



[The Rift Between U.S. President Biden and Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu Has Become Apparent Following the Recent State of the Union Address](#)

In his recent 2024 State of the Union address, U.S. President Joe Biden delivered a fiery speech in which he called out former President Donald Trump, Russian leader Vladimir Putin, and even criticized Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu over his Gaza War policies and failure to safeguard civilians. President Biden claimed that “Israel has a fundamental responsibility to protect innocent civilians in Gaza...Israel must also do its part. Israel must allow more aid into Gaza and ensure humanitarian workers aren’t caught in the crossfire.” This was a clear criticism of Netanyahu and Israel’s handling of the conflict, which has also negatively impacted Biden’s domestic political prospects. There has been a notable sentiment throughout the United States that some citizens will not vote for Biden in the upcoming November election unless a lasting ceasefire is initiated to protect innocent Palestinian civilians – and there are even those who are of the mindset that Biden is irredeemable due to his support of Israel in the preceding months amid their devastating War on Gaza. In a hot mic moment after the speech, Biden expressed how he and Netanyahu would need to have a “come to Jesus meeting,” indicating that Biden has been displeased with the humanitarian violations of the war. During his State of the Union speech, Biden also unveiled a plan to build a temporary pier that will help deliver aid to Gaza to try and alleviate the dire humanitarian conditions.

President Biden has been increasingly public about his frustrations with Netanyahu’s unwillingness to open more land crossings for aid, and the planned military offensive in the border city of Rafah – both of which are detrimental to the lives of Palestinian civilians. He has stated that an Israeli assault on Rafah, where an estimated 1.5 million displaced Palestinians are taking refuge, would constitute a “red line.” In clarifying remarks during a media interview, Biden claimed that “It is a red line, but I am never going to leave Israel,” and that he would continue sending weapons for Israel’s Iron Dome even with criticizing the killing of more than 30,000 Palestinians. A common theme since the beginning of the war has been the Biden administration’s inability to guide Israeli actions in Gaza, despite the U.S. providing support to Israel. Biden is attempting to leverage this position to see humanitarian assistance prioritized, but recent statements from Netanyahu show that the two leaders are on different pages regarding their approach to Gaza.

In a recent “softball” interview on “Fox and Friends,” Netanyahu stated that Israel would not be “getting off the gas” and that it would not stop short of “complete victory.” In Netanyahu’s eyes, a “complete victory” is categorized as the total destruction of Hamas. In his interview, Netanyahu made it clear that he is not intent on settling for anything less than this “goal,” as he seeks to go after Hamas battalions that he believes are in Rafah. Furthermore, he expressed little regard for the opinion of Biden, asserting that decisions regarding Hamas are at Israel’s discretion and not the United States because “it is our neck on the line.” With all of this, Netanyahu is disregarding and disparaging U.S. input despite the United States sending around \$4 billion a year in what is largely military assistance to Israel, and what is estimated to be approximately \$300 billion total between 1946 and 2023 – a figure that is only continuing to grow. The United States’ objective to send aid to Palestinian civilians while simultaneously sending weapons to Israel is contradictory, according to some former and current administration officials.

Public relations between U.S. President Biden and Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu seem to be faltering, evident from Biden's belief that Netanyahu was "hurting Israel more than helping," and Netanyahu's subsequent response where he contended that he was "pursuing the wishes of the majority in Israel." While Netanyahu tries to claim that he has the support of the Israeli public, it should be noted that former U.S. President George W. Bush similarly believed he had the support of the U.S. public in his invasion of Iraq, a war that ended in catastrophic failure. Biden has cautioned Netanyahu against such missteps, warning Israel in his latest interview to not make the same mistakes that the U.S. made invading Iraq back in 2003. This plea has fallen on deaf ears, as Netanyahu remains insistent on pursuing "complete victory" in Gaza, something that even the staunchest of Israel's defenders concede is unattainable. The growing rift between Biden and Netanyahu has presented a bad diplomatic look for both leaders, as their interviews signify a muddled alliance and a lack of coordinated strategy.