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Aktuelles aus israelischen Tageszeitungen

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1. Libyen

Auch in Israel werden die Geschehnisse in Libyen mit großer Aufmerksamkeit verfolgt. In dem nordafrikanischen Staat hatten Bürger Mitte Februar mit Demonstrationen gegen den Despoten Muammar Gaddafi begonnen. Im Gegensatz zu anderen arabischen Herrschern geht Gaddafi jedoch mit äußerster Gewalt gegen die Demonstranten vor. Inzwischen herrscht Bürgerkrieg in Libyen.

In Israel werden diese Entwicklungen mit einer gewissen Genugtuung beobachtet. Zum einen, weil Libyen in UN-Gremien immer wieder Resolutionen gegen Israel eingebracht hatte. Zum anderen, weil die westliche Welt auf Grund ökonomischer Interessen eine Politik der doppelten Standards gegenüber Libyen betrieb. Kritisiert wurde außerdem eine Delegation von arabisch-israelischen Politikern, die im April 2010 Libyen besucht hatte. Gaddafi hatte dabei Investitionen im arabischen Sektor in Israel versprochen.

The Gaddafi disgrace

"Muammar Gaddafi has become the symbol of the hypocrisy of the world. [...] Despite all of [his] subversive activities against Western targets, the international community somehow accepted Libya in various influential forums, and forgave Gaddafi for past transgressions, somehow believing that a 'new' Gaddafi had appeared on the scene from the 1990s onward.

How is it that Gaddafi's Libya [...] was elected to chair the United Nations Human Rights Commission in 2003 and was again elected to serve on the commission in 2010? [...]

Today, the world is abhorred by Gaddafi's actions against his own people. However, for years the world stood silent as a serial human rights abuser and a terrorist-supporting regime. [...] Have we no shame?"

David Altman, JED 24.02.11

While Libya burns

"The possibility that Libya will break up into its constituent parts into its tribes, its clans, and its regions - is not a fabrication of Saif al Islam Gaddafi, the ruler's eldest son. [...] Libya has no real national tradition. Its sole collective experience, important though it was, came 80 years ago, in an uprising against the colonial ruler, Italy. [...] A failed country of this size, in this part of the world, and with such huge oil wealth, is liable to endanger the Mediterranean and Europe."

Yoav Karni, GLO 24.02.11

Don't interfere in Libya

"There is no doubt that Western military interference in favor of the Libyan people [...] is the type of noble idea that appeals to our hearts. [...] The dynamics are familiar: The NATO forces who will invade [...] and the country will be conquered quickly. [...]

Two or three months after the dust settles, the United States will discover that it is caught in a swamp that would make Americans long for Iran and Afghanistan. [...] At most, we are dealing with a violent gang of tribal leaders, each one of whom aspires to become the next Gaddafi. In democratic elections, if and when such elections are held, the head of the largest tribe shall win. [...]

This doesn't mean we shouldn't try to offer help, yet this time we can do it in a different way - without tanks and fighter jets, but rather, using other, quieter means: Funding and supporting resistance groups, or formulating a secret proposal that would ensure the future of Gaddafi and his loved ones in exchange for his quiet departure."

Yakir Elkariv, JED 23.02.11

Stop Gaddafi now

"Stop him now, immediately, with full force, before it's too late. [...]

The world's silence in the face of the massacre is horrifying. Everyone saw the horrific images, yet it

took the leaders four days to 'be shocked,' and another day passed before they decided the time has come to resort to condemnations. [...]

Come out against him with full force, and don't convene emergency sessions in order to inform the cameras that you are siding with the Libyan people. If you really are siding with them, put a quick end to the massacre and don't let Gaddafi escape. Give the colonel what he deserves: A court-martial and a bullet in the head."

Smadar Peri, JED 23.03.11

The Libyan effect

"The Libyan turmoil has already destabilized the international commercial system and we will all pay the price, regardless of our distance from and lack of involvement in Libya.

Libya's importance as an oil producer perhaps explains the different reaction to its upheaval compared to that of its Egyptian neighbor. Though the cost in human casualties was nowhere as horrific in Egypt, world leaders quickly and explicitly called for Hosni Mubarak to step down. Condemnation of the Libyan bloodletting notwithstanding, there hasn't been similar pressure for Gaddafi's personal removal.

[...] A decade ago, excessive oil prices were somehow tolerated, but today's economies are barely hobbling out of the recent recession. Game-changing price hikes might well throw the entire international financial complex back into a state of frantic flux."

JPO 24.02.11 Editorial

Politicians as mercenaries

"I shall speak of [...] the hypocrisy of the Arab Knesset members and public figures who a few months ago went to grovel before the Libyan despot. [...] All the Arab parties, organizations and ethnic-religious communities were represented in the delegation there. [...] They all came before him, bowed and shook his hand. [...] [They] were [...] political mercenaries in the service of Gadhafi [...]. They should now publicly express remorse and beg forgiveness, first from the Libyan people and next from the Arab citizens they purport to represent."

Slaman Masalha, HAA 27.02.11

The truth about Gaddafi

"In April 2010, I visited Libya in the framework of a delegation of Arabs. [...] Today [...] we are seeing venomous criticism hurled at delegation members. The debate is legitimate, yet the court-martial we are subjected to is wholly disproportional. [...]

Our national and moral duty is to maintain ties with our brethren wherever they are. Should we decide not to visit Arab states because of their reactionary regimes, we'll end up staying in our homeland and not going anywhere, as to my great regret democracy is light years away from all Arab rulers, with no exception. [...]

[But] suggest that leaders of the Palestinian public expose the whole truth about what happened behind the scenes during this historic visit. They should display leadership and national responsibility, and openly declare that we were humiliated in Libya, and that during the meeting with Gaddafi we saw a competition of insincerity and hypocrisy. These leaders must take the initiative, because they were elected to represent the Palestinians in Israel and therefore owe them a full report about the visit."

Zohir Andreus, JED 28.02.11

2. US-Veto gegen UN-Resolution

Mit einem Veto haben die USA die Verabschiedung einer Resolution im UN-Sicherheitsrat verhindert. In dem von fast 120 Staaten gemeinsam eingebrachten Dokument ging es darum, die Illegalität der jüdischen Siedlungen im Westjordanland festzuschreiben. Alle anderen 14 Mitglieder des Sicherheitsrates, darunter Deutschland, stimmten für die Resolution. Obwohl die US-Regierung sich gegen den Bau weiterer Siedlungen ausgesprochen hat, hält sie einen UN-Beschluss für kontraproduktiv. Auch israelischen Stellen ließen verlautbaren, dass eine Resolution die Wiederaufnahme von Gesprächen nur erschweren würde.

Im Vorfeld der Abstimmung war es zu angespannten Verhandlungen zwischen der amerikanischen Regierung und den Palästinensern gekommen. Berichten zufolge hatte Obama eine Sicherheitsratsklärung angeboten, in der er die Illegitimität der Siedlungen betonen würde. Dieses Angebot wurde jedoch ausgeschlagen. Stattdessen bezeichneten die Palästinenser fortlaufende Ausweitungen der Siedlungen als ein Hindernis für die Gründung eines lebensfähigen palästinensischen Staats.

A new era at the UN

"What set the stage for the sea change in approaches to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict at the UN was the lack of progress in talks between the sides. The awareness among leading UN members of the complete breakdown in communications between the White House and Israel's prime minister created a new mood in which Palestinian concerns are at the top of the international community's agenda. [...]

Mubarak's disappearance from the stage strengthened the Palestinians' resolve to oppose America's entreaties to remove their resolution from the agenda. [...] 'In cases of friction with the PA, the U.S. usually turned to Mubarak, who was always quick to try to help,' explained a diplomat[...]. 'This time, when the Palestinians obstinately refused to withdraw their proposed resolution denouncing the settlements, the U.S. government had nobody to turn to.' [...]

From Israel's standpoint, the most dramatic result of the drama that occurred behind the scenes at the Security Council is that the settlements have been irreversibly and categorically defined as the number-one problem impeding peace between Israel and the Palestinians. No Israeli attempt to blame the stalemate on the Palestinians will be accepted at the UN.

And the fact that 130 member states affixed their signatures in support of the pro-Palestinian draft resolution was seen in New York as a dress rehearsal for the declaration of a Palestinian state at the next General Assembly session in September." Shlomo Shamir, HAA 22.02.11

When a veto isn't enough

"After the US exercised its veto [...], a collective sigh of relief was heard in Jerusalem. Unfortunately, this sentiment was premature.

US Ambassador Susan Rice made it clear that she was vetoing the resolution on technical grounds alone, not because of its problematic content. [...] The negatives far outweigh the positives here, and the precedents set by Rice's statement have set preconditions for the next round of talks that greatly damage our negotiating position.

In her speech, Rice strongly rejected 'the legitimacy of continued Israeli settlement activity.' [...]

There is obviously either a deliberate change under way in US policy toward the conflict, or a very deep misunderstanding of these complex issues within the Obama administration. [...]

So where does this leave us? At some point in the not-too-distant future, the US administration is going to decide it is once again time to make a major push aimed at resolving this conflict. When that day comes, we will find that the starting point is more similar to the Palestinians' than it is to ours. It will be the duty of any responsible government, and especially one led by the Likud, to tell our American friends that this stance is simply not acceptable. It is not in Israel's or America's best interest."

Danny Danon, JPO 23.2.11

An important turning point?

"Despite Obama's goodwill toward the Palestinians, recent events suggest this may be an important turning point in the relationship between the PA and the United States.

Last week, [...] Prime Minister Fayyad proposed the establishment of an interim Palestinian unity government that would include Hamas [...]. The United States provided over half a billion dollars in aid to the Palestinians in fiscal year 2010. It is unclear whether the U.S. legally can continue to provide funding [...] to a Palestinian government that includes Hamas.

The Palestinian leadership might have looked at last month's American veto of a UN Security Council resolution condemning Israel – together with the many recent, and frankly, hasty assessments of America's waning influence in the Middle East [...] – and concluded that the United States now is more of a burden than a help in advancing Palestinian national goals."

Jonathan Schachter, HAA 04.03.11

The sinking US empire

"The result of the UN Security Council vote on condemning Jewish settlements in the occupied territories highlights the diplomatic weakness of our patron, the United States.

The veto right [...] is part of the loot taken by the winning powers following World War II. This ancient privilege does not reflect their power these days. [...] We shall see more states joining the five permanent members of the Security Council. India, Japan and Brazil will surely be joining – Judaism is not the basis of their culture, a wealthy, influential Jewish minority doesn't reside there, the Holocaust does not weigh on their conscience, and Islam does not threaten their huge populations.

The votes to take place at the UN will prove America's declining diplomatic power. Some 140 states will condemn Israel's conduct, and it is doubtful whether even 10 countries will endorse Israel. We are relying on a sinking superpower."

Yaron London, JED 21.2.11

The sound of one hand clapping

"There were no winners in last week's UN vote [...]. Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas looked like he wanted an excuse to avoid making peace, Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's preference for building settlements over negotiating only further deepened Israel's international isolation and President Barack Obama showed he had little influence with either side."

D. Bloomfield, JPO 23.02.11

3. Umwälzungen in der arabischen Welt

In den israelischen Medien dominiert die Frage, inwiefern die Umwälzungen im Nahen Osten eine Gefahr für Israel darstellen, die öffentliche Debatte. In einer Knessetansprache warnte Premierminister Benjamin Netanyahu, dass die durch die Revolten ausgelöste Instabilität lange anhalten könne. Er betonte auch, wie wichtig es sei, die Friedensverträge mit Jordanien und Ägypten aufrecht zu erhalten. Mit dem Fall Mubaraks ist in Israel die Sorge gewachsen, ein neues Regime in Ägypten könne sich gänzlich von Israel abwenden. Diese Befürchtungen werden verstärkt durch die Tatsache, dass ägyptische Gaslieferungen seit einem Anschlag auf die Gasleitungen im Sinai Anfang März ausgesetzt worden sind. Zudem haben erstmals seit 1978 Schiffe der iranischen Marine den Suez-Kanal durchquert.

Präsident Shimon Peres bezeichnete die Umwälzungen in der arabischen Welt jedoch als eine Chance für Frieden in der Region. Er gab außerdem an, dass Friedensgespräche mit den Palästinensern nun fortgesetzt werden müssten.

The Arab revolt

"The revolts over the past two months have been largely constructive, patriotic and open in spirit. Political extremism of any sort, leftist or Islamist, has been largely absent from the streets. [...] I see changes that could augur a new era, one in which infantilized Arabic-speakers mature into adults. [...] While cautious about premising foreign policies on this abrupt improvement, it would also be a mistake to reject it. The rebel movements need an opportunity to find themselves and to act as adults. The time has come to discard the soft bigotry of low expectations; speaking Arabic or Persian does not make one incapable of building the democratic means to attain free ends."

Daniel Pipes, JPO 01.03.11

The long road to democracy

"Even if genuine democracies do begin to emerge in the Middle East, there is no guarantee that they will support U.S. and EU policies, or adopt friendly attitudes toward other democratic countries in the region. The opposite might be the case. Indeed, we can point to democratic states - Turkey is perhaps the best example - that have turned their backs on the West because of their differing national interests. Therefore, democracy is not a guarantor of stability, nor will Middle East democracies necessarily be

'natural allies' of the U.S. and the EU, and certainly not of Israel.

Carlo Masala, HAA 25.02.11

Don't count on democracy

"There is not even one beginning of democracy in any of the 'revolutions' we are seeing around us. [...] The common perception is still about the 'domino effect' - that is, tyrants shall be toppled with the click of a button. [...]"

Many observers claimed recently that the warnings uttered by Arab rulers regarding the dangers of radical Islam are meant to keep these regimes in power. Maybe, but nonetheless they may be right. After all, radical Islam is the only organized alternative to the authoritarian regimes and has a solution for every problem. [...]"

The Middle East this year is just like what we saw in Iraq in 2003, in Iran in 1979, or in the Palestinian Authority in 2006: Nice talk and theories about liberalism and democracy, yet in practice what we have is anarchy and violence, terrible death, and Islamic autocracy waiting down the road."

Guy Bechor, JED 26.02.11

There goes the neighborhood - what now?

"While Israel and the more clear-sighted members of the Western world are sensibly concerned by the current regional instability, and rightly wary of the capacity of Islamist forces in their various guises to subvert Arab peoples' desire for freedom and opportunity, perhaps, rather than wringing our hands, we'd be better off trying to constructively influence the process

For a start, the US and the rest of the West might [...] specifically earmark aid for democratic reform. [...]and] to dramatically expand educational programs for young Arab students at home and abroad [...] The West should do everything they can to create economic opportunity in Arab countries where such help will be welcomed."

David Horowitz, JPO 04.03.11

Freedom, democracy and ulterior motives

"In the West Bank, Hamas activists are trying to fan protests against the government of Mahmoud Abbas, hoping the same thing that happened in Egypt will happen there. Yet Palestinians cannot have any kind of real democracy while their people are under occupation.

Small groups of radicals are trying to organize protests against the PA in some Arab countries, and even in the US, but they are driven not by democracy but rather by the goal of undermining the

only Palestinian government willing to support peace based on a two-state solution.

These protesters who are targeting PA President Mahmoud Abbas really want Hamas in power to oppose any peace with Israel and ramp up their campaigns to boycott all of Israel rather than focusing on products made in the West Bank."

Ray Hanania, JPO 01.03.11

Disgusted with the West

"Is the Western idea of democracy what the Middle East masses, imbued in a completely different cultural mindset, actually have in mind? Common sense would dictate otherwise. A Pew poll released on December 2, 2010 found that 85% of Muslims in Egypt welcome Islamic influence over political life and view it as a positive thing for their country. [...]

The Egyptian protestors who screamed 'We hate America' at ABC News correspondent Christiane Amanpour and those who attacked CNN reporter Anderson Cooper did so not because of normalized, moderate views of America. The time has come to take the rose-tinted glasses off and realize that two cultural mindsets will inevitably clash no matter what attempts are made to gloss over the Mideast reality with Western verbiage."

Anav Silverman, JED 03.03.11

Islamists and democracy

"It is too soon to say what the new Egyptian constitution and government will look like and how genuine and vigorous Egypt's democratic institutions will be. [...]

Less encouraging are the protesters' posters of Mubarak and Gaddafi with Stars of David on their foreheads and the recent announcement by the secular, liberal head of the Party of Tomorrow, Ayman Nour, himself a candidate for president, that 'the Camp David agreement is over.' Nour reminds us that pointing the finger at Israel apparently remains an appealing populist tool in the hands of regional politicians, whether Islamist or not."

Jonathan Schachter, JED 03.03.11

Netanyahu flees Cairo

"The world" is united in its belief that Israel is clinging to the status quo, and is demanding that it abandon the occupation and the settlements as its contribution to the new regional order. Netanyahu's warnings that the revolutions in Arab states will strengthen Iran and radical Islam - and that therefore, the wise course is to hunker down and wait - have been either ignored or rejected by a West enthralled by the miracle of 'Arab democracy.'

The Palestinians are approaching 'White September,' in which they will declare independence - and if they meet with an Israeli rejection, begin an Egypt-style popular uprising. The conditions that led to the uprising in Cairo's Tahrir Square also exist in East Jerusalem: masses of young people with no hope, but exposed to the temptations of globalization and the Internet. If they march in their thousands toward the Old City, Israel will not be able to stop them. Netanyahu won't massacre demonstrators as Libya's Muammar Gadhafi has."

Aluf Benn, HAA 02.03.11

The earthquake after the storm

"Where will the popular revolutionary energy released in our region lead? Israel should take into account that this energy, now directed inward, will at some point be directed at it as well. In the Arab street, there is deep empathy for the Palestinians. Given the preponderant weight of public opinion, this sentiment will influence regimes to a greater extent, and will be exploited by them to deflect attention. This is especially true during a protracted diplomatic stalemate.

Moreover, because of the stalemate, with the banner of liberty raised in our region, the Palestinian public could embark on a popular anti-Israeli uprising. [...]

It seems that precisely when the earth moves is the time to leave the comfort zone of the status quo and seek a diplomatic initiative. Statesmanship, as opposed to seismology, is supposed to influence the course of events."

Michael Herzog, HAA 28.02.11

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 den Vorschlag von Bildungsminister Gideon Sa'ar, Schüler auf **Klassenausflüge nach Hebron** zu schicken:*

Hebron school trips wrong

"Are you truly planning to send your children [...] on a trip to Hebron? Do you really plan to abandon them in the most volatile place in the region, just because Education Minister Gideon Sa'ar wants to

highlight his patriotism? [...] Sa'ar is [...] seeking to send Israel's students to the Cave of the Patriarchs in order to score political points while showing terrible recklessness in the process. [...] Hebron is a holy and inseparable part of our history. In the same breath, the city was not and will not be a part of the State of Israel. [...] Such trips will not only jeopardize the children's lives, they will also taint their souls while perpetuating a distorted 'reality.' These students will not see 130,000 Palestinians being forcefully oppressed in order to accommodate the needs of only 500 Jews. [...] Instead, the students will get a lesson on fraud: They will be impressed by the gravesite of our forefathers, while completely ignoring the acts of their children."
Yehuda Nuriel, JED 22.02.11

Say yes to Hebron trips

"The education minister's decision [...] managed to let many dark genies out of the radical Left's bottles. [...] It is precisely those who wish us to get to know the other who are now trying to hinder such effort with all their might. [...]

Hebron is part of our heritage. One may dislike our presence there in terms of politics, yet one cannot deny the significance of the city and of the Cave of the Patriarchs. As fate would have it, the post-peace-with-Arafat era has turned the Cave of the Patriarchs into a safe place for a visit and even a convenient one in terms of accessibility and distance. This brings together all the desired conditions for those who wish to teach their children about our past, and not via reality TV shows.

The trouble is that in Israel of the 'forces of light and progress,' some places must remain in the dark as far as these forces are concerned."

Yoaz Hendel, JED, 21.02.11

Über ein Telefongespräch zwischen Premierminister Benjamin Netanyahu und Kanzlerin Angela Merkel:

Words, words, words

"Last week [...] Netanyahu called [...] Angela Merkel. He phoned to say he was disappointed that Germany had voted for a UN Security Council condemning the settlements. Merkel reportedly responded: 'How dare you. You are the one who disappointed us. You haven't made a single step to advance peace.' [...]

In order to call and berate Germany's leader, the caller must feel a certain sense of power and authority over the object of the reprimand. But Netanyahu's power and authority vis-a-vis key countries have run out, in part due to the man he

appointed foreign minister. Netanyahu is seen as all talk and no action, a chronic time-waster. [...]

He called to verify that Germany did not intend to shift the center of gravity from words to deeds. Under normal circumstances, the call would have been absurd, with one person phoning another to express disappointment in the other's acting in accordance with her worldview. [...]

And that's precisely why Merkel got angry. For her, Netanyahu's phone call was proof that he expected her to continue to say one thing and do something else."

Alon Idan, HAA 01.03.11

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

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