

# Netanyahu's Pre-Indictment Hearing Begins

By [Stephen Lendman](#)

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Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

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*The hearing begun Wednesday is expected to last four days, maybe longer.*

*Netanyahu's 10-lawyer team is up against 20 state prosecution officials, headed by AG Avichai Mandelblit, State Prosecutor Shai Nitzan, and Liat Ben-Ari, lead prosecutor in three criminal cases against him.*

Evidence is damning. He faces fraud and breach of trust charges in three criminal cases, bribery in one of them.

Barring Knesset legislation he seeks for immunity as prime minister and to prevent Israel's Supreme Court from denying it, AG Mandelblit will decide whether or not he's prosecuted.

He faces Case 1000, 2000, and 4000 charges. In December 2018, the State Prosecutor's Office recommended indicting him for bribery in two of the above cases.

Case 1000 involves lavish gifts Netanyahu got from Israeli billionaire Arnon Milchan in return for political favors.

Case 2000 is about the prime minister getting caught red-handed on tape, negotiating a quid pro quo with Yedioth Ahronoth publisher Arnon Mozes for more favorable broadsheet coverage in return for legislation prohibiting distribution of the free daily Israel Hayom, YA's main competitor, owned by Netanyahu supporter Sheldon Adelson.

Case 4000 alleges police suspect Walla news owner/controlling shareholder of Bezeq telecommunications company Shaul Elovitch ordered favorable coverage of Netanyahu on his news site in return for benefits arranged for Bezeq.

In its latest edition, the [Times of Israel](#) published the full text of "criminal allegations against Netanyahu, as set out by Israel's AG."

Given hard evidence supporting charges against him, the broadsheet said he intends "to advance legislation to render himself immune from prosecution in three criminal cases in which he is facing indictment, and that he will also seek to prevent Israel's Supreme Court from intervening in this effort."

Last May, Israel's Channel 12 reported that he'll seek legislative immunity for as long as he remains prime minister, why he's going all-out to retain power, along with wanting continuation of his political career.

He reportedly told Likud Knesset members the following:

"The citizens of Israel deserve a full-time prime minister. I'll deal with my legal

issues when I have completed my time (in office)."

"The citizens of Israel knew about my legal situation and elected me. If I were focused on my personal best interests, I'd manage my legal battle as prime minister and not as an ordinary citizen, but I recognize that this is not in the best interests of the state."

In September elections, Likud got 26% support from Israeli voters. It's "in the best interests of the state" for Netanyahu to be replaced as PM, and be held accountable for serious criminal offenses.

Charges by AG Mandelblit are explained in great detail, headed by saying:

"Following are allegations of criminal acts committed by you in three cases over the periods of time that you were a public servant."

Charges related to the above three cases were explained, the following stated in them:

"You interfered in the way that the ministries you headed handled matters relating to Milchan, when you were in a situation of severe and ongoing conflict of interest between your personal obligations to Milchan, which stemmed from your personal relationship with him and the favors that he provided to you, and your duty to the public."

"You allegedly committed, during your term of service, acts of breach of trust that caused substantial damage to integrity and to the public's trust."

"The relationship...became a mutual relation of quid pro quo, which included favors that Elovitch gave you in the field of media coverage, with the expectation that you would promote, on his behalf, various interests connected with the Eurocom Group and himself individually."

"You did these things for Elovitch in exchange for the favors that Elovitch did for you as far as coverage. By doing so, you behaved in a biased manner and placed yourself in a conflict of interest between your public roles and your private affairs."

"You demand (that Walla) feature, prominently and for many hours, a video that you released on election day in 2015 in which you warned that "the Arabs [were] coming to the polls in droves" and called upon right-wing voters to vote for your party."

"You acted in a situation of conflict of interest, used governmental powers out of ulterior motives connected with your personal benefit and your family's benefit, caused the corruption of public servants subject to your authority, and acted improperly."

"By your actions as described above, you took the favors listed above in full awareness that you were taking a bribe as a civil servant for activities connected with your position, with the knowledge that the favors listed above were given to you for actions connected with your public positions."

"In exchange for the favors, you used your authority, taking advantage of your high position, in order to carry out actions that benefited Elovitch significantly while acting improperly."

“Although you were aware of these connections and the conflict of interest that was created because of them, you acted, throughout your term as prime minister and minister of communications, in the interests of Bezeq and Elovitch, sometimes even deviating from proper behavior, to the significant benefit of the Elovitches and of Bezeq.”

“You acted in a biased manner and placed yourself in a severe conflict of interest between your public positions and your private affairs, broke the rules that applied to you as a public servant, and committed acts of breach of trust that cause substantial damage to the proper behavior of the administration, the integrity of public servants, and the public’s trust in public servants.”

“In addition, you kept substantial information about the true nature of your relationship with Elovitch from the authorized officials, gave them partial information about this relationship, and also presented them with false information about your relationship with Elovitch.”

“By doing so, you committed acts of fraud and breach of trust that cause substantial damage to the proper behavior of the administration, the integrity of public servants, and the public’s trust in public servants.”

“Due to the acts listed here, I am considering prosecuting you for taking bribes — an offense according to Section 290 of the Criminal Law; and for fraud and breach of trust, a crime according to Section 284 of the Criminal Law.”

Signed: Avichai Mandelblit

Attorney General

Note: Favors received from Milchan included nearly half a million dollars in cigars, champagne, and “other favors.”

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