



# NETANYAHU'S GLOBAL FAR-RIGHT ALLIANCES

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March 13, 2025

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“Netanyahu: In a league of his own” read Likud party billboards that hung over the Tel Aviv highway, [depicting](#) the Israeli prime minister shaking hands with three global authoritarians: Russian President Vladimir Putin, US President Donald Trump, and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Netanyahu is not in a ‘league of his own,’ but in a league with far-right ultranationalists worldwide. Last month, Foreign Minister Gideon Sa’ar recruited new members to Netanyahu’s league, [formalizing](#) diplomatic engagement with a trio of far-right parties in France, Spain, and Sweden. On March 12, it was [reported](#) that representatives from these parties have been invited by Netanyahu to attend a conference later this month in Jerusalem – on the topic of combating antisemitism, no less.

As the Prime Minister of a country that prides itself on liberal democracy, Netanyahu is doubling down on aligning with illiberal, anti-democratic world leaders who have long track records of engaging in or enabling antisemitism. The leader of the Jewish state has emboldened and excused these nefarious actors, due to their shared commitment to right-wing pro-Israelism, including support for Israeli territorial maximalism, opposition to Palestinian statehood, and impunity for the crimes of occupation. Domestically, Netanyahu has evaded responsibility for his own crimes utilizing the same [illiberal practices](#) as his global far-right counterparts. In forging these alliances, Netanyahu is abandoning Israel’s Jewish and liberal democratic values, fuelling a global movement that endangers diaspora Jewry and other targets of far-right persecution.

## Where it began: Netanyahu’s authoritarian kinship with Viktor Orbán

Netanyahu has developed a particularly strong bond with the Fidesz party in Hungary, led by Viktor Orbán. Hungary’s Defense Minister once [remarked](#) that Netanyahu and the Hungarian strongman “belong to the same political family.” Most recently, Fidesz was [extended](#) an invitation by the Israeli prime minister to participate in the International Conference on Combating Antisemitism, scheduled for March 26-27 in Jerusalem. This is despite the fact that Orbán has promoted the “[Great Replacement](#)” theory, [employed](#) imagery of scheming Jewish “globalists,” and [waged](#) antisemitic smear campaigns against Hungarian Jewish philanthropist and Holocaust survivor George Soros.

Orbán has repeatedly [portrayed](#) Soros as a “puppet master” behind numerous conspiracies, evoking a longstanding antisemitic trope. Under his reign, the Holocaust Memorial and Documentation Center in Budapest has sanitized the record of Hungarian participation in World War II, and certain Jewish congregations have been stripped of their official status. In 2022, Orbán was condemned by the International Auschwitz Committee for criticizing race mixing with “[non-Europeans](#),” and he previously heaped praise on Miklós Horthy – the Hungarian leader who collaborated with Nazi Germany and passed anti-Jewish legislation. In many of these instances, Prime Minister Netanyahu has [leapt to](#) Orbán’s defense, embracing him as a “[true friend of Israel](#).”

## Formalizing Additional Ties with the Far-Right

Foreign Minister Sa’ar [reportedly](#) assessed the far-right trio in France (National Rally), Spain (Vox), and Sweden (Sweden Democrats) based on three criteria – antisemitism, Holocaust denial, and Israel. “Some

of these parties have bad roots,” he [acknowledged](#), “but we look at their deeds in practice today.” Another Israeli Foreign Ministry source [explained](#) further that “we do not agree with the entire platform of these parties or with every statement made by their leaders, but we believe that we can have a dialogue with them.”

Sa’ar instructed his ministry to formalize engagement with the above trio, while opting to maintain Israel’s official policy of non-engagement with far-right parties in Germany (Alternative for Deutschland) and Austria (Freedom) – *for now*. This engagement whitewashes the Jew hatred and other bigotries of the European far-right, ultimately sacrificing the fight against global antisemitism for the sake of advancing Netanyahu’s right-wing pro-Israelism.

The Likud party has further strengthened ties with the European far-right by [joining](#) Patriots.eu as an [observer member](#). Patriots.eu is an alliance of far-right parties, including France’s National Rally and Spain’s Vox, represented in the European Parliament by Patriots for Europe. Last month, Likud became the first ever non-EU party to officially join the far-right alliance, thereby giving resurgent European authoritarianism what one Freedom Party member called a “[kosher certificate from Israel](#).”

### Far-Right Trio in France, Spain, and Sweden

The National Rally (NR) party in France, formerly known as the National Front, is boycotted by the Council of French Jewish Institutions. The Front was founded by Marine Le Pen’s father Jean-Marie, a notorious antisemite and Holocaust denier, alongside former Nazis and Vichy regime collaborators. Though Marine has sought to distance herself from her late father, NR still [promotes](#) a radical anti-Muslim agenda, while maintaining a “pro-Israel” stance to the satisfaction of Benjamin Netanyahu.

Last year, [Amichai Chikli](#), whom Netanyahu ironically charged with leading the Ministry for Diaspora Affairs and Combating Antisemitism, broke from Israel’s precedent of refusing contact with NR; he publicly [endorsed](#) Marine Le Pen for the French presidency, calling the far-right leader an “excellent” choice and claiming that Netanyahu is “of the same opinion.” Also last year, Chikli [addressed](#) a far-right convention hosted by the Vox party in Madrid; he brushed off the party’s long history of antisemitism and [praised](#) it for “aligning with Israel.” Vox’s [track record](#) on Jew hatred includes embracing neo-Nazis and even nominating a Holocaust denier as a party candidate in the 2019 Spanish national election.

Like its French and Spanish counterparts, the far-right Sweden Democrats (SD), a former ally of the KKK whose founders include a Waffen-SS member, has engaged in various forms of antisemitism – ranging from [wearing](#) a Nazi uniform to [insulting](#) Anne Frank. Nevertheless, SD [claims](#) it “wants to be friends with Israel,” and Netanyahu’s Foreign Minister has just officially welcomed their friendship.

### Far-Right Duo in Germany and Austria

After shockingly [doubling](#) its share in the German federal election last month, Alternative for Deutschland (AfD) is now the second-largest party in the Bundestag. The Central Council of Jews in Germany has denounced the AfD for rampant antisemitism, Holocaust denial, and neo-Nazi activity. Senior AfD members have posted antisemitic social media content; adopted the Nazi slogan “everything for Germany;” participated alongside neo-Nazis in a planning meeting about mass deportations of “[non-assimilated](#)” Germans, advocated for the reclamation of the Nazi *völkisch* nationalism; suggested that Nazi SS were “not all criminals;” and bemoaned German guilt for the Holocaust.

Nonetheless, AfD continues to be regarded by Netanyahu as a “[potential ally](#)” (despite his government’s official ban), because they share anti-Muslim and ostensibly “pro-Israel” agendas. Yair Netanyahu, the eldest son of the Israeli prime minister, was even [featured](#) in an AfD campaign advertisement calling for the return of a “Christian” Europe.

Austria’s Freedom (FPO) party, an AfD ally, is yet another far-right party in Europe that Netanyahu has [flirted with](#), despite the no-cooperation policy of the Austrian Jewish community and supposedly the Israeli government itself. FPO was founded by a former Nazi SS brigadier general and its current leader, Herbert Kickl [aims to become](#) Austria’s *volkskanzler*, the Nazi term for “people’s chancellor” used to describe Adolf Hitler.

## **Resurgent Authoritarianism and Holocaust Revisionism**

Netanyahu has also emboldened and excused antisemites outside Europe, including right here at home. After Trump advisor Elon Musk, an ardent supporter of Alternative for Deutschland, performed what appeared to be the Nazi “Heil Hitler” salute at an inauguration event in January, the Israeli prime minister swiftly came to his defense and [called](#) him a “great friend of Israel.” In response to an X user who accused Jews of hating white people, Musk wrote “you have said the actual truth” and was promptly [invited](#) by Netanyahu to visit Israel in order to clean up his image.

The Israeli prime minister has also [boasted](#) of South American friendships with the likes of “[pro-Israel](#)” Brazilian ex-president Jair Bolsonaro, indicted for plotting a far-right coup and beloved by the Likud party. In turn, this phenomenon has contributed to the resurgence of ultranationalism, democratic backsliding, and growing illiberalism worldwide.

All of these global far-right actors have deployed authoritarian tactics and promoted anti-immigrant policies, especially anti-Muslim immigration, thereby facilitating democratic erosion in their respective countries. They also have a common ally in the prime minister of Israel, who provides cover for their authoritarianism and Holocaust revisionism. In exchange, Netanyahu can rely on their defense of him and his policies on the world stage.

Netanyahu’s friendships are not only antithetical to the founding principles of the Jewish state, they also endanger diaspora Jews and other minorities threatened by the far-right. The Israeli prime minister relies on these friendships to advance and promote his agenda of West Bank annexation, permanent occupation, and wholesale Palestinian erasure. American Jewry must reject Netanyahu’s global far-right alliances, protect vulnerable communities – including Palestinians – and stand up for the liberal democratic values upon which the State of Israel was founded.