacy. Support for this direction was reflected in the election results and in the demand by political parties to hold negotiations as a precondition for joining the coalition.⁹ It was also evident from general polls carried out over a long period among the Israeli public, which has consistently – since the Oslo process and to the formation of the government – supported negotiations with the Palestinians.¹⁰

However, this is only the first stage in a peace process. A government that is genuinely interested in promoting an agreement based on two states for two peoples must work to achieve legitimacy for continuing negotiations, for the issues discussed, for the solutions proposed, and for a basic change in attitudes toward the other society as part of the process of peace and reconciliation.

Legislation

During this period of negotiations, there was no coordinated and consistent attempt to generate public support through legislation for the negotiations or for peace with the Palestinians. On the contrary: coalition members

and government ministers proposed laws and government decisions that were explicitly meant to hamper the negotiations and portray them as illegitimate. These included the bill approved by the Ministerial Committee on Legislation to annex the Jordan Valley,¹¹ or bills sponsored by coalition members, but eventually rejected, such as the bill to impose Israeli law over all settlements in Judea and Samaria,¹² or the bill to require the government to receive Knesset approval for entering into negotiations over Jerusalem or the issue of Palestinian refugees.¹³ In the consciousness of the Israeli and Palestinian public, any such bill places another obstacle on the already narrowed chances of a resolution of the difficult core issues. Moreover, these bills undermine not only the discussion of the substantive components of a possible solution, but also – and perhaps primarily – the symbolic elements of a solution to the core issues of Jerusalem and the refugees. The complementary side of these legislative initiatives can be seen in the rejection of opposition-sponsored bills intended to send a message to strengthen the peace process or to promote reconciliation between Jewish and Palestinian society.¹⁴

The most prominent example is promotion of the law requiring a referendum in the event of a government decision to hand over sovereign Israeli territory to another entity. In the context of building public legitimacy, the framing of the law and the context of the legislation are no less important than its content. After all, any such decision will require broad public legitimacy on the basis of a referendum or elections. In other words, a referendum could be a high point in mobilizing public support for the peace process. However, as a result of the framing of the law that was enacted, it is perceived by its initiators, by the opposition, and by the general public as intended to place restrictions on the peace process and undermine it. Furthermore, the basic message that this law and its explanatory material convey to the public is that those working to achieve an agreement do not have legitimacy to sign an agreement.¹⁵

Government Ministry Decisions

Government ministers and ministries, particularly the Defense Minister and the Minister of Construction and Housing, have also helped convey a message that undermines any potential change in basic positions toward negotiations and the other side that is needed to ensure the success of a peace process. These ministers have continued to promote construction in the settlements, which is perceived by all the parties involved in the

conflict – excluding the official position of the current government – as one of the main obstacles to the peace process.¹⁶ This message is also conveyed by the government decision on national priority areas, which includes settlements in Judea and Samaria, particularly small, new, and isolated settlements, and enables ministers to grant them additional benefits. The decision conveys a message to both the Israeli and the Palestinian public that is contrary to the peace process.¹⁷ Other ministries promulgated regulations or made statements that were contrary to the spirit of the peace process and reconciliation, and conveyed negative messages to the Arab minority in Israel. Examples are the Education Minister, who wished to cut back on the study of Arabic;¹⁸ the Finance Minister, who worked to provide a VAT exemption to those purchasing a first apartment, but excluded Arabs, among others, from this benefit;¹⁹ and the Interior Ministry, which changed its procedure for providing residency status to a foreign spouse married to a permanent resident so that it would be possible to deport Palestinians even during handling of their petitions.²⁰ This legislation and these decisions have an impact on the deeper level of the reconciliation process between Israeli and Palestinian society: they reflect a general trend toward a non-conciliatory discourse, which alienates and excludes the Arab minority within Israel rather than mobilizing its support for a process of dialogue for peace between Israel and the Palestinians.

Public Statements

Statements by the Prime Minister and other leading ministers to the Israeli public similarly rebuffed the opportunity to mobilize public legitimacy. When Justice Minister Tzipi Livni and Yitzhak Molcho began the most recent round of negotiations with the Palestinians, Netanyahu and Economy Minister Naftali Bennett competed for credit for continuing construction in the settlements.²¹ In the United States, in a speech in English, Netanyahu expounded on the anticipated fruits of peace.²² However, in the Knesset, at cabinet meetings, and in his Hebrew speeches, he has painted a picture of the future, the day after a peace agreement, which is fraught with dangers. Using particular historical events that are scorched in the Jewish people's narrative, he has described the Arabs in negative terms, stating that they wished to destroy and not to build;²³ he has highlighted their recalcitrance in negotiations and their attempt to close their eyes to reality;²⁴ he has described the Palestinians as enemies and adversaries; he has tied the Palestinian nationalist movement to the Nazi effort to exterminate the

Jews; and he contends that Israel does not need peace in order to be safe and to continue to develop and grow.²⁵

Minister Bennett, who heads the Bayit HeYehudi party, which represents the settlement enterprise, is not alone in working to undermine the legitimacy of the negotiations, a possible peace agreement, the Israeli negotiators, and the Palestinian leader, describing the future after peace as an economic, social, or security disaster.²⁶ Other major figures in the government share this sentiment, for example Defense Minister Moshe Ya'alon, who has spoken out against negotiations with the Palestinians, against the Palestinians' good faith, and against the actions and personality of the US mediator, claiming that there is no partner on the Palestinian side for the idea of two states for two peoples and no chance to reach an agreement in this generation.²⁷

Like Netanyahu, Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman has declared that he is in favor of a peace agreement with the Palestinians. He has stated that he would be prepared to leave his home in a settlement and that he supports the continuation of talks. However, he asserts that he does not see any prospects for an overall agreement with the Palestinians at this time;²⁸ minimizes the power or the desire of the other side to make progress in the process; describes the day after the agreement as a situation full of dangers, not opportunities; proposes an exchange of territory and populations so that Israeli Arabs will find themselves within the borders of a Palestinian state; and does not leave any opening to discuss any kind of implementation of the return of Palestinian refugees. These statements reinforce Israeli society's concerns regarding its existence and identity as a Jewish state. They also intensify fears of a peace agreement with the Palestinians that includes, inter alia, recognition of their full sovereignty over their territory, and perhaps even symbolic, limited recognition of the right of return.²⁹ In addition, they place major obstacles in the path of the negotiations.

The Minister Leading the Negotiations

Minister Tzipi Livni, who was in charge of leading the negotiations with the Palestinians on behalf of the Prime Minister, does not serve in one of the three key positions in the government. In addition, her ministry has no direct contact with shaping the situation in the conflict. This is another message about the importance that the government and the Prime Minister attribute to the process. Moreover, coalition members treat Livni in a way that mocks her, weakens her further, and damages the legitimacy of her

actions in the negotiations.³⁰ Yitzhak Molcho's appointment as the Prime Minister's special emissary to the negotiations has been perceived by commentators as an attempt by Netanyahu to keep an eye on Livni so that as the official envoy to the negotiations, she does not deviate from the boundaries marked out by the Prime Minister.³¹

Steps Not Taken

There were several necessary steps that the Netanyahu government chose not to take in the ongoing conflict between Israel and the Palestinians and the mobilization of public legitimacy for negotiations and a full peace process. The first step is a meeting with Abbas, which would convey a message that there is a partnership geared toward building trust. The next step is a halt to construction in the settlements, at least those that are east of the security barrier, which would convey both to the Israeli public and to the Palestinians that Israel is moving seriously and sincerely toward peace. Other such steps are acquainting the Israeli public with the Palestinian narrative; encouraging meetings and social and economic collaboration; and emphasizing the fruits of peace. This is a partial list, and does not exhaust the measures that could have been taken to mobilize public legitimacy for the peace process and convey to the entire world that when it comes to a political settlement, Israel means business.

Palestinian Activity

This article has focused on the actions of the Netanyahu government and its contribution – or lack thereof – to mobilizing public legitimacy for the peace process and reconciliation. However, Abu Mazen and the Palestinians also played a role in shaping the boundaries of legitimate action among the Israeli public. Along with many other actors that are partners in the political struggle, the Palestinian leadership has a considerable opportunity to contribute to a change in Israeli public legitimacy.

Palestinian officials joined Israeli figures in expressing a lack of confidence in the success of the talks throughout the period of the negotiations.³² Furthermore, Abu Mazen has refused to recognize Israel as the state of the Jewish people, and he has thus missed a major opportunity to influence the Israeli public's positions on the negotiations and the peace process. He threatened to approach United Nations institutions and international tribunals as a means of achieving the release of prisoners and a freeze on construction in the settlements.³³ He thus undermined the degree of

public legitimacy given by the Israeli public to the peace process and the continuation of talks. He ultimately did appeal to UN organizations and conventions, and with this primarily symbolic act and the subsequent reconciliation with Hamas, contributed a great deal to the stalemate and to further erosion of the legitimacy given by the Israeli public to the peace process.³⁴

Conclusion

Mobilization of public legitimacy is a necessary, albeit not sufficient condition for the success of the peace process. While public legitimacy is not identical to political support for a given position, without public legitimacy, it will be difficult to mobilize political support for a peace process. In addition, public legitimacy is not absolute, and often a political struggle among various actors ensues over the amount of legitimacy for certain actions. There is no agreed, objective index for measuring the degree of legitimacy of a particular action, and any action is judged in retrospect by the public's response to it. This lack of clarity, which makes it difficult for social analysts and researchers, is also what makes the historic change in the boundaries of legitimate action possible.

When actors are interested in changing the existing situation and pursuing a process of peace between former enemies, this involves a reshaping of the boundaries of legitimate action, which is generally also accompanied by a political struggle and a movement for change. The government and its leaders have much power in reshaping the boundaries of legitimate action so that they will support a peace process. Their actions must complement the prior release of information regarding the other side's character and intentions to turn the former enemy into a potential partner; efforts to make the foreign and the alien into the familiar; and a transition from a conflict-directed discourse to a discourse directed at peace and building trust. Their actions must be addressed not only to their public, but also to the other society's public.

In the Israeli-Palestinian context, actions by the Netanyahu government are in keeping with the many polls conducted in different stages of the negotiations, which indicate that a majority of Israeli Jews favor a resolution of the conflict on the basis of a negotiated two-state solution, but also show that there is more limited support for many particular components of other elements and stages in the peace process. Over 60 percent support peace negotiations with the Palestinians. However, more than 80 percent

do not believe they will succeed, and they oppose the return of Palestinian refugees to Israel, even in token numbers, or the Israeli assumption of partial responsibility for creation of the refugee problem. Most Jewish Israelis continue to see the Palestinians as enemies and not as neighbors. They do not have confidence in Palestinians, either personally or as a collective; they are cognizant of the absence of trust on the part of the Palestinians in Israel; and they find it difficult to see how this trust can be built.³⁵

A leader and his government can have great impact on shaping the boundaries of public legitimacy. De Gaulle and Sadat not only responded to what was expected to be legitimate; they also worked and even led the struggle to change and redefine the boundaries of legitimate action. Therefore, the argument that the Netanyahu government acted only within the existing boundaries of public legitimacy is not convincing. Not only did Netanyahu and his government not work to establish legitimacy for the various stages of the peace process; they often worked to delegitimize the peace process and future reconciliation, as well as the negotiations themselves, even while they were underway. The government and Prime Minister, consciously or inadvertently, worked to draw boundaries for public legitimacy that would limit in advance their possible range of actions and their ability to progress in the peace process.

Yet in the absence of a genuine desire by leaders to promote a peace process – whether because of their world view or a lack of political ability to do so, or because their position and power rely on the existing framework of legitimate actions and a change in the discourse could hurt this standing – there is still hope for other forces interested in achieving peace. There is no hard and fast status quo for the boundaries of public legitimacy, and there is an ongoing struggle over these boundaries among various elements in Israel society. The events and the discourse on the other side, and in other circles in which Israeli society takes part, such as international and regional ones, have an impact on the domestic discourse as well. Actors outside the formal leadership can thus at times succeed in leading the process of redrawing the boundaries of legitimate action. The success of other actors in establishing a process of peace and reconciliation as a legitimate act, and establishing refusal to engage in a peace process as illegitimate, contains the seeds of change in the policy even in a government that did not necessarily intend to lead to a peace process.

Notes

- 1 This article was written before Operation Protective Edge and relates to the 2013-14 US-sponsored Israeli-Palestinian negotiations.
- 2 See Melvin Richter, "Toward a Concept of Political Illegitimacy: Bonapartist Dictatorship and Democratic Legitimacy," *Political Theory* 10, no. 2 (1982): 185-214.
- 3 Tamar Hermann, "Changes in Official Defense Policy and the Positions of Israeli Jews toward Conduct of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict (2000-2004)," in *The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict from a Peace Process to Violent Confrontation, 2000-2005*, ed. Yaacov Bar-Siman-Tov (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies, 2006), p. 193.
- 4 Tamar Hermann and David Newman, "A Path Strewn with Thorns: Along the Difficult Road of Israeli-Palestinian Peacemaking," in *The Management of Peace Processes*, ed. John Darby and Roger MacGinty (New York: Palgrave, 2000), p. 108; Peter F. Trumbore, "Public Opinion as a Domestic Constraint in International Negotiations: Two Level Games in the Anglo-Irish Peace Process," *International Studies Quarterly* 42, no. 3 (1998): 545-65.
- 5 John Talbott, "French Public Opinion and the Algerian War: A Research Note," *French Historical Studies* (1975): 354-61.
- 6 Ibrahim Saad Eddin, "The Vindication of Sadat in the Arab World," *Policy Focus Series* 22, Washington Institute for Near East Policy, October 1995.
- 7 Ephraim Lavie and Henry Fischman, "Strategic Decisions Taken During the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process as Barriers to Resolving the Conflict," in *Barriers to Peace in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, ed. Yaacov Bar-Siman-Tov (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Institute Studies, 2010).
- 8 For illustration, see the public's attitudes as reflected in the Israel Democracy Institute's Peace Index from the time when the new government was formed, on the eve of the talks led by US Secretary of State John Kerry in June 2013. Ephraim Yaar and Tamar Hermann, Peace Index – June 2013, <http://en.idi.org.il/media/2587522/Peace%20Index-June%202013%282%29.pdf>.
- 9 On Yesh Atid's conditions, see Yuval Karni and Tzvika Brodt, "Lapid: These Are My Red Lines," *Ynet*, January 24, 2013, <http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-4336518,00.html>. See also Hatnua's conditions. Jonathan Lis, Yair Ettinger, and Yossi Verter, "Livni to Haaretz: Netanyahu Realizes We Must Start a Peace Process," *Haaretz*, February 20, 2013, <http://www.haaretz.co.il/news/elections/1.1933770>.
- 10 The consistently high support for negotiations with the Palestinians among the Israeli public is reflected in repeated polls carried out by Yaar and Hermann for the Israel Democracy Institute's Peace Index. See <http://www.peaceindex.org/indexMainEng.aspx>.
- 11 Moran Azulay, "Ministers Approve Bill to Annex the Jordan Valley; Appeal is on the Way," *Ynet*, December 29, 2013, <http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-4470875,00.html>.

- 12 Decision 697 of the Ministerial Committee on Legislation of February 9, 2014, which received the mandate of a government decision, number 1383, on February 26, 2014.
- 13 Decision 606 of the Ministerial Committee on Legislation of January 12, 2014, which received the mandate of a government decision, number 1261, on January 29, 2014.
- 14 For example, rejection of the bill to condition construction beyond the 1967 lines on a majority of 80 MKs, in government decision 1223; rejection of the bill to bring Jews and Arabs closer in the educational system, in government decision 995; rejection of the bill to commemorate the Kafr Qassem massacre, in government decision 904; rejection of the bill to require public bodies to publish their materials in Arabic, in government decision 903; and rejection of the bill to consider "price tag" attacks as terrorist acts, in government decision 1290.
- 15 See the government decision to approve the referendum law, decision 639 of July 28, 2013, at the start of the talks, and the passage of the Basic Law: Referendum in its second and third reading in the Knesset, while the opposition was absent from the plenum. To illustrate the framing of the bill as undermining the government's legitimacy to engage in a peace process that includes concessions of territory, see the opposition proposals to amend the law to a "Law to Destroy Representative Democracy in Israel" in the framework of reservations presented in the plenum, http://knesset.gov.il/laws/data/PunchBanana/Files/488358/488358_4.pdf.
- 16 For example: Itamar Fleischman, "More than 1,000 Housing Units in Territories Nearing Approval," *Ynet*, July 16, 2013, <http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-4405719,00.html>; announcements by the Ministry of Housing and Construction, August 11, 2013, <http://www.moch.gov.il/Spokesman/Pages/DoverListItem.aspx?ListID=5b390c93-15b2-4841-87e3-abf31c1af63d&WebId=fe384cf7-21cd-49eb-8bbb-71ed64f47de0&ItemID=513> and November 4, 2013; Itamar Fleischman, "Netanyahu Blocked Construction in E1 Planned by Ministry of Housing," *Ynet*, November 12, 2013, <http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-4452625,00.html>; Attila Somfalvi and Elior Levy, "Lapid Attacks Tenders Published for Housing in Territories," <http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-4475284,00.html>; Elior Levy, "Huge Jump of 123% in Construction in Territories," *Ynet*, March 3, 2014, <http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-4494615,00.html>; Haim Levinsky, "Despite Cancellation of Plans, Uri Ariel Promises to Continue Momentum of Construction in Territories," *Haaretz*, November 27, 2013, <http://www.haaretz.co.il/news/politics/1.2177080>.
- 17 See government decision number 667 of August 4, 2013, <http://www.pmo.gov.il/Secretary/GovDecisions/2013/Pages/des667.aspx>. See also the cabinet discussion in January 2014: Omri Nahmias, "Livni to Livnat: Criticism of Settlements is Not Anti-Semitic," *Walla News*, January 26, 2014, <http://news.walla.co.il/1minute/?w=/20/2715404>.

- 18 Yaara Barak, "Education Minister Shai Piron Cuts Back on Arabic Studies," *Galei Zahal*, January 23, 2014, <http://glz.co.il/1064-34809-HE/Galatz.aspx>.
- 19 Uri Hudi, "Lapid Program Will Paralyze Real Estate Market in Short Term," *Globes*, March 18, 2014, <http://www.globes.co.il/news/article.aspx?did=1000925058>.
- 20 Amira Hass, "Interior Ministry Could Expel Foreigners while Handling their Petitions," *Haaretz*, November 17, 2013, <http://www.haaretz.co.il/news/education/.premium-1.2167061>. See the updated procedures of the Population and Immigration Registry, which exclude the Palestinian population and complicate the conditions of the family unification process, <http://piba.gov.il/Regulations/1.6.0001.pdf> and <http://www.piba.gov.il/Regulations/5.2.0011.pdf>.
- 21 Yitzhak Ben-Horin, "An End to a Rift Lasting Years: Negotiations Restarted," *Ynet*, July 30, 2013, <http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-4411367,00.html>.
- 22 See the Prime Minister's comments at the AIPAC conference, March 4, 2014, <http://www.pmo.gov.il/MediaCenter/Speeches/Pages/speechaipac040314.aspx>.
- 23 See, for example, "Prime Minister Netanyahu's Speech at the Special Meeting of the Knesset Plenum in Honor of the French President," Foreign Ministry, November 18, 2013, http://mfa.gov.il/MFAHEB/PressRoom/TopEvents/Pages/PM_Netanyahu_Speech_at_the_Knesset_for_President_of_France_181113.aspx.
- 24 See, for example, Netanyahu's speech in "The 129th Session of the 19th Knesset," *Proceedings of the Knesset* (Jerusalem: Knesset, March 19, 2014).
- 25 See, for example, "Prime Minister's Remarks at Begin-Sadat Center Conference on 'Israel Towards 2020,'" November 6, 2013, http://mfa.gov.il/MFAHEB/PressRoom/TopEvents/Pages/PM_Netanyahu_speech_at_Bar_Ilan_University.aspx.
- 26 Interview with Naftali Bennett by Rino Tzror on *Galei Zahal*, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KgkmNI_sx5M, posted on Naftali Bennett's Facebook page, November 7, 2013, <https://he-il.facebook.com/NaftaliBennett/posts/650095255012146>; Naftali Bennett, "Palestinian State Will Crush Israel's Economy," Meeting of Jewish Home Knesset Faction, January 20, 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HwW9k48ySm4>.
- 27 For example, Barak Ravid, "Ya'alon: Even without Agreement with the Palestinians, We'll Manage," *Haaretz*, February 2, 2014, <http://www.haaretz.co.il/news/politics/1.2233135>; Barak Ravid, "Ya'alon to Businessmen: Don't Delude Yourself, There is No Palestinian Partner for Two-State Agreement," *Haaretz*, December 27, 2013, <http://www.haaretz.co.il/news/politics/.premium-1.2201301>.
- 28 Yitzhak Ben-Horin, "Lieberman: No Chance for Agreement with Palestinians," *Ynet*, December 7, 2013, <http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-4462276,00.html>.

- 29 See, for example, Lieberman's speech at the conference of ambassadors, January 5, 2014, <http://mfa.gov.il/MFAHEB/PressRoom/TopEvents/Pages/FM-speaks-at-ambassadors-and-heads-of-mission-conference-5-Jan-2013.aspx>.
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