

Trump Threatens to Cut Israel Aid Over Netanyahu Corruption Trial

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Former United States President Donald Trump has sparked controversy by threatening to withhold billions of dollars in American aid to Israel if Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's corruption trial is not canceled. The unprecedented remarks have drawn both gratitude from Netanyahu and outrage from Israeli opposition leaders, who argue that Trump is interfering in an independent nation's justice system.

In a lengthy post on his social media platform, Truth Social, Trump defended Netanyahu, describing the charges as baseless and politically motivated. "It is terrible what they are

doing in Israel to Bibi Netanyahu,” Trump wrote, using Netanyahu’s nickname. “He is a war hero and a prime minister who did a fabulous job working with the United States to eliminate the dangerous nuclear threat in Iran.”

Trump claimed that forcing Netanyahu to “sit in a courtroom all day long” over what he called minor gifts like “cigars and a Bugs Bunny doll” was a distraction that could derail critical negotiations with Hamas and efforts to contain Iran. He compared the Israeli leader’s legal troubles to his legal battles, calling them both “political witch hunts.”

Netanyahu was indicted in 2019 on charges of bribery, fraud, and breach of trust. Prosecutors stated he received expensive gifts from influential billionaires, including Australian businessman James Packer and Hollywood mogul Arnon Milchan. Netanyahu denies any wrongdoing and has called the cases an attempt to drive him out of power. His trial began in 2020 and has become one of Israeli history’s most high-profile legal sagas.

The Israeli leader’s popularity has declined sharply since his return to power in 2022 at the head of the country’s most far-right government. Recent polling suggests that about 70 percent of Israelis, including some of Netanyahu’s supporters, do not trust his government. Despite this, Netanyahu welcomed Trump’s comments, thanking him “for your moving support for me and your tremendous support for Israel.”

Not everyone shared Netanyahu’s gratitude. Israeli opposition leader Yair Lapid criticized Trump’s intervention, stating that no foreign leader should interfere in Israel’s independent legal system. Lapid said that the courts must be allowed to function without outside pressure, especially from former American presidents.

Trump’s threat to cut aid is significant because the United States provides Israel with billions of dollars in military and security assistance each year, more than to any other country. His comments follow a pattern of publicly attacking legal institutions that challenge his allies or himself. In recent years, Trump has faced multiple legal challenges, including being found liable for sexual abuse, falsifying business records, defrauding banks, and attempting to overturn the 2020 election results.

As Trump and Netanyahu continue to face legal troubles, their political alliance remains strong and controversial. Whether Trump’s threat will affect the ongoing trial or U.S.-Israel relations remains to be seen.