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Aktuelles aus israelischen Tageszeitungen

13. August – 06. September 2010

1. Beginn direkter Friedensgespräche in Washington

Zum Auftakt der Wiederaufnahme von direkten Friedensgesprächen am 1. und 2. September trafen sich der palästinensische Präsident Mahmoud Abbas und der israelische Premierminister Benjamin Netanyahu in Washington. Zuvor waren direkte Friedensgespräche für über 20 Monate ausgesetzt gewesen. US-Präsident Barak Obama hatte angekündigt, innerhalb von einem Jahr ein Friedensabkommen aushandeln zu wollen.

Im Rahmen des ersten Treffens einigten sich beide Seiten nun auf ein Fortführen der Verhandlungen und regelmäßige Zusammenkünfte von Netanyahu und Abbas. Die zweite Runde der Gespräche wird am 14. September in Ägypten stattfinden.

Schon vor Beginn der Gespräche hatte ein Wiederaufflammen von Gewalt jedoch Befürchtungen genährt, der Friedensprozess könne zusammenbrechen, noch bevor er wieder in Gang gekommen war: Die Hamas bekannte sich zu zwei Anschlägen auf jüdische SiedlerInnen im Westjordanland, bei denen vier Israelis getötet wurden.

Sofern Netanyahu nichts Gegenteiliges verfügt, könnten zudem Ende September wieder Bauaktivitäten in den Siedlungen des Westjordanlandes beginnen. Doch sollte der teilweise Baustopp in den Siedlungen nicht fortgeführt werden, droht den Friedensgesprächen der Abbruch – so viel hatte Abbas bereits im Vorfeld der Gespräche deutlich gemacht.

Reason for optimism in talks

“Is there any reason for optimism? Indeed, there is. For the first time in history, most Arab leaders view a Middle Eastern state other than Israel – Iran – as their major enemy. The Israeli government under Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu is strong, stable

and deeply committed to resolving the conflict based on two states for two peoples.

In the West Bank, Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas is working to restore law, order and economic prosperity while similarly pledging to pursue the two-state solution. And President Barack Obama has placed achieving peace at the top of his foreign policy agenda. Never before, perhaps, have conditions been so conducive.”

Michael B. Oren, JPO 02.09.10

Doubtful declarations

“The Washington summit met the goals set for it. It ended with an announcement of the renewal of negotiations to reach an Israeli-Palestinian settlement. [...]

Netanyahu convinced the leaders of the United States, Egypt and Jordan to sponsor the direct talks, and demonstrated impressive political ability in preserving his coalition intact at a time when he is entering discussions about a withdrawal from the West Bank, the future of the settlements and the status of Jerusalem.

But [...] Netanyahu was short on details, and the doubts regarding the seriousness of his intentions and ability to promote a settlement have yet to dissipate. [...] If Netanyahu will give in to the pressure of the settlers and their supporters and renew construction [in the settlements] at full steam, it will become clear that he is not capable of promoting the historic compromise that he promised.”

HAA 05.09.10 Editorial

A test of leadership

“Above all, the meeting in Washington is a leadership test for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. He refused to reply to the document on borders and security the Palestinians sent him during the proximity talks. [...] The time has come

for the prime minister to show his outline for a final-status agreement. [...]

The Washington summit and the ensuing talks are also an important test of leadership for Abbas, who must prepare his public for painful compromises. And this is also a test for Obama, whose involvement in the Israeli-Palestinian track has thus far not led to real progress.”

HAA 01.09.10 Editorial

Hopes and fears

“The heart says do anything for peace. Freeze the settlements – depriving Abbas of the pretext he is already advancing to scupper the talks [...]. Work for compromise on border routes and even in Jerusalem. [...] And the head? The head, in a murderous week such as this, cannot forget that second intifada bloodbath, and the Palestinian leadership duplicity that fostered it. [...] The heart so fervently wants to see all the current pessimism proved wrong. But the head deduces that Netanyahu’s admirable hope of finding, in Abbas, a new Sadat, will prove forlorn, and fears that this week’s return to terror attacks was only the first murderous consequence.”

David Horovitz, JPO 03.09.10

Peace? Yes, they can

“How easy it is to approach the peace summit in Washington cynically. [...] How easy it is to say that, again, nothing shall come out of it, because we already got used to that. [...]

We believe that both sides want peace. We’re not sure whether they are willing to pay the price inherent in it, yet we know with certainty that they can. [...]

A final status agreement is not only necessary, it is also possible. We can only hope that those who currently object to models such as the Geneva Initiative will not find themselves longing for such models in the future. So give Obama, Abbas, and Netanyahu some credit. Yes, they can.”

Nidal Fugaha/ Gadi Baltiansky, JED 02.09.10

This peace is killing us

“The peace process and funeral processions always went hand in hand around here. [...]

Those who think that things will be different after the next agreement is signed are either stupid or senile. All the security geniuses here in Israel and abroad will not be able to produce a formula that would guarantee tranquility in the event of handing over land to the control of Mahmoud Abbas’ militias.

Such agreement will be signed in an exciting ceremony in America, but end up with Israeli cars dotted with bullet holes here.”

Hagai Segal, JED 03.09.10

The new Netanyahu?

“Israelis are not buying the [...] attempt to convince us that we have a Palestinian partner. [...] When Palestinian terrorists gun down innocent people on the highway simply because they are Jews, the public’s reasoned response is to say that the Palestinians do not want peace. [...]

The most distressing aspect of Netanyahu’s enthusiastic participation in a process the Israeli public rationally opposes is that it is him doing it. With Netanyahu now joining the ranks of those who attack Israel’s defenders as enemies of peace and claim that defending the country is antithetical to peace, who is left to defend us?”

Caroline Glick, JPO 03.09.10

Abbas has the will and the way

“In spite of Tuesday’s terror attack and its tragic consequences, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas remains a partner for peace. [...]

Israel must not find itself held hostage by Hamas, waiting for the Islamist group to agree to relinquish its rule over Gaza or stop terror attacks, before agreeing to sign a peace deal.

In word and deed, Abbas has made clear he has both the will and the way to make peace, but he can’t do it under the terms the Israeli right is demanding. He can show flexibility over borders, maybe even over the right of return. But not over Jerusalem [...]. The Netanyahu government must understand the price of ending the conflict. You want peace? Give Abbas the Temple Mount. Without Islamic sovereignty over what Muslims call the Haram al-Sharif, we won’t have peace even a decade from now.”

Avi Issacharoff, HAA 02.09.10

Durable solution is possible

“If all the concerned sides come with clean hands, good faith, a willingness to compromise and down to earth expectations – a durable solution can be put in sight. [...]

A viable two-state solution should be based on the simple criteria of Maximum Area, Maximum Israelis and Minimum Non-Israelis within Israel’s borders, and a similar equation within the Palestinian borders, while limiting the evacuation of residents (of

both nationalities) to an absolute minimum. For that to work, both sides will need to compromise.

In order to secure a viable two-state solution, the time has come for Jordan and Egypt to give more than their limited moral support. They should give some real estate.

Barren or mostly Palestinian populated land, adjacent to what was once known as the West Bank of Jordan, should be handed over to the Palestinians. The same should be said for such land south of Gaza. The talks in Washington are a good opportunity to further develop this concept. [...]

If this September will bring an end to the discriminatory construction freeze and a beginning to impartially constructive negotiations, we might all be in for a pleasant surprise – if not we will get more of the same.”

Ophir Falk, JED 02.09.10

2. Boykott der Siedlung Ariel durch israelische Künstler

In Ariel, einer der größten jüdischen Siedlungen im Westjordanland, soll im November ein neues Kulturzentrum eröffnet werden. Doch nachdem bekannt geworden war, dass mehrere israelische Theater Auftritte in Ariel planen, weigerten sich 36 prominente israelische SchauspielerInnen und RegisseurInnen in einem Brief an ihre Geschäftsführer, an Aufführungen in der Siedlung teilzunehmen.

Kulturministerin Limor Livnat (Likud) und Premierminister Benjamin Netanyahu kritisierten den Boykottaufruf scharf und drohten mit finanziellen Konsequenzen, sollten staatlich geförderte Kulturbetriebe Auftritte verweigern. Dennoch erhielt der Boykott Unterstützung von mehr als 150 weiteren israelischen KünstlerInnen, AkademikerInnen und SchriftstellerInnen, die ihre Solidarität mit den SchauspielerInnen bekundeten und ebenfalls ankündigten, Veranstaltungen in den Siedlungen fern bleiben zu wollen.

Stalin's commissar in the PMO

“Thirty-six actors, directors and screenwriters who disagree with the government's policy [...] succeeded in putting the debate about Ariel on the agenda. But their position is unacceptable to Israel's rightist government, which quickly responded with typical aggressiveness. [...] Netanyahu is acting like Andrei Zhdanov, Stalin's cultural commissar: He is trying to compel artists to express a government policy that seeks to annex Ariel, by threatening to harm their

livelihood. [...] Refusing to perform in occupied territory is not delegitimization of the state, as Netanyahu claims, but the expression of a legitimate and worthy position.”

HAA 30.08.10 Editorial

Boycotts and legitimacy

“Manipulating government funding to influence artistic expression is a slippery slope. Who determines which political opinions are legitimate and which are not? Better to allow artists full freedom of expression, including the right to boycott a particular venue, than to centralize control in the hands of politicians with clear political agendas. [...] Actors, playwrights and directors who have joined the boycott [...] stand to lose popularity among many, probably most, of their fellow Israelis [...] who may wish to punish them at the box office. [...] However, by providing funding to all forms of artistic expression, including kinds that are hypercritical of its policies, Israel sends out a strong message to its detractors. [...]

By boycotting Ariel, actors, directors and playwrights are forfeiting the opportunity to enter into dialogue with their fellow Israelis through the medium of art. They are also – as is their right as citizens of a Jewish and democratic state – conveying an utter lack of sympathy for a group of people who share with them a common destiny, despite all the politics that divides them.”

JPO 29.08.10 Editorial

Our cultural dictatorship

“Well, ladies and gentleman, playwrights and actors: This is not the problem of Ariel residents, but rather, of ‘legitimate’ residents such as myself [...] whose tax payments finance and subsidize your work for the sake of democratic culture.

I keep on sponsoring you even when you present works that are incommensurate with my worldview [...]. I do [...] this because in a democratic state it's important to have culture that does not present one voice, it's important to have criticism, and mostly it's important to create cultural bridges between people [...]. However, your proposed boycott, which would target anonymous audience members, would constitute political coercion – a dictatorship established on the backs of innocent citizens who are guilty of nothing. This is what I find hard to accept, even if in your view it's all about culture.”

Yoaz Hendel, JED 31.08.10

Puppet theater

“Yes, there is a difference between legitimate, sovereign Israel and the areas of its occupation. Yes, there is a moral difference between appearing here and appearing there, in the heart of an illegal settlement. [...] Is there really a need to mention all this, especially to artists and creators? It turns out there is. [...]

Does state financing provide a warrant for any theatrical abomination? [...] It's not easy to rebel against the one who gives you bread; it's not easy to disobey in your workplace.

But this is a real test. After the Habima and Cameri theaters perform at Ariel, they shouldn't be surprised to find performance halls around the world locking their doors to them. [...] The call must go out to Israel's artists: Don't lend a hand to this theater of the absurd. Be actors, [...] not puppets.”

Gideon Levy, HAA 29.08.10

Theater of the absurd

“Ariel is home to tens of thousands of Jews, including leftists, and just like their money subsidizes the salaries and theaters of the refuseniks, these people too deserve a decent dose of culture, especially with the inauguration of a new cultural center. [...]

What we saw was an unwise move by playwrights and theater actors, who will likely be met with a response by rightist colleagues. Indeed, should centrist and rightist Israelis boycott the plays of Habima, for example, our national theater would be able to summon all the remaining leftist audience members to one of Tel Aviv's smallest venues, Tsavta 2, and we would still see empty seats.”

Eitan Haber, JED 30.08.10

Put on a show in Ariel

“Instead of boycotting Ariel's new cultural center, the actors would be better off thanking their bosses for the unique opportunity to perform before settlers on their home turf, where they could talk to them about occupation and bereavement.”

Akiva Eldar, HAA 30.08.10

Boycotts are legitimate

“Boycotts are a legitimate means anywhere in the world and a vital political weapon. [...] Boycotts are the way of the world. [...]

The European Union imposed a boycott on settlement products and did not recognize them as Israeli-made, thereby charging customs fees. So what did the Israeli government [...] do? It agreed to

cooperate with the boycott, and Ariel products are no longer recognized as Israeli-made.

Finally, the Israeli government does not recognize the Ariel College. [...] That is, the boycott against Ariel was started by the government [...]. Everything was done with public funds.

So why do actor Dror Keren and author David Grossman deserve all the nonsensical condemnations? For acting like [...] their governments had been acting for many generations?”

Gideon Eshet, JED 03.09.10

3. Facebook - Fotos israelischer Soldatin

Die Fotos, die Eden Abergil auf ihrer Seite des sozialen Netzwerkes „Facebook“ veröffentlichte, sorgten auch in Israel für Entrüstung: Die junge Frau hatte Bilder online gestellt, die sie als Soldatin neben mehreren palästinensischen Gefangenen mit verbundenen Augen und gefesselten Händen zeigen. Den Bildern war der Satz beigefügt, der Dienst in der israelischen Armee sei „die beste Zeit“ in Abergils Leben gewesen.

Nachdem BloggerInnen auf die Fotos aufmerksam gemacht hatten, wurde in israelischen und internationalen Medien ausgiebig über den Fall berichtet. Sprecher der israelischen Armee und PolitikerInnen verurteilten Abergils Verhalten. Menschenrechtsorganisationen bezeichneten die öffentliche Schelte jedoch als scheinheilig und wiesen daraufhin, dass es sich nicht um einen Einzelfall handele, sondern dass solche Fotos und der respektlose und gewaltsame Umgang mit festgehaltenen PalästinenserInnen an der Tagesordnung seien.

What Eden Abergil did wrong

“Some critics have attempted to draw comparisons between Abergil's photographs and pictures of laughing American soldiers posing with tortured detainees at Abu Ghraib in Iraq. The comparison is superficial and misplaced. The Abu Ghraib pictures revealed a despicable culture of torture at the American detention center; Abergil's document the all-too-unfortunately-familiar banality of widespread arrests of suspected Palestinian militants. [...]

Nonetheless, the episode also highlights the dangerous ease with which Israel's regrettable need to deploy soldiers in the West Bank – involving relentless interaction with the Palestinian civilian population – in order to keep our populace safe, can breed a routine in which respect for those civilians is

lessened or lost. [...] Abergil [...] lost sight of the fact that the Palestinian detainees in her charge, whatever their suspected crimes, must be afforded fundamental respect as fellow human beings.”
JPO 18.08.10 Editorial

The banality of occupation

“There’s nothing special about these photos. They are no different than tens of thousands of other such photographs of bound people across the West Bank. [...] What makes this case special are its banality, triviality, and ordinariness. She was photographed with cuffed human beings for the hell of it. [...]

What may be most disturbing in these photos is the suspicion that a reality of disrespect for people, their property, their time, and even their lives is not something that we leave behind over there, far away in the wild east. Rather, it may be something that permeates into our lives too, our attitude to the old lady at the hospital, the conduct of police, the arrogant attitude of public servants, the reckless driving, and the violence in and out of the family.

Maybe those who adhere to the slogan ‘Judea and Samaria are here’ are right after all. This is what’s scary, that Judea and Samaria are certainly right here.”

Edna Canetti, JED 18.08.10

When I was Eden Abergil

“The photographs [...] did not ‘shock’ me. [...] Instead, the photos brought back memories from my military service. Once, I was also Eden Abergil: [...] I covered many eyes with pieces of cloth, I bound many wrists with plastic cuffs. [...] There was nothing special in my experience or in the photographs of Eden Abergil. Tens of thousands of soldiers who served in the territories and Lebanon, like Eden and me, were exposed to similar experiences. [...] The situation is violent and humiliating without diverging from orders or regulations. The occupation did not ‘corrupt’ me or any of my colleagues in the unit. We didn’t return home and run wild in the streets and abuse helpless people. [...] But we learned one lesson: Regardless of politics, it’s better to be the guard than the prisoner. [...] The occupation did not transform us into law-breaking criminals, it only taught us that it’s best to be on the stronger side.”

Aluf Benn, HAA 01.09.10

In praise of shame

“What’s happening to us that we’re producing Abergils [...] in ever increasing numbers? Do we not recognize the danger of our unwillingness to confront the shameful parts of who we’ve become? Of course we’re at war, and yes, we do have very real enemies. [...]

[But] the danger of constant self-justification is very real. If we continue this pattern of avoiding shame and shifting blame, even if we are successful in saving this country, we may wake up one day and realize that what we saved wasn’t worth having in the first place.”

Daniel Gordis, JED 28.08.10

An innocent, a broad

“For two full days, our merciful and conscience-driven nation poured its holy wrath down upon Eden Abergil [...]. There is no greater pleasure than sitting at home with the air-conditioning on and watching a poor girl sweating on television and trying to justify herself. [...]

The truth is, there is nothing intrinsically shocking and disgusting in Abergil’s Facebook photos. The morality or immorality comes from the viewer. The viewer is shocked by the contrast between his own freedom and the captivity of the handcuffed people. [...] But let us look at things in perspective: Abergil is not the main subject of the photos. She is only mediating the contrast screaming out to be noticed - a contrast that would have existed even without her in the photo - between people who have been denied their freedom, their right to see and their right to move, and our endless freedom to be photographed, watch television, use Facebook, look at other people’s Facebook pages and do anything we feel like, including stupid things.

Benny Ziffer, HAA 20.08.10

4. Medienquerschnitt

Die Vielfalt der in Israel relevanten Themen kann in einem Medienspiegel nicht umfassend wiedergegeben werden. Um den deutschen LeserInnen dennoch einen Einblick in das breite Themenspektrum, das in den Medien behandelt wird, zu gewähren, veröffentlichen wir in dieser Schlaglichtausgabe wieder eine kleine Auswahl an weiteren Themen, die in den vergangenen drei Wochen die israelische Gesellschaft bewegten.

Über den **designierten Generalstabschef Yoav Galant** und die Affäre um ein gefälschtes Dokument, in dem er bezichtigt wurde, eine Verleumdungskampagne gegen Rivalen zu führen:

Respect for IDF is gone

"The days when IDF generals were like God's deputies [...] are long gone, yet we still believed that the General Staff Headquarters is [...] a sort of green area within a polluted, decayed body. This is the reason why the shock around here in the past week is so deep. The question of whether the so-called Galant document is forged or not is the last issue that should preoccupy us. What's much more disturbing is the conduct of the people who are supposed to be focused on one thing only: The responsibility for our security and wellbeing. [...]

Something needs to happen here, and quickly. Someone needs to put the house in order. We obviously cannot go on with a divided, suspicious top brass preoccupied with intrigue and all sorts of plots. We must not have the decay that had spread everywhere in the country also spreading deep into the IDF."

Sima Kadmon, JED 19.08.10

Yoav Galant's IDF

"Barak's speedy appointment of Galant [...] leaves the defense minister and his chosen commander at risk, should the 'Galant affair' yet come back to bite them. [...] With Israel challenged by Iran and its proxies to north and south, Hizbullah and Hamas respectively; with security in the West Bank a constant concern; and with other regional players always capable of posing threats to Israel's wellbeing, the IDF cannot afford to lower its guard. Israel's enemies may think they scent weakness in the unseemly controversy that has engulfed the IDF in recent weeks. A professional, effective transfer of authority at the helm is the most effective way of dispelling that dangerous notion."

JPO 25.08.10 Editorial

Über den geplanten Bau einer **Moschee in unmittelbarer Nähe vom Ground Zero** in New York:

Undercurrents below the Ground Zero Mosque

"71 percent of Americans object to the proposed project of building a mosque next to Ground Zero. I cannot agree with the theory that such broad resistance represents Islamophobic sentiments, nor

that it is a product of a 'rightwing' smear campaign against one imam or another. [...]

Public objection to the mosque [...] represents a vote of no confidence in mainstream American Muslim leadership which, on the one hand, refuses to acknowledge the alarming dimension that anti-Americanism has taken in their community and, paradoxically, blames America for its creation."

Judea Pearl, JPO 28.08.10

A mosque in the temple

"Why be in such a hurry to reject a building whose founders say it is intended to promote interfaith dialogue? After all, they promised that 'extremism will have no place here.'

Any responsible person must reach out to every moderate, while at the same time distancing and condemning every extremist. Those who conflate people of good intentions with those of evil intentions, whether by commission or omission, will return the world to a state of chaos and lead it to Sodom."

Yossi Sarid, HAA 13.08.10

The moderate Muslim threat

"More than anything, the center and its name (The Cordoba House) are a symbol. [...] The Cordoba House is marketed to Westerners as a stronghold of tolerance, moderation, and interfaith dialogue. Yet in Islamic tradition, Cordoba is first and foremost a Christian Spanish city conquered by Muslims in 711, with many of its residents butchered or turned into slaves; a mosque built on the ruins of a church; and memories of the Almohads, the spiritual fathers of contemporary Islamic zealots."

Shaul Rosenfeld, JED 18.08.10

HAA = Haaretz

HZO= Ha Tzofe

IHY = Israeli HaYom

JED = Jedioth Ahronoth

JPO = Jerusalem Post

MAA = Maariv

GLO = Globes

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