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[Gantz Elected Knesset Speaker, Signaling a Power-Sharing Agreement with Netanyahu](#)

In a stunning twist to Israel's current political deadlock, Benny Gantz nominated himself to be speaker of the Knesset and was elected, ahead of agreeing what appears to be a power-sharing deal with Prime Minister Netanyahu's Likud government. As a result, Gantz's Blue and White Party is on the verge of disintegrating as factions of the coalition break away in the aftermath of the controversial move. Gantz's decision follows an Israeli Supreme Court ruling earlier in the week that ordered previous Knesset Speaker Yuri Edelstein to hold a vote to elect his successor. Edelstein rejected calls to do so, saying Israel's High Court of Justice is interfering in the country's politics, and doesn't have the authority to order him to hold an election. Rather than comply with the court's ruling, Edelstein resigned his position on Wednesday afternoon, which paved the way for Gantz's move today.

Israel's top court had ruled earlier in the week that previous Knesset Speaker Yuri Edelstein must hold a vote to elect his successor after he refused a request to do so. Edelstein refused to hold a parliamentary session in the Knesset, after Israeli President Reuven Rivlin gave opposition leader Benny Gantz the mandate to form a government following elections earlier this month. The elections failed to yield a clear winner, but Gantz had won the support of a majority of Knesset members which gave him a majority in Israel's legislative body. In a unanimous ruling, Israel's High Court of Justice initially gave Edelstein until 9:00PM local time on Wednesday to hold a session of the Knesset to choose his successor. In response, Edelstein said that "it would mean the Knesset's agenda was set by the Supreme Court and not the Speaker of the Knesset," hinting at Likud's larger talking point of the Israeli political establishment working to undermine embattled Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in order to support Benny Gantz and his Blue and White Party.

Netanyahu is currently under indictment on charges of fraud and breach of trust. Edelstein also said that by the Supreme Court inserting itself into the political arena, it would undermine the authority of the next Knesset Speaker and would in turn hurt the legitimacy of the Knesset and the government itself. Additionally, Edelstein argued that the court was undermining the separation of powers laid out in Israel's constitution. Edelstein had previously pledged to hold an election for his replacement, but refused to set a specific date, which led to the High Court of Justice stepping in. Instead of agreeing to the High Court of Justice's terms, Edelstein resigned his position on Wednesday, becoming the first ever Knesset speaker to quit.

Edelstein's resignation opened the door for today's newest development, in which it appears Benny Gantz has agreed to a power-sharing deal to form an emergency government with Prime Minister Netanyahu.