



## Schlaglicht Israel Nr. 07/11

### Aktuelles aus israelischen Tageszeitungen

25. März – 10. April 2011

#### 1. Goldstones Widerruf

*Nach dem Krieg zwischen Israel und der Hamas im Gazastreifen im Januar 2009 ernannten die Vereinten Nationen eine Untersuchungskommission unter dem Vorsitz des südafrikanischen Richters Richard Goldstone. Die Veröffentlichung des "Goldstone-Berichts", in dem Israel Kriegsverbrechen vorgeworfen werden, gilt in Israel als eine der problematischsten Publikationen der letzten Jahre und wird oftmals als Auftakt einer Delegitimierungskampagne gegen den jüdischen Staat gesehen.*

*In einem in der Washington Post veröffentlichten Artikel widerrief Goldstone nun einen der kritischsten Vorwürfe des Berichts – nämlich, dass die israelische Armee gezielt gegen Zivilisten vorgegangen sei. Hätte er gewusst, was er heute wissen würde, wäre der Bericht anders ausgefallen.*

*Israel hatte nicht mit der Untersuchungskommission kooperiert und ihr keine Beweismittel zur Verfügung gestellt.*

*Als Reaktion auf den Artikel forderte Premierminister Benjamin Netanyahu die UNO dazu auf, den Bericht zurückzuziehen. Der politisch rechts stehende Shas-Innenminister Eli Yishai lud Goldstone telefonisch zu einem Israel-Besuch, damit dieser sich selbst ein Bild von der Lage machen könne.*

#### Israel's 'march of folly'

"In effect, Goldstone is apologizing for reporting that Israeli soldiers intentionally harmed civilians. [...] What Goldstone should apologize for, and won't, sadly, is distracting us from what was wrong with Cast Lead in the first place. [...] A military action like Cast Lead could not possibly be undertaken without top commanders assuming in advance that civilian casualties would be very high. [...]"

The point is, Israel should never have come close to undertaking an operation of this kind, where loss of innocent life was bound to be so extensive, since it

had not come close to exhausting every possible diplomatic avenue for reestablishing a cease-fire, let alone achieving an overall settlement. [...]

Ironically, inevitably, the Goldstone report, focusing as it did on the conduct of the Israeli military after the attack was launched, obscured the larger tragedy."

Bernard Avishai, HAA 08.04.11

#### Goldstone won't help us

"I propose that we keep the celebrations in check. While Goldstone's article indeed softens the image of the IDF and its officers, and while the United Nations praised the IDF for probing itself, the State of Israel's international problems do not start with the Goldstone Report and do not end with the Goldstone article. [...] Israel's record includes blatant, ongoing violations of international law since 1967, especially in respect to the transfer of population to occupation land in Judea and Samaria. On this matter, there is no argument among the international community. We also cannot expect any article by a leading international jurist who will speak out in our defense.

Should Israel fail to secure an agreement with the Palestinians by September 2011, these violations will be haunting us as early as this year. Hence, leveraging Richard Goldstone's latest article isn't enough. Israel must take the bull by the horns in the coming months in order to prevent a new, possibly unprecedented deterioration in our ties with the UN and the entire global theater."

Alon Liel, JED 04.04.11

#### Into the garbage can of history

"The Goldstone report is a year and a half old, but the diplomatic skies have not fallen in and Israel is managing to progress, not so badly, even at a time when most of the UN bodies are persecuting it. [...]"

There were condemnations following the report also from countries and public figures that are not hostile to Israel, but most of these were merely for form's sake and keeping with political correctness.

Nations know, and certainly heads of state do, those that are genuinely enlightened, that a malicious plot is constantly being concocted against Israel and the Goldstone report was just one of its links. [...] The report can be thrown into the garbage can of history."

Israel Harel, HAA 08.04.11

### **Goldstone's apology**

"In repudiating his earlier contention that Israel had intentionally targeted civilians in Gaza, he offers a classic lesson in how not to apologize. It turns out that grave though the damage to Israel's global reputation by Goldstone's false report was, the slander was Israel's fault: 'Israel's lack of cooperation with our investigation meant that we were not able to corroborate how many Gazans killed were civilians and how many were combatants... our recommendations... did not include any evidence provided by the Israeli government.' [...]

And yet, just a few lines later Goldstone writes that the UN Human Rights Council, which commissioned his report, has a 'history of bias against Israel [that] cannot be doubted.' So even Goldstone admits that Israel was being asked to cooperate with an investigation commissioned by an authority inherently prejudiced against it, which explains why it rightly refused to participate."

Shmuley Boteach, JPO 05.04.11

### **Not so fast**

"The Israeli government claims that Justice Richard Goldstone's recent *Washington Post* op-ed exonerates the country from the Goldstone Report's charge that IDF forces committed war crimes during the 2008-09 Gaza conflict. Not so fast. [...]

Goldstone's shift focuses on his allegation that Israel had an apparent policy to target civilians. [...]

But Goldstone has not retreated from the report's many documented allegations of serious laws-of-war violations by IDF forces – violations that cost many civilian lives."

Kenneth Roth, JPO 04.04.11

### **Goldstone, the useful idiot**

"Justice Goldstone, [...] it's hard to ignore the fact that's you're Jewish. You admitted that this adds another dimension to the matter. Indeed, one hell of

a dimension. The reason you were chosen as the 'perfect' candidate by those who sent you is your descent. That way, nobody would accuse you of being anti-Semitic. In fact, you constituted the kosher stamp for this blood libel. [...] Just like many global leftist activists who turn a blind eye to reality. You're simply exploited. You sold your soul to the devil without noticing it."

Assaf Wohl, JED 03.04.11

### **Goldstone and Palestinian statehood**

"The Goldstone case study shows us that as Machiavelli taught, it is just as good if not better to be feared. When Goldstone issued his tendentious report, he no doubt assumed he would suffer no personal consequences for claiming IDF soldiers and commanders are war criminals and that Israeli Jews are neurotic. After all, everyone libels Israel and gets away with it.

But rather than get a pass for his behavior, Goldstone got ostracized. Following the government's lead, Jewish activists throughout the world attacked him for his lies. Everywhere he went he was challenged. Obviously, these attacks had an effect on him that attempts to appease him would not have had."

Caroline Glick, JPO 04.04.11

### **The judge is in our hands**

"It is hard to identify when the breaking point came. Apparently it was a sequence of events: total ostracism on the part of every Jewish organization the world over; declarations, not from the lunatic fringes, but from central figures in world Jewry to the effect that Goldstone, the world-renowned human rights activist, was 'spreading lies' about his own people. [...]

The headline in the daily *Yedioth Ahronoth* said: 'The pressure and the regret.' It should have read: 'The pressure and the surrender.' Another successful campaign of targeted assassination. [...]

It's a shame that Israeli society chose to break the mirror."

Oudeh Basharat, HAA 08.04.11

### **Goldstone's legacy**

"Goldstone excused the report's harsh pronouncements of Israeli guilt on the grounds that his mission did not have contrary evidence. But this is both false and irrelevant. [...] Where evidence was lacking, the responsible course was to admit that the mission did not know what had happened. Instead, the report repeatedly and unjustifiably presumed Israel guilty

and Hamas innocent. Goldstone's belated and partial acknowledgement of error has not undone the report's damage."

Avi Bell, JPO 03.04.11

## 2. Unruhen in Syrien

*Seit Ende März gehen in Syrien zehntausende Menschen auf die Straße, um gegen das Regime von Präsident Bashar Assad zu protestieren. Seit Anfang April haben syrische Sicherheitskräfte dabei immer wieder das Feuer auf Demonstranten eröffnet. So wurden am vergangenen Wochenende etwa 40 Menschen getötet. Während die Demonstranten zunächst zu Reformen aufgerufen hatten, werden nun Stimmen nach Assads Rücktritt laut. Zwar hatte Assad wenige Tage zuvor in einer Rede vage Versprechungen von Reformen gemacht, der Einsatz der Armee gegen Zivilisten überzeugte die protestierenden Massen jedoch weithin von seiner Unglaubwürdigkeit.*

*In Israel werden die Entwicklungen mit Spannung beobachtet. Im Gegensatz zu Ägypten und Jordanien hat der nördliche Nachbar Syrien kein Friedensabkommen mit Israel abgeschlossen.*

### The Syria peace myth

"For some 40 years they told us that peace with the Alawite family ruling Syria will bring us peace with the entire Arab world.[...] After that they said that a deal would sever the ties between Syria and Iran.[...]

Yet all of these stories were baseless. Syria, which is isolated within the Arab world, would not have prompted any other Arab state to come on board; not even Lebanon. [...]

Fortunately, we did not sign a peace deal with Assad, yet stability and deterrence were maintained. We had peace without official 'peace' – and that's a lot. To that end, we did not have to pay heavy prices, in terms of land or legitimacy, and for that reason future options, with a new regime in Damascus, are still relevant. [...]

Israel has an interest in living at peace with its neighbors, but we must secure agreements with peoples, not with isolated regimes."

Guy Bechor, JED 10.04.11

### The truth about Syria

"As long as the Syrians made the most rudimentary ostensible gestures toward peace, consecutive US

administrations, with strong European encouragement, were willing to overlook its many vices. [...]

While there is reason to be acutely concerned that whoever or whatever replaces the Assad regime is liable to be still more hostile to the West and to Israel, it is surely long overdue to scrap the decades-old policy of 'constructive engagement' with a leadership that showed a particular [...]. The effort to depict Assad's Syria as some kind of enlightened, humane, reform-minded regime has rarely looked as imbecilic as it does today, with the president's security forces doing his bidding and gunning down his people, just as they did in his father's time."

JPO 27.03.11 Editorial

### Let Syria take care of itself

"The weakening of the regime in Damascus illustrates how an opportunity was squandered because of the failure of talks with Syria. Israel now has no direct channel of communication with that country, as it has with Egypt and Jordan. [...]

There will be risks, for example, if Syria's store of chemical weapons falls into dangerous hands, if the collapsing regime tries to survive by ratcheting up the conflict with Israel, or if Assad's successors exploit the conflict to gain domestic legitimacy. [...]

Israel needs to avoid any open or covert involvement in these events to the north, whether verbal or in terms of action. [...] Israel should also declare that it will enter into negotiations with any Syrian government that achieves legitimacy and recognition."

HAA 28.03.11 Editorial

### The Syrian spring

"We are presented with a unique opportunity in Syria. [...]

If the Assad regime is overthrown, it will constitute a major blow to both the Iranian regime and Hezbollah. [...]

There is no reason for Israel not to act independently to help Assad's domestic opponents. Israel should arm the Kurds. [...] Barak should release information about Syria's transfer of weapons to Hamas and Hezbollah. The government should release information about Syria's use of terror against the Druse. [...]

We are living through dangerous times. But even now there is much we can do to emerge stronger from the political storm raging around us. Syria's revolt is a rare opportunity. We'd better not squander it."

Caroline Glick, JPO 28.03.11

### **Peering into the future**

"Should the Assad regime be overthrown it may affect the existing alliance between Syria and Iran directed against Israel, which would be welcome news for Israel and the rest of the world. And if the wave of protests reaches all the way to Iran, that would be good news indeed.

So all in all, there is room for some optimism."

Moshe Arens, HAA 05.04.11

### **Embrace Syrian revolution**

"The Syrian Revolution is about the haves and the have-nots. It is about economic empowerment, halting uncontrollable corruption, and the arrogance of a half-witted man. [...] The alternative to Assad is freedom. The alternative to the single party rule is democracy. [...]

Syrian politicians, in a new Syria, will turn inward to provide for their people's security and comfort. Ever since Iraq gained its freedom, has any Scud missile been fired on Israel? The country is too busy building and so will Syria when we are free."

Farid Ghary, JED 02.04.11

### **The Syrian possibility**

"The political turmoil in Syria will not spare Israel the need to embark on a land-for-peace deal. It might delay it, but it will also increase the probability of U.S. pressure to carry it out. Washington never recognized Israel's de-facto annexation of the Golan. [...]

If the Assad family, which has been more preoccupied with preserving its regime than with retrieving the Golan, disappears from the scene, then so will those factors inhibiting progress in the peace process. And so, contrary to popular opinion, the overthrow of Assad by a popular movement, rather than a palace coup, may, in fact, speed up the bargaining over a peace-for-land deal."

Amir Oren, HAA 28.03.11

## **3. Das "Nakba-Gesetz"**

*Am 23. März verabschiedete die Knesset das sogenannte "Nakba-Gesetz", das Institutionen, die "die Fundamente des Staats und seine Werte" untergraben, von der Finanzierung durch öffentliche Geldern ausschließt. Vor seiner Abschwächung sah der Gesetzesvorschlag Gefängnisstrafen für all diejenigen vor, die den israelischen Unabhängigkeitstag als Trauertag begehen. Palästinenser – auch arabische Israelis - erinnern sich an diesem Tag der "Nakba"*

*("Katastrophe"), mit der 1948 hunderttausende Palästinenser ihre Heimat verloren.*

*Am selben Tag wurde außerdem ein Gesetz verabschiedet, dass es Gemeinden von bis zu 400 Familien erlaubt, Aufnahmekriterien für potentielle Bewohner aufzustellen.*

*Weniger als die Hälfte der 120 Abgeordneten nahmen an den beiden Abstimmung teil.*

### **So many laws, so little time**

"More than a year ago, [Israel Beiteinu MK] Miller introduced a bill that would turn marking the Nakba into a crime for which there would be a sentence of up to three years imprisonment.

The Knesset had the good sense to reject this bill out of hand, and the result was the current amendment, which wraps the abomination in cotton wool. Of course, there is nothing wrong with the state refusing to finance ceremonies commemorating the Nakba, but to suggest that there is something criminal about a people commemorating what it views as a national tragedy (and from a Palestinian point of view it was a tragedy, even if one they largely brought upon themselves) is an abomination."

S.H. Rolef, JPO 25.03.11

### **The silence of the 60 lambs**

"These laws [...] are dangerously chipping away at Israeli democracy. [...] Kadima leader Tzipi Livni and the whole faction but five MKs did not bother to show up for the vote on the Nakba Law. Nor did Atzmaut chief Ehud Barak and his entire faction, and most Likud MKs. [...]

Their thundering silence enables the extreme right to lead parliament and all Israeli society on a path of incitement against an entire community, infringing on its rights for the imaginary purpose of protecting the state and its values. The silence is no less worrying and outrageous than the laws themselves."

HAA 25.03.11 Editorial

### **In praise of the Nakba Law**

"A sovereign state seeks to cut the budgets of institutions and bodies that reject its basic values, yet some people around here characterize this as an undemocratic step. [...] Can one imagine that the leftist camp in this country doesn't mind funding anti-Israel bodies with taxpayers' money? [...]

What we have here is a gulf between the needs of democracy and the ignorance, or even maliciousness, of its rivals. If there is anything ridiculous about this law, it's the fact that the State of Israel is

even forced to legislate such laws so that it would be permitted not to fund those who work against it."

Yoaz Hendel, Jed 28.03.11

### **So whose Nakba is this?**

"The Israeli school curriculum has run away from Palestinian history, and now the Nakba Law will try to bury in the sand whatever remains of collective memory. [...] Anyone who wants to erase the Nakba, water down the Palestinian collective memory and blur Land Day will only push them deeper into remembrance, one that includes all the errors, distortions and hatreds against whoever seek to uproot that memory."

Zvi Bar'el, HAA 27.03.11

### **Toward an Israeli apartheid state**

"The tsunami of racist laws passed by the Knesset in recent months is [...] being explained by reasoned and worthy arguments: the right of small communities to preserve their own character (the Acceptance Committees Law ); the state's right to prevent hostile use of the funds it allocates to education and culture (the Nakba Law) [...]. But I believe that as in other historical instances, the aim of this legislation is the gradual establishment of an apartheid state in Israel, and the future separation on a racial basis of Jews and non-Jews.

An apartheid state is not created in the blink of an eye."

Daniel Blatman, HAA 04.04.11

## **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 Mord an dem jüdisch-arabischen Schauspieler und Aktivisten Juliano Mer-Khamis in Jenin:*

### **Murdering hope in Jenin**

"After hearing the news about the murder of Juliano Mer-Khamis, the Arab-Israeli actor who was a radical peace seeker in favor of the Palestinians, many Israelis asked the following question: Really, if the

Palestinians are capable of murdering their staunchest fan on the face of this earth, you want to make peace with these people? [...]

The murder [...] is a blow to all those people who pursue peace and believe that it can be achieved. At this time it's hard to imagine a more symbolic victim of the pursuit of peace with the Palestinians. [...]

Juliano was the son of Arna Mer and Saliba Khamis, a Jewish Israeli woman and an Arab Christian man. Yet Juliano Mer chose to be Arab, not to love his own country, Israel, and to show great love for his Palestinian brethren. Juliano Mer-Khamis was murdered in Jenin Monday, and along with him, the hope for peace was murdered. How terrible can this place be?"

Eitan Haber, JED 06.04.11

### **Mourning a quiet, but effective, rebel**

"He had been targeted by the religious fanatics. His message was one that challenged the conventional norms. He wanted to make Palestinians and Israelis think.

Mer-Khamis co-founded the Jenin Children's Theater in 2006 with Zakariya Zubeidi, the former commander of the al-Aksa Martyrs Brigade in Jenin. [...] Despite his involvement, the theater was targeted by arsonists twice, and the threats against Mer-Khamis continued.

Religious fanatics were not just angry at his attempts at 'normalization' with Israelis, but also that he proposed such ideas as having co-ed theatrical productions, despite prohibitions on the role of Muslim women in public activities. [...]

Palestinians are watching the prodemocracy protests in the neighboring Arab countries with envy, hoping to do the same in the territories. But we can't cry for real democracy as long as the violent religious fanatics roam our streets preaching intolerance and hatred. It is a growing problem in Palestine."

Ray Hanania, JPO 05.04.11

*Über eine neue israelische Friedensinitiative, die von ehemaligen prominenten Mitgliedern von Armee und Geheimdienst und weiteren Persönlichkeiten aus Politik und Wirtschaft mit Bezug auf die arabisch-Friedensinitiative aufgelegt wurde :*

### **Peace through business**

"The thinking pattern adopted by Israeli governments for dozens of years now is premised on the security narrative. [...] Our top economic and political echelons [...] barely addresses the adjacent Pal-

estinian economy. Those who honestly discuss peace cannot remove from the equation the immense standard of living gap between the two economies. [...]

One of the more interesting insights of recent times is that a very modest beginning of improvement in the economic state of West Bank Palestinians, coupled with a rational leadership in Ramallah [...] produces [...] relative quiet in the area. [...]

Once the hope for a better life is lost, it is much easier to turn into a martyr. Economic development in the territories is an Israeli interest no less than a Palestinian one. [...]

The economy is our chance, and there's much we can do."

Idan Ofer, 07.04.11

### **New Leftist Peace Initiative Designed to Put Pressure on Bibi**

"The security figures backing the initiative are the usual suspects who made no secret of their extreme dovish tendencies. [...]

The initiative is reminiscent of the Geneva Initiative, where Israeli leftists presumably reached an accord with their counterparts in the Palestinian civil society. [...] What makes things worse than Geneva is that the proposal also calls for the gradual surrender of the Golan Heights in return for security arrangements. The plan holds out hope for a joint response against mutual regional threats, presumably meaning that Syria would abandon Iran.

The Geneva initiative was credited with putting pressure on former Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon to the point that he was willing to come up with his ill-fated Disengagement plan for Gaza and northern Samaria. [...] In common with Geneva, the purpose is to put pressure on an elected Israeli government."

Aryeh Ben Hayim, AS 05.05.11

AS = Arutz Sheva  
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  
Helene Kortländer*

Homepage: [www.fes.org.il](http://www.fes.org.il)

Email: [fes@fes.org.il](mailto:fes@fes.org.il)