

ZU-LAT

Equality and Human Rights

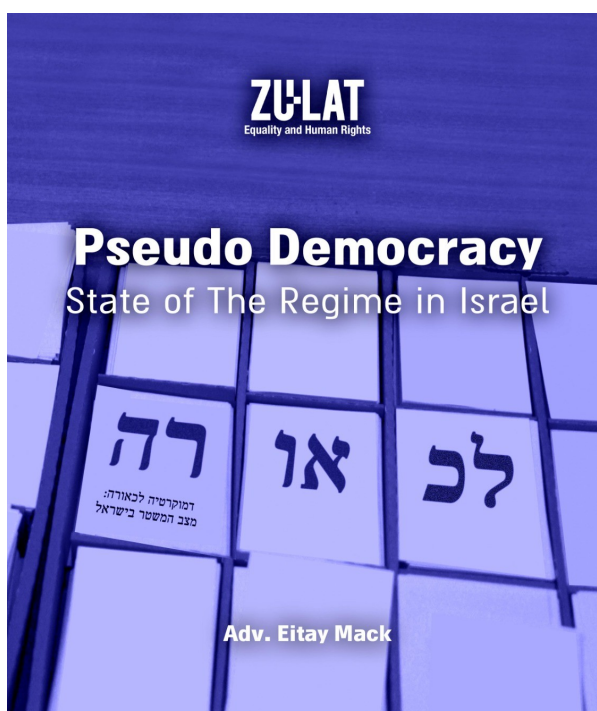
Dear Friend,

Under the pall of the ongoing governmental-political crisis, the dissolution of the Knesset, and the run-up to a fifth round of elections within two years, Zulat is today publishing a new report: **"Pseudo Democracy: State of the Regime in Israel."**

Our report has taken on topical significance in the face of the agenda espoused by the political bloc supporting Binyamin Netanyahu, an agenda that openly seeks to weaken Israeli democracy, its oversight mechanisms, and its gatekeepers, and one of blatant racism against Arabs, xenophobia, and hate of LGBTQs and women.

As the report shows, Israel has never been a model of a liberal democracy. **From its early days, its regime has been a hybrid of both democratic and authoritarian components, which at different periods has tilted toward one of those extremes.**

To read the full report, click on the image:













The report was written by **Attorney Eitay Mack** based on the consultative opinion of **Dr. Tamir Magal**. Its steering team consisted of **Prof. Daniel Bartel, Prof. Aeyal Gross, Prof. Naomi Hazan, Dr. Maha Karkabi-Sabbah, and Prof. Orit Kedar**.

The report shows that the democratic crisis in Israel did not begin only because of this or that prime minister, but evolved as a result of historical, political, social, and economic circumstances in the domestic and international arenas ever since the establishment of the state.

The report's focus on the reigns of David Ben-Gurion and the Mapai party and of Binyamin Netanyahu and the Likud party stems from the similarity between their authoritarian tendencies and the fact that these are periods that shaped the character of the regime.

The following table compares the two periods:

	Mapai's Rule 1948-1970	Likud's Rule 2009-2021
Delegitimization of Political Rivals		
Violation of Separation of Powers		
Violation of Freedom of Expression		
Anchoring Discrimination Against Minorities in Law		
Restriction of Protests and Political Activism		
Entrenchment of Single Leader	Ben Gurion – 12 years	Netanyahu – 12 years (+3 years in a former term)

The intensification of authoritarian elements took place during the tenures of Ehud Barak, Ariel Sharon, and Ehud Olmert, and redoubled immediately after the assassination of the late Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, with the expansion of the settlement enterprise in the West Bank and the perpetuation of Israel's rule over the Palestinian people.

In parallel, the State of Israel within its sovereign boundaries saw

the surge of a discourse of discredit and delegitimization of the judiciary and the gatekeepers, the Left camp, critics in academia and culture, and of the Palestinian citizens of Israel in particular.

After his reelection for a second term, Netanyahu took advantage of existing authoritarian elements to follow in the footsteps of Mapai and of many prime ministers who preceded him. In addition, he spearheaded radical legislative and public moves that broke the rules of the political game.

Among other things, various legislative steps were taken to reduce the Knesset's powers and its ability to oversee the executive, and efforts were made to undermine the status and independence of the gatekeepers. Political competition was reduced through delegitimization, and legislation was enacted to remove the Arab public and the Left from the political arena.

The report includes operational recommendations for dealing with authoritarianism. Attorney Eitay Mack formulated 15 proposals designed to update and reinforce existing provisions of the law in order to strengthen the democratic foundations of the regime, rectify some of its authoritarian foundations, and preempt dangerous trends in the coming years.

The proposed legislation will not solve all the problems of the regime in Israel, but if passed by the parties in the Knesset, they may help strengthen the protections of human and civil rights and facilitate the struggle to curb authoritarian tendencies.

The upcoming election will be particularly dramatic. Its outcome may either tip our hybrid regime in the democratic direction or bring it all the way back to the authoritarian end of the spectrum.

[>> Click to read the full report "Pseudo Democracy: State of the Regime in Israel"](#)

[>> "Israel is a hybrid regime" Interview with Zulat President Zehava Galon, The Jerusalem Report](#)

WE NEED YOU

The aforementioned report is just the beginning. It is the product of hard work of which we are very proud, and which we would like to present to the decision-makers in order to fortify our democracy. To this end, **we need your continued support.** Donate to us so we

may continue to secure achievements.

[make a donation](#)

Yours truly,

Zehava Galon

President of Zulat for Equality and Human Rights

[missed any of our past newsletters? they're all here](#)

