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Aktuelles aus israelischen Tageszeitungen

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1. Fortsetzung direkter Friedensgespräche

Am 14. September trafen der israelische Premierminister Benjamin Netanyahu und der palästinensische Präsident Mahmud Abbas im ägyptischen Sharm el-Sheikh zur zweiten Runde der direkten Friedensgespräche, die zwei Wochen zuvor begonnen hatten, zusammen. Obwohl keine offiziellen Angaben zum Inhalt der Gespräche gemacht wurden, hieß es aus regierungsnahen Quellen, Grenz- und Sicherheitsfragen hätten im Zentrum des Treffens gestanden. Die Gespräche wurden am 15. September in Jerusalem fortgeführt.

Abbas hatte angekündigt, keine Konzessionen bei palästinensischen Grundpositionen wie dem Rückkehrrecht machen zu wollen. Netanyahu wollte sich gleichzeitig nicht auf eine Verlängerung des Siedlungsbaustopps im Westjordanland festlegen. Dementsprechend fielen die Einschätzungen israelischer Kommentatoren zumeist negativ aus. Der US-Nahostgesandte George Mitchell zeigte sich hingegen optimistisch und sprach von Fortschritten bei den Verhandlungen.

Plan B for peace

“There is a problem: In exchange for what Netanyahu is willing to give, he is demanding an end to the conflict. In exchange for an end to the conflict, the Palestinians are demanding what he is not willing to give. [...] The trail that led to the abyss of Camp David and the abyss of Annapolis is leading to the abyss today as well. A permanent Israeli-Palestinian peace requires the fulfillment of six well-known principles: recognition of a Jewish and democratic state, establishment of a demilitarized Palestinian state, the division of Jerusalem, an extensive evacuation of settlements, no right of return for Palestinian refugees and agreement on a border. But there is at least one principle to which the Palestinians will not agree: They will not give up

their demand for a right of return. And there is at least one principle to which Netanyahu will not agree: He will not share sovereignty over the Temple Mount. [...]

The only solution is to think out of the box. [...] To sit Israelis and Palestinians down in a closed room and task them with formulating a long-term interim agreement [...]: Division of the land now, peace later.”

Ari Shavit, HAA 18.09.10

The negotiations illusion

“The leftists are saying that the Netanyahu government will thwart any agreement, and that’s true. The rightists are saying that the Palestinians will thwart any agreement, and we would do well to remember that this is true as well. [...]

So perhaps we need to look reality in the eye, and accept two basic facts. The first one, as opposed to the leftist view, is that the current round of negotiations is no more than another attempt by two refusenik sides to buy time. The second fact, which contradicts the rightist view, is that time is in their favor, not in our favor. Our international status is being eroded and we are gradually turning into a minority in the Land of Israel.

Hence, we would do well to let go of the negotiations illusion and start to plan another unilateral move in Judea and Samaria – because the alternative to partitioning the land is Zionism’s demise.”

Gadi Taub, JED 14.09.10

The perils of diplomatic theater

“With Hamas in charge in Gaza and widely supported in Judea and Samaria, Abbas will probably not risk signing a peace deal with Israel that will likely serve as his death warrant. But the same observers who bemoan the poor chances for a treaty ignore the fact that the alternative – that Abbas signs a peace deal with Israel – would be a disaster for Israel. Any deal Israel signs with the

PLO will make the country weaker. We know this because we have already signed deals with the PLO. And all of those deals made Israel weaker. [...] The PLO's response to every agreement has been to escalate its political and terror war against Israel." Caroline Glick, JPO 17.09.10

Peace theater of the absurd

"Netanyahu's problem is that by continuing to refer to Abbas as 'my partner in peace', he discourages people from appreciating that his stance in these negotiations is no different than that of his duplicitous predecessor, the murderous Yasser Arafat. [...] We are losing the battle of ideas because we are still reinforcing the illusion that this is merely a conflict over land between two peoples, promoting the flawed belief that peace can be achieved with a society whose leaders' ambitions of achieving statehood are superseded by their primary objective of bringing an end to Jewish sovereignty in the region."

Isi Leibler, JPO 15.09.10

Why Hamas is holding its fire

"We should not be misled by the official Israeli and Palestinian spokesmen - nobody involved in the renewed direct negotiations is really interested in holding them. [...] Palestinian Prime Minister Salam Fayyad [...] has, for several years, worked on building the necessary infrastructure [...] for the establishment of a Palestinian state. [...] From the point of view of the heads of the Palestinian Authority, holding direct negotiations with Israel is an obstacle to their strategy, and even puts it at risk. This is because, until now, they have been working to achieve their strategic goals [...], without being asked to pay any price to Israel, without signing any agreements, without recognizing Israel's right to exist, and without renouncing 'the right of return', etc. Any significant progress in the direct negotiations with Israel will necessarily result in sharp criticism within the Palestinian arena and their position will be weakened. [...]"

Benjamin Netanyahu is not interested in overt significant progress in the direct talks with the Palestinians, because of the heavy political price he will pay."

Boaz Ganor, GLO 12.09.10

Give us a border!

"The direct talks that were launched at the Washington summit should have one aim - to fix the border between Israel and the Palestinian state that

will be set up in the West Bank. Israel needs a border that will delineate its borders, normalize its international status, end the dissent over the settlements and solidify the national consensus. [...] The question of narratives must be left to historians, educators and creators of culture. The statesmen must focus on life's practical aspects and agree on the border in the West Bank."

Aluf Benn, HAA 08.09.10

Happy is he who believes

"I don't believe he means what he said in his Bar-Ilan University speech about two states for two peoples, and that what he said at the Washington summit is what he plans to do at the Sharm el-Sheikh summit. So far he has only paid lip service to peace. Likud's hawks are not getting upset by his speeches, nor are his coalition partners hastening to part company from him. Apparently they don't believe him. [...]"

If Netanyahu really does intend to sign an agreement within a year to withdraw from the territories, how is it possible he is not preparing public opinion for that tsunami?"

Akiva Eldar, HAA 13.09.10

2. Aufhebung des Siedlungsbaustopps?

Die direkten Gespräche zwischen Israel und den Palästinensern werden von dem geplanten Ende des Baustopps in den jüdischen Siedlungen im Westjordanland, den Netanyahu vor zehn Monaten verfügt hatte, überschattet. Netanyahu wird von seinen Koalitionspartnern, darunter Außenminister Avigdor Lieberman, gedrängt, eine Fortsetzung abzulehnen – und damit seine bisherigen Aussagen einzuhalten.

Palästinenserpräsident Abbas kündigt jedoch mehrfach einen Abbruch der Friedensverhandlungen an, sollte in den Siedlungen wieder gebaut werden. Netanyahu signalisierte inzwischen aber, Bauvorhaben nur in den Siedlungsblöcken nahe der Grünen Linie zulassen zu wollen. Palästinensische Stellen haben sich bisher jedoch nicht zu einem solchen Kompromiss geäußert. Auch während der letzten Monate hatte es Ausnahmen gegeben: So wurden unter anderem öffentliche Gebäude und schon genehmigte Wohneinheiten gebaut. Allerdings wurde von palästinensischer Seite nun angedeutet, dass Netanyahu den Baustopp nicht offiziell verkünden müsse. Was zähle, sei allein, dass keine weiteren Wohnhäuser

für Israelis in den besetzten Gebieten gebaut würden.

The freeze as a test

“Once again, it appeared that Israel is not capable of stopping settlement activity.

The experience of the past year shows that with the help of goodwill and creativity on all sides, a formula can be found to restrain the expansion of settlements. Abbas has declared several times that he does not insist that Netanyahu publicly announce a settlement freeze. [...]

Netanyahu needs to understand that the expansion of settlements cannot be reconciled with a two-state solution [...] and that his ability to stand up to right-wing pressure is a test of his leadership. The crisis over a building freeze during the negotiations is negligible compared to the challenges the prime minister will face in discussions of the core issues.”

HAA 15.09.10 Editorial

End this freeze

“The official policy goal was to induce the Palestinian Authority to negotiate directly with the State of Israel. But the Palestinians refused, armed with excuses. [...]

Now, despite the freeze’s failure to induce negotiations in the first place, there is talk, even demands, of extending the freeze. This must not happen.

Ultimately, the freeze is based on the big lie – that the settlements are the cause of the Israeli-Arab/Palestinian conflict and only removing them and creating a Palestinian state will achieve peace. But the Jewish-Arab conflict began long before the creation of the ‘settlements.’ [...]

Admittedly, the Palestinians have already stated their intent to use the freeze’s end as an excuse to terminate negotiations. But even if it continues, they will find excuses.”

Daniel Tauber, JPO 15.09.10

Getting rid of the goats

“From the outset this demand was a waste of time. What difference does it make if they build a few more houses when on the horizon looms a massive evacuation of the territories?

And what have the Palestinians done during the 10-month ‘vacation’ they received? True, Prime Minister Salam Fayyad raised the quality of life in the West Bank. That’s his achievement, not the construction freeze’s.”

Yoel Marcus, HAA 14.09.10

Illusions and manipulations

“There are many other issues of far greater legal and political import than settlement policy, and one may thus wonder if this is the real reason for its having become the central and decisive issue in the negotiating scene. In fact, the real reason [...] is a concerted policy of manipulation by the Palestinian Authority leadership [...] to enhance the international pressure on Israel.”

Alan Baker, JPO 14.09.10

Your bid, Mr. Abbas

“No serious player believes Israel can hang on to the West Bank forever. [...] What’s standing in the way? Settlements? Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman, one of Israel’s most nationalist politicians, lives in a settlement, and has said openly that to achieve peace he and his family would leave their home.

The obstacle today, as always, is Palestinian refusal to accept a Jewish state.”

C. Krauthammer, JPO 13.09.10

Don’t betray us this year

“A year of cruel decrees has drawn to an end in Beit Hagai and in other Judea and Samaria communities; insulting decrees that turned [Israel] into the only place in the world where a Jew is not allowed to build a home just because he’s Jewish. [...]

May it be your will that the prime minister hold his head up high rather than walk with his tail between his legs – so that he won’t capitulate and cave in to the pressure. Let him deliver on his word, not evacuate even one community, and revive the construction effort. [...] After all, in his election campaign Netanyahu told us that should we withdraw from Judea and Samaria, the missiles will reach every site in the tiny Israel.”

Orit Struck, JED 10.10.09

Freeze Lieberman

“Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman views the settlement issue as [...] nothing more than a Palestinian excuse to torpedo direct talks. [...]

The demand to suspend settlement building is no excuse - it’s as legitimate a position as the Palestinians can have. Why should they relinquish a condition that has the support of the entire world, with the sole exception of Israel? Nor is freezing construction an Israeli ‘gesture’ - in its May 2003 decision to adopt the Middle East road map Israel committed itself to freezing all settlement activity. [...] If [...] Netanyahu shows determination not only

to freeze settlements temporarily, but to evacuate most of them permanently, the settlement row could prove to be a golden opportunity to get rid of Lieberman. [...] Instead, he should invite Tzipi Livni to serve as foreign minister. [...] Livni's appointment would be the most valuable possible 'gesture' to the humiliated Israeli peace camp, and Israel's tenuous position on the world stage."

Akiva Eldar, HAA 20.09.10

3. Jüdisches Neujahr

Am 9. September wurde in Israel das Jüdische Neujahr gefeiert – der Beginn des Jahres 5771. In den Medien wurde dies zum Anlass genommen, das vergangene Jahr zu reflektieren und Ausblicke in die Zukunft zu wagen. Die meisten dieser Bilanzen fielen pessimistisch aus und verzeichneten auch für das kommende Jahr nur wenig Optimismus. Im Mittelpunkt standen dabei der Konflikt mit den Palästinensern sowie andere externe und interne Gefahren, denen Israel ausgesetzt ist, darunter die Zerrissenheit in der israelischen Gesellschaft, die Bedrohung durch das iranische Atomprogramm und die Hamas, sowie das Erstarken anti-demokratischer Strömungen in Israel.

The look-and-learn year

"If life is a learning experience, the year just ending provided its fair share of interesting lessons. One lesson being that life, indeed, is not fair. [...] Ultimately, rather than being educated, the feeling is that the world wanted to teach Israel a lesson in the most negative sense of the phrase. [...]

There was the Goldstone Report on the winter 2008 Gaza campaign. [...] Israelis felt like the kid who's been bullied and beaten and, when he finally hits back, is sent by the teacher to the principal's office.

Any positive PR from our efforts in Haiti was drowned out in the tidal wave created by the flotilla affair at the end of May. [...] So many commissions of inquiry followed [...] that it became clear that Goldstone isn't the only one who wants us permanently labeled as the problem child. [...]

Altogether, it was a year in which everyone wanted to tell Israel what it could do and where."

Liat Collins, JPO 11.09.10

A year in the bubble

"Looking back on a year of news coverage [...] our collective inability to look outside our little Israeli bubble seems to be the main characteristic. [...] I am referring to our increasing failure to look at the wider

picture of just about anything. [...] We had the photo album of Eden Abergil, [...] who shocked [...] thanks to two photographs [...] in which she was seen grinning with bound and blindfolded Palestinian prisoners. Commentators were quick to blame her for yet another blow to Israeli hasbara and the IDF Spokesman had a field day castigating her [...]. It was left to human rights groups [...] to remind us that Eden was not the one to blame, but 43 years of occupation. [...]

If we are about to launch the long overdue kulturkampf over Israel's future identity, let's try and make it a fight for something real. Here's to a year of trying to see outside the bubble."

Anshel Pfeffer, HAA 08.09.10

A prayer for 5771

"Our leaders are leading us astray by insisting that it is possible to achieve peace in the near term with our neighbors. Peace today is impossible because our neighbors reject at least two of our national creed's three components: Jewish nationhood and the Land of Israel. [...]

It is my prayer for the coming year that our leaders [...] recognize that it is both their sacred duty and their great privilege to confidently represent and defend our exceptionalism and our destiny as the nation of Israel."

Caroline Glick, JPO 08.09.10

Stand up to facist threat

"If we look at what happened here in the past year, we discover for example that some rabbis teach their followers how to kill Arab children; elsewhere, Ashkenazi haredim are unwilling to see their daughters studying with Mizrahi girls. [...]

In the past year we encountered another disgraceful element, known as 'Zionism' and those showing arrogance on its behalf. [...] The kind of Zionism that wishes to dictate to academicians what they're allowed and not allowed to teach, while producing blatantly anti-democratic pressure. [...]

Those who want to be just should treat others justly, and mostly longtime citizens of this country. They and their parents and their grandparents must be respected as citizens and as human beings. They too deserve a Shana Tova, a good year. A better year." Shulamit Aloni, JED 09.09.10

5771 and beyond

"In the coming year, we continue to face threats on five fronts: Iran, Syria, Hizbullah, Hamas and the global jihad. [...]

The challenge for our peace negotiators in the coming year is not to let the country's security red lines be portrayed as an unwillingness to move toward a deal with the Palestinians. [...]

Israeli and Palestinian leaders have to ask themselves what their real interest is: achieve a lasting peace or find an elegant and convincing way to blame the other side for the failure of the talks. As 5771 rolls in, it seems that Obama desperately wants a deal, Abbas doesn't really want one, and Bibi doesn't know what he wants yet."

Amir Mizroch, JPO 08.09.10

Excellent fuel for our growth engine

"The Hebrew year just ending, 5770, was a good one from an economic perspective. [...] No one expected the Israeli economy to recover so quickly from the world economic crisis. [...]

This past year, however, has not been one of change but rather more of the same. [...] All important economic reforms were stalled. [...] Where was Steinitz and Netanyahu's lost opportunity? They didn't deal with the Israeli economy's basic problems. [...]

It is [...] appropriate to note that peace not only addresses the problem of security. It is also the best fuel for our growth engine."

Nehemia Shtrasler, HAA 07.09.10

Don't lie to our children

"The future looks rather grim and murky this year too, children. Do the best you can then. What we can offer you is mostly hope. As you will learn one of these days, hope is a sort of basic human feeling that is shared by those who cannot assume responsibly and bring change, and also by people who can bring change, but don't want to."

Ariana Melamed, JED 11.09.10

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 zwei Wochen die israelische Gesellschaft bewegten.

Über Missstände im israelischen Bildungssystem:

For the sin of neglecting to teach our children

"An alarming range of statistics regarding our academic standing should leave us feeling anxious and apprehensive about the future of this country. [...] Not only are our absolute scores lower than those of our neighbors in the OECD, [...] but even our brightest don't match up to theirs. At least as worrisome, is that the gap between our strongest pupils and our weakest is among the highest in the Western world. [...] Ultimately, [...] our future is as dependent on what happens in the corridors of our schools as in the corridors of power. [...] We can involve ourselves in our children's education.

We can insist that the social agenda not be ignored even as the political agenda is being pursued."

David Breakstone, JPO 08.09.10

Don't lie to our children

"First grade students: [...] There is no educational vision in the State of Israel at this time. At most, the system hopes that you will make [your] way through it for 12 years and leave it with no harm done to you. [...] Yet if there's a spark hidden in you that waits to be discovered, fanned, and ignited, it is highly doubtful whether anyone would notice it. [...] Your excellence instructors, the teachers, earn such embarrassing salaries to the point where their economic existence is a sort of disaster in process.

[...] The huge gap between the lofty words and lowly wages reflects social hypocrisy and growing indifference towards your education."

Ariana Melamed, JED 11.09.10

Über einen Artikel im Time Magazine mit dem Titel „Warum Israel sich nicht für Frieden interessiert“:

Time and again, yes to peace

"A cover story telling [...] that Israelis are not into peace. [...] Why? Because Israelis are making money, they got off easy with the world economic crisis, the real estate is booming even when Hamas fires rockets in the air, and above all it's been over two years since the last mega-suicide bombing. In short we're all having a ball and couldn't care less about peace. [...]

If someone hasn't comprehended yet - this is the way the neo-anti-Semitism works. [...]

Because we don't care, we continue to raise our children on songs of peace, while the other side educates on hatred, violence, and suicide bombings as a life goal. Because we don't care, every prime minister we have had in Israel in the past decade

has tempted the Palestinian leaders with peace offers that were continuously refused. [...]

Is it possible that we care, but we're just too quiet about it? [...] Maybe this is what has happened to us: we are so busy with defensive responses that we forget to say that we want peace. [...] It may sound a bit tedious because it seems so obvious, but it is important to say it. All the time. Why? Mainly because it's the truth."

Lilac Sigan, GLO 07.09.10

'Time' and time again

"It's not that we have 'disengaged from the peace process,' as the article suggests. It's just that if we were to wait for peace before carrying on with our lives, we'd still be in refugee camps, dependent on UN handouts, rather than enjoying a high standard of living in a strong economy in a country with a thriving cultural life. [...] Of course we care about peace. But until it happens, we'll carry on enjoying life as best we can – no matter what Hamas and Hizbullah throw at us."

Liat Collins, JPO 10.09.10

HAA = Haaretz

HZO= Ha Tzofe

IHY = Israeli HaYom

JED = Jedioth Ahronoth

JPO = Jerusalem Post

MAA = Maariv

GLO = Globes

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