

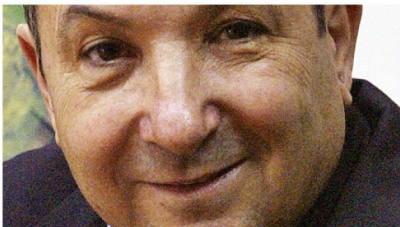
# Key players in Israeli election



## LIKUD PARTY

■ **Benjamin Netanyahu, 59:** Hawkish, right-wing opposition leader is front-runner in opinion polls. Former prime minister (1996-99), Netanyahu maintains that Israel's three-week offensive against Hamas in Gaza last month did not go far enough.

**Opposes two-state solution to Israeli-Palestinian conflict – current cornerstone of peace efforts backed by U.S. and international community**



## LABOUR PARTY

■ **Ehud Barak, 66:** Former prime minister (1999-2001) and defence minister has vowed to “smash” and “topple” Hamas. Barak negotiated peace with Palestinians but talks broke down amid violence in 2000, costing him his job.

**Favours two-state solution and, when prime minister, said he would hold an Israeli plebiscite on status of East Jerusalem**



## KADIMA PARTY

■ **Tzipi Livni, 50:** Foreign minister and acting prime minister vows tough line on Hamas militants. Tzipora Livni was a Likud activist until Prime Minister Ariel Sharon formed Kadima. She has since become a strong supporter of a two-state solution.

**Since 2007, Livni has been Israel's chief Palestinian negotiator, offering to work with moderate Palestinians and Arab states for peace**



## YISRAEL BEITEINU PARTY

■ **Avigdor Lieberman, 50:** Far-right politician wants Israeli Arabs to swear loyalty to state or lose their vote. Once suggested that Arab Knesset members who had talks with Hamas representatives should be executed.

**Has tapped into militant, patriotic mood following Gaza war – could emerge as kingmaker, determining whether Netanyahu or Livni can form next coalition government**