

Netanyahu takes office as Israeli PM

by UPI

JERUSALEM -- Binyamin Netanyahu took office as Israeli prime minister Wednesday during a ceremony in Jerusalem, observers said.

Saying the government faces many challenges, Netanyahu promised he and his Cabinet would "roll up our sleeves and start working straightaway, as soon as we step out of this office," the Jerusalem Post reported.

Netanyahu praised his predecessor, Ehud Olmert, saying he "was one of Israel's most talented prime ministers" and wished him well. Netanyahu also thanked "my sons, who keep me grounded in reality, and my beloved wife, Sara, the mother of my children and the axis of our family life."

The Post reported that Olmert, speaking before Netanyahu, expressed regret in not being able to reach a Palestinian peace agreement during his term. He lamented "mistakes" he made, saying, "In addition to tough decisions and achievements, I have also made errors, and I am not afraid to admit it."

Olmert added, "I believe that we can reach real peace that can ensure Israel's prosperity."

Copyright © 2009, by United Press International. All Rights Reserved.

Netanyahu takes office as Israeli PM by UPI