

# *Israeli opposition parties work to unseat Netanyahu after inconclusive elections*

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Tel Aviv, March 8 (RHC)-- In Israel, opposition groups are uniting in a bid to end Benjamin Netanyahu's long-running career as prime minister, after Israel's third election in less than a year failed to produce a clear winner.

With officials still counting the last of the votes from Monday's election, Netanyahu's coalition remains three seats shy of the majority needed to form a government. In a televised address earlier this week, Netanyahu accused his main opponent, Benny Gantz, of "linking up with terror supporters," after Gantz's Blue and White alliance partnered with a coalition of Arab-majority parties.

Gantz could soon become prime minister, after Israel's former Defense Minister Avigdor Lieberman said his far-right ultra-nationalist party would join Gantz's coalition. Gantz is a former Israeli general whose campaign ads have boasted about Palestinian body counts and bombing Gaza back to the "stone ages."

Both Gantz and Netanyahu support Israeli settlements on occupied Palestinian land, which are illegal under international law.

Palestinian chief negotiator Saeb Erekat, reacting to Monday's election, said: "From the exit polls we have just seen, it's obvious that annexation, settlements, apartheid won the elections. The whole election campaign was about annexation of the Jordan Valley, the Dead Sea, the settlements, Jerusalem, subjecting the Palestinian people to — further and deeper to the Israeli occupation, denying them the rights of determination."

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Netanyahu is set to face trial March 17th on charges of bribery, fraud and breach of trust.

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