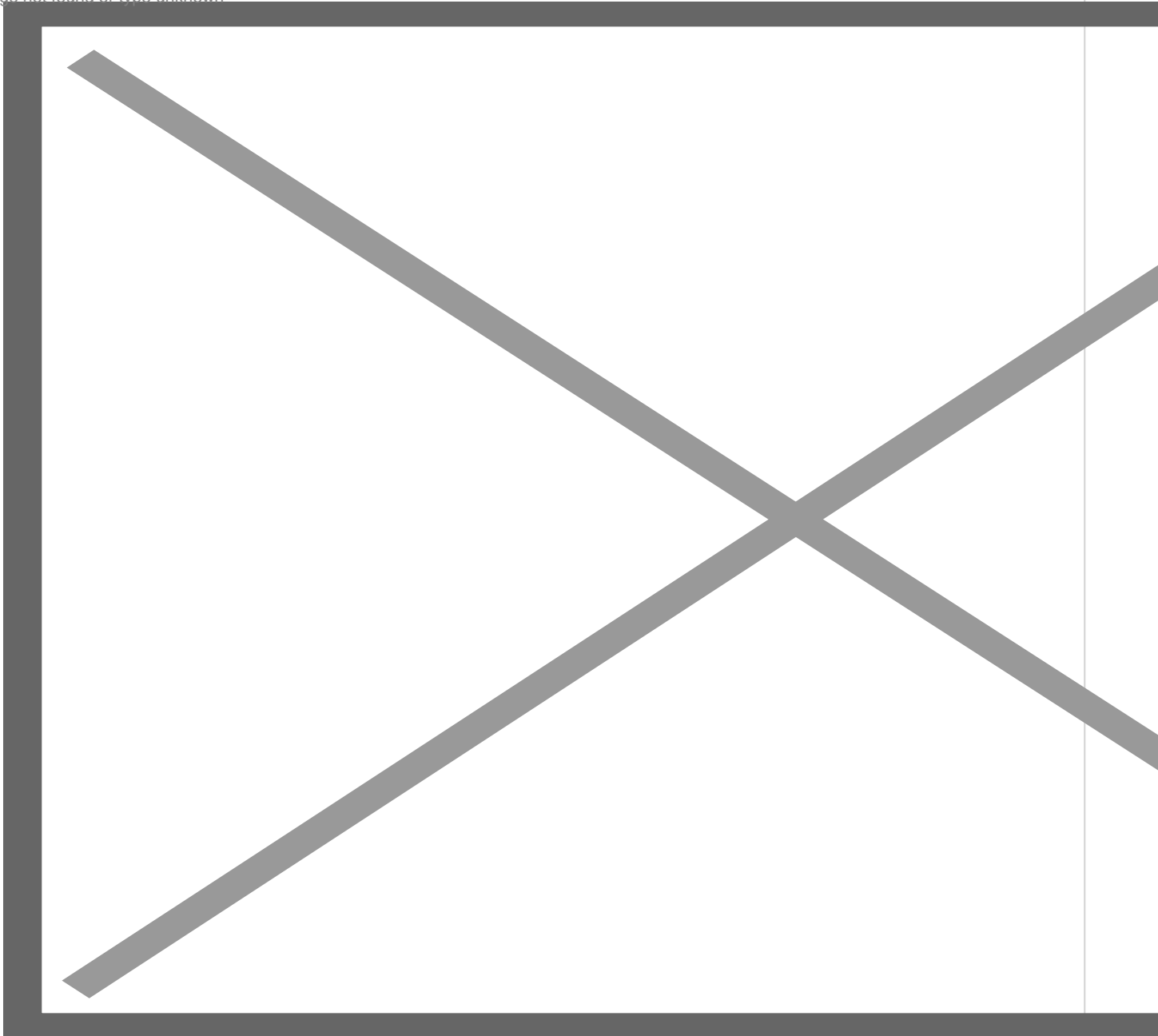


*Joe Biden extends an invitation to
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Netanyahu to visit White House*

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Joe Biden extends an invitation to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to visit White House

Washington, July 19 (RHC)-- U.S. President Joe Biden has formally invited widely unpopular Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to Washington for a visit, after hesitating for many months due to the political situation in Israel. Political observers say that the invitation from the White House had also been delayed due to the surging atrocities against Palestinians in the Occupied West Bank.

Netanyahu's office declared that Biden had extended the invitation during a telephone conversation between the two sides on Monday, a day ahead of a visit to Washington by the Israeli regime's president Isaac Herzog, who is due to address the U.S. Congress in a largely ceremonial event intended to show support for the regime, since most American lawmakers receive campaign contributions and other perks and bribes from powerful pro-Israel lobby groups across the United States.

Biden had held off extending the invitation to Netanyahu out of concerns over his right-wing cabinet's judicial overhaul bid and as well as the regime's expansion of settlements on the occupied West Bank, according to local press reports.

The reports further cited a senior Biden administration official as saying that the two leaders had agreed to meet "later this year in the United States." The development comes amid escalating violence against Palestinians in the West Bank, the regime's illegal measures authorizing settler outposts as well as inflammatory remarks from a member of Netanyahu's cabinet, drawing rare criticism of Tel Aviv by some U.S. officials.

This is while White House national security spokesperson John Kirby emphasized that Biden remains concerned about the judicial overhaul and "some of the extremist activities and behavior by some members of the Netanyahu cabinet."

The Israeli statement said the two leaders shared a "long and warm" conversation, focused on curbing "threats from Iran," and strengthening the alliance between the two countries.

Recently, Biden accused members of Netanyahu's coalition of exacerbating tensions with the Palestinians, calling it "one of the most extreme" cabinets he has seen in his decades in politics. Biden's criticism prompted strong reaction by hawkish members of Netanyahu's regime, with Israeli national security minister Itamar Ben-Gvir mockingly declaring: "President Biden must internalize that Israel is no longer another star in the American flag."

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