Ehud Barak
Prime Minister of Israel and Minister of Defence

Ehud Barak was born on Feb. 12, 1942, at Kibbutz Mishmar Hasharon. He received a bachelor of science degree in mathematics and physics from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in 1968 and completed his master's degree in economics engineering systems at Stanford University in 1978.

Mr. Barak enlisted in the Israeli defence forces in 1959, and rose through the ranks to brigadier-general in 1979. Mr. Barak, Israel's most decorated soldier, retired in 1995, having served as chief of the general staff from 1991 to 1994.

In 1995, Mr. Barak was appointed Minister of the Interior and Minister of Foreign Affairs. He was elected chairman of the Labour Party in 1997.

Mr. Barak was elected Prime Minister of Israel on May 17, 1999. He is also Minister of Defence.

Mr. Barak is married and has three children.