

## Ehud Barak

Minister of Defense, Israel



Ehud Barak, Chairman of the Haazma'ut faction 2011, former Chairman of the Labour party, became Israel's Minister of Defense for the second time in June 2007. He previously served as Israel's 10th Prime Minister and Minister of Defense from 1999 to 2001.

Barak served as Minister of the Interior and then as Foreign Minister under Prime Minister Rabin and Prime Minister Peres in the years 1995-1996.

With his service as the Israel Defense Forces' (IDF) Chief of the General Staff from 1991 to 1995, Lt. General Barak completed a 36-year military career as the most decorated soldier in the history of the IDF.

During his military career, Barak commanded special forces elite units, as well as armored divisions. Barak headed the R&D and Planning Branch of the Israel Defense Forces and later served as Director of Military Intelligence, OC Central Command and Deputy Chief of Staff.

Ehud Barak personally headed several of the most daring counter-terror special operations in the history of Israel and as a young colonel was a key architect of the June 1976 Entebbe Operation rescuing hijacked passengers.

During his tenure as prime minister, Barak led Israel out of a prolonged recession into an economic boom, with 5.9% annual growth, record foreign investment, near-zero inflation, a halved deficit and significantly decreased external debt.

The core of the Barak government's efforts was devoted to the peace process. In May 2000, Prime Minister Barak ordered the withdrawal of the IDF from southern Lebanon, ending 18 tragic and bloody years of Israel's presence there. He led far-reaching efforts to negotiate peace agreements, first with Syria and later with the Palestinian Authority, with the active participation of President Bill Clinton and his administration. Regrettably, these negotiations did not result in the breakthroughs necessary to conclude final agreements.

Barak received a B.Sc. degree in mathematics and physics from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem in 1968, and an M.Sc. in economic engineering systems at Stanford University in 1978.

Ehud Barak was born on February 12, 1942 at Kibbutz Mishmar HaSharon, Israel.

He is married to Nili, the father of three daughters and grandfather of three.