



JDI denounces Likud Political Agreement with Extremist Parties

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The Jewish Democratic Initiative (JDI) notes with concern recent political alignments within Israel in the run-up to the March 2021 elections.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has made a “surplus votes” agreement with an amalgamation of extremist political parties called *Religious Zionism*. The agreement cements cooperation between the ruling *Likud* bloc with parties that have formerly been banned due to their racist, bigoted, violent and undemocratic ideologies.

The arrangement serves to legitimise radical beliefs that include homophobia, Islamophobia, intolerance of non-Orthodox Judaism and racist incitement including the stripping of Israeli citizenship of non-Jews and expulsion from the State.

Leaders of the *Religious Zionism* coalition venerate terrorism, preach hate and intolerance and do not subscribe to basic democratic principles. By signing cooperative agreements with these extremists, *Likud* has opened a window of cooperation and influence for a future Government of Israel to incorporate some of their policies and politicians into the ruling coalition.

The Jewish Democratic Initiative views this as a fundamental step in further degrading Israel’s democracy.

Legitimising extremist beliefs serves to emphasise the schism between Diaspora Jews, whose rights are mostly protected by their governments, and Israeli’s whose civil rights are being eroded. Equal rights for every citizen is the bedrock of any Democracy. The *Religious Zionism* bloc advocates for a reduction of these rights.

JDI calls on all our communal organizations, institutions and bodies to publicly denounce this agreement. As a community we must make the distinction between the distorted values of this extremist political grouping - that has no place in any decent society - and our own.

Silence is not an option.

Yours sincerely,
The Jewish Democratic Initiative Steering Committee