



‘Bloc of change’ can undo the overhaul and probe Oct. 7 – even without a gov’t

Yossi Verter

Ahead of the election, speculation on the next government's composition has understandably taken center stage in public discourse. But the next Knesset, which on November 10 will celebrate its first session exactly two weeks after the election, has garnered far less attention.

The celebration, complete with a predictable speech by President Isaac Herzog on the need for unity and the declarations of allegiance by new and old lawmakers,



will be very brief. The very next day, the parliament will become a tumultuous arena – seething and bloody from bitter clashes between the executive and the legislative branches – and its parliamentary majority, according to every opinion poll, will likely to swap sides.

The following scenarios are based on the picture emerging from these polls, in which no bloc can form a

Zionist and Jewish 61-seat majority. The opposition wins at least 65 seats, including between 13 and 15 that belong to Arab parties.

Yisrael Beiteinu's Avigdor Lieberman and Together's Naftali Bennett rule out any government that relies on the votes of Arab Knesset members. They do not rule out depending on them or cooperating with them in the Knesset, which could end up being a “caretaker Knesset” between two election campaigns or until a government is formed.

What could a parliamentary majority achieve, if it is not represented in the government? The question should be, what couldn't it? It could move mountains. For that to happen, two basic conditions have to be met.

First of all, during the seven days before recommendations are submitted to the president, the heads of parties in the “bloc of change” must agree on one candidate as the person to form a government. The Arab parties have already pledged their support on anyone these leaders agree on. This will compel the president to give this candidate the mandate for forming a government.

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Activists from the Democrats clashing with Likud supporters in the Mahane Yehuda market in Jerusalem, on Friday.

Itai Ron

Israel slams Nobel Peace Prize winner over Gaza findings

Liza Rozovsky and Reuters

Israel denounced on Friday the decision to award the 2026 Nobel Peace Prize to Navi Pillay, a former United Nations human rights chief who led a UN panel that concluded that Israel committed genocide in Gaza.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu accused Pillay of spreading “blood libels” against Israel and helping to legitimize a “fake case” against the country at the International Criminal Court when was an ICC judge.

Hours after the prize was announced, the Trump administration imposed sanctions on the court. His administration has long been hostile to the court and has previously imposed sanctions on its prosecutors and judges.

Friday's move goes much further, potentially punishing companies that provide services to the court itself, amounting to an unprecedented attack on an institution founded on an international treaty.

“President Trump will never allow the International Criminal Court to prosecute Americans,” U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio said in a statement reviewed by Reuters ahead of the official announcement. “That is why, today, the United States is sanctioning the International Criminal Court. We will ban transactions with this rogue court, cutting off their resources and crippling its ability to operate.”

The ICC criticized the sanctions, saying that they constitute “an attempt to obstruct the course of justice and to prevent the Court from doing what it was created to do. It is an assault on the rule of law and on the very foundations of the international legal order which strikes at the simple principle that no one stands above the law.”

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From hostages to protective presence: Israelis know it's on them

Dahlia Scheindlin

On October 7, Yonatan Shamriz hid in his shelter in Kfar Azza with his pregnant wife and their 2-year-old, holding the door shut with one hand, and a knife in the other, he related last year. His immediate family survived, but his younger

brother Alon was kidnapped. At the 2025 memorial event, Shamriz said “we came out [of hiding on October 7] to a state in which nothing functioned but the people.”

The state continued to fail Yonatan Shamriz. Only after major demonstrations by Israeli civilians, the government reached the first ceasefire/hostage release deal with Hamas in late November 2023. Yonatan's brother Alon was not among the first 105 people released, and the

deal collapsed in early December. About two weeks later, Alon and two other hostages managed to break away from their captors in Gaza and tried to attract nearby IDF forces to save them. The soldiers mistook them for Palestinian militants and shot them dead.

The triple catastrophes – October 7 itself, the fact that citizens had to beg the government to retrieve the hostages, and the tragic mistake of Israeli forces killing three hostages – seem like proof that the state betrayed its most basic functions of physical protection.

On Wednesday this week, the third anniversary of October 7, the state proved again that it had failed in non-material ways as well, unable even to unify the country in collective memorialization. Once again, it was left to citizens.

That evening, tens of thousands – organizers say as many as 70,000 – people gathered with a silence

rarely heard from Israelis, in a massive nighttime event held on the grassy expanse of a Tel Aviv park. The level of order for such a sprawling crowd was striking, leaving no distraction (or escape) from the shared sorrow.

In one riveting speech, Omri Shifroni told of the day his young niece and nephew,

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Settlers, soldiers prevent W. Bank olive harvest **Matan Golan** [Page 3](#)

Abbas postpones elections by a year, drawing sharp opposition

Jack Khoury and Reuters

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas on Saturday signed a decree postponing the Palestinian Authority's presidential and legislative elections by 10 months, setting a new date of September 11, 2027.

The decree overturns the previous decision to hold parliamentary elections on November 28 of this year. The last time elections were held was in 2006, and they have been postponed repeatedly ever since.

According to the Palestinian news agency Wafa, the decision was made because of security, political and logistical difficulties in holding the elections next month,

particularly Israeli restrictions on Palestinian movement in East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip, as well as the security and humanitarian situation in Gaza.

However, the decision has drawn sharp political criticism from Abbas' opponents, who argue that the postponement is intended to forcibly prolong his rule without allowing the public to decide who should lead it.

According to Palestinian sources, officials in Abbas' Fatah party, which rules the Palestinian Authority, fear divisions within the movement in the West Bank, the emergence of new electoral slates led by young people and activists unaffiliated with the leadership, and

the growing strength of the movement's reformist faction headed by Mohammed Dahlan, one of Abbas' most prominent rivals.

The sources said such a split could weaken Fatah and Abbas' political circle, which includes his son Yasser, who was recently elected to the movement's Central Committee, his deputy Hussein al-Sheikh and intelligence chief Majed Faraj.

Haaretz has learned that talks between Dahlan and Hamas are not expected to lead to an alliance. Instead, the option currently under consideration is a joint electoral slate bringing together Dahlan and supporters of

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AG: Stop Ben-Gvir from using prisons for campaign videos



Itamar Ben-Gvir in the Knesset.

Olivier Fitoussi

Josh Breiner

Attorney General Gali Baharav-Miara has ordered the head of the Israel Prison Service to prevent National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir from using prisoners, prison facilities and staff in election campaign videos, warning that doing so would violate the law.

The directive follows a series of videos posted by Ben-Gvir showing him entering the cells of Palestinian security prisoners, both men

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Alexander Nemenov/AFP

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New variants of antisemitism

For many members of the Jewish Diaspora, it is always October 8

Joshua Leifer

If Israelis have lived for the last three years in a perpetual October 7, in a doom loop of trauma and mourning, many Jews outside of Israel live in an unending October 8.

October 8 was the day the shape of a new world was revealed. As images of Hamas' atrocities circulated online, people who had previously postured as human rights activists reacted to the gruesome murder, burning, maiming and kidnapping of civilians not with horror but with adulation.

Even while the Hamas gunmen remained in the towns and kibbutzim of Israel's south, left-wing groups in New York and around the world held rallies where speakers celebrated the attacks with breathless enthusiasm. At least one attendee of such protests is now even running for office in New York state.

In her powerful tract “Le 8-Octobre: Genealogie d'une haine vertueuse” (“October 8: Genealogy of a Virtuous Hatred”), the French Israeli sociologist Eva Illouz observes that when it comes to most situations of mass killing – say, Sudan, Ethiopia, Sri Lanka, Syria or Ukraine – the typical response of Western progressives and liberals is compassion. Yet



The Czech Jewish community Oct. 7 memorial in Prague, Wednesday.

Eva Korinkova/Reuters

that was not the case on October 8 because the people being killed were Israeli Jews, and Israeli Jews – held collectively responsible for their government's actions in a way the citizens of Putin's Russia or, dare we say, Trump's America, are not – have become the acceptable objects of a virtuous and apparently invigorating hate.

Such hatred debilitates the faculty of reason, which is also why – even as Israel launched its devastating response that left Gaza in ruins, displaced most of its people and destroyed their homes – many of those who

imagined themselves as Palestine's advocates continued to speak of October 7 as a glorious day and hail the late Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar as a hero.

On the first anniversary of October 7, I found myself in Athens, where demonstrators flew banners proclaiming that “October 7 is the first day of the liberation of Palestine.” Never mind that in reality, on the bloodstained ground, Palestine's liberation never looked more unlikely.

Since October 8, antisemitic rhetoric has become a mainstay of public discourse in the West more than at any

point in the last half century. And I do not mean here criticism of Israeli policies or even the vague, fashionable anti-Zionism common in elite opinion, which dreams of Israel's replacement with a single Palestinian state but is too cowardly to declare outright the way to get there: Israel's military defeat, a scenario that would almost certainly involve killing on a scale dwarfing that of the last three years.

Instead, I mean what we might call old-school anti-Semitism – conspiracies of

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