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Aktuelles aus israelischen Tageszeitungen

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1. Unruhen in Tunesien und Ägypten

In Israel werden die Entwicklungen in den arabischen Nachbarländern zur Zeit sehr aufmerksam verfolgt. Nachdem zunächst in Tunesien ein Volksaufstand für die Absetzung des autokratischen Präsidenten gesorgt hatte, halten die Proteste in Ägypten – entgegen anfänglicher Erwartungen – nun schon seit einer Woche an. Am 1. Februar demonstrierten in Kairo Hunderttausende gegen Präsident Hosni Mubarak.

In Israel dominiert jedoch die Sorge, was geschehen könnte, wenn der ägyptische Herrscher abtreten muss. Obwohl das Verhältnis zwischen den beiden Staaten aufgrund fehlender zivilgesellschaftlicher Beziehungen oft als "kalter Frieden" bezeichnet wird, ist Mubarak Israels wichtigster arabischer Bündnispartner. Außerdem deckt Israel einen bedeutenden Teil seines Energiebedarfs mit ägyptischem Erdgas ab. Würde im Nachbarland ein islamistisches Regime an die Macht kommen, befürchtet Israel einen Bruch des Friedensvertrags sowie eine Stärkung der Hamas in den palästinensischen Gebieten.

Bei einem Besuch von Bundeskanzlerin Angela Merkel betonte der israelische Premierminister Benjamin Netanyahu dementsprechend, wie wichtig die Stabilität in Ägypten sei. Seine Kabinettskollegen wurden indes dazu angehalten, die Lage nicht zu kommentieren.

When Arab regimes tremble

"There is no reason to believe that the events in Tunisia signal a regime change. More likely: only a partial leadership change.

What does it mean for other Arab countries? It calls to their attention the stress of serious economic difficulties given international problems and local mismanagement. The signal is that governments

have to ease up a bit on their masses regarding pricing of basic commodities and other services. [...] This is not, then, a turning point in Arab or Middle Eastern political history."

Barry Rubin, JPO 24.01.11

The power of the people

"It's a civil revolution in which the people, not the military, decide that they have had enough with the system. [...]"

In these countries, the weakening of government censorship, the effective use of the Internet, state bodies that lack authority, and especially the enormity of the suffering transform the people's direct action into an act of great influence. [...]"

Hopefully the turmoil in Egypt, which is affecting all its allies in the Middle East and West, will encourage leaders there and in Arab states to quickly change the contract between the regime and the citizens. This is a new order that hopefully the whole region will move toward. It deserves to be encouraged by the West."

HAA 31.01.11 Editorial

A region in ferment

"There are no shortcuts to the transition from tyranny to Western-style freedom. The overhasty imposition of quasidemocratic elections, without first laying the requisite groundwork, is demonstrably no solution. Hamas's takeover of Gaza and Hizbullah's rise to power in Lebanon are bitter proof of that. Arab countries' fundamental and, therefore, nearly intractable problem is that in most cases the institutions that form the backbone of democracy – an honest judiciary, a legislature guided by liberal ideals, strict and equal law enforcement and a free press – do not yet exist.

The turmoil sweeping this region seems to vindicate Clinton's warning that the status quo of authoritarianism is no longer sustainable. But the

question remains how to implement Clinton's advice. Building the durable institutions that are needed to make a peaceful transition to political and economic pluralism, and thus ensuring true freedom and democracy, is not a process that happens overnight."

JPO 27.01.11 Editorial

The Egypt disaster

"It would be enough to give some thought to the implications of the Shah's fall in Iran in 1979 on current-day Israel in order to understand the disaster that may befall us as result of what is happening in Egypt right before our eyes. [...] Back then, the freedom-hungry youngsters became a victim of the ayatollahs. We can assume that ElBaradei and his comrades will be eaten up by the Muslim Brothers even more easily. [...]

Today in Egypt there is no powerful opposition party, and one of them is already under the Muslim Brothers' control. Such outcome would bring Israel back to the situation it faced in 1966, when almost everyone around us was a staunch enemy."

Hillel Frisch, JED 31.01.11

Silence is golden

"There are many pundits who would tell you that this wave of revolt is really an extremist conspiracy led by Iran/al-Qaida/Muslim Brotherhood/Al Jazeera (fill in the blank) even though there has been no evidence to back such a claim. There's no question Israel must be very concerned over what is happening in the Arab countries – but journalists and columnists alike are jumping the gun when it comes to implications. [...]

This time, there's nothing to gain by speaking out. The Arab world might be burning, and it's our job is to keep as far away from the flames as possible. When events get so big and out of hand, no one knows what the future may bring."

Jeremy Ruden, JPO 31.01.11

Don't expect democracy in Egypt

"There is a lot of talk about the Tunisia effect, but the speakers don't know if there was a revolution at all, or merely a change in leadership. There is a substantive difference between the two concepts: in a change of leadership the ruler is overthrown; in a revolution the regime is overthrown. [...] Now the Egyptian masses [...] want to oust President Hosni Mubarak. They want democracy, freedom of expression, civil rights. If they succeed in winning them, we can talk about a revolution. But the

chances of it happening are slim [...]. More likely, matters will end with the overthrow of Mubarak, a change in leader, but not a revolution."

Matti Golan, GLO 30.01.11

Arise ye workers from your slumber

"A new, unexpected player has appeared: the public. [...] This Arab street has already used these tools to depose Tunisian President Zine El Abedine Ben Ali, and its ideas have gone viral. What if it manages to establish democracy in Egypt? In Yemen? [...] And when Al Jazeera's cameras come close to the demonstrators, it also becomes clear that these are not religious radicals. [...]

We don't have to wait for other regimes to fall to understand that the revolution is happening before our very eyes. Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak will not fall due to demonstrations in Cairo's Tahrir Square, and Yemen's ruler will also continue to rule by force. But it's a revolution of awareness and of the fundamental notions of what the Middle East is. Most importantly, we need a revolution in the way the West views the region."

Zvi Bar'el, HAA 30.01.11

The alternative is Islam

"When the time comes for genuine elections in Egypt, the country's future will be determined not by university graduates in Cairo but by 70 million villagers. [...]

They will vote for the Muslim Brotherhood because no liberal party can give them the rapid change desperately longed for by the masses, who suffer from shortages of flour, clean drinking water, jobs and housing.

The parties will be [...] hostile to Israel, of course. An unstable, rudderless transition period, a parliamentary democracy in the Turkish model, if not the Iranian, will give rise to a religious regime that within a few years will presumably be in control of the best-trained and best-equipped army in the Middle East."

Ron Leshem, HAA 31.01.11

Israel left all alone

"The uprising in Egypt reinforces Israel's strategic distress in the Middle East: We're alone, without any allies. [...] After Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu came to power, he embraced President Hosni Mubarak and managed to form an alliance with him over the joint fear of Iranian penetration into the region. [...] Mubarak's decline now leaves Netanyahu without any Arab allies. [...] In the near

future Egypt will be preoccupied with its own affairs and won't be involved in the peace process."

Itamar Eichner, JED 30.01.11

2. Enthüllungen über palästinensische Konzessionen

Al Jazeera TV, der arabische Fernsehsender aus Katar, hat mehr als 1,600 palästinensische Geheimdokumente über die Friedensverhandlungen mit Israel erhalten und wichtige Aspekte daraus öffentlich gemacht.

So wird aus den Protokollen ersichtlich, dass die palästinensische Führung sich bereit zeigte, die israelische Annektierung weiter Teile Ostjerusalems hinzunehmen. Außerdem erklärte Präsident Mahmoud Abbas sich angeblich mit einem Rückkehrrecht für nur wenige Palästinenser zufrieden.

Diese Konzessionen waren 2008 angeblich in Folge der Annapolis-Friedenskonferenz gemacht worden. Allerdings hatte die palästinensische – so wie die israelische – Bevölkerung davon nichts erfahren. Die palästinensische Führung stellte indes die Echtheit der Dokumente in Frage und bezeichnete Zitate daraus als aus dem Kontext gerissen. Bei der Veröffentlichung handele es sich um eine Schmutz-kampagne des Fernsehsenders, die der rivalisierenden Hamas nützen solle. In Ramallah kam es entgegen anfänglichen Befürchtungen nicht zu Protesten gegen Abbas – einige hundert Demonstranten protetestierten stattdessen gegen Al Jazeera.

There (still) is a partner

"The documentation [...] illustrates the serious and down-to-business approach of the Palestinians with regards to the central core issues - borders, Jerusalem and holy places. The documents testify yet again that Israel has found a pragmatic Palestinian partner, interested in implementing the two-state solution on the basis of the 1967 borders. [...] [They] reflect the Palestinian leadership's deep frustration with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's refusal to open a serious debate on the central issues. Without a solution to these issues, Netanyahu's declarations in support of a two-state solution are devoid of meaning."

HAA 25.01.11 Editorial

The Erekat retrenchment

"The proverbial shocker, apparently, is that Palestinian leaders are fully aware of the compromises necessary to create a Palestinian

state [...]. The leaders understand that Israel is here to stay. [...] The problem is that Arab leaders - including the Palestinian Authority - have yet to level with their people. [...] The truth is that until the Palestinian people (and their leaders) make peace with the notion that they will never have all of Jerusalem and 100% of the West Bank, or unlimited refugees returning to Israel, peace will remain a pipedream."

Matthew Brodsky, JED 26.01.11

What does Netanyahu want?

"This is nothing new. In fact, most of the concessions 'leaked' were actually already made by Yasser Arafat when he accepted the Clinton Parameters (albeit a year and a half too late). [...] Israeli leaders have been misleading the public for years on the extent of Palestinian concessions, and it was convenient and comfortable for the Palestinian leadership to not be completely forthcoming on the details with their own public. [...] The recent 'leaks' of Palestinian documents testify to a willingness to meet Israeli security and other political demands. In fact, if Netanyahu fully comprehends the significance of what has been leaked, he should be compelled to move forward with the present Palestinian leadership as soon as possible. Right now the only thing that will guarantee its continued rule is a peace agreement."

Gershon Baskin, JPO 24.01.11

The real Palestinian concession

"Had the PLO leadership respected its people, it would not be speaking out of both sides of its mouth, but conducting an open debate about this demand. It would have shared its conclusions with its public [...]: The dreamed-of right of return is not attainable. [...]"

It is not technical problems that are preventing such a democratic debate, but the failure to see the people as an agent of change. [...] Palestinian [leaders] know how to use the resilience and creativity of their people in the face of the daily torture that is foreign rule. But they do not help translate this personal and collective stamina into a strategy of unarmed popular struggle. [...] A strategy of a general popular struggle [...] does not jibe with the perks of power that the PLO and Fatah leadership have gotten used to, and which are directly dependent on travel permits from the Civil Administration and contracts with USAID."

Amira Hass, HAA 26.01.11

Missing a moment of truth

"If the Palestinian public wills it, if its leaders have the guts [...] this episode could yield an unprecedented sobriety. It could mark the beginning of the honest internalization among the peoples of this region that the Jews have sovereign rights here – and that maximalist demands for the 'right of return,' for every inch of disputed territory, for unchallenged control of every holy place, are simply not going to fly."

David Horowitz, JPO 28.01.11

A remarkable, brilliant exercise in public diplomacy

"There is a tremendous gap between what goes on in the negotiating room, what has been said and discussed in these rooms for years and decades and what we are *told* by our leaders goes on in there. The cat is finally out the bag and nothing will be as it was before. [...]"

The documents show that the wheel will most likely not be re-invented in trying to solve this conflict and that through the many official and unofficial negotiation rounds, the parameters of an agreement have already been found – they just need to be finalized.

This is perhaps Al Jazeera's greatest service to Israelis and Palestinians alike: what our leaders have been so hesitant (no to mention afraid) to come out with and tell us, has been done for them."
M. Radoshitzky, JPO 28.01.11

Israel will never get a better deal than the one it rejected

"The Palestinians and the Arabs raised an outcry against the far-reaching concessions of the Palestinian Authority, threatening to crush it once and for all, and in Israel: silence.

Who cares about another fateful missed opportunity? [...]"

Who cares that for a decade our leaders brazenly lied to us, deceived us by saying that there's no partner, that the Palestinians are evading giving answers, that there is no Palestinian proposal, and above all, that Israel wants peace, not the Palestinians.

We eagerly bought the lies, and now that they've been exposed, we remain apathetic."

Gideon Levy, HAA 2.01.11

Al Jazeera helping Hamas

"The revelations made by the Qatari network Sunday and the ones that were expected to follow

may exact a heavy price from both sides. [...] The overall package presented by the Qatar-based network was a resounding 'You sold out Palestine.' [...] Such reports and claims, which have been repeated in various forms and more forcefully in recent years, are gradually weakening the Abbas-led Palestinian Authority. [...] And when this is the impression created by the most popular network in the Arab world, can one assume this will not have future implications? [...] This is yet another step, and apparently a deliberate one, in weakening the PA, a move that one party stands to benefit from: The Hamas movement."

Roe Nahmias, JED 25.01.11

3. Ergebnisse der Turkel-Kommission

Am 31. Mai 2010 waren neun türkische Aktivisten, die sich mit einem Schiffskonvoi auf dem Weg in den von Israel mit einer Seeblockade belegten Gazastreifen befanden, von einem israelischen Einsatzkommando getötet worden. Nun legte die nach ihrem Vorsitzenden Jacob Turkel benannte Untersuchungskommission, die von der israelischen Regierung einberufen worden war, ihren Bericht vor. Darin wurde den israelischen Soldaten bescheinigt, nach internationalem Recht gehandelt zu haben. Ebenso sei die Abschottung des Gazastreifens legal, allerdings müsse dabei das Leid der Zivilbevölkerung minimiert werden. Außerdem sei die Militäraktion schlecht geplant gewesen und habe alternative Methoden zum Stoppen der Schiffe nicht in Betracht gezogen. Die Untersuchungsergebnisse werden nun einem UN-Ausschuss vorgelegt werden. Auch die türkische Regierung veröffentlichte einen Bericht, demzufolge jedoch zwei der Aktivisten schon vor Landung der Truppen aus der Luft erschossen worden seien.

Flotilla raid probe needless

"The Turkel Committee will not be changing the world's attitude to the flotilla incident. Those who criticized Israel before will continue to criticize it tomorrow as well. [...]"

In fact, the Turkel Committee was formed for appearances' sake only – in order to provide a response to the criticism leveled at the Israeli government. [...]"

The fact that Israel critics worldwide, headed by Turkey's Erdogan, chose to portray the IDF operation as a war crime does not mean we should be cooperating with this. Those who feel they need

more committees in their lives should seek one that would look into the reason for releasing the Marmara terrorists the day after, or the reason why we are discussing compensation and apologies to Turkey." Yoaz Hendel, JED 23.11.01

The report is good, the situation is bad

"The committee [...] made a dream come true for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who appointed it. If it had been called the Netanyahu committee it could not have produced a better report. [...]

Turkel and his colleagues were not judges in this case, but defenders. [...]

Therefore the report's usefulness in terms of diplomacy and public relations will probably be negligible. It doesn't represent a 'committee of investigation' but rather the 'government of Israel' - the entity that is responsible for the flotilla affair. Because, after all, Netanyahu and his ministers were afraid to appoint a state commission of inquiry, whose composition would be decided by the Supreme Court."

HAA 24.01.11 Editorial

Turkel's credibility

"The presumption that the Turkel Committee's findings are unreliable due to some sort of imagined prejudice is deeply dismaying, though entirely predictable. [...]

In addition to the five Israeli members, the Turkel Commission also includes two international observers [...]. Are we to believe that all of these respected scholars and experts put their reputations on the line in a grand Zionist conspiracy designed to 'whitewash the military'? That all those long hours of investigation and inquiry were a sham? For some, apparently, clinging to such ludicrous notions is preferable to internalizing that Israel's military requires no 'whitewashing,' because it should not have been stained in the first place."

JPO 24.01.11 Editorial

Offer to Turkey misguided

"It is a pity that Israel rushed about a month ago to offer the Turkish government a compromise in respect to Ankara's demand for an apology and compensation.

The Israeli compromise initiative, which was met by a stubborn, uncompromising Turkish position, weakens to a small extent the validity of the unequivocal conclusions presented by the Turkel Committee."

Ron Ben Yishai, JED 24.01.11

The Turkel Commission is fighting yesterday's war

"The Turkel Committee's too narrow mandate, which focuses almost entirely on the Gaza flotilla, ignores the wider and more important context: Israel faces a systemic and systematic assault on its political-economic model – a campaign to delegitimize it. [...] Therefore, the government, along with friends and allies, must launch a global, systemic offense. [...]

The Gaza flotilla was openly planned and uninterruptedly organized over a 14-month period by NGOs, primarily in friendly countries. Unfortunately, the Turkel Committee merely offers a corrective to yesterday's provocation. It does not offer any new strategy, let alone a systemic review. Israel needs much more."

Daphna Kaufman, JPO 24.01.11

Make Erdogan pay

"Israel indeed lost the immediate PR battle over the flotilla incident and devoted many months to curbing the damage, yet the time has now come to take advantage of the 'Turkel momentum' and initiate a counter attack on the PR and diplomatic front. [...]

First, Israel must highlight the close ties between the Erdogan government and the IHH, a radical Islamist organization defined as a terror group in Germany. [...] Secondly, Israel must initiate a diplomatic counter-offensive that would hit the Turkey's regime's sensitive spots. [...] Turkey can [...] be accused of brutal war crimes against the Kurdish population. It is also possible to take advantage of this opportunity in order to do historic justice and recognize the Armenian Holocaust [...].

The best defense is offense, instead of compensation, apologies, or delegations of Knesset members aimed at warming up the ties. The only way to stop the Turkish aggression is by drawing red lines and boundaries for Erdogan's regime."

Dani Magner, JED 27.01.11

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 die Zukunft der israelischen Linken:

Time for new type of Left

"It is sad to see the party that once upon a time established this state falling apart. [...] Yet perhaps this expiry date signals that the time has come for a new type of Left: Israeli and Zionist. A proud Left, which first knows to declare what belongs to the Jewish people and only later thinks about compromise. A leftist camp that knows how to object, in a clear voice, to bodies that promote Israel's de-legitimization without fearing some people who recite like parrots words such as fascism and McCarthyism. [...]"

With or without Barak, we better see the emergence of a good political alternative here. Otherwise, we shall be left with a radical leftist camp and only memories of election dilemmas and democracy."

Yoaz Hendel, JED 21.01.11

Last Chance

"Israeli politics will reap real benefit from Ehud Barak's abandonment of Labor for Likud only if it is exploited for a genuine shake-up of the system. [...] Israel has become the only Western country besides the United States that does not have a significant social democratic party. [...] Therefore, social democracy in Israel has to be invented from scratch. It must be based on three principles: nurturing genuine liberal democracy [...], striving for social justice [...]; and an end to the war based on recognition of the finality of the situation in place at the conclusion of the War of Independence.

In a party of this kind, supporters and opponents of the settlements will not be able to dwell together. Nor will people who favor a totally deregulated economy be able to dwell together with those convinced that such a system is a recipe for disaster, or people who believe human rights must be stringently upheld with those who believe that Jews constitute an ethnic community with superior rights."

Zeev Sternhell, HAA 28.01.11

*Über die Kontroverse um den **designierten Generalstabschef Yoav Galant**, dem vorgeworfen wird sich staatliches Land für sein Grundstück angeeignet zu haben:*

Give Galant a break

"We should hope for Yoav Galant's sake that he will not lose the appointment for IDF chief of staff because of construction deviations. [...]"

Will we grant a little quiet to a person who joined the army at the age of 18 and has been there ever since then? A man who served [...], while leading troops into the line of fire, on cold nights and in distant lands, during wars and special operations, far away from home, while courageously risking his life. [...] Where did the joy at his downfall come from, for heaven's sake? What did this man do that he deserves this exaggeratedly zealous atmosphere against him?"

Hanoch Daum, JED 24.01.11

For the wrong reasons

"Galant must not become the Israel Defense Forces' next chief of staff. Indeed, he might not become chief of staff, but for the wrong reasons. The Galant affair only proves the eclipse that has darkened Israeli society, which is upset by (relatively) small matters and ignores the truly serious ones. A few dozen dunams of rocky soil trouble it much more than hundreds of people killed for nothing. [...] The monstrous dimensions of the commander's palace produce a greater scandal than the monstrous destruction sown by that commander. [...] The commander of Operation Cast Lead was never worthy of being chief of staff because of senseless killings and destruction, suspicions of war crimes, and the twisted doctrine of no casualties at any cost."

Gideon Levy, HAA 23.01.10

HAA = Haaretz
JED = Jedioth Ahronoth
JPO = Jerusalem Post
GLO = Globes

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Verantwortlich:

Dr. Ralf Hexel,
Leiter der Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Israel

Redaktion:
Maike Harel
Anita Haviv

Homepage: www.fes.org.il
Email: fes@fes.org.il