

“AN EXPERT VIEW FROM ISRAEL”

Series Report #105



SUMMARY OF A ‘MIDDLE EAST FORUM’ WEBINAR 8 FEBRUARY 2023



In a brief ‘Webinar’ session organized by the Washington based MEF, Ashley Perry, an adviser to Israel's minister of foreign affairs and deputy prime minister in 2009-15, provides weekly updates on Israeli politics.

SUMMARY OF ASHLEY PERRY’S WEEKLY COMMENTS

- Ashley Perry began his weekly briefing by first commenting on the tragedy of the recent earthquake in Turkey that has claimed so many thousands of lives.
- Perry said that through the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) and various NGOs, Israel had provided aid and support to Turkey and indirectly to Syria (despite the fact that it was an enemy state).
- Perry noted that the subject of ‘later tremors’ potentially affecting Israel, which was on the same earthquake fault line as the others had also become an issue, especially since there had been no cabinet discussion of looking into the subject for the protection of civilians since 2015.
- Perry next turned his attention to what he called the “main issue that has occupied all attention in Israel, not just in the past week but the past month and will likely continue doing so for some time in the future” – namely the issue of ‘judicial reform’.
- Perry said that he had spoken to many proponents of judicial reforms whose main argument has been that non-elected people in the judiciary needed to be curtailed from interfering in the judicial process.
- However, Perry was of the view, that most proponents of reform had at no time envisaged such a backlash from the public.
- Indeed, having lost the public sphere, more demonstrations had been called for in the coming week (Monday, 11 February). According to Perry, ex-Likud Defence Minister, Moshe Ya’alon was now assuming a prominent role in dealing with this issue.
- Although, the opponents of judicial reform had also called for nation-wide strikes, Israel’s largest labour union had refused to partake.

- Nonetheless, the government was bent on moving forward and the first set of actual voting for “representation on the judicial appointments committee” (something that had been in the hands of the judiciary in the past) was expected to take place in the Knesset next week.
- Next, the government will try to pass a law connected with reform that will disbar the judicial system from interfering in ministerial appointments – a law that is seen to be directed at bringing the Shas Party leader, Aryeh Deri back to his previous position as Interior and Health Minister.
