



## Schlaglicht Israel Nr. 05/15 Aktuelles aus israelischen Tageszeitungen

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#### 1. Vorgezogene Neuwahlen

*Das Parteienbündnis Zionistisches Lager zwischen der Arbeitspartei unter Führung von Isaac Herzog und HaTnua unter der früheren Justizministerin Tzipi Livni sowie auch der frühere Wirtschaftsminister Yair Lapid von Yesh Atid werfen Netanyahu wirtschaftliches Versagen vor. Die Regierung stellt die Sicherheit in den Mittelpunkt ihrer Kampagne. Wenige Wochen vor dem Wahltermin sieht sich Netanyahu mit zwei sehr kritischen Berichten des Rechnungshofes konfrontiert: Ein detaillierter Bericht über die privaten Ausgaben seiner Familie sowie ein Bericht, der die Wohnungsbaupolitik der Regierung als Fiasco mit katastrophalen Folgen qualifiziert.*

#### Talking 'tachles' in a vacuous election campaign

If one were a visitor from abroad, judging from the Israeli election campaigns one could easily assume that there are no major issues of importance facing the State of Israel. The Israeli public is being daily bombarded with empty slogans, clever but meaningless YouTube videos and vacuous Facebook posts. (...) There are some parties which never write a platform because there is simply no position which the list of candidates can agree on. These parties hope that enough citizens will merely vote for their brand, in much the same way as one chooses a type of laundry detergent or soft drink if they see

and hear enough advertising.(...) Israel's political system has become paralyzed with fear and it largely puts its own survival ahead of the interests of the state and its people. The people of Israel should demand more from their potentially elected officials. They should demand clarity and a sense of purpose. Israelis should say clearly that they will not vote for parties which do not even deign to provide a platform or vision. We should not be hoodwinked by punchy videos and clever slogans; we should demand clear answers to questions of national and existential importance. It's time to put an end to meaningless and empty election campaigns, it's time for straight talk.

Ashley Perry, JPO, 16.02.15

#### Right-wing leaders, stop cultivating anti-Left, anti-Arab propaganda

The Samaria Settlers Committee, a body that benefits from public funds through the Samaria Regional Council, posted a video in which a master with a German accent who hides behind a broadsheet newspaper uses his Jewish servant to collect stories that blacken the reputations of Israel and the Israel Defense Forces. In exchange, the master tosses the servant euro coins, until the former no longer has any need for the Jew and sends him to his death. The analogy is clear: Left-wing organizations, whose

logos appear at the end of the video after the Jewish collaborator hangs himself, are helping Nazi Europe in exchange for money. (...) Almost 20 years have passed since the murder of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, who appeared in right-wing posters dressed in a Nazi uniform, but it seems that the tragic results of the incitement against him have yet to be internalized. Along with the constant incitement against Arabs, the right-wing propagandists do not hesitate to portray leftists using the most inappropriate images human history has to offer as part of its campaign of fear-mongering and delegitimization.(...)  
Editorial, HAA, 16.02.15

**Viral videos bring out the worst in Israeli politics**  
(...) Social media has also proven a good fit for the Israeli political landscape. (...) There's also something very Israeli in the direct, personal approach of connecting with voters via social media. It is part of the informality of public life where politicians and army generals alike are known by childhood nicknames. But it also speaks volumes about the country's post-ideological climate when social-media skits become the tools for distinguishing the main parties in 2015. (...) It seems that politicians and their campaign managers think superficial comic spoofs are more effective tools than emphasizing their party's policies and achievements to date. (...) Humor is a fantastic tool to engage people in politics, but as an end in itself – which is what the viral videos are – it says something very sad about the expectations of politicians and the electorate alike. It's easier to turn to spoof and populism when you have no answers to any of the problems Israel is facing; international isolation, a yawning chasm between rich and poor, let alone its continued rule over millions of Palestinians. (...)  
Daniella Peled, HAA, 17.02.15

**Contemptuous, excessive spending by Netanyahu? Ho-hum**  
(...) Netanyahus' appalling history of excessive spending is unlikely to deal a decisive blow to Benjamin Netanyahu's prospects for reelection in precisely one month's time — even in a country where a vast proportion of the populace simply cannot get through the month, cannot hope to buy a home. (...) Why? Because while Herzog, Lapid, Kahlon et al might well prove relative paragons of spending propriety were they to occupy the prime minister's office, the electorate still remains unpersuaded they'd be better than Netanyahu at all the other stuff prime ministers do. (...) when Israelis go to the ballot boxes next month, they'll be asking themselves whether Netanyahu is more capable than his rivals of re-

sponsibly stewarding future lurches into conflict, and many will answer yes. They'll be asking whether Herzog is truly capable of avoiding those conflicts, and not so many will be sure.(...) Tuesday's State Comptroller's report will likely come to be regarded as another minor story of relatively marginal abuse. (...)  
David Horovitz, TOI, 17.02.15

**Netanyahu forgot he's supposed to serve his voters, not abuse their trust**  
Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (...) appears to have no shame in his behavior. (...) The things described in the report are outrageous. (...) Until now, Netanyahu has not only enjoyed the help of the comptroller, but also, and especially, that of the men who occupy the two most senior positions in the law enforcement system, both of whom are his appointees – Attorney General Yehuda Weinstein and State Prosecutor Shai Nitzan. Both have gone out of their way to thwart criminal proceedings against Netanyahu, or even proceedings that could lead in that direction and end up tagging him as one of the chief suspects. This intolerable situation must end. Any other person who was the subject of findings like those in the comptroller's report would have been put under criminal investigation, in addition to the torrent of public criticism that would have rained down on him. (...) The comptroller's report and the material that substantiates it (...) constitute clear grounds for an immediate criminal investigation. The proximity to the election should not prevent such a probe. (...)  
Editorial, HAA, 18.02.15

**It's not the PM's residence we should discuss, it's our life here**  
(...) A prime minister in Israel, any prime minister, is entitled to a secured residence, even somewhat luxurious, befitting his position and status. The house hosts heads of states between its walls and should be suitable for that. (...) It's very important to publicly discuss the exaggerated expenses at the prime minister's residence, but it's more important to discuss issues that are already boring us, like our life. (...) With all due respect to the state comptroller and the Israeli media, the house on 3 Balfour Street is not the problem. I really don't care if the prime minister drinks champagne from crystal glasses every morning, as long as the champagne and crystal cause him to make the right decisions.  
Eitan Haber, JED, 21.02.15

### **I still have a dream - and it means that I, a Bedouin Arab woman, must vote**

(...) Bedouin society is traditional and conservative - but the government makes things yet harder for us. The 90,000 residents of the Negev's unrecognized villages lack infrastructure and basic services. Their socioeconomic situation is the worst in Israel, and in addition they must fend off home demolitions. But I persevered. Each time I thought about the dream - freedom, justice, equality - I smiled an optimistic smile because I believed that the gloomy situation would change. Again, we are in a democratic country, the government is "a government of the people," and I didn't think the people would want anything else. Elections implement a government of the people. The people choose their representatives, who in turn swear to work for the benefit and security of the people. (...) The recent increase in the minimum vote needed to get into the Knesset, not the demands of the people, prompted most of the Arab parties to merge. (...) Although I have reservations, the fact that I believe in the abilities of most of the candidates is a reason to go out and vote. After all, I still have a dream.

Hanan Elsana, HAA, 21.02.14

### **In this election, vote for coexistence**

The most urgent issue on the agenda, which is penetrating the Israeli educational system, is dealing with growing racism. (...) The Jewish-Arab rift reached a boiling point over the summer (...). In the past few weeks we have witnessed two incidents in which Arabs-Druze were assaulted in the public domain just because they dared speak Arabic. This murky wave of racism and violence concerns many citizens in Israel - parents of schoolchildren, teachers and worried citizens - but the public debate of the election period seems to be jumping over it, coming down to racist and excluding statements which only increase the polarization and hatred. (...) So far, and not unintentionally, the political candidates and parties have avoided dealing with issues of a joint society, racism and polarization. They may be avoiding discussing the problem and possible solutions, but we are not letting go. The answer to this question is concealed first and foremost in the education. (...) Eradicating racism and a shared life education are imperative for all of us - citizens, parents, students, teachers and the entire Israeli society.

Hazar Masri-Hussein, JED, 25.02.15

### **Leave Bibi alone**

Benjamin Netanyahu responded to the damning report on Israel's housing crisis in the same way he

responded to a report on excessive expenditure at the prime minister's residence: He brushed it aside, as though it were a triviality, an unimportant matter seized upon by petty people who have failed to deal with the real issues at hand. (...) this was the air Netanyahu gave off on Wednesday, when he first responded to the report. "We're talking about housing prices, about the cost of living," he said, "I will not for one moment forget the issue of life itself, of living, and that the greatest challenge we face is the threat of Iran arming itself with nuclear weapons with the declared purpose of destroying us." In other words, stop bugging me about the high cost of housing and the high cost of living. (...) I, your prime minister, have the weight of far more important matters on my shoulders - of life itself. So why are you talking to me about the despair of everyday life, about the hopelessness, about the people in their 30s and 40s who spend their whole salary on a delusional rent or who are forced to live with their parents. Why are you telling me about people who every year are further away from realizing their dream of buying a home, while Iran every year gets closer to becoming a nuclear threshold state? (...) It is impossible to deal with two issues at the same time, the prime minister is telling Israelis. It's either the Iranian nuclear problem or the housing crisis. You decide.

Sima Kadmon, JED, 26.02.15

## **2. Netanyahus Rede vor dem US-Kongress**

*Netanyahus Rede vor dem Washingtoner Kongress stellt das strapazierte Verhältnis zwischen dem israelischen Regierungschef und US-Präsident Barack Obama auf eine präzedenzlose Belastungsprobe. Susan Rice, die Nationale Sicherheitsberaterin im Weißen Haus, bezeichnete die Rede als „destruktiv“ für das amerikanisch-israelische Verhältnis. Netanyahu beharrt indes darauf, nichts unversucht zu lassen, um eine Einigung mit Iran zu verhindern. Nach Ansicht der israelischen Regierung würde mit dem sich abzeichnenden Abkommen, das Iran eine Fortsetzung der Urananreicherung ermöglichte, die Bedrohung einer atomaren Aufrüstung des Ajatollah-Staates fortbestehen.*

### **Israel's election campaign focuses on trivia while far reaching economic and political developments take place around us.**

(...) Netanyahu has a chance, which hopefully he will make full use of, to consolidate the understanding of the members of Congress and through them the American people, of the extreme danger represented by Iran's approach to the "nuclear threshold", which will be facilitated and legitimized by the

agreement apparently being cooked up by Kerry and Zarif to be presented to the other participants in the six-power group as a fait accompli. Meanwhile, Professor Gilo of the Anti-Trust Authority continues on his mad quest to severely damage Israel's economic and energy future, as well as frustrating an historical opportunity to strengthen economic ties with Jordan and Egypt. Recent developments have included the signing of a Memorandum of Intent by Egypt with Cyprus to purchase gas from the Aphrodite field and the announcement by Jordan that they might do the same. (...) The current Egyptian administration should be warmly embraced and encouraged by the forces of the West. Instead, Israel ruins its chances to promote economic ties, Europe is lost in its economic and social torpor, and the US administration continues to demonstrate that in fact it supports the Muslim Brotherhood, the mortal enemies of al-Sisi and the origin of every one of the Sunni terrorist organizations active today throughout the world. As a wise goblin was quoted as saying, by an equally wise English playwright, "What fools these mortals be". Indeed.

Norman Bailey, GLO, 24.02.15

### **When it comes to Iran and Israel, Obama is way off target**

The unelected mullahs in Iran must be having a hearty laugh this week, enjoying the spectacle of the Obama Administration falling over itself to drive a wedge between America and our vital Middle East ally Israel. (...) At this very moment, government officials whose salaries are paid by American taxpayers are actually cooking up ways to harm America's relationship with an ally that serves as a bulwark against radical Islamic terrorist forces in the Middle East and cooperates closely with us on myriad arenas ranging from intelligence, defense and homeland security to agriculture and biotechnology. (...) What message do we send, not just to Israel, but to all of America's friends across the globe, when we allow petty politics to undercut the historic bonds that have united us for decades? This President should be ashamed of his treatment of our friend Israel. He has trained his sights on a crucial ally when we should be focused on our actual enemies. Let's not forget who they are. The apocalyptic religious zealots in Iran who spent decades developing a nuclear program in secret that they don't actually need to produce energy, and which they only came clean about possessing once they were caught red-handed by the international community. Our enemies chant to "Death to America" and burn American flags at public rallies in Iran. They support terrorist groups such as Hezbollah, which has killed

more Americans than any terrorist group except al-Qaida. They provide arms, money and moral support to sick murderers who gleefully target innocent men, women and children all over the world. (...)

Armstrong Williams, JPO, 28.02.15

### **Trifling over bottles, while Iran goes nuclear**

(...) The timing of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's speech has nothing to do with the upcoming elections in Israel, as many would have us think. The timing has everything to do with the late March deadline for a nuclear deal. (...) It is a shame the Iranian issue has become the sticking point between Netanyahu and an Obama administration seeking to even the score with the Israeli prime minister, as if he were an enemy and not a friend. It's too bad that officials in Washington aren't saving their negative energy for the Iranians. The current rift may not be because of Netanyahu's planned speech. It could be that opposition to a bad nuclear deal is the main reason for the open tensions between the administration and Netanyahu. (...) An Iranian nuclear bomb would not only threaten Israel's very existence but it would also jeopardize its diplomatic and military maneuverability in the Middle East, which is growing ever more perilous. While we trifle over the household spending at the Prime Minister's Residence and Sara Netanyahu's bottle recycling (all in efforts to influence political outcomes), Iran is focused on obtaining a nuclear bomb. (...)

Boaz Bismuth, IHY, 22.02.15

### **Go, Netanyahu, go!**

Go to Washington, Benjamin Netanyahu, (...) because Iran is important, and Israel Hayom is important, and the Tea Party is important. (...) Don't listen to those who say you are destroying our relations with the United States. They're wrong. You know that it's all over as far as U.S. President Barack Obama is concerned. Go, because you've already ruined everything, and one more speech won't make any difference. Go, Bibi, go, because you have no housing solutions in your kitbag. Go, Bibi, so that your rivals shouldn't think housing prices are your top priority. Go, so they'll understand that only the Republican Congress is on our side. Go and prove it. Go, Bibi, go, because the remarks floated about the need for an arrangement with the Palestinians and the Arab states are nonsense. (...) Go, Bibi, go, because the Iranian nuclear problem is threatening and worrisome. You know you could deal with the issue in talks with Democratic leaders, but you pushed them into the hands of their humiliated president. Go, because the Democratic sena-

tors aren't facing a fateful election on March 17; you are. Go, Bibi, go, even though you know your trip harms Israeli interests. Go, and don't listen to those who think you should stay home. Because how will you look? Like a responsible Israeli leader, or a coward fleeing the battlefield? (...) prove to those who want you to present an economic and social agenda that such an agenda is worthless. (...) Go, Bibi, go, because the European countries washed their hands of you long ago. (...) Go, Bibi, go, because you are stagnating in the polls (...) Stand tall, and make us feel small.  
Uzi Baram, HAA, 24.02.15

### **A time to stand down, not double down**

(...) How is it possible, we ask behind closed doors, that the prime minister does not understand the effect his actions are having on American Jewry? (...) Just imagine an electoral outcome next month whereby an Israeli coalition is formed that either explicitly or implicitly disavows a two-state solution. What will American Jews do when a chasm opens up between the policies of the Israeli and American administrations? (...) The fault lines between Israel and Diaspora Jewry, however, exist not just in the sphere of geopolitics, but at the very heart of Jewish identity. (...) The government of Israel cannot claim to speak on behalf of world Jewry and then alienate that very Jewry. (...) If Prime Minister Netanyahu is as concerned about Iran as he purports to be then surely he and his advisors can find a way to state the case without alienating the leader of the free world. This is the time stand down, not double down. The urgent message regarding the Iranian threat will be less politicized and thus delivered far more effectively if spoken by the prime minister, whoever that may be, after the election, not before. (...) The intended speech before Congress is wrongheaded and it is the responsibility of American Jewry to forewarn the prime minister of the consequences of his intended project.(...)

Elliot J. Gosgrove, JPO, 17.02.15

### **Is Herzog following Chamberlain's example?**

It seems likely that whoever read Zionist Union leader Isaac Herzog's interview with the Washington Post over the weekend became confused and thought for a moment that they were reading a statement from the U.S. State Department, or from Secretary of State John Kerry himself. In a demonstration of complete disconnection from reality, Herzog refused to define Iran as an existential threat to Israel, and then said, "I trust Obama to get a good deal." Herzog's words could not help but bring readers back to September 1938, when then-British

Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain returned to London amid cheering throngs who praised him as "the man who saved peace." (...) It's as if nothing has been learned from the terrible history and that facts don't exist, as if the Jews are still without an independent state and dependent on the kindness of noblemen and that the Iranians had not repeatedly declared their desire to destroy Israel. (...) The fact that Herzog and Tzipi Livni come out against the government's policy on Iran time and time again, inviting international pressure and aligning themselves with the weak and irresponsible policy of U.S. President Barack Obama, shows their complete disregard for the existential threat facing Israel from Iran.

Omer Dostri, IHY, 23.02.15

### **3. Terror in Dänemark**

*Nach den Anschlägen in Kopenhagen hat Dänemarks Ministerpräsidentin Hellen Thorning-Schmidt die Juden im Land zum Bleiben aufgerufen. Netanyahu hatte nach dem Anschlag auf die Synagoge in Kopenhagen, ähnlich wie nach den Terroranschlägen in Frankreich, die Juden in Europa aufgerufen, nach Israel auszuwandern. Die jüdische Gemeinde in Dänemark lehnte den Aufruf ab.*

### **Can Jews just pick up and move?**

(...) While the events in Copenhagen were unfolding, a cemetery in France was discovered to have been desecrated days earlier, with some 250 headstones vandalized and overturned. Across the ocean over the weekend -- in Madison, Wisconsin -- dozens of Jewish homes were sullied with spray-painted swastikas and anti-Semitic slurs.(...) Israelis do not experience anti-Semitism. Seeing Arab terrorism as distinct from the Jew-hatred of the Nazi era, they feel secure in who they are, in spite of incessant war. Their hunger for adventures away from home is a combination of national wander-lust and youthful rootlessness. As for the Jews of Europe: Rather than viewing them as blind and foolish for not seeing the writing on the wall and fleeing to the state that was established in their biblical homeland -- to provide refuge and freedom from the difficulties of the Diaspora -- I have come to feel compassion for their plight and dilemma. Once a person has built a life somewhere, whether or not he was born in that place, the prospect of picking himself up and starting over can be daunting to the point of virtually impossible. (...)

Ruthie Blum, JPO, 20.02.15

### **Comment: Israel and Denmark - We are one**

(...) I am grateful for the warm expressions of sympathy that I have received from Israeli friends of Denmark. We are united in our sorrow – but also in our strong commitment to the basic values that were challenged, once again, this past weekend. As we Danes look ahead, it is essential not to draw the wrong conclusions. Regardless what the ethnic origins of the perpetrator were, and regardless of his religious beliefs, this is not about a specific religion or a specific community. I am heartened by the fact that representatives of all monotheistic faiths in Denmark have forcefully condemned these acts of terrorism. If we let those who are behind such acts drive a wedge between us – whether based on ethnicity or religion – and if we let them drive us to compromise on the fundamental values of freedom and tolerance that we hold so dear, they will have won. We cannot let that happen!

Jesper Vahr, JPO, 16.02.15

### **European Jews moving to Israel are trading anti-Semitism for racism**

(...) let's assume that thousands of Jews do decide to abandon their businesses, studies, homes and livelihoods and board rescue flights to Ben-Gurion International Airport. What will they find here? They'll see right-wing videos portraying the Israeli left as Nazi collaborators out to destroy the country. They'll learn how fortunate they are not to have come here as refugees from Eritrea or Sudan, or even as Jewish immigrants from Ethiopia. Jews who have suffered European anti-Semitism will trade it in for Israeli racism. They'll discover they've become citizens of an occupying country, the occupation that has contributed to that same anti-Semitism that made them pack their bags in the first place. And here are two other facts that European Jews should be aware of. Israel's murder rate is 1.8 per 100,000 people, while in France it's 1 per 100,000 and in Denmark 0.8. Last year, 27 people were killed in terror attacks here. In France and Denmark not a single person was. (...) You, the Jews of Europe, were taught to demand quality of life. In Israel, anyone seeking quality of life like that in Berlin is considered a traitor. And please don't confuse Israeli-ness with Jewishness. Israelis don't go crazy for foreigners even if they're Jewish. Just ask the Russians. About 150,000 of the immigrants from the former Soviet Union have left. And ask the Ethiopians, the Bukharans and the Kurds, who decades after arriving are still identified by where they came from. Of course, you're entitled to immigrate, and of course you'll receive a warm welcome at the airport.

But remember that Israel hastily swallows its immigrants. It doesn't digest them.

Zvi Bar'el, HAA, 18.02.15

### **The Wrong Message about Aliyah**

(...) In response to the latest terrorist attack against Jews in Denmark, Netanyahu made the same pitch to Jews there that he did to the Jews of France after they were attacked. He told the Jews of Europe to get out! (...) And they should make Aliyah (immigrate) en masse to Israel. (...) I am not God forbid opposed to making Aliyah. (...) Not that I am a fan of Europe. As Menachem Begin once put it, Anti-semitism is in the mother's milk of every European. (...) But the Holocaust did indeed change things. Antisemitism is not only no longer government policy, it is no longer tolerated. Unlike it was before and during the Holocaust. (...) The Antisemitism that exists in Europe today is not government policy. (...) My message to Prime Minister Netanyahu is... Yes! Urge the Jewish people to make Aliyah. But urge them to do it for the right reasons. Jews should not make Aliyah to run away. Europe of 2015 is not the Europe of 1939. They should do it because they want to live in Israel. That would be the right thing to do. Urging them to do it now – saying it is no longer safe for Jews to live there now, is not the way to relate to nations from whom you seek support.

Harry Maryles, TOI, 17.02.15

## **4. Medienquerschnitt**

### **Kein Asyl für Flüchtlinge**

#### **Four out of 5,573: Israel's illegal and immoral policy**

(...) Since July 2009, Sudanese nationals in Israel, most of whom are from the Darfur region, submitted 3,165 asylum requests. The state has responded to only 45 of them; 40 were rejected and five people received temporary resident status (...). There were 936 Sudanese who left Israel or canceled their requests (...) before they received a response, and 2,184 (...) are still waiting for an answer. With regard to asylum seekers from Eritrea the state has been using a unique tactic, aimed at justifying the high refusal rate, while implementing the same deliberate procrastination policy. Since 2009, 2,408 Eritreans have submitted asylum requests, but only four were recognized as refugees (...); 997 requests were rejected (...), 72 left Israel before being answered (...) and 1,335 are still waiting for a response. The Interior Ministry explained the rejections in a uniform fashion: "Desertion from the army does not consti-

tute grounds for granting refugee status,” since Eritrean asylum seekers inevitably note in their requests that remaining in their native land would mean serving in the army there for life. These numbers paint a grim picture of a deliberate effort by the Interior Ministry (...) to break the asylum seekers’ spirit with endless, burdensome waiting, so that the state would not have consider their requests and approve them. (...)

Editorial, HAA, 19.02.15

### **Kein Wasser für Rawabi**

#### **Israel must connect the new Palestinian city of Rawabi to the national water grid**

The new Palestinian city of Rawabi, near Ramallah, inspires envy. Not necessarily because of the extraordinary success that was achieved in planning an entire city meant to provide decent, affordable housing for thousands of Palestinian families couples, nor on account of the stunning views it affords. No, this is the envy of Israeli settlers and politicians, for whom every Palestinian success is an Israeli failure. (...) Rawabi (...) has been waiting for months to be connected to the national water grid. Around 1,000 apartments that have been purchased there are move-in ready, but for a lack of running water. (...) Israel’s Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories is in favor of connecting Rawabi to the water grid. It would not affect the security balance and would provide an excellent solution to the housing shortage in the West Bank. The cabinet must issue an immediate order to carry out the connection and allow home buyers to move in without further delay.

Editorial, HAA, 17.02.15

### **“Hilfe” für Homosexuelle**

#### **Conversion therapy: Jerusalem, unite to fight prejudice against LGBTQ Jews**

There is a practice that proponents suggest can “straighten out” gay people. You would think we had left such pseudo-science in the dark ages. But you would be wrong. Fifteen years into the 21st century, this dehumanizing and dangerous perspective is alive and well. Later this month, in fact, one session of a conference to be held in Jerusalem will include presentations from so-called conversion therapy experts who will suggest homosexuality is a “condition” to be “cured.” (...) As Jews, we know what (...) it means to struggle for acceptance. Our experience demands we open our hearts and our minds to be welcoming to all. It demands we recognize that what unites us in our shared humanity is far greater than

what divides us. It demands we embrace the diversity that is so important to Jerusalem now and in the future. (...) If you think this issue does not affect you, think again. (...) Now is the moment to boldly look forward to how we can create a more respectful, welcoming future for Jerusalem, for Israel and for the Jewish people. The challenges we face today demand nothing less.

Lynn Schusterman, HAA, 16.02.15

### **Millionen-Urteil gegen Palästinenser**

#### **NGO silence on PLO terror verdict**

A federal court in New York this week issued a landmark decision in the case of Sokolow v. PLO, ruling in favor of the victims of war crimes and crimes against humanity.(...) This decision marks an important milestone in holding Palestinian terrorists and officials accountable for their campaign of atrocities against civilians. (...) One would expect human rights and international justice NGOs and activists, who have campaigned on these issues for decades, to support the trial and rejoice at the jury’s decision. Instead, the international and Israeli human rights network has been virtually absent. (...) From their silence, one could reasonably conclude that NGOs and their officials were stunned and upset by the verdict. (...) The New York decision, however, throws a major wrench into the NGO strategy by finding that the PLO and the Palestinian Authority were intimately involved in war crimes against civilians. If anything, this case may force the ICC prosecutor to issue indictments against Palestinian officials (...)

Anne Herzberg, JPO, 24.02.15

### **10 Jahre friedlicher Widerstand in Bil’in**

#### **A decade of civil disobedience in my West Bank village**

On February 20, 2005, we, residents of the West Bank Palestinian village of Bil’in, set forth, accompanied by supporters from around the world, and marched to the west side of the village. Israeli army bulldozers had begun uprooting olive trees there and wiping out the place that had shaped our memories and those of our ancestors. (...) Since then, we have organized 521 weekly Friday demonstrations and another 80 at other times. The protests are still taking place. (...) We are simple people and are not large in number, but from the first moment, we refused to accept the reality the occupation was imposing on us through the separation barrier, with its route planned to run through Bil’in and neighboring villages. And despite the range of points of view

of village residents, everyone agreed on a common goal: persistent opposition to the fence, until it came down. (...)The recruitment of our friends from abroad in our struggle made things easier for us — as did the fact that Israeli activists joined us. (...) The second step in turning Bil'in into a symbol of the Palestinian popular struggle to such an extent that the villagers have been dubbed the "Palestinian Gandhis" was the use of art, theater, sports and music at the protests to illustrate the disaster that the construction of the fence was bringing upon us. (...) All of us much act to change the bitter reality.(...) We will continue to strive for humaneness to prevail. Even those who have not come to the village up to now are invited to join in and taste the sweetness of success.

Abdullah Abu Rahmeh, HAA, 26.02.15

HAA = Haaretz

JED = JediothAhronoth / Ynetnews

JPO = Jerusalem Post

IHY = Israel HaYom

TOI = Times of Israel

GLO = Globes

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