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Aktuelles aus israelischen Tageszeitungen

19. November – 02. Dezember 2013

1. Übergangsabkommen zum iranischen Atomprogramm

Nach langen Verhandlungen haben der Iran und die USA, Russland, China, Frankreich, Großbritannien und Deutschland in Genf ein Übergangsabkommen zur Eindämmung des persischen Nuklearprogramms unterzeichnet.

Die Vereinbarung gilt für sechs Monate, in denen ein finales Abkommen ausgehandelt werden soll. Während dieser Zeit soll der Iran keine Urananreicherungen über 5% vornehmen und keine neuen Zentrifugen und Anreicherungsanlagen errichten. Im Gegenzug werden die Sanktionen gegen das iranische Regime teilweise zurückgefahren.

Der israelische Premierminister Benjamin Netanyahu kritisierte die Vereinbarung, die die Sanktionen für minimale Konzessionen von Seiten des Irans zurückschraube, als "historischen Fehler". Inzwischen empfinden aber immer mehr Israelis die von Netanyahu insbesondere an den USA geübte Kritik als kontraproduktiv und treten für einen gemäßigten Ton ein.

Give the agreement a chance

"Netanyahu succeeded during recent years in convincing most of the world's nations that the Iranian nuclear threat is real, and that an Iranian bomb would endanger not only Israel, but the Middle East and in truth the entire world. Israel's call to impose severe sanctions and its threat to use force [...] heightened the sense of urgency and ultimately advanced the agreement's success.

Nonetheless, [...] he must now [...] give the agreement a chance [...].

Automatic opposition and threats isolate Israel, and weaken its power to influence future agreements with Iran, which will be even more important."

HAA 25.11.13 Editorial

Mind the gaps

"Netanyahu is right when he says that if the U.S. and Iran fail to strike an agreement after six months, they would prefer to stop short of declaring the talks a failure; rather, they would extend the interim agreement until it becomes the de facto permanent deal. The current agreement, despite its positive aspects, will not scale back Iran's capability to manufacture nuclear weapons in any meaningful way -- a provision that must be incorporated into any permanent agreement as far as Israel is concerned.

[...] Only through cooperation and close coordination would Israel and the U.S. be able to accept a Plan B -- which would go into effect if Iran breaches the agreement or if the parties fail to reach an agreement after six months of negotiations.

This plan would have to ratchet up sanctions and make the military option more credible and more threatening."

Avner Golov, IHY 27.11.13

Geneva deal a victory

"Netanyahu is raising meaningful points about the problematic character of the Geneva agreement: It leaves Iran as a nuclear threshold country [...] and it is even a withdrawal from the Security Council resolutions which called for a complete freeze of the Iranian nuclear program. What Netanyahu is not doing is acknowledging reality: The agreement was inevitable from the moment Rohani was elected Iranian president.

Israel's job is now to stand on guard [...]. That is done through an ongoing and sincere dialogue with the US, and not through cries of despair and gloomy prophecies about an agreement which is an established fact."

Alon Pinkas, JED 26.11.13

The devil is in the deal

"The sanctions may have worked, but they apparently fell short because Iran has yet to buckle. This is the only reason why Iran was not willing to fully accept the West's demands. [...]"

The smiling Iranian delegation was not authorized to talk about ending the nuclear program. Its mission was limited to getting sanction relief, nothing more.

[...] Ratcheting up the pressure on Iran would have forced Iran to accept the West's demands and fully dismantle its nuclear program. [...]"

Netanyahu was right all along: the whole world has been fooled by Iran. The Islamic republic, using both smiles and curses, misled the powers."

Boaz Bismuth, IHY 24.11.13

The Geneva deal

"The deal does not roll back the vast majority of technological advances Iran has made in the past five years [...]. Also, while it is easy to roll back sanctions, it will be much more difficult to reinstate them should the Iranians renege on their part of the deal. And cracks in the sanction regime combined with the tremendous pressures of business interests to resume 'business as usual' with Iran might result in more economic relief than intended. [...]"

At its best, the deal [...] might temporarily slow Iran's progress toward nuclear arms capability. More likely it will provide the US and other western nations with a false impression that headway has been made while providing cover for the Iranians as they plod forward toward nuclear capability. Under the circumstances, there seems little cause for celebration."

JPO 24.11.13 Editorial

Bibi, don't jump (yet)

"Western powers [...] never really believed that Israel would attack Iran, exposing its home front to the risk of devastation by Iran's long-range missiles.

It's unclear if Israel's threats were always a bluff, intended to bring about an American attack on Iran. If this was the case, Bibi misread the Obama administration's determination to refrain from any military action in the region. [...]"

There is now some tension in U.S.-Israeli relations, with some inane threats on our side to mobilize Congress against the president, but we should take care not to stretch things too far. There is no other country that supports us and protects us, including from being foolish."

Yoel Marcus, HAA 29.11.13

New Iran, new US, same old Bibi

"The most important achievement for Iran is that it succeeded in leveraging its nuclear program into a powerful diplomatic tool. Six powerful countries [...]"

now recognize Iran as a nation with rights; the American president talks to the Iranian president eye to eye; the Iranian regime has won legitimacy as a rational and wise government; and the military option against it is evaporating. [...]"

This is the horror now gripping [...] Netanyahu: When the regime in Iran turns into a legitimate government, when the threatening veil that makes Iran a nightmare is removed, how is it going to be possible to spread fear? How can we convince people it is an insane regime? [...]"

Netanyahu is right. Iran is now creating for itself a new status that will redefine relations in the region. The Iranian nuclear program has already done its job."

Zvi Bar'el, HAA 27.11.13

Pen, ink instead of blood

"When the Netanyahu government launches a great outcry against the interim agreement signed by the West through Obama's direct mediation with Iran – it presents its rift with Washington to the entire world. [...]"

In a situation in which Israel is isolated in the world in any case, this only weakens its strength. [...]"

Within the White House, officials are referring to Netanyahu as an ungrateful leader, and stressing that any agreement would have failed to satisfy the current Israeli government – because what it really wants is war, not a dialogue. [...]"

Obama proved that talking to the enemy with a hand extended in peace, with respect and with good intentions – leads to a result. The agreement is good for America, which is repositioning its status in the world. It is even better for Israel, because now there will be calm. And Israel has not been abandoned by America. On the contrary, diplomatic wisdom won."

Orly Azoulay, JED 27.11.13

Total, unmitigated defeat

"The agreement is a total US defeat and Iranian victory. [...]"

Knowing that Obama will never attack Iran militarily and will do his best to delay Israel from attacking Iran in time will have disastrous consequences to the Middle East. Many countries [...] like Qatar and Iraq will make the best terms they can with the triumphant Iran in the hope of protection from annihilation. Many others like Egypt and Turkey will gravitate to the Russians and the Chinese for military cooperation and nuclear reactors. Others like Saudi Arabia, and UAE, will turn to the Pakistanis for a nuclear bomb.

The nuclear arms race has just begun."

Shoula Romano Horing, JED 24.11.13

Israel must thank US for Iran agreement

"A warming of relations between the US and Iran could [...] dramatically change the balance of power throughout the Middle East. It could reestablish Iran as a friend of the US, and allow it to overtake its Arab allies, headed by Saudi Arabia and Egypt. This is the Arab world's nightmare scenario. [...]"

The Arabs [...] are afraid that [...] the Tehran-Washington relationship will become so close that it will surpass theirs. For them, the 'Iranian threat' is not a nuclear bomb, and not the 'point of no return.' For the Arab allies of the US, Iran is a regional power that is extending its tentacles in every direction, and is trying to gain influence."

Jacky Hougy, GLO 24.11.13

2. Kompromiss für das Horizon 2020 Abkommen

Im Januar 2014 werden neue Zulassungskriterien für EU-Kooperationsprogramme in Kraft treten. Demnach dürfen EU-Gelder nicht in die jüdischen Siedlungen in den von Israel 1967 besetzten Gebieten fließen. Diese Kriterien erschweren die Unterzeichnung des Horizon 2020 Abkommen für wissenschaftliche Zusammenarbeit zwischen der EU und Israel maßgeblich.

Nach wochenlangen Verhandlungen konnten Außenministerin Zippi Livni und ihre EU-Amtskollegin Catherine Ashton nun jedoch einen Kompromiss erzielen.

Dem Abkommen wird demnach ein Anhang hinzugefügt, in dem Israel erklärt, dass die EU-Vorgaben nicht die Grenzen Israels definieren. Außerdem erklärte die EU sich bereit, Institutionen zuzulassen, die auch in den besetzten Gebieten aktiv sind. Allerdings müssen diese Mechanismen entwickeln, die garantieren, dass die europäischen Fördermittel nicht in den Siedlungen eingesetzt werden.

Bekannte Wissenschaftler und Politiker hatten die israelische Regierung zum Einlenken gedrängt. Ein Nichtunterzeichnen hätte zu Verlusten in Milliardenhöhe für israelische Forschungsinstitutionen geführt.

The price of deception and apartheid

"Israel is now beginning to pay the price of its deeds in the occupied territories. [...]"

The settlement enterprise has turned Israel into an immoral state whose policies are unacceptable to the world of which it seeks to be part. It's regrettable that the government hasn't understood this on its own, but the international community must make this clear to it."

HAA 27.11.13 Editorial

Our international trial

"The Europeans [...] are not interested in justice for us, but only in justice for the Arabs. [...]"

In 1979, Morocco annexed Western Sahara, which is 12 times larger than Israel. The European Union does not recognize Morocco's sovereignty over the area. [...] Recently, the EU signed a fisheries agreement with Morocco in which it commits to allocate grants for the development of Morocco's fisheries industry in exchange for access to its waters. The agreement includes the occupied territory in Western Sahara. [...]"

Not surprisingly, the European Union has not imposed rules like the guidelines for providing grants to Israel on any other country in that situation. In this way, the Europeans applied a double standard: one rule for the Jewish state and another for the rest of the world."

Dror Eydar, IHY 29.11.13

Brussels sprouts an agreement -- at a price

"The European intransigence until the very last moment must serve as a warning signal that our relations with Europe could be imperiled down the road. [...]"

The silence on the right attests to just how things have deteriorated. The Likud accepted the EU's delegitimization of the Jewish communities in Judea and Samaria. [...] The fact that they remained silent shows they too have finally understood what the average Israeli has long realized: that the government has no choice but to accept the two-state solution."

Dan Margalit, IHY 29.11.13

Borders on the horizon

"How could this situation has been averted? By obviating the European Union's settlement guidelines. How might Israel accomplish that going ahead? By reaching an understanding about the border between Israel and the future Palestinian state. [...]"

But the Netanyahu government has refused, by all accounts, to present to anyone a detailed proposal of where it would like to see its future border run. As the Horizon 2020 agreement demonstrates, by refusing to formally give up its claim on part of the West Bank and east Jerusalem, the government painted itself into a corner, ultimately producing a situation in which it has literally been obliged to sign off on the boycott of all Israeli activity beyond the Green Line."

Jonathan Rosene, JPO 30.11.13

Sanctions will get Israel to end the occupation

"Israel has signed the Horizon 2020 agreement [...]. This is irrefutable proof that a boycott threat works well with Israel, too. [...]

The settlements are an all-Israeli project and the boycott can't be limited to them, just as the boycott of apartheid-era South Africa couldn't be limited to the institutions of apartheid. [...] Israel funds, protects and nurtures the settlements, so all of Israel is responsible for their existence. It's unfair to boycott just the settlers. We're all guilty. On the other hand, boycotting all of Israel is likely to morph into the rejection of its very existence, something most of the world justly does not want. Therefore, we should rejoice over the limited boycott even if it is tainted by double standards."

Gideon Levy, HAA 01.12.13

3. Isaak Herzog wird Vorsitzender der Arbeitspartei

Am 21. November hat Isaak "Buji" Herzog, der zwischen 2005 und 2011 verschiedene Ministerposten inne hatte, die Wahlen zum Vorsitzenden der Arbeitspartei gewonnen. Seine Vorgängerin Shelly Yacimovich unterlag mit 40% der Stimmen. Yacimovich war weniger als zwei Jahre im Amt gewesen. Bei den Knesset-Wahlen im Januar 2013 hatte die Arbeitspartei nur 11% der Stimmen erlangt. Yacimovich weigerte sich, der Regierungskoalition beizutreten und wurde somit Oppositionsvorsitzende.

Die Mitglieder der Arbeitspartei scheinen Yacimovich nun dafür abgestraft zu haben, dass sie ihren Fokus ganz auf soziale und wirtschaftliche Fragen legte, während die Außenpolitik und insbesondere der Friedensprozess mit den Palästinensern außen vor blieben. Laut einer Umfrage in der Wirtschaftszeitung Globes könnte die Arbeitspartei unter der Führung Herzogs drei Sitze hinzugewinnen, würde es zu Knesset-Wahlen kommen.

Herzog can do it

"Yacimovich attempted to [...] bring in a new, young generation of socially active party members [...]. But her potential success was usurped by Yair Lapid and his Yesh Atid party, and her attempts to cash in on the social revolution of recent years failed to pay any dividends [...]. She also put all her eggs in the social and economic basket, totally ignoring the critical issues of foreign affairs, security and peace rather than strike a balance between the two. She left a vacuum on matters related to the peace process and the future of the Palestinians, allowing the

present government to move the country ever farther to the right without any serious opposition. [...] Herzog has what it takes to make that final effort at getting the Labor Party back on its feet and providing a true opposition to the present government and an alternative government in the next elections. [...] He must [...] create a message around which the entire left wing [...] can unite [...] – as indeed the right wing have succeeded in doing, despite their internal differences – if he is to have a solid base for challenging the present government in the next elections."

David Newman, JPO 25.11.13

More options for the coalition

"Herzog is certainly more open to joining the government than former [...] Yacimovich [...] yet there are two matters that take precedence.

First, Herzog likely believes that, sitting on the opposition benches, he could expand his base of support within Labor. [...]

Secondly, the diplomatic issue is key. Herzog is concerned that the negotiations with [...] Abbas will reach a dead end and he fears a European boycott of settlement goods and Israeli academic institutions. Herzog also probably wonders why he would ever join a coalition that has a foreign minister who talks about the need to find alternative allies to the U.S. [...] Herzog took such a step, he would be betting his entire political hand [...].

Even with the hurdles [...], Herzog's election has given the coalition the feeling that it now has an extra player sitting on its bench. [...] Herzog could take Habayit Hayehudi leader Naftali Bennett's place. [...]

In terms of the political stock market, Herzog's election as Labor's new leader has given the government certain new options, but these options are far away from being exercised."

Dan Margalit, IHY 24.11.13

Labor's new leader

"Yacimovich's domineering leadership style combined with her conviction [...] that a social democratic agenda had to be the main emphasis of the campaign, resulted in many casualties. [...]

By neglecting the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, she lost large percentages of the party's traditional support base [...].

On this backdrop, Herzog – a man with impeccable pedigree [...], keen political instincts and a unique ability to bridge differences and foster cooperation, takes the helm of Labor. [...]

Herzog definitely has the qualities needed to heal the rifts inside Labor and build a coalition with other center-left parties [...].

Our political landscape is in desperate need of a strong, unified opposition that can offer a viable alternative not just to the socioeconomic agenda of the present government but also to its treatment of the single most burning issue confronting Israeli society – the Israeli-Palestinian conflict."

JPO 25.11.13 Editorial

It's baby face's turn

"After the extrovert and aggressive conduct of Ehud Barak, and Yachimovich who failed to deliver against Netanyahu, there is a need for a less violent but more comprehensive chairman. The political Left and Center are more shattered than ever, and it's time for a person specializing in building bridges and not only in blowing them up.

[...] The crushing gap with which he beat Yachimovich gives him the aura of a winner.

Is it enough in order to defeat Netanyahu? At the moment the prime minister still appears in his peak, but he may lose his political agenda down the road. The Iranian threat is not so intimidating anymore, the economy is in a crisis and the peace negotiations are stuck. The public has stopped believing in magicians and may prefer to elect people of labor, no pun intended."

Baruch Leshem, JED 27.11.13

What can Labor prince Herzog learn from Yacimovich?

"Bringing back Labor voters who shifted their loyalty to Meretz and Hatnua is an easy task. But to persuade moderate right-wing constituencies and conquer the premiership, [...] Herzog must also learn something from his predecessor. [...]

Empirically, since 1977, the Labor managed to win only when receiving the support of center or moderate right-wing voters, mostly from the Likud. To do just that, previous Labor candidates have put an emphasis on social and economic issues on the one hand, while distancing themselves from too-extreme leftist views in terms of the peace process with the Palestinians. Ironically enough, this is exactly what Shelly Yacimovich tried to do. The principles were right; their implementation – disastrous."

Ron Gilran, JPO 28.11.13

Shelly, despite it all

"I would vote for Yacimovich, despite everything. Her fateful and almost only sin was her stupid attempt to turn her back on the most decisive issue in today's Israeli reality, the occupation and its children. [...]

But Yacimovich also did not join the right's government, and we should remember this today to her credit. [...] Herzog and his friends would have been

ministers (again), just as they were in all the right-wing governments, quelling the stench from within and behaving self-righteously. [...]

You won't ever catch Herzog uttering a single controversial idea, or even a single interesting sentence. A 'good boy' in the worst sense of the term, he is a workaholic and gray politician. [...] This is not how you build an alternative."

Gideon Levy, HAA 21.11.13

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 **Begin-Prawer Plan zur Umsiedlung zehntausender Beduinen** in der Negev-Wüste:*

The prudent Prawer plan

"The plan [...] created to resolve the land issue in the Negev [...] is fair and logical. Many Bedouins also know this, but they won't dare go against the demagogical trend dominating public discussion in the south. [...]

It's a shame, since [...] if the Bedouins accept the offer, it will improve their community's welfare. [...]

The Prawer-Begin Plan is a privilege, not an obligation. It is an opportunity, not a loss.

They don't want it? There is no reason to force it upon them and there is no reason for it to boil over into violent protests. It is up to the government to express sorrow and to announce that it is leaving the door open for the Bedouins, and in the meantime, to stick to two principles: It will not coerce the Bedouins to accept the plan, but it will actively, effectively and aggressively prevent any further deviation or attempt to control more land on their part [...]. At the same time, the government can renew momentum for construction in the Negev for other Israeli citizens. [...] A giant desert is waiting to bloom. It is up to the government to offer soldiers free housing from Dimona, Yerucham and southward. Of course, also to Bedouin soldiers."

Dan Margalit, IHY 02.12.13

Enemies in their own state

"Bedouins have lived in the Negev and cultivated their traditional lifestyle since the dawn of history. The Begin-Prawer Plan seeks to displace them and

compel them to move into urban settlements that would condemn them to a life of hardship, poverty and unemployment.

The significance of this plan is clear: The Bedouin people are forbidden to continue being Bedouin. [...]

It is the right of those who are subject to expulsion to protest and resist such a discriminatory plan. [...]

Not only do they have a right to demonstrate [...] and make their rage and sorrow heard, but it is our duty to prevent any suppression of these democratic protests. [...]

The silencing of the protests supporting Bedouin rights is a black stain on the conscience of our society."

Sami Michael, JED 02.12.13

*Über den **neuen Generalstaatsanwalt Shai Nitzan:***

Respect, and reserve judgement

"The Israeli Left condemns him as the stalwart of security hawks. [...] The Right sees him as an enemy of settlements. [...] If the Right is willing to accept [...] the fact that the rule of law also applies to settlements, and that you cannot build a Jewish house on privately owned Palestinian land even if the Palestinian is afraid to claim his property, [...] then Nitzan would be derelict in his duty if he did not enforce this.

The Right protested the fact that he used aggressive tactics like administrative detention against opponents of the Gaza disengagement who broke the law. I am no legal expert, but let's say they did receive disproportionately harsh treatment. Does such a misstep render him unfit? [...]

On the contrary, Nitzan would be unfit for the position if, contravening the law, the government and the attorney-general, he had released the lawbreakers because his heart was with [the settlements in Gaza]. [...]

In light of his reputation as a consummate legal professional and charismatic leader, we can respect him, while reserving judgment."

Dan Margalit, IHY 20.11.13

Nitzan must restore the public's faith

"Nitzan's biggest challenge [...] will be to restore the public's faith in the prosecution, currently at a nadir. [...] Most Israelis [...] have certainly heard about some of the prosecution's crushing failures this year, above all the acquittals of former Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman.

The state prosecutor must lead the prosecution by serving as both a legal and moral authority. [...] Nitzan will have to make principled decisions even

when they aren't popular, and to defend them not only in court, but in the court of public opinion. [...]

Nitzan will now be the public's attorney; he won't have to agree to government officials' requests that he defend every legal position they adopt. [...]

Nitzan will have to allay the suspicions that accompanied his selection and demonstrate integrity and assertiveness in carrying out his mission of upholding the public interest."

HAA 20.11.13 Editorial

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