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**Trump**

# **A Festival of Obsequiousness**

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**If the scenes of Donald Trump's celebration at the Israeli Knesset and in Sharm el-Sheikh were staged for cinematic or theatrical exploitation, they would undoubtedly rank among the worst productions in history. These two spectacles formed a single festival of adulation, unprecedented for any US president or, any leader elected through a free election, for that matter. They are more reminiscent of the praise showered upon despots in their own country or within their empire – like the North Korean leader's adulation at home or the cult of personality surrounding Stalin in the Soviet Union's republics and satellite states.**

However, from this perspective, the obsequiousness displayed at the Knesset was in fact more genuine than that at the Sharm el-Sheikh summit. As Benjamin Netanyahu told his American friend, it was an outcome of "the covenant between our two promised lands" – thus hinting at the shared features of the US and Israel as settler-colonial states born from genocidal warfare against native populations. Today, the historical parallels between the two states are complete. Moreover, there is no question that Trump has been the most supportive US president of the Zionist state, and not just of the state itself, but also of Netanyahu's neofascist rule, a political character Trump himself shares.

The US president reciprocated the Israeli prime minister's adulation by praising him, emphasizing his contribution to the peace plan Trump announced in his presence in Washington just two weeks earlier. Trump's impudence even extended to asking the Israeli president, who was seated alongside him, to pardon Netanyahu for the corruption charges he is facing, dismissing them with a flippant remark: "Cigars and champagne, who the hell cares about that?" Trump was referring to the bribe charges against Netanyahu (\$260,000), which are quite modest indeed compared to the lavish gifts Trump himself received from foreign governments, especially from the Gulf monarchies – reflecting a broader global pattern of corruption.

As a former political advisor to Netanyahu predicted in an interview quoted by a *Financial Times* correspondent last Friday: "There's no better campaigner for Netanyahu than Trump. His address to [the Knesset] will be the start of the election campaign." Indeed, Trump has effectively launched Netanyahu's re-election campaign, which is set to culminate in the Knesset elections to be held within a year from now. Ultimately, the biggest beneficiaries of the US president's plan and visit are not just Trump himself, basking in sycophantic praise from both Netanyahu and the Israeli opposition leader, but Netanyahu as well.

The Trump Plan, in fact, is the result of an agreement between the two men, in reaction to the negotiations that quickly stalled after the initial prisoner exchange following the truce declared just before Trump's second inauguration, last January. Trump demanded that Hamas release all its hostages at once, preventing it from using their gradual release as a bargaining means. He then gave Netanyahu the green light to resume military operations and continue Israel's destruction and occupation of Gaza's remaining residential areas. As Israeli military action escalated, the Trump administration pressured regional governments so that they exert in turn their pressure on Hamas, ultimately compelling the movement to release its remaining captives, largely diminishing its ability to affect the Strip's future – or the broader Palestinian cause.

This release of the last Israeli detainees has lifted a significant burden from Netanyahu's shoulders, as it was a key rallying point for the popular movement against him. He was caught between the hammer of the opposition and the anvil of allies even more right-wing than him. Once again, like at the beginning of the year, Netanyahu used US pressure as a pretext to accept what his allies had resisted. The two key leaders of the Zionist ultraright ended up attending the Knesset session and applauding both Trump and Netanyahu. The Israeli prime minister and his allies are fully aware that Trump's plan is destined to fail, while Hamas and all other Palestinian fractions now lack the leverage to impede Israel's further encroachment and occupation of those parts of Palestine it has yet to formally

annex (see [“The ‘Deal of the Millennium’ After the ‘Deal of the Century’](#), *Al-Quds Al-Arabi*, 30 September 2025).

As for the Sharm el-Sheikh ceremony, it was less a celebration of Trump’s “greatness” and more a reflection of the weirdness of world leaders fawning over him. To believe that their praise was sincere, one would need to doubt their mental abilities, particularly when one considers the humiliation Trump has subjected many of them to. No US president before Trump has treated the global stage with such disdain and yet no one has been the object of such obsequiousness. This shows that, in this era of political decay, naked power politics, and the rise of neofascism, many contemporary rulers are willing to abandon their dignity and submit to those with more power and wealth.

As for the proud Palestinian people, they have spent a century proving their refusal to submit to their oppressors – whether the British Mandate authorities or the Zionist government. They will not kiss Donald Trump’s hand or show him “appreciation”, no matter what those who claim to represent them may do. They will not submit to the so-called Peace Council chaired by Trump, which includes figures like Tony Blair, George W. Bush’s partner in the occupation of Iraq. Instead, the Palestinian people will continue their struggle for full rights, undiminished. It is time for them to draw lessons from the Karitha (severe catastrophe) of today, as well as from yesterday’s Nakba, and find a way to regain the momentum they achieved during the two glorious popular intifadas of 1936 and 1988 – the high points of their long history of resistance.

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