

Netanyahu Addresses GOP Senators as Blinken Makes Global Attempt at Hostage Deal

JERUSALEM, Israel – Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu addressed Republican senators Wednesday about Israel's war with Hamas.

The meeting took place amid a growing disagreement with the White House and Senate Democrats over the war's direction.

The address to the Republican senators came just days after Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer called for Israel to have new elections to replace Netanyahu.

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Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) stated, "I made it clear to him that it's not the business of the United States to be giving a democratic ally advice about when to have an election or what kind of military campaign they may be conducting."

Schumer clarified his remarks to reporters, saying, "Well, let me say this: I gave this speech out of a real love for Israel. And if you read the speech, we called only for there to be an election after the hostilities had declined, after Hamas was defeated."

Republicans charge the upcoming presidential election prompted Schumer's speech.

Wyoming Senator John Barrasso said, referring to the Middle East two-state solution, "In my opinion, the two states

they're most worried about are Michigan and Nevada, which are states that (President) Biden is very worried about in terms of his own re-election."

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Netanyahu said he told President Biden in a phone call this week that the prime minister needs to do what's right for Israel.

"As I said," he noted, "there were times we agreed with our friends, and there were times we did not agree with them. In the end, we always did what was essential for our safety, and we will do so this time as well."

Netanyahu also said it will "take some time" before Israel's military launches its offensive in Rafah.{eoa}

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