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Trump im Amt

Schon wenige Tage nach dem Amtsantritt von US-Präsident Donald Trump kündigte Israels Regierungschef Benjamin Netanyahu an, alle bisherigen Beschränkungen für die israelische Bautätigkeit in Ostjerusalem aufzuheben. Die Stadtverwaltung gab zunächst den Bau von 566 neuen Wohnungen für jüdische Israelis in Ostjerusalem bekannt. Zudem sollen 2500 Wohnungen im Westjordanland errichtet werden. Der von der Siedlerpartei Habayit Hayehudi verfolgte Plan, die Siedlung Ma'ale Adumim und anschließend weitere Teile des Westjordanlandes zu annektieren, soll bis zum Treffen von Netanyahu und Trump aufgeschoben werden, das für Mitte Februar in Washington angesetzt ist. Netanyahu ließ durchblicken, dass das Atomabkommen mit Teheran Priorität für ihn hat. Unklar bleibt, ob der neue Chef im Weißen Haus sein Versprechen an Israels Regierung wahr machen wird und die US-Botschaft von Tel Aviv nach Jerusalem verlegen lässt.

Is Trump already walking back his Jerusalem embassy promise? Let's hope he is

(...) Relocating its embassy to Jerusalem would mean the U.S. taking a partisan stance on a central and sensitive issue, a source of controversy between Israel and the Palestinians, and between Israel and the international community. The future status of Jerusalem is among the core issues of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (...). Its national, religious and symbolic meanings have already led to violence

erupting due to unilateral steps taken in the city. (...) It is not by chance that, as of today, not a single country has an embassy in Jerusalem. (...) Any American decision to (...) relocate the embassy will certainly backfire. With the stagnation of the peace process (...) the embassy move could have dire consequences. Not least among those possible consequences: Escalation and violence between Israel and the Palestinians. Damage to the relationships that Israel has managed to gradually develop and deepen with some of its Arab neighbors. If President Trump really wants to have Israel's back, as he's often said he does, he should focus his energy on promoting peace, rather than on taking actions like moving the U.S. embassy that will distance its achievement even further.

Dr. Nimrod Goren, HAA, 23.01.17

The president's 3 promises

(...) Trump comes to power with three impossible promises (...): to transfer power from Washington to the people, to put America first and to make America great again, meaning to return it to its former glory. The U.S. is the most important democracy in the world (...) There is no other country in which (...) the public is involved in the selection of so many officeholders who have an impact on their lives, in which there are so many nongovernmental organizations that express the needs of the individual, and within which anyone can be president. (...) no public can fill all the positions of power by itself, and doing so

would almost certainly result in anarchy (...) If the focus will be on America looking inward, with a preference for "Made in the USA" (...) then perhaps America will become a country with regional influence, but not of international significance. That (...) certainly will not return America to its former greatness. American's transition into an international power in the first half of the 20th century stemmed from its willingness to play in the global court. Trump will need to choose between returning America to its former glory (...) and "America first," which calls for America's withdrawal from the world stage, and he may find himself unable to realize either one.

Yossi Beilin, IHY, 22.01.17

Trump and Israel: Wait for the meeting

U.S. President Donald Trump's (...) inauguration speech (...) did not shine a spotlight on the president's goals in the international arena, aside from declaring his commitment to fighting radical Islamic terrorism (...) The possibility of relocating the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem was not mentioned either. (...) even more questions arise on the matter of Iran and the nuclear deal. (...) This matter, too, will be at the center of the new president's meeting with the prime minister, who has said there are "various ways" to undo the Iran nuclear deal. The statement itself should not be taken at face value, in other words as it pertains to the formal framework of the deal, but by what it means; not just regarding the ways to stunt Iranian efforts to acquire a nuclear bomb or a coordinated response to Iranian violations, but the issues neglected by the deal, which right now are a more clear and present danger than the nuclear issue. These issues, of course, are Iran's ballistic missile program, its terrorist activities and its hegemonic aspirations, evidenced among other things by Tehran-backed Shiite invasion of large swaths of the Middle East, and the possibility that Hezbollah will attempt to open a new front with Israel by establishing a foothold on the Golan Heights.

Zalman Shoval, IHY, 23.01.17

What Trump can do for Mideast peace on day one

(...) the incoming president would be wise to look back to some old plays and also to make some small bets as a way to build trust between the parties and lay the groundwork for real progress. (...) We have seen that even when you have a White House intent on reaching an agreement on this conflict, it all depends on the parties' willingness to

compromise on the most difficult issues. (...) there are measures that Mr. Trump can support on day one that may not solve the whole crisis but can (...) foster trust between Israel and the Palestinian Authority. This would require a mix of reviving old arrangements even as it allows for some new approaches. (...) In 2005, President George W. Bush sent a letter to Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon (...) Written in the context of Israel's unilateral withdrawal from Gaza, the letter recognized the reality of settlements. (...) It was (...) unrealistic to expect Israel to uproot the largest civilian areas located near the Green Line, known as the settlement "blobs." (...) by returning to this notion of treating the settlement blocs near the Green Line differently, Mr. Trump would be making a clear and powerful statement to Israel, the Palestinian Authority and the world that contrary to UN Resolution 2443, there is an arrangement for Israel's settlement policy that is consistent with a two-state vision. (...) By reviving the Bush position, the U.S. can reinsert a more reasonable position into the process, one that can facilitate the return of both Israel and the Palestinians to the negotiating table. (...)

Jonathan A. Greenblatt, TOI, 24.10.17

Trump and Israel: The wrong man at the right time

It's interesting to see that beneath the Israeli government's enthusiasm about Donald Trump hides fear, even if still as a conqueror. (...) The fear actually derives from the expectation that he will indeed turn out dedicated to Israel and do everything he said he would. (...) Netanyahu knows what right-wingers know deep in their hearts: It's easy to spread illusions about the territories and rely on players like the Obama administration as an explanation for preventing annexation. (...) Israel (...) won't survive in the region if it follows a belligerent and unilateral policy. (...) the Saudis, Egyptians, Jordanians and of course the Palestinians won't accept a unilateral annexation of land, and certainly not with the change in Jerusalem's status. And a confrontation with the Islamic world over the holy of holies is something even the United States can't save Israel from. (...) Trump is the wrong man at the right time. His tenure will be helpful in making Republicans and enthusiastic Israelis realize that reality is more diverse than his vocabulary.

Avi Shilon, HAA, 26.01.17

Trump's week of independence

One of the most entrenched traditions in American politics takes place every time a party loses the White House: The new president goes out of his way to send a message of reconciliation and healing, even as he or she articulates a new vision according to his own world view. (...) President Donald Trump has departed from this tradition. Trump's (...) goal has been to deliver on his campaign pledge to present a radical alternative to the Obama years and undo the legacy of the 44th president. Through executive actions and draft legislation, Trump is trying to erase the past eight years from the public's collective memory. (...) this strategy of pursuing major reform without first conducting an extensive review and prioritizing the goals is risky and prone to complications. (...) Trump may not be able to act so swiftly. (...)

Prof. Abraham Ben-Zvi, IHY, 30.01.17

Tote bei Räumung des Beduinendorfs Umm al-Hiran

Bei Auseinandersetzungen zwischen Polizisten und Beduinen aus dem staatlich nicht anerkannten Dorf Umm al-Hiran sind zwei Menschen getötet worden. Nach Angaben der Polizei wurde ein Beduine erschossen, als er die zur Räumung des Dorfes eingesetzten Sicherheitskräfte mit einem Auto rammen wollte. Einwohner widersprachen dieser Darstellung. Der Fahrer des Autos, ein beliebter Mathematiklehrer, habe die Kontrolle über das Auto verloren, erst nachdem Polizisten grundlos auf ihn geschossen hätten. Die Polizisten waren in das staatlich nicht anerkannte Dorf im Negev gekommen, um die ohne Baugenehmigung errichteten Häuser zu zerstören. Die rund 700 Einwohner Umm al-Hirans, die 1956 vom damaligen Militärgouvernement dort angesiedelt wurden, ohne dass ihr Dorf jedoch vom Staat offiziell anerkannt wurde, sollen gegen ihren Willen in die nahegelegene Ortschaft Hura umgesiedelt werden. Die Menschenrechtsorganisation Adalah, die die Beduinen vor Gericht vertritt, kritisierte den Vorfall. "Das israelische Rechtssystem und die Regierung sind verantwortlich für die Tötung in dem Dorf", hieß es in einer Stellungnahme. "Die Entscheidung des Höchsten Gerichts, dem Staat die Zerstörung eines seit 60 Jahren existierenden Dorfes zu erlauben, um auf den Ruinen einen jüdischen Ort namens Hiran zu errichten, ist eine seiner bisher rassistischsten Entscheidungen."

We give carrots and get the stick

Bedouins deserve equality as citizens of the State of Israel, but they cannot continue their blatant disregard of the law. To receive the fruits of our democracy, one must follow its laws, pay taxes and not squat on state-owned land. Frustration. That is what everyone feels about how the state has been coping with the Bedouin community in the Negev over the years (...). All in all, the regulation of the Bedouin settlement in the Negev is progressing. (...) No one denies that the Bedouin are Israeli citizens. Equal in rights, (...) they are equal in obligations too (...) the national government's share in the Bedouin authorities' budget is 36% higher than in development towns. Property taxes, on the other hand, are significantly lower. It all could have ended differently, had the Arab MKs chosen to support the integration of the Bedouin. To encourage them to accept the fact that the state has given them rights. But they chose to add fuel to the fire. It could be different if the state understands that time has run out, and that it must continue its plan to modernize the Bedouins. To enforce its laws and offer its resources. By stick and carrot.

Smadar Bat Adam, IHY, 19.01.17

Umm al-Hiran: A cautionary tale of an Israeli government emboldened by Trump

(...) The devastation in Umm al-Hiran (...) was a sign of an Israel increasingly unwilling to accept ethnic and religious pluralism in its society, and it ran counter to the liberal values commonly embraced by North American Jews. (...) Umm al-Hiran teaches us that as North American Jews, it is our responsibility to serve as watchdogs over an increasingly right-wing Israeli government that is likely to be further emboldened by the Trump administration. (...) The police's characterization of the death of Erez Levy as the result of an ISIS-motivated attack, a claim that appears to be based solely on the newspaper clippings found in his home, frames the events of January 18th in the language of security and shifts the discussion from that of citizens protesting the demolition of their homes to that of global terrorism and a threat to Israel. (...) Beyond police efforts to connect al-Kiyan to ISIS, the government's timing to carry out this demolition order is also concerning. This order was issued by Israel's High Court in 2015 and the demolitions were reportedly supposed to have begun in November 2016. So why on January 18, two days before Donald Trump's inauguration with the world's attention focused on the transition of power in the United States, did the police officers

and equipment finally arrive to carry out the demolitions? The Israeli government has undergone an extreme shift to the right during the period of the Obama administration and we cannot predict how it will act now under Trump. (...) Now more than ever, we must advocate for diversity, equality and pluralism in Israel in a political environment that, as it turns ever more rightwards, becomes more and more hostile to these values and to the civil rights of its minority populations.

Rebecca Arian and Arel Jarus-Hakak, HAA, 24.01.17

Being a second-class citizen in Israel

The police's insistence to hold on to the body of Yaqoub Moussa Abu al-Qiyan, until it was released for burial following a High Court order, does not indicate a mishap or insensitivity, but a common perception, not to mention prejudice. It wouldn't be baseless to say that had he been a Jewish terrorist, his body would have been released for burial shortly after the incident and the police would not have imposed restrictions on the acceptable mourning ceremonies. (...) the feeling of deprivation of the Bedouins, as well as all of Israel's Arab citizens, did not begin at Umm al-Hiran and will not end there. (...) This war of versions comes down to a reference which was not noted in al-Qiyan's Israeli identity card, but is engraved in the heart of the identity of Israel's Arab citizens – "second-class citizens." That is the feeling of the Umm al-Hiran residents who refused to evacuate, and that is also the feeling of those who chose to evacuate. (...) Israel's Arabs have never been a top priority for Israel's governments throughout the generations (...) many communities in the Arab sector suffer from distress and neglect. (...) Large parts of the public will identify with the deprivation of their Arab neighbor and condemn racist comments against him, but those same citizens will find it difficult to identify with him when he raises the Palestinian Authority's flag. (...)

Tami Arad, YED, 26.01.17

Israel's police minister: a one-man horror show

(...) Public Security Minister Gilad Erdan. (...) has turned into a one-man horror show. When the blazes broke out around the country he stationed himself in front of microphones, his eyes brimming with fire, and declared a wave of nationalistically-inspired arson attacks (...). His words put the Jewish population into a situation of paranoid rage, and the Arab population into one of petrifying fear. (...) A few hours after the events in the Bedouin village of Umm

al-Hiran he proclaimed that Yakub Abu al-Kiyan was a terrorist with links to Islamic State, and that he had purposely run over a policeman in an act of terror. Repeated viewings of the video (...) and the autopsy (...) showed that the Bedouin teacher had received no medical attention and bled to death after 20 minutes. (...) The determination with which politicians of Erdan's type hold onto their lies in light of their patent absurdity is a widespread worldwide phenomenon (...). If we don't exile Erdan from public life because of his unruly behavior, we will allow the continuation of our destruction as a fair and just society. A civil protest calling for his dismissal (...) will signal to those politicians who have not yet made their mark that the rules of the game are changing, and spreading fabricated plots and irresponsible accusations is no longer acceptable. All we want (...), is within reach. A determined struggle against a minister who spreads baseless accusations will be the first round, the hardest of all, in turning around the vile wheel of populism that is poisoning our lives. (...)

Iris Leal, HAA, 26.01.17

Arab lawmakers, not collaborators

(...) What do you want from the Arab lawmakers? On one hand deafening screaming and heart-wrenching scenes of people whose lives have been destroyed, claiming that Arab lawmakers aren't looking after the problems of ordinary Arab citizens since they devote all their time and energy to the Palestinian problem. On the other hand, when these lawmakers roll up their sleeves to protect their people from the willfulness of the government, accusations that they are incorrigible inciters are hurled at them. (...) here is the outline of an Arab leader that the government is bent on fostering among you: He's a collaborator. (...) Here is what the government would like to hear: "What is your response, loyal Arabs, to the demolition of your houses? We thank the State of Israel. And if we build a Jewish settlement on the ruins? Even more gratitude. (...) What an idyll exists here between he who's seen destruction and he who builds on top of the ruins, between the uprooted and the one planted in his place. (...) Most of the Palestinian nation was being expelled from its homeland and the world believed the expelled were the criminals. And here, 70 years later, history repeats itself. A Jew arises on the ruins of an Arab. (...)

Odeh Bisharat, HAA, 29.01.17

Debatte über Bericht des staatlichen Kontrolleurs zum Gazakrieg 2014

Mitschnitte von Debatten, die das israelische Sicherheitskabinett im Vorfeld der Bodenoffensive vor zweieinhalb Jahren im Gazastreifen abhielt, und die in Auszügen an die Presse durchsickerten, deuten auf grundlegende Meinungsverschiedenheiten zwischen dem früheren Wirtschaftsminister Naftali Bennett und dem damaligen Verteidigungsminister Moshe Yaalon. Bennett forderte offenbar schon Ende Juni 2014 einen Einsatz der Bodentruppen, um die Bedrohung der geheimen Tunnel zwischen Gaza und Israel zu konfrontieren, während Yaalon gezögert haben soll. Die Offensive begann erst gut eine Woche später. Den Berichten zufolge, hätten dem militärischen Geheimdienst Indikationen dafür vorgelegen, dass die islamistische Hamas nicht an einer Konfrontation interessiert gewesen sei. Ob die Mitschnitte veröffentlicht werden sollen, liegt in den Händen des Staatskontrolleurs Joseph Shapira.

Learning from mistakes

(...) While we understand the need to protect classified information, it is essential that the non-classified parts of the state comptroller report be published as soon as possible. Only through its publication is there hope that the report will lead to a real change in the security cabinet's decision-making process. (...) Unpublished reports are quickly forgotten. (...) Seventy-two Israelis (...) were killed. Yet the achievements of the prolonged incursion were limited. (...) Within months after the war, Hamas managed to rebuild its tunnel network. (...) A picture emerges of a dysfunctional decision-making process. (...) In every war or military operation mistakes are made. We are all human and people make mistakes, especially at times of war. The difference between effective and ineffective leadership is that the former learns from its mistakes while the latter does not. The next conflict with Hamas-ruled Gaza is not a question of if but one of when. Publication of the state comptroller's report will increase the chances that Israel's leaders will not repeat the mistakes made in the war of 2014.

Editorial, JPO, 24.01.17

How the Security Cabinet should really work

(...) in regards to Gaza, both in 2014 and today all we have is a security interest. We have no territorial, economic or political interest regarding who will control Gaza. (...) The Israeli security interest (...) is faced by Hamas' interest, and it has only one interest in the coming years—to remain in power. For

that purpose, it needs two things: an improvement in the economic situation and international legitimacy. The conflict of interests between Israel and Hamas is not big, which is highly significant when it comes to the question of whether to launch a military operation or whether the conflict could be prevented in a different way. (...) What the ministers should do is always ask one opening question: What were the other alternatives you considered and why did you favor the one you just presented to us? If this question is not asked, it creates a dangerous situation in which the cabinet allegedly has only two options—to approve the army's plan or reject it. (...) A full presentation of alternatives will require the army to elaborate on each alternative. (...) On a strategic level, the more one goes into details, the more the discussion becomes superficial rather than thorough. (...) an extension of cabinet discussions, particularly at times of fighting, creates a huge burden on the chief of staff and senior army officials, who should rather dedicate these precious hours to issues under their responsibility. (...) from the leaks it seems that the comptroller missed the most important thing too: addressing the quality of processes in the cabinet discussions.

Giora Eiland, YED; 25.01.17

When the tail wags the dog

(...) According to the comptroller, the underground tunnel threat was not presented to the cabinet in full and in a timely manner; the IDF did not have a suitable plan to confront the tunnels and depended primarily on improvisations; and worse of all, Israel was dragged into a military operation without defining its desired long-term solution in Gaza. (...) The comptroller places the brunt of the blame on the political echelon. (...) The IDF, meanwhile, is criticized for the gap between advance intelligence warnings (...) about the tunnel threat and the lack of an applicable operative countermeasure, and it is criticized for its management of the war (...). Sounder preparation and management of the operation could have led to better results, in less time and at a lower cost. (...) Israel has still not defined what it wants from Gaza strategically. This is not only crucial to how we define the other side and the way we engage it (...), it has to be the cornerstone of all future IDF operational plans regarding Gaza. In actuality – during Protective Edge and today as well – the order is backward and crooked: The IDF devises plans, and the political echelon derives its goals from them. (...)

Yoav Limor, IHY, 25.01.17

Israeli watchdog's 2014 Gaza war report is a deceptive diversion

(...) The public debate taking place (...) is merely a smokescreen covering up the real crimes of the assault (...) this report whitewashes the horrible mass killing and destruction in Gaza, while allowing Israel to claim that it is examining itself and its wars. This is an unimportant report and debating it is an illusory escape into minutiae. (...) the point is that Israel executed a criminal, unjustified attack on a helpless Gaza population, and to date no one has taken responsibility for it (...). A society with some moral imperatives would be addressing that, not who said what to whom in the security cabinet. (...) The Israel Defense Forces killed 366 children, 180 infants and toddlers, 247 women and 117 elderly people – what is there to criticize here? The IDF destroyed 18,000 homes and left 100,000 people homeless, (...) but the main point is for us to know who was in favor of blowing up the tunnel shafts and who wasn't. (...) This is proof that it's all gone mad; Moshe Ya'alon is the moral voice compared to Galant, while Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is a pacifist compared to Bennett. A brave state comptroller would have investigated, for example, the horrific bombings, particularly by the Israel Air Force, of homes in Gaza. (...) Without belittling the danger they pose, is the problem really just the shafts and were the tunnels the only blunder? (...) Gideon Levy, HAA, 25.01.17

Medienquerschnitt

Ermittlungen gegen Netanyahu

Affair 2000

(...) No matter how badly the conversation smells, it is not certain that we are talking of criminal rather than ethical offenses. The answer to this question is, apparently, a function of whether what was said was meant in earnest or whether it was merely a ploy on the part of one or both to incriminate the other. Since the conversation was recorded by Netanyahu, or at his behest, it cannot be ruled out that there is some truth in his claim that he had no intention of going through with the deal (...). It is not clear why for over two years he did not make use of the recordings. (...) Leaving aside ideology, the reported problematic conduct by Netanyahu and members of his family over the years – to which Affair 1000 (...) and Affair 2000 have recently been added – cannot be

brushed off merely as personal persecution by political rivals and law enforcement. (...) the evidence about his attempts to manipulate the media must lead to his immediate departure from the Communications Ministry (...).

Susan Hattis Rolef, JPO, 22.01.17

The freedom to write

(...) I found myself at Yedioth Ahronoth. I heard that they were looking for different opinions for the point-counterpoint column, and I offered my services. I wasn't called to the newspaper, so I am undoubtedly not part of the "bribe" allegedly offered to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. (...) Every time, I was surprised by the fact that I wasn't being censored by Arnon "Noni" Mozes' "leftist" newspaper. (...) I wrote harshly against my colleagues. And every morning, I was surprised to see my column, blatant and severe, in black and white, in Noni's leftist paper. (...) Yedioth Ahronoth has an agenda. I haven't always liked it, but I could always say it out loud to the editor, and most importantly, I could write things in the newspaper in a different spirit. (...) In Yedioth's weekend supplement, not a single article is printed before being approved by the reporter. I learned that I can demand to change a headline. I learned to shout. I learned that I have full journalistic freedom. Yes, yes, in Noni's leftist newspaper, the one I didn't want to bring into my home, the one that became my professional home. And the owner of this newspaper, even if he wanted to, cannot negotiate away the integrity, courage and professionalism that belong to me, my friends and diligent and talented editors and reporters.

Yifat Erlich, YED, 18.01.17

Pariser Friedensgipfel

A farce in Paris

The conference in Paris belongs to the legacy of U.S. President Barack Obama's administration: A moment before it all falls apart, strike a blow at the Jews. (...) We have grown far too accustomed to this intellectual disgrace, having heard it from U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry in his last speech, from Hollande on Sunday evening and from other leaders (...), according to which there is a correlation between the settlement enterprise and terrorism. We must not agree with this lie, which indirectly justifies the murder of Jews and ignores the reasons for the murder of Christians on European land. This approach is a recipe for the defeat of Europe at the

hands of those seeking to destroy it. (...) The oldest conflict, which began several hundreds of years prior, is that between Islam and Christianity. (...) the French have submitted to the Muslims. They are seeking to liberate Jerusalem from its rightful owners and to transfer it to Muslim occupiers, in the hope that they will be spared and that the killing campaign in the streets of Europe will stop. What a shameful defeat. (...) The problem with the French Left is the thought that the Jewish grasp on Zion is similar to French settlement in Algeria. Jerusalem was the capital of the Kingdom of Israel, and the biblical prophets spoke there of their visions of peace when the land of Paris was still settled by tribes of Celtic descent.
Dror Eydar, IHY, 16.01.17

Legales Haschisch

Israel Cannabis: Under the Hood

(...) The recreational cannabis market is hitting some major developmental milestones and is no doubt a force to be reckoned with. (...) It's strictly medical...with the promise of export on the horizon. (...) Government funded research is the driver of the Israeli cannabis market. (...) It is the absence of the noise that a recreational market produces that allows for a whole lot of science to unfold, and unfold quickly. (...) you'd be hard pressed to find a state with a more supportive environment towards medical cannabis study, active government funding and decades of maturity in the field. (...) In the near future, we are going to see a host of new medical products and innovative business solutions catering to the cannabis industry based upon Israel's unique ability to put science to work. (...) We call this 'Israel-under-the-hood.' Simply put, Israel has the resources, the know-how and the framework to sustain the growing R&D demands of such a large market. (...) Israel's medical cannabis program, which began back in the mid-90's, was a global first of it's kind. (...) It is Israel's positive regulatory environment, commitment to scientific progress and that has allowed for such a wide foundation of research and development to grow and drive data beyond the the noise and pressures of a recreational market. (...)
Clifton Flack, TOI, 26.01.17

Internationaler Holocaust-Gedenktag

Our duty to remember

In recent decades, Holocaust denial has reached extraordinary and worrying proportions. (...) While the older forms of this phenomenon simply denied the events, the numbers and the historical facts, the newer, more sophisticated forms are distorting history and the memory of the Holocaust by portraying its victims as the evil protagonists. (...) Given this reality, in which Israel is dealing with a challenging propaganda front, International Holocaust Remembrance Day stands out as one of the rare diplomatic successes won by the State of Israel in recent years. (...) An important message is hidden in the marking of International Holocaust Remembrance Day on Jan. 27. This was the date that the Red Army entered Auschwitz and liberated the remaining survivors from the concentration camp. Even the greatest admirers of the Warsaw Ghetto fighters (...) cannot ignore the fact that it was the free world (...) that rescued the remaining survivors from the fate of the other 6 million.. (...) As others mark our tragedy, so too is it our duty to honestly and fairly recognize the tragedies of others. (...) More than on any other day, Jan. 27 is, for us, a good opportunity not only to thank the world (...) but also to engage in some introspection, and perhaps to reach a clear, determined decision that we too must recognize the Holocausts of others, without bringing politics into the equation.

Dr. Eyal Levin, IHY, 26.01.17

Annexion von Teilen des Westjordanlandes

The dangers of annexing the West Bank

Last week the group Commanders for Israel's Security kicked off a campaign warning about the dangers of annexing land in the West Bank and arguing the merits of separation. The commanders, I among them, can see the reality taking form right in front of us. We seek only to warn the Zionist public against the unilateral annexation that the government is initiating. In the name of messianic nationalism, these steps threaten the Zionist vision of a democratic state for the Jewish people with equal rights for all. (...) a "one state" future can already be seen in "united Jerusalem." Once a developing city with a decisive Jewish majority recognized de facto by the international community, it has become a city marred by rifts and violence, a desperately poor city losing its Jewish majority and the international

recognition it wants so badly. (...) Because of Jewish migration from the city, because of its many tensions, within two decades Israel's capital will clearly become a city with a Jewish minority. If the Palestinians change their policy and decide to take part in local elections, the mayor and most of the city council will be Palestinian. (...) The day-to-day friction and Palestinians' freedom of movement in Jerusalem create opportunities for terrorism, reflected in the fact that the city's Palestinian residents share in the struggle to create a state with East Jerusalem as its capital. A unilateral annexation of the West Bank wouldn't make the Palestinians forgo their national dream. In the absence of separation and a security fence, it would be all the easier for them to ply violent resistance throughout "united Israel." (...) What about Gaza? Can we simply ignore its 2 million people (...)? What about the UN report predicting Gaza's socioeconomic collapse by 2020? What about the Palestinian refugees? Could Israstine, a country with two peoples living together, prevent the refugees from returning, at least in part? (...) Who would finance the welfare systems of the binational state? Who would take care of the millions who joined the circle of poverty? (...) Immediately after the Six-Day War, Leibowitz wrote that annexing the territories would destroy Israel as the state of the Jewish people. It would bring destruction on the entire Jewish people, bring down Israel's socioeconomic structure and sully the people – Jews and Arabs alike. And all that would happen even without the Arabs becoming a majority.

Shaul Arieli, HAA, 27.01.17

Unilateral actions will not advance the peace process

(...) Annexation has been the de facto policy of Netanyahu in recent years and especially since the formation of his current coalition. (...) any step toward annexation has explosive potential and must be weighed carefully. (...) It will not improve the lives of residents in Ma'aleh Adumim in any way but only serve to antagonize the international community(...) as well as regional partners such as Jordan, Egypt and the PA. No one has the moral right to advance empty provocations at the expense of the vision of peace. A future State of Israel with internationally recognized borders is at risk and with it the very existence of Israel as both a Jewish and democratic state. (...) Anyone genuinely committed to supporting the people of Ma'aleh Adumim, along with the other settlement blocs, should work toward a peace framework that brings Jewish settlements within the

universally acknowledged borders of the State of Israel. (...) unilateral actions of this sort not only put Ma'aleh Adumim's implicit legitimacy at risk, but also the future status of east Jerusalem's Jewish neighborhoods. (...) If this proposal goes ahead, Netanyahu's hypocrisy and reckless populism will become visible to the international community and he will make Israel appear as the side that derails the peace process, and risk increasing tensions as well as retaliatory moves seeking international recognition of a Palestinian state outside of a bilateral agreement. This de facto and de jure process of annexation has been out of control for too long, threatening some of the most sensitive areas in this land. (...)

Amir Peretz, JPO, 30.01.17

Why I, as a proud Israeli, want the world to boycott us

(...) I (...) call upon Israeli citizens who belong to the peace camp to appeal to the international community to impose a boycott on Israel. (...) I am connected body and soul to this country, where I was born 72 years ago and to which I gave my best years in professional and public office, and I am still not willing to break free of it. (...) the state does (...) the nationalist and racist fanaticism of the government (...) is becoming more and more extreme, and contrary to the values I hold most dear. These iniquities are an internal concern of Israeli society and I have the right – and for now, at least, also the possibility – to fight for their correction from within society. (...) the fact that Israel consistently violates the conventions of international humanitarian law (...) justifies intervention by the international community. These conventions (...) were written in the wake of lessons learned from World War II (...). They were intended to reduce harm, and to protect the civilian populations living in occupied lands. (...) it is with a huge amount of emotional difficulty and pain that I make this call for Israelis to appeal to the international community to impose a boycott. Furthermore, I am doing this only for political-pragmatic reasons. (...) Israel is not the country that most deserves to be hit by a boycott. (...) Israel, however, is a country whose economy is dependent on the world and its conduct. An economic boycott – or at least sanctions like those imposed on Iran – would almost certainly influence its policy. It (...) doesn't matter where exactly justice lies in this conflict – there's no doubt that the greater strength lies with Israel's military might, not the Palestinians with their knife attacks and truck-rammings – Israel is the side that

is determining the reality on the ground and altering it irreparably. (...) Let's do this with one single, simple desire: to ensure our existence in this place (...), our lives. (...)

Ilana Hammerman, HAA, 29.01.17

HAA = Haaretz

YED = JediothAhronoth / Ynetnews

JPO = Jerusalem Post

IHY = Israel HaYom

TOI = Times of Israel

GLO = Globes

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