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Major Political Parties

Kadima

Party Leader: Tzipi Livni

Campaign Slogans: 1) The Courage to Change. 2) A Different leadership.



Official Web Site: <http://www.kadima.org.il/>

Key Points In Platform:

- Supports a negotiated peace process based entirely on the 'Road Map' Peace Plan, eventually leading to the creation of a Palestinian state as articulated at the Annapolis Peace Conference. However, will not negotiate with Hamas-led PA unless Hamas accepts Israel's right to exist, accepts past agreements between Israel and the Palestinians and ends all violence.
- No further unilateral withdrawals; although Israel reserves the right to unilaterally draw final borders if the Palestinians do not fulfill their obligations under the Road Map.
- Favors keeping the 'major settlement blocks' (Ariel, Gush Etzion and Ma'alei Adumim) within the final borders of Israel.
- Governmental reform to stem the power of Central Committees in Israeli political parties.
- Continue to pursue a moderate, market-based economy.
- Plans to introduce legislation to legalize civil marriage and burial.

What the critics are saying about Kadima:

Kadima, led by Ehud Olmert, has achieved very little and may have actually resided over Israel's first military loss during a war. The Winograd Commission, that was designed to look into the war and its failings, was scathing in its criticism of Israel's leadership during the war. Olmert's popularity descended to an unprecedented single digit as he fought legal issues. Livni called for Olmert to resign but then retracted her call. Livni's close association with Olmert has tarnished her image, and even successes in Gaza may not be able to help her.

Labor

Party Leader: Ehud Barak

Campaign Slogans: Look Me in the Eyes and See the Truth, Not Nice, a Leader

Official Web Site: <http://www.havoda.org.il/14-he/Party.aspx>

Key Points In Platform:

- Willing to negotiate with the Palestinian Authority while remaining strong on security.
- In favor of the creation of a Palestinian state, while dismantling isolated settlements.
- Favors increasing the minimum wage, guaranteeing pensions to every employee, and increasing social security benefits for the elderly and the handicapped.
- Favors maintaining the religious status quo

What the critics are saying about Labor:

Few seem to be able to widely differentiate Labor's policies from Kadima's. Since Barak's return to political leadership, he has not been able to stand out and many still resemble his previous leadership and the rumors about his arrogance and tempestuousness. Labor is also veering further away from its socialist origins as it is seen as backed by big-business tycoons and has achieved very little on the issues of welfare. Barak's leadership during the Gaza war helped Labor in the polls but many rightist parties are claiming he stopped too soon.

Likud

Party Leader: Binyamin Netanyahu

Campaign Slogans: Because we have a country to run,
Remaining strong together

Official Web Site: <http://en.netanyahu.org.il/>

Key Points In Platform:

- Has stated willingness to negotiate peace with Palestinian leadership "not compromised by terror", but adamantly refuses to negotiate with Hamas and any member of the Hamas-led PA.
- In favor of a realistic solution to the advancement of the peace-process. This is accentuated by an economic peace-plan which will bolster the Palestinian economy.
- Opposed to dismantling of major settlements
- Continue economic reforms started by Netanyahu as Finance Minister
- Favors maintaining status quo in religious/state issues



What the critics are saying about Likud:

Likud has taken many newcomers to its list and it appears hard to tell where exactly they fall on the political spectrum. While it has the likes of Dan Meridor and Uzi Dayan on the left of the party, it also has the likes of Moshe Yaalon and Benny Begin who are diametrically opposed. Critics have argued that Likud is running a specifically vague campaign so as not to accentuate the differences within the party.

Smaller Political Parties

Yisrael Beitenu-'Israel is our Home'

Party Leader: Avigdor Lieberman

Campaign Slogans: Lieberman, I trust him!
Leadership You Can Trust.

Website: <http://beytenu.org/>

Points in Platform:

- A belief that the "land for peace approach" is fundamentally flawed – only a "land for land – peace for peace" approach, in which both parties compromise and commit to certain terms, can succeed.
- Strong security and anti-crime platform
- The desire to see Israel join NTAO and the EU
- Easing of conversions and the introduction of civil unions, while strengthening the Jewish nature of the state.



Official Key

Shas

Party Leader: Eliyahu Yishai

Campaign Slogans: Yes, We Can

Official Web Site: www.shasnet.org.il

Key Points In Platform:

- Sephardic religious movement, led by spiritual mentor Rabbi Ovadia Yosef
- Governmental policies should be based on strict Jewish law
- In the past, prepared to relinquish land in return for peace, but uncomfortable with this policy given increased terror
- Pragmatic approach to security based on the sanctity of life.
- Returning the higher social payments to large families and increase funding for the Yeshivas.



Meretz and the New Movement



Party Leader: Haim Oron

Campaign Slogans: Doing what is good for Israel

Official Web Site: www.Meretz.org.il

Key Points In Platform:

- Left-wing social democratic secular party
- Supports a just and comprehensive peace between Israel and its neighbors
- Has historically supported direct negotiations with the Palestinians and continues to do so in theory, however, concedes that direct negotiations with Hamas is ill-advised at this time.
- Favors dismantling settlements and an almost full withdrawal from West Bank, with land swap for the remainder
- Supports state recognition of non-Orthodox conversions and acceptance of patrilineal descent as source of Jewishness
- Human, civil rights and social justice agenda
- Ecology and a safe environment agenda

United Torah Judaism

Party Leader: Yakov Litzman

Campaign Slogans: TBA

Official Web Site: None

Key Points In Platform:



- Coalition of Ashkenazi ultra-orthodox parties representing the Hassidic and Lithuanian sects
- Non-Zionist but would like to see laws strengthen Judaism in Israel
- Can sit with any of the major parties regarding security issues, but more comfortable with the right as much of its constituency is hawkish
- Advocate on behalf of their constituency regarding government budgets and social services

United Arab List

Party Leader: Ibrahim Ssarsour

Campaign Slogans: TBA

Official Web Site: TBD

Key Points In Platform:



- Union of three Israeli Arab parties - United Arab Party (Ra'am), Arab National Party (Mada) and Islamic Movement
- Israel should become a state of all its inhabitants and not have overtly Jewish character
- The Arabs should be recognized as a national minority and be awarded rights accordingly
- Full Israeli withdrawal from West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem
- Establishment of Palestinian state with Jerusalem as capital
- Right of return for Palestinian refugees of 1948

National Union

Party Leader: Ari Ariel, Aryeh Eldad

Campaign Slogans: Not Afraid At All

Official Web Site: <http://www.leumi.org.il/>

Key Points In Platform:



- Left HaBayit Hayehudi because it didn't think the joint platform was not hard-line enough on the Greater Land of Israel issue
- Joined forces with the largely secular hard-line party HaTikva
- Against any withdrawals from any territory
- Against the creation of a Palestinian state.

The Jewish Home - Habayit HaYehudi

Party Leader: Daniel HersHKovitz

Campaign Slogans: Strength, Strength and Be Strengthened

Official Web Site: <http://www.111.org.il/>

Key Points In Platform:



- New party, replacing the National Religious Party in these elections
- Against further withdrawals from the West Bank, based on the on security, Biblical and Zionist beliefs
- Against the creation of a Palestinian state.
- Strengthening of the state and religious education system

Hadash - Democratic Front for Peace and Equality

Party Leader: Mohammad Barakeh

Campaign Slogans: Building a New Left

Official Web Site: www.Hadash.org.il

Key Points In Platform:



- Non-Zionist and Communist ideology
- Improving status of disadvantaged Israelis
- Formation of democratic and secular constitution
- Improving rights for Israeli Arabs and women
- Supports Israel as a state of all its citizens rather than a 'Jewish State'
- Supports formation of a Palestinian state
- Supports rights of Palestinian refugees of 1948 to either return ("right of return") or be compensated for property abandoned

Gil – The Pensioner's Party

Party Leader: Rafi Eitan

Campaign Slogans: TBA

Official Web Site: <http://www.www.gil.org.il/>

Key Points In Platform:

- Commitment to protecting pension rights, including housing, raising the amount of national health insurance and services for pensioners
- Politically centrist on security and negotiations with the Palestinians.
- The maintenance of traditional Jewish values and advancement of democratic values

Meimad – Green

Party Leader: Micahel Melchior

Campaign Slogans: Choosing a different politics

Official Web Site: <http://hayeruka-meimad.org.il/english>

Key Points In Platform:

- The party focuses primarily on environmental issues and promotes "politics of cooperation that will promote peace."
- Politically dovish and believes in a two-state solution based on the 'Green Line'
- The party backs train transportation as opposed to paving new roads.



National Democratic Assembly (Balad)

Party Leader: Jamal Zahalka

Campaign Slogans: TBA

Official Web Site: www.Balad.org

Key Points In Platform:

- Israeli Arab party
- Israel should be a democratic state of all its citizens
- Supports right of return for Arab refugees from the 1948 war
- Full Israeli withdrawal from West Bank and East Jerusalem
- Supports creation of a Palestinian state



Small Parties Not in the Knesset

- Acharayut (Responsibility)
- Aleh Yarok (Green Leaf)
- Brit Olam Lemaan Yeladeinu (Lasting Promise to Our Children)
- Da'am (Workers Party)
- HaTnuah HaYeroka/Meimad (The Green Movement/Meimad)
- HaYerokim (The Greens)
- HaYisraelim (The Israelis)
- Koach HaKesef (The Power of Money)
- Koach Lehaspiah (Power to Influence)
- Lazuz
- Leader
- Lev (Heart)
- Lochamei Hevrah Meuchadim (United Fighters for Society)
- Mahapach BeHinuch (Revolution in Education)
- Nitzoley Shoah Im Bogrey Aleh Yarok (Holocaust Survivors w/Green Leaf Alumni)
- Or (Light)
- Ra'ash (Men's Rights Party)
- Tzomet-HaTnuah LeZionut Mithadesheth (Junction - Movement for Renewed Zionism)
- Yisrael Hamithadesheth (Renewed Israel)
- Yisrael Hazaka (Strong Israel)
- Zabar (Youth of Israel)