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**1. Israelisch-deutsche Regierungskonsultationen**

*Komplett in Ordnung sind die israelisch-deutschen Beziehungen nicht, trotzdem wollen die beiden Regierungen wieder gemeinsam ihre Probleme angehen. Bundeskanzlerin Angela Merkel kam mit ihrem Kabinett nach Jerusalem. Im Mai letzten Jahres waren die seit 2008 regelmäßig abgehaltenen Konsultationen offiziell aus Termingründen ausgefallen. In Israel vermutete man hingegen, dass die Absage der Kanzlerin mit einem kurz zuvor von der Knesset (Parlament) verabschiedeten Gesetz zusammenhing, das es ermöglicht, ungenehmigt errichtete Siedlungen rückwirkend zu legalisieren. Israels Siedlungspolitik im besetzten Westjordanland gab wiederholt Anlass zum Streit zwischen Jerusalem und Berlin. Die Kanzlerin äußerte sich im Frühjahr „besorgt“ angesichts der Eskalation im Gazastreifen. Aktuell droht die Räumung von Khan al-Ahmar. Berlin warnte vor dem Abriss des Beduinendorfes und dem Bau einer neuen Siedlung, die „die Umsetzbarkeit einer Zwei-Staaten-Lösung“ erschweren würde. Zentraler Konfliktpunkt zwischen beiden Staaten blieb das Atomabkommen mit Iran, auf das Israels Regierungschef Benjamin Netanyahu jüngst in seiner Rede vor der UN-Generalversammlung einging. Israel drängt zu Veränderungen des Abkommens, allen voran sollten bessere Kontrollen möglich sein.*

**The contrasts between Merkel’s first and current visit to Israel**

The contrast between German Chancellor Angela Merkel’s first visit to Israel and the current one is significant. (...) Merkel came to Israel for the first time in January 2006 when she was the head of a new coalition government. (...) At that time Merkel was in a position of strength in both Germany and Europe. Those positions have greatly eroded in the past few years. (...) Merkel spoke about the friendship between the two countries. Yet in 2006 there were strong indications of unease among the German population about Israel. (...) Merkel was determined to maintain a pro-Israeli position. Subsequent visits of delegations of German ministers for consultations between the two governments over the years have been additional positive signs. (...) Much of that ‘normalcy’ has since been undone. Like other Western European countries, Germany accepted large numbers of immigrants from Muslim countries. (...) The situation deteriorated further when in September 2015 the German government began to pursue a welcome policy for Middle Eastern and North African refugees. (...) One result of this policy was the rise of a new anti-Islam party, AfD. (...) On the average there are four antisemitic incidents registered in Germany every day. (...) The welcome policy has greatly increased the doubts about a “normal” future for Jews in Germany. (...) During Merkel’s earlier

visits to Israel, collaboration between the two countries was the major topic. This time, Prime Minister Netanyahu and his colleagues would fail German Jewry if they did not give the country's antisemitism problems also a significant place on the meeting's agenda.

Manfred Gerstenfeld, JPO, 01.10.18

### **Merkel stands with Israel**

Those in Israel who are angry over Germany's efforts to salvage the 2015 nuclear deal with Iran should keep in mind a few important things: Even back when Germany's foreign minister was Joseph "Joschka" Fischer – considered one of Israel's greatest friends – Germany was prepared to concede on the possibility of Iran arming itself with a nuclear weapon. (...) This position changed when Chancellor Angela Merkel came to power in late 2005. (...) Every time Israel intervened to ask Germany to adhere to international sanctions, Merkel responded positively according to the policy she had established: "The existence and security of Israel are part of the German national interest." With that, once it became apparent to the Germans and the rest of Europe that the Obama administration was striving for a nuclear deal with Iran no matter the cost, Berlin adapted itself to the new reality. (...) If Israel continues to provide Germany and the international community with evidence that Iran is exploiting the nuclear deal to deceive the world and funding terrorist groups across the Middle East and beyond, Merkel's commitment to Israel's security will be put to the reality test. (...)

Eldad Beck, IHY, 03.10.18

### **Angela Merkel's duplicity on Israel**

Germany is being inconsistent and duplicitous (...) on three issues: first, the German government's denial of antisemitism's true nature in Germany; second, Germany's efforts to circumvent US sanctions on Iran; and third, Germany's insistence on maintaining and even on increasing funding for UNRWA. (...) On the one hand, the German government says it won't tolerate antisemitism; on the other hand, it refuses to admit that the main source of anti-Jewish violence in Germany today is the Muslim antisemitism of Turkish immigrants and of Syrian refugees. On the one hand, Merkel says that Germany is committed to Israel's security; on the other hand, she actively undermines US sanctions against a regime that calls for Israel's annihilation and that is developing a military nuclear program. On the one hand, Germany says it

supports a two-state solution; on the other hand, it proudly bankrolls UNWRA, which constitutes the ultimate obstacle to such a solution by transmitting the refugee status to the descendants of the 1948 refugees, and by nurturing the myth of their ultimate "return" to Israel. (...)

Emmanuel Navon, JPO, 04.10.18

### **Germany's Nazi-friendly, anti-Semitic far right has a new mission: Recruiting Jews**

(...) What might at first appear like a steady march towards enlightenment has (...) taken a worrying turn over recent years. On this October 3 (...) Germany's much-praised Einheit (...) has never been in shorter supply. While difficulties have made themselves felt long before, the violent demonstrations in the southeastern city of Chemnitz this summer have shone a painfully bright light on the extensive societal divisions Germany faces today while also showcasing how disruptive a reinvigorated radical right can be, if it so chooses. (...) The sad truth is that today, the far-right Alternative for Germany party (...) can count on considerable electoral support all throughout the country. (...) The polarization wrought by this openly radical-right party continues to poison our public discourse and pit the citizens of our country against each other. This rift is unlike any other the Federal Republic has ever seen, in that it goes deeper and is much more fundamental. (...) Germany is still a strong, wealthy, and politically stable country – something we should keep in mind at the time of such a resonant national holiday as this. However, as a German and as a Jew, it pains me to see how far the divisions have progressed in our society. Once more, I am witnessing the rise of a party on the far right, and I see anti-Semitism on the rise again, not least because of it. Germany is a long way from "unity in freedom" today.

Charlotte Knobloch, HAA, 05.10.18

### **Merkel and all the men**

(...) There they were, ramrod straight, standing next to one another in similar suits: 22 men surrounding Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and the most powerful woman in the world, German Chancellor Angela Merkel. (...) The photo, which was meant to glorify and promote the crown jewel of Israel's economy, unwittingly laid bare something else entirely – the banality of erasing women from the most important arena that there is, the centers of power. The exclusion of women in this case was unintentional, without anyone expressing an opinion

on it, but it is no less dangerous, and perhaps even more dangerous, than a graphic artist sitting at an ultra-Orthodox newspaper and actively photo-shopping out the images of women. At least he recognizes their existence before deleting them. (...) It is the simple and easy dynamic of exclusion at play that continues to thrive even 100 years after the suffragettes took to the streets. It makes it possible for everyone to take comfort – in good faith and without a loss of integrity – since after all, none of the participants would have objected to the presence of women at the event. They simply weren't there. (...) Just as the presence of one Angela Merkel doesn't excuse the absence of other women, so the integration of women – even on a massive scale – in the workplace is not sufficient as long as they don't get equal pay, equal treatment and an equal place in management, on boards of directors and in decision making. (...)

Roni Bar, HAA, 09.10.18

## 2. Keine Einreise für Lara Alqasem

*Die amerikanische Studentin Lara Alqasem kämpft um ihr Recht, an der Hebräischen Universität in Jerusalem studieren zu dürfen. Die 22-Jährige war Anfang Oktober in Israel gelandet, um ein Studienjahr in Jerusalem anzutreten. Israels Behörden verdächtigen die Studentin, die propalästinensische Boykottkampagne BDS gegen Israel zu unterstützen, und verweigerten ihr deshalb die Einreise. Das Parlament hatte im letzten Jahr eine Gesetzinitiative verabschiedet, die den Aufruf zum Boykott unter Strafe stellt. Nach tagelangem Zwangsaufenthalt im Transitbereich des Flughafens Ben-Gurion hofft sie, die Einreise nach Israel auf gerichtlichem Weg zu erreichen. Berichten zufolge plante Alqasem ihr Masterstudium im Bereich Menschenrechte an der Hebräischen Universität aufzunehmen. Sie sei im Besitz eines israelischen Visums. Vertreter der Universität appellierten an die Behörden, die Studentin einreisen zu lassen. Alqasem hat palästinensische Vorfahren und war in ihrer Heimat führende Aktivistin der Organisation „Students for Justice in Palestine“ („Studenten für Gerechtigkeit in Palästina“). Nach Angaben ihres Anwalts soll sie inzwischen auf Distanz zu der Gruppierung gegangen sein und den antiisraelischen Boykott ablehnen.*

### Israel's '1984' moment in the war against BDS

One of the most intriguing characters in George Orwell's "1984" is Emmanuel Goldstein. He is the principal enemy of the state, whose organization

"The Brotherhood" is responsible for anything and everything that goes wrong. (...) Orwell hints that Goldstein may not even exist, except as an instrument of state propaganda. That is Orwell's dystopian Oceania circa 1984. In Israel circa 2018, we don't have Big Brother and Thought Police agents, but we do have Gilad Erdan and the Strategic Affairs Ministry. (...) This week he gave us a "1984"-lite movement, when he said he might reconsider the fate of Lara Alqasem – an American student who's been denied entry into Israel for her alleged BDS activities – if she is prepared to publicly declare that BDS "is illegitimate and [that] she regrets what she did on this matter." And voilà, we have our prospective Winston Smith too. (...) BDS propaganda is often ugly, and its anti-Israel propaganda relies on exaggeration and sometimes outright lies. But in no way does it pose anything even remotely resembling a threat to the State of Israel. (...) But what harm do Alqasem and student BDS activists like her really do? The answer is virtually none. Where BDS could be truly harming Israel in a way that demands the government do something is in business. If BDS' dream of convincing companies not to do business with Israel succeeded, our economy would be in serious trouble because it relies so heavily on international trade and investments. Nothing like that has happened (...). It hurts to see a respected academic or a favorite pop star decline to visit Israel – but it's emotional hurt, not a real one, and it doesn't happen very often. By most measures, Israel's standing in the world has improved in recent years. (...) Erdan's Orwellian performance this week, which was probably aimed at Likud voters more than slaying any BDS monster, is doing more harm to Israel's image than Lara Alqasem and her fellow activists could ever dream of doing.

David Rosenberg, HAA, 10.10.18

### Israeli minister should apologize, not the detained American student

(...) Israel is going from bad to worse: After it sent a 16-year-old Palestinian girl who slapped a soldier to prison for eight months and turned her into an international heroine, and after it jailed a Palestinian poet who published a poem, it is now waging all-out war against an American student who came to do an M.A. in human rights at Hebrew University. It is hard to believe that the name of the ministry that stands behind this foolish decision is the Strategic Affairs Ministry. How is a student who in the past called for a boycott of a hummus manufacturer a "strategic

matter"? (...) Alqasem told the appeals tribunal (...) that the chapter she belonged to had only a few members, about five, and that she wasn't considered a "senior" person in the national organization, which is one of the criteria for barring entry to Israel of boycott supporters. (...) "If I supported it [a boycott of Israel] I wouldn't be able to come to Israel as a student." But (...) the real damage to Israel's image and the encouragement of boycotts is by Erdan, Interior Minister Arye Dery and the rest of the thought police and political persecutors who constitute the ugliest government this country has ever known. The letter of harsh rebuke by the Committee of University Heads to Erdan is also commendable. The court should allow Alqasem to enter Israel. If anyone should apologize, it is not Alqasem, but rather the Israeli government. Editorial, HAA, 10.10.18

### **Fighting BDS activists is justified**

Perhaps the critics of Public Security Minister Gilad Erdan and the supporters of American student Lara Alqasem, who has been denied entry into Israel over her support of the boycott, divestment and sanctions movement, are right. It would have been better to avoid law enforcement measures fashioning her as the latest on-duty prisoner of Zion for the Palestinian cause. (...) On the fundamental level, Erdan is right. The (...) anti-Israeli activity is established by small, localized cells; they know that the fight to boycott Israel is decentralized, lacks a hierarchal structure, and that it's campaigners dot the landscape of Western campuses. (...) What do those who call to boycott Israel, if not to inflict serious economic, academic and cultural damage on the Jewish state, expect? (...) This is also directed at Hebrew University's board of directors, whose members ceremoniously hopped on the bandwagon calling for Alqasem's release and whose leaders even declared that academia believes in "diversity of opinion" – and therefore "raise the banner of tolerance toward those who call to boycott us." With all due respect and utmost forgiveness — at whose expense exactly? The boycott movement has made Israeli academia a primary target (...). The arrogant contempt for the fight against the BDS movement is a slap in the face of every Israeli citizen. Dr. Eithan Orkibi, IHY, 10.10.18

### **Israel's exilic existential anxiety**

Israel's founding fathers hoped that when we have our own country, where we can defend ourselves by ourselves, the existential anxiety that had

characterized us over 2,000 years of exile would disappear. But it hasn't. Our hysterical treatment of BDS supporters is not strategic in nature, it's psychological. Israeli society is living in internal contradiction. On the one hand, we champion the "we don't care what others think about us" attitude. (...) On the other hand, the new Jew is hypersensitive to what others say about him. (...) This theoretical yearning is connected to something deeper than anxiety over one's image. Armed from head to toe, protected by nuclear warheads (...), no longer a servant with no rights, but an over privileged master who has his own "Jews"—the new Jew has yet to complete the mental recovery that Israel's founding fathers wished for. (...) Being "like all other nations" means not to act out of the existential need to please, but also not out of complete disregard to the world. To stop viewing everything in the terms of "what will they say about us," but also not give ourselves a general indulgence (a pardon) because of our chosenness or past suffering. To listen to criticism without having to accept it right away, but at the same time not automatically define it as anti-Semitic. (...) Meaning, are we willing to be treated in the same way we've treated others? (...) Under the Netanyahu governments, the exilic existential anxiety has become the main characteristic of the Israeli. And if there's no existential threat, there's no choice but to make one up. (...) How did the BDS Movement become an existential threat that justifies unfounded conduct, like in the case of Lara Alqasem? The answer will not be found in the field of strategy, but in psychology.

Aviad Kleinberg, YED, 10.10.18

### **Israel's public enemy no. 1**

(...) the case of Lara Alqasem proves that Israel no longer has to work hard in order to defeat itself. Alqasem, 22, has been held for more than a week in the lockup at Ben-Gurion International Airport because she once boycotted some hummus. (...) How did the security at Ben-Gurion Airport go from being a necessary evil to a Monty Python sketch? (...) A young woman who is seeking to study in Israel is in detention on grounds that she is boycotting Israel, even though she has already declared that she does not support BDS. You have to read that sentence a few times to understand what losing one's bearings looks like. (...) Erdan is just the latest participant in the current march of folly. (...) I suggest we remember that boycotts are not a security risk, economic terror or diplomatic

terror. To argue otherwise is not just an insult to one's common sense, but also to victims of terror and real security risks. (...) Israel has a clear interest in fighting any boycott against it, but it should also consider adapting its measures to suit the cause. The arrest of young women will not eliminate the boycott movement, but rather fuel it, and questioning opponents of the occupation at Ben-Gurion Airport does not further Israel's reputation. (...) in Israel today even stating the obvious has become radical. There is no clearer indication than this of the nation's state of mind after a decade under the regime of Benjamin Netanyahu. Zehava Galon, HAA, 11.10.18

### **Stop the Orwellian detentions**

The government has painted itself into a corner over the detention of an American student who has been held at Ben-Gurion International Airport for a week. (...) Minister Gilad Erdan said that student Lara Alqasem should repudiate past actions and views that may have supported the boycott of Israel. Only then could she come to study at the Hebrew University in Israel's capital. (...) the government should reconsider this policy of telling visitors that they must pass a kind of Orwellian test of loyalty to enter Israel. (...) The detained student wanted to study at The Hebrew University, one of Israel's top institutions of higher learning. (...) When the cornerstone was laid, local Arabs, Jews and non-Jews from all over attended. (...) Today, the state's leaders increasingly forget about the need for ideas and the need to influence people through discussion and to welcome critics from abroad. Walling off the country by detaining critics would have surprised the early Zionist movement. (...) Whenever Israel has sought to ignore critics or ban ideas it has never succeeded. Israel banned the Beatles in 1965, for the nonsensical notion that they might corrupt the youth. The state sought to ban the Palestinian flag and not negotiate with Palestinians under the false impression that ignoring them would make their national aspirations evaporate. But those aspirations grew ever stronger in the 1970s and 80s. (...) The current policy appears to have gone too far, catching in the net of detentions numerous voices who are merely critical of Israel, not supporters of violence. (...) Israel has nothing to hide. The government should let its critics in and show them why they are wrong. Editorial, JPO, 11.10.18

### **Big Brother at right wing's service**

(...) states monitor simple acts on the social networks and (...) they could be used against users in formal procedures. Every social network user's digital fingerprints – every “like” or click to show attendance at an event, even if done in haste, long ago or with no intention of expressing support – is used by enforcement authorities worldwide to determine people's fates. (...) Alqasem is not alone, of course. Palestinians and Israeli Arab citizens have known for years that every digital move they made could haunt them even if it's supposedly protected under freedom of expression. Now foreign left-wing activists are in the surveillance crosshairs, and similar testimony has been used against left-wing Israeli citizens. This is the realization of the Big Brother vision: Ideological positions are gleaned from the web by governments, or worse: their envoys in civilian espionage organizations, who “snitch” on their political rivals. Cooking up criminal cases based on internet searches must be forbidden.

Editorial, HAA, 12.10.18

### **If you're gonna boycott, don't change the definition**

(...) Alqasem is not being compelled to enroll at an Israeli university, and as a non-citizen she is not endowed with an innate right to visit a country that she has taken a personal stance against. (...) The legality of the denial of entry and detention of Alqasem when she refused to leave are not at issue. (...) The government should simply deport Alqasem and similar cases regardless of any supposed new statements on anything. These are people that are entitled to their own opinions, but not to pernicious lies in pursuit of evading port of entry restrictions. (...) even though Israel is relatively free compared to most of its neighbours and permits publishing of some of the most ridiculous slanders by its own citizens, I would still rather it had more freedom and less censorship than the opposite. (...) at a certain point feelings cannot be fought anymore (...). People that dedicate their lives to a cause, right or wrong, and advertise their own personal righteousness cannot then complain when the party that they are acting against declines an attempt to enter their realm. While Alqasem's fake ordeal is being trumpeted by the well meaning and the soft headed, Pakistan stands to execute an imprisoned Christian woman named Asia Bib for blasphemy and Saudi internet writer Raif Badawi has been imprisoned since 2012 and suffered a flogging in

2015 as a result of his liberal blogging. These people did not choose their country, their country chose to screw them. Alqasem, by contrast, is free to leave Israel anytime she wants and proceed to take interest in any fake cause that suits her upon returning home.

Ramon Epstein, TOI, 14.10.18

### **The case of Lara Alqasem**

(...) Whether the detention and denial of entry, on the grounds that Alqasem allegedly supports the boycott of Israel, was justified is still an open legal question (...). However, under the circumstances it was certainly an unwise and miserable decision, (...) because of the damage it causes Israel's eroding image abroad as a liberal, democratic state, and especially to Israeli universities, which are struggling with academic boycotts (...). Israel's fight against the boycott of the Jewish settlements in the territories and/or Israel as a whole, though legitimate, is rather hysterical and perhaps even counterproductive. (...) boycotts are a legitimate means in international relations. (...) Of course, it is also legitimate for Israel to reject this criticism and resist boycotts. However (...) as unpleasant as the current boycotts implemented against Israel and/or the Jewish settlements beyond the Green Line are, they do not really cause much financial damage. (...)

Susan Hattif Rolef, JPO, 14.10.18

### **3. Gegenseitige Warnung vor einem Krieg**

*Israels Regierungschef Benjamin Netanyahu scheint die Geduld zu verlieren. Nach Monaten blutiger Grenzproteste im Gazastreifen drohte er der dort herrschenden Hamas mit einer neuen Militäroperation. "Die Hamas hat die Botschaft offenbar nicht verinnerlicht", meinte er und setzte hinzu, Israel werde die Angriffe aus dem Gazastreifen und die Gewalt stoppen, sollte die Hamas das nicht selbst tun, „und dies wird wehtun, sehr wehtun“. Im Verlauf einer Kabinettssitzung bereitete er die Minister auf einen erneuten Krieg gegen die Hamas vor, sollte die Lage zusätzlich eskalieren. Auch Yahya Sinwar, Chef der Hamas im Gazastreifen, äußerte sich in einem Interview pessimistisch. Ein Krieg sei „unvermeidbar“, auch wenn er weder im Interesse Israels noch der Hamas sei. Um die Krise zu entschärfen signalisierte Qatar Bereitschaft, die Diesellieferung für das einzige Kraftwerk in Gaza zu finanzieren, was indes in Ramallah auf Unmut stieß. Palästinenserpräsident Mahmoud Abbas zielt mit Kürzun-*

*gen darauf ab, den Druck auf die Führung der Islamisten zu erhöhen.*

### **War in Gaza: Palestinians die. Israelis die. Only Hamas wins**

(...) Conditions in Gaza have gone from dire to calamitous. (...) No one would sit still and raise their children in such conditions. (...) Protests and violence are increasing along the fence, in step with Gaza's deterioration. (...) the risk of major confrontation is looming once more. (...) Israel holds the power, and therefore the initiative. Israel could (...) ease the blockade of Gaza. (...) No one has to like Hamas. (...) The blockade gives Hamas a free hand, and escalation affirms them as the interlocutor of violence. De-escalation would speak past them. Peace would put them out of business. (...) There is still time, and there are still choices, to spare everyone's children. (...)

Marilyn Garson, HAA, 02.10.18

### **Sinwar's lying gun**

The ideology behind the demonstrations on the Gaza border fence (...) is the destruction of Israel. Everything is controlled by the Palestinian military chief, Yahya Sinwar. What prevents him from realizing this ideology is the reality, which constantly comes knocking at his door—the Israeli iron wall. (...) After spending 22 years in an Israeli prison (...) the Hamas leader knows us well. (...) Sinwar lies to his people and robs them of hope, in the name of a greater goal. He lies to every foreign leader and journalist arriving in Gaza, and has no problem lying to Israelis as well. (...) As Hamas tightens its grip, Gaza's living conditions, including water and electricity availability, decline. (...) As Sinwar's reign continues, Gaza becomes more and more volatile. Under his rule, Gaza is constantly on the verge of war, and peace is out of sight—the writing is on the wall. (...) Gaza's distress is not going away, Hamas's ideology will endure, and so will its use as a political tool— no matter which regional player intervenes. (...) Assassinating Hamas's leader (...) must be on the table, and with it, a military resolution, or, alternatively, the development of economic incentives so that Gaza will have much to lose. Listen to Sinwar, read between the lines. He mustn't be the one to dictate Israeli strategy.

Yoaz Hendel, YED, 04.10.18

### **Don't test us**

(...) After two months of relative quiet, last Friday some 20,000 Gazans approached the fence to clash

with IDF forces. (...) The socioeconomic situation in the Gaza Strip is consistently deteriorating and the leadership there has no solution. (...) Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas (...) is trying to bring Hamas to its knees. Hamas is taking out its anger on Israel, hoping that the mess at the border will lead to a solution. (...) Hamas is playing with fire (...). It would only take one Israeli child harmed by one of these innocent-looking improvised bombs to change Israel's policy at the border. (...)

Yoav Limor, IHY, 05.10.18

### **Sinwar's hidden message: Calm for Gaza rehabilitation or war**

(...) Sinwar is sending a message between the lines to the Israeli public: (...) If you don't stop Gaza from going hungry, I'll make sure you suffer too. In the interview, Sinwar presents his own alternative to war. (...) he wants it on his own terms; a direct agreement with Israel—via the UN, the US and Egypt—which bypasses the Palestinian Authority. Such an arrangement could serve both to boost Sinwar's status and to strengthen the Hamas organization ahead of the expected power struggle in the Palestinian arena in the post-Abbas era. (...) To him, reaching an arrangement is the preferred step to break the stalemate. If that doesn't work, (...) the violence at the protests escalates further and further: from stones and tires to incendiary kites and balloons, and from there to explosive balloons. (...) If all of that doesn't work, a drastic move will follow, which could rock the region and bring to the change Sinwar mentions in the interview. (...) Sinwar's motto as Hamas's leader is: Gaza First. (...) Give me a few good years to reorganize, rebuild Gaza, allow it to prosper—and I'll give you quiet during that time. (...) While Sinwar is talking about calm in return for changing the standard of living in Gaza, the relationship between Hamas and Iran is gaining momentum; there is sharing of knowledge and transfer of funds from Iran to Gaza at an unprecedented scope. (...) There are no signs of investment in the civil sector at the expense of the military buildup. Israel would've liked to see some sign of goodwill, beyond rhetoric, but Hamas is not providing this sign. (...)

Alex Fishman, YED, 06.10.18

### **Egypt holds the key**

(...) El-Sissi, who is having some success in his bitter battle against Islamic State and other terrorist groups in Sinai – mainly because of Egypt's security ties to Israel (...) is slowly restoring Cairo to the

status of a regional power. (...) the Gaza leadership, despite being wooed by Iran, still prefers Egypt as a broker in the intra-Palestinian fracas and even in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. (...) Hamas is not trying to make military gains, but rather political ones that will ease conditions for the population and prevent discontent among the Palestinians in Gaza. (...) The Egyptians' original approach was to skirt the intra-Palestinian conflict and try to stabilize the violence. But Abbas refused, letting Egypt, Israel and other Arab states know that they were not sovereign in Gaza and had no authority there. (...) if the Egyptians continue to involve themselves in the process of reaching a Gaza cease-fire and implementing a Palestinian reconciliation agreement, another war between Israel and Hamas will be kept at bay. But if Egypt decides to pull its finger out of the Palestinian pie and concentrate on its own internal security matters, another war against Hamas is inevitable.

Daniel Siryoti, IHY, 07.10.18

### **A rational Hamas**

The interview with Yahya Sinwar, Hamas chief in Gaza, which was conducted by Italian journalist Francesca Borri and published in the Israeli daily Yedioth Ahronoth, set off a major internet storm in the Gaza Strip and the Palestinian diaspora. What? Sinwar spoke knowingly to an Israeli newspaper? (...) What caused the outrage was that the wording of the article seemed to indicate that Borri was sent by the Israeli newspaper, and that that's how the situation was presented to Sinwar. (...) A Gaza resident told me that he was convinced that most of the answers were given in writing because of "the polished wording, the level-headed replies and the rational explanations." He believes that an entire team thought things through and wrote the answers, not Sinwar alone. He also said that the message in the interview is addressed to the Palestinians in Gaza "who are sick and tired of Hamas rule," no less than to readers in the West (...). And I was left longing for the period when senior Hamas officials gave interviews to the Israeli press and to a Jewish Israeli like me – including Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, Ismail Haniyeh and many others. And I was left with the following conclusion: When Israel doesn't allow Israeli journalists to enter Gaza, it makes life easy for Hamas.

Amira Hass, HAA, 08.10.18

#### 4. Medienquerschnitt

##### Vorgezogene Neuwahlen wieder denkbar

###### A clear sign elections are near

(...) Netanyahu's rhetoric had changed. (...) he said he has yet to make up his mind on early elections. For those in the meeting, this was a very clear sign that elections are near. (...) United Torah Judaism will discard any plan it may have had to compromise on the controversial conscription bill. (...) Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman, who has recently shown flexibility on the language of the bill, will once again stand firm and refuse to agree to any changes. (...) The party leaders also noticed another change: There was no daylight between him and Finance Minister Moshe Kahlon. (...) A lot has been said about the growing bond between Netanyahu and Kahlon. It could ultimately mean the two will run on a joint ticket. In fact, the show they put on display (...) suggests they have already decided to join forces. (...)

Mati Tuchfeld, IHY, 08.10.18

##### Jude heiratet Muslima

###### What's so bad about assimilation?

(...) The fear of assimilation is something we've all imbibed with our mothers' milk. Annihilation, destruction, Auschwitz, something like that. (...) The opposition to assimilation is racist and purely nationalistic. Again it's the superior and pure Jewish blood that mustn't be mixed, heaven forbid, with any Christian, Muslim or other impurity. After a long history living as a minority under threat, the people can't shake that survival instinct. (...) Is the struggle against assimilation a struggle to preserve Jewish values as they've been realized in Israel? If so, then it would be best to abandon that battle. The gefilte fish and hreime (spicy sauce), the bible, religion and heritage, can be preserved in mixed marriages as well. (...) The Jewish state has already crystallized an identity, which can only be enriched by assimilation, which is a normal, healthy process. Lucy Aharish and Tzachi Halevy may actually spawn a much more moral and civilized race than the one that has arisen here so far.

Gideon Levy, HAA, 13.10.18

##### Mord unter Kollegen

###### Tragic Barkan Killing Bursts Bubble of Coexistence

The tragic killing in the Barkan industrial zone, where Kim Levengrond Yehezkel and Ziv Hajbi were murdered, has left us with nothing except to embrace our grief. (...) Along with the sorrow and pain, a dream has vanished. The bubble of coexistence between Jews and Arabs was shattered, and the illusion of life based on mutual respect and cooperation blew up in our faces. (...) The Barkan industrial zone will no longer be marketed as a symbol of peace in the chaos of the Samaria region. But if the people of Israel set the example of unity, Israel will become a symbol of peace within the chaos of the world. Then, we will not only live in coexistence, but in global coexistence. We will feel ourselves as one united people, and we will shine like a lighthouse to the world, fulfilling our duty to become a "light unto the nations."

Michael Laitman, TOI, 09.10.18

##### Kongresswahlen in USA

###### The US elections and Israel

Israelis are anxious about the future of the US's pro-Israel stance, but a US president's foreign policy is largely unfettered by Congress. The disgusting and drawn-out character assassination of Judge Brett Kavanaugh, has been followed by the announcement of US Ambassador to the UN Nikki Haley that she will be retiring after the end of the year. These events have reinforced Israeli anxiety about what the congressional elections in November might signify for US-Israeli relations, particularly if the Democrats should take control of one or both of the houses of Congress. (...) the US president has much more flexibility in the foreign policy area, with or without the cooperation of Congress. (...) In fact, following the announcement of the "deal" the Senate did vote, narrowly approving it, but the administration made it abundantly clear that it would honor it no matter what Congress did or did not do. (...) there is reason to believe that the Trump administration's attitude towards relations with Israel will not change (...) unless the president decides it is in the interests of the country to change that policy, and the Congress be damned.

Norman Bailey, GLO, 14.10.18



HAA = Haaretz  
YED = Yedioth Ahronoth / Ynetnews  
JPO = Jerusalem Post  
IHY = Israel HaYom  
TOI = Times of Israel  
GLO = Globes

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