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**1. Neuwahlen nach gescheiterten Koalitionsverhandlungen**

*Am 17. September werden in Israel erneut Parlamentswahlen stattfinden. Israels amtierender Regierungschef Benjamin Netanyahu konnte den Auftrag von Staatspräsident Reuven Rivlin, eine Regierung zu bilden, nicht fristgerecht erfüllen. Üblicherweise wird in so einem Fall ein anderer Parlamentarier mit der Mission beauftragt. Genau um das zu verhindern, trieb Netanyahus Likud-Partei die Auflösung des Parlaments und erneute Wahlen voran. Ein einziges Mandat fehlte Netanyahu für eine Mehrheitskoalition. Avigdor Lieberman, ehemals Verteidigungsminister und Chef der national-weltlichen Partei Yisrael Beiteanu, sieht sich selbst zwar als den „natürlichen Partner einer rechten Regierung“, aber er ließ nicht ab von seiner Forderung, für ultraorthodoxe Juden dieselben Regeln beim Militärdienst geltend zu machen, wie für weltliche Männer. Ohne die fünf Abgeordneten, die Lieberman mit in die Knesset brachte, kam Netanyahu nur auf 60 der insgesamt 120 Sitze. Netanyahu wäre zu Zugeständnissen bei der Wehrpflicht bereit gewesen, nicht jedoch die beiden ultraorthodoxen Parteien, mit denen es schon Koalitionsverträge gab. Beide Seiten – die weltliche Yisrael Beiteanu und die ultraorthodoxen Abgeordneten – waren nicht unter einen Hut zu bringen. Noch kurz vor Ablauf der Frist versuchte Netanyahu, Blau-Weiß zu spalten, um Abtrünnige für seine Regierung zu gewinnen. Er machte sogar einen Vorstoß bei der Arbeitspartei, die er mit Ministerposten für Justiz und für Finanzen lockte. Die Sozialdemokraten, die bei den Wahlen mit nur sechs Mandaten auf ein historisches Tief gefallen waren, ließen sich nicht kaufen. „Wie tief Ihr gesunken seid“, schimpfte Shelly Yachimovich von der Arbeitspartei auf die Likud-Abgeordneten und nannte sie „Heuchler“. Blau-Weiß, die wie der Likud bei den Wahlen auf 35 Mandate kam, wäre zu einer Großen Koalition mit dem Likud bereit gewesen, machte jedoch den Abtritt Netanyahus zur Bedingung. Der Likud hält indes fest zu seinem Chef, für den die Zeit nun knapp werden könnte, um das Immunitätsgesetz rechtzeitig in der nächsten Knesset durchzubringen, das Netanyahu vor drei Gerichtsverfahren wegen Bestechung und Betrug retten soll. Die den Anklagen vorausgehende Anhörung ist schon für Anfang Oktober geplant.*

**Coalition now**

(...) Going to another election is the last thing Israel needs. Let's start with the cost: Election Day is a day off in Israel, leading to a loss of NIS 5 billion to the market, in addition to about NIS 700 million in government expenditure to hold the election. This would come in a time of an increasing budgetary deficit – and there would be no government to try to fix it. (...) The entire government would essentially be frozen for almost a full year. (...) The major decisions that need to be made – whether about national security, the peace plan set to be rolled out in a few weeks by the Trump administration, or any other issue – would continue to be undertaken by an interim gov-

ernment with limited power, and without a functioning Knesset to discuss the issues and pass laws. This is not a tenable situation. Politically, it is not a wise idea for the Right to test the electorate. While right-wing parties did receive a solid majority of the vote – especially if one counts those that did not make it over the threshold – the electorate may be angry and will certainly be fatigued. Turnout will likely be low, and the voters that do show up could punish the parties that are perceived as causing this upheaval. No one really knows going into an election season how it will end, so none of the parties should be so confident about it.

(...) The country voted for a new Knesset – expecting its members to lead our country, not get bogged down in political squabbles and kick the can down the road. The time for a functioning coalition is now.

Editorial, JPO, 26.05 19

### **The man who cannot be bought**

(...) Lieberman can see the obsession underneath Netanyahu's heavy make-up and is unable to hide his contempt. (...) Netanyahu has never put the country before his own personal advantage, and when it comes to his legal woes, he is obsessed. (...) the Likud fears that Rivlin may task someone else with the job of putting together a coalition, so is opting for fresh elections. (...) Netanyahu now aiming his fire in all directions at once. He has even enlisted the president of the United States, who on Monday obligingly tweeted that he hoped to be able to continue to work with Netanyahu as prime minister. (...) His Israel Hayom mouthpiece is already in the trenches (...). Lieberman from his vantage point on the outside, can observe the panic on the inside. (...) Lieberman observes the opposition, in particular Blue and White leader Benny Gantz, who so wants to be loved by the left and the right, the religious and the secular, oblivious to the fact no one so beloved has ever become prime minister of Israel. He sees the cracks beginning to appear, the egos and conflicting views. He sees the Blue and White leadership lacking the fire, the hunger and the ambition to rule. Lieberman knows any right-wing leader attempting to form a government would have played one side of the aisle against the other, negotiating with the center-left as well as the far-right. Netanyahu, however, knowing that the opposition would never provide him with immunity for his myriad corruption investigations, conducted all coalition negotiations from a clear disadvantage.

Nahum Barnea, YED, 28.05.19

### **Fresh elections will cost Israeli society dearly**

Civil war may be the ultimate price Israelis will all pay if the fresh elections are held at the end of the summer. (...) Slowly the divisions in our society are deepening. (...) we have turned into a collection of separate nations. (...) We have become puppets controlled by power-hungry politicians, whose aggression combined with the toxicity of social media have brought the simmering mutual hatred in Israeli society to a new level. (...) Avigdor Lieberman has become the hero of the secular right. (...) we have an absurd situation: while the ultra-Orthodox parties saw their voter tally increase in the April elections (...) and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was quick to support their demands regarding the Haredi draft law, they have become a political punching bag for those seeking to score easy points. But the ultra-Orthodox politicians would be wise to tone down their own rhetoric, and realize that it is possible to stand up for your principles without trying to compete with Lieberman's aggressive tactics. (...) Against the backdrop of the political crisis, the harsh rhetoric between the secular and the ultra-Orthodox has intensified in recent days. (...) Even justified outrage needs to be restrained when debating on divisive issues. We cannot abandon the culture of dialogue. (...) We are so few with so much in common (...). Each sector of Israeli society needs to take a hard look at what needs fixing inside. We are in desperate need of a responsible adult to bring order to this kindergarten of aggressive children, before they rip out each other's eyes. This is the price of fresh elections, or at least the threat of them due to an alleged dispute between two sectors of Israeli society, and we do not want to pay it.

Shoshana Chen, YED, 29.05.19

### **Give someone else a chance**

(...) the bill to dissolve the Knesset (...) is a fundamentally groundless move. (...) Netanyahu is prepared to do anything to preserve his regime and evade prosecution. After he dragged the country into early elections in an effort to act prior to the attorney general's decision on whether to charge him, he made himself a hostage to his coalition partners in exchange for their support of legislation that would help him avoid trial. Now that he has failed to form a government, he is trying to block the president from giving a different MK the mandate to do so. (...) if Netanyahu does not succeed in forming a government, another candidate should be given a chance to do so be-

fore the Knesset is dissolved. (...) But Netanyahu, as usual, uses democracy to empty it of content. After all, as far as he's concerned, the only purpose of democracy is to preserve his rule.

Editorial, HAA, 29.05.19

### **Israeli political upheaval is good for Hamas, bad for Iran**

(...) the interim government already in place (...) will pose none after the vote to dissolve the government. The security cabinet, headed by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, will remain in place at least until the end of the year with him still at its helm. But regarding the military's long-term preparedness and planning the decision will not be made for a while. (...) All of Israel's enemies are familiar with Netanyahu and understand that his word is final on all matters of Israel's security (...). Now more than ever he will react forcefully to any disturbance, violation or casualty (...). Hamas (...) can challenge Israel just a little bit more into making further concessions. Netanyahu will likely ignore the fire bombs sent over from Gaza by air, as well as minor nuisances on the border fence, as long as another round of rocket attacks, mostly targeting residents of Israel's south (...) is avoided. (...) In the North, facing the Iran-led radical Shi'ite axis, new elections are not expected to have much effect. The United States took over reactions to the Iranian threat weeks ago, allowing Israel to take a back seat and refrain from increasing tensions in the area. It would be to Israel's advantage if the Gulf states are the ones to demand U.S. action against Iran. Tehran is fully aware of the Israeli public support Netanyahu enjoys when it comes to his policies on Iran, so any attempt on their part to use this election period to move ahead on their missile enhancement projects in Lebanon and Syria will be met with the full might of the IDF. (...) The Trump peace plan will however be affected by the snap elections in Israel (...). The Bahrain economic workshop held to raise money for Palestinians will take place next month, but it's the political part of the deal will not be revealed before a new government is formed in December 2019, if at all.

Ron Ben-Yishai, YED, 30.05.19

### **Netanyahu's fire sale of Israeli politics**

(...) Israel has experienced political maneuvering (...), but what we saw in the Knesset on Wednesday night launched a new chapter in the disintegration of Israeli democracy. The newborn Knesset chose to commit suicide solely because of one man's personal caprice. (...) The root (...) is Netanyahu's decision on the eve of the 2015 elections to wed the right-wing to the ultra-Orthodox parties in an inescapable marriage. If he could have maneuvered between the right-wing and the center, the collapse should have been avoided. Ironically, there is something admirable about the way Netanyahu has conducted himself in recent days. The man came out fighting. He has no inhibitions, no shame as he hawked out the precious assets of the Israeli government in a liquidation sale. (...) On the one hand, this is utterly shocking; on the other, it is spectacular. The man is fighting for his power, his position, his freedom. Like a fly that refuses to drown in cream, Netanyahu kicked his legs more and more until the cream became butter. (...) The Likud lawmakers carry out whatever orders are issued from Netanyahu's perch on Balfour Street. Ambitious politicians with healthy egos, wore their ineffectuality and irrelevance with relish. (...) Israeli politics is sick, and Netanyahu is the last person to act as physician

Nahum Barnea, YED, 30.05.19

### **Israel's snap election is a makeup exam for democracy**

(...) The horror show that has materialized in the past month (...) is the inevitable result of a corrupt, longtime right-wing government that must reach its end. This is a government that treats its citizens as a captive audience, demonstrates no responsibility toward them and places narrow personal interests above the interests of the state. Lieberman can boast that he's sticking to his principles, but the Yisrael Beiteinu party chairman had no problem with serving in a cabinet headed by a suspect who faces indictments in three separate cases (...) and who, contrary to his declarations, intended to advance tailor-made bills that would help him escape justice — so long as the conscription law is passed in its current form. But the affront to democracy that Israel has suffered in recent days also contains an opportunity for change. In the face of the corruption and the destruction that expanded under the right-wing government, the center left must unite and offer an alternative that is the polar opposite: responsibility, egalitarianism, striving for the common good, extending a hand to the Arab community and demonstrating personal integrity. A moment before democracy was burned on the stake, Israel received a second chance. We must take full advantage of it.

Editorial, HAA, 31.05.19

## 2. Eurovision Song Contest

*Trotz internationaler Proteste und politischer Demonstrationen verlief der Eurovision Song Contest (ESC), der in diesem Jahr in Tel Aviv stattfand, ohne nennenswerte Störungen. Die pro-palästinensische BDS- (Boykott, De-Investition und Sanktionen) Bewegung, die eine wirtschaftliche Isolation Israels vorantreibt, scheiterte bei dem Versuch, Musiker von einer Teilnahme abzuhalten. Allerdings hielt die isländische Gruppe Hatari während der Liveübertragung des finalen Wettbewerbs palästinensische Flaggen vor die Kameras, was von der Israeli Broadcasting Corporation (KAN) als Provokation aufgenommen und auch von der Europäischen Rundfunkunion als Regelverstoß gegen die „unpolitische Veranstaltung“ verurteilt wurde. Die Austragung des ESC in Tel Aviv war auch innerhalb Israels auf Proteste gestoßen. Ultraorthodoxe Juden kritisierten die Entweihung des Sabbat. Wegen Demonstrationen mussten einige Straßen in Jerusalem vorübergehend gesperrt werden.*

### Pop stars and politics

(...) Madonna's coming, she's not coming... and she is here. In the flesh. On stage to celebrate Eurovision in Tel Aviv, despite political pressure by anti-Israel haters. (...) Will we win and host again next year? I hope not. With the political backlash of not holding the show in Jerusalem, our capital city, who needs it. With all the complaints and calls to boycott singing on an Israeli stage, I'd rather not. I hate to rain on the party but a proud Israel is a strong Israel. If we bend to pressure, it might make sense in the short run, but I'd rather not be faced with demands to change our story, to hide our heritage and to shame our pride. I doubt another country would have bowed, perhaps we are used to being pressured but no more. After all, we are 'not your toy'. (...) So cheer like crazy for your favorite country, wave that blue and white flag when it's our turn, and enjoy all the little ditties in between songs, with every delegation filmed on the backdrop of another part of our beautiful, rich, varied homeland. I hope the walls of Jerusalem figure somewhere in those videos as well. I'm not the one who brought politics to Eurovision, but if it's already there, we might as well be honest about who we are as a country and be proud of our ancient roots, whatever our nay-sayers think. (...)

Ruth Lieberman, TOI, 16.05.19

### Hosting Eurovision doesn't make Israel part of Europe

(...) Israel isn't the only technically non-European member of the EBU and you could argue that thanks to its isolation from most of its neighbors, and the fact that the Europeans do indeed owe us, the least they can do is let us in to their competitions. (...) But (...) Israel isn't a European country. Not by geography, not by demographics and not by history. Most Israelis (...) got the clear message that Europe didn't want us there, certainly not as living Jews. And yes, you can argue that the Middle East doesn't want us either, but surely the point of it all has been that we're planning on staying here, whether they want us or not. (...) Much of the "political" coverage of the Eurovision was over the miserable boycott attempts of anti-Israel social media activists to punish it for taking place in Israel. (...) Any attempts to boycott a Eurovision contest from taking place in any of the member-countries of the European Broadcasting Union would have failed, because the entire aim of the contest is to project a depoliticized, non-ideological and uncontroversial image of uncomplicated entertainment. Anyone who thinks the Eurovision could be transformed in to a platform for political protest has simply never watched the broadcast or listened to any of its songs. (...) Israel hosting the Eurovision doesn't say anything about the Israel-Palestine conflict. It won't help make Israel's case to the world, or push the Palestinian struggle any further down from the already low place it occupies on the global agenda. Just (...) few will remember in a couple of weeks that it was in Tel Aviv this year. It's a gauzy artificial product with no nutritional values. Cultural fast-food which you can consume and digest in any city, not only in Europe, but anywhere in the world. (...) And for Israel it's an illusion that it can escape the Middle East for a non-existent vision of Europe. Because no matter how many Eurovisions we host, we'll never be part of Europe.

Anshel Pfeffer, HAA, 16.05.19

### The real winner of Eurovision was Israel

(...) there's no doubt that the Jewish state was the real winner of the Eurovision Song Contest 2019. (...) to be the host is a big deal (...) Israel more than delivered. (...) national public broadcaster, KAN, put on a slick, polished, dynamic production. The stage looked every bit as fabulous as previous venues. (...) Israel's win was a slam-dunk defeat for the discriminatory BDS activists. (...) Israel's humanity was on display. Viewers in their millions got a

taste of what the Israeli people are like and – in the hosts, hailing from different backgrounds, Arab and Jewish, straight and gay – a taste of Israeli diversity, too. The truth shone through that in Israel, quiet coexistence happens every day. (...) while in Israel people have the freedom to love who they want and be who they are, just miles away LGBTQ people are persecuted and killed in other Middle Eastern countries. Maybe Israel's hosting of the competition showed viewers that we need not accept that reality. (...) The event also showcased Israel's growing international star power. (...) There was a flash of politics – but in an uncontroversial way. When Madonna's dancers flaunted the European Broadcasting Union's rules and wore an Israeli and Palestinian flag as they walked arm in arm, the Israeli audience didn't recoil – they applauded. (...) Israel is a tiny, plucky (...) country. Surrounded by mostly hostile neighbors, Israelis love to succeed, to give to the world, to be appreciated and to project that love back. That was the Israel that Eurovision viewers saw. The bar for Israel's hosting was set extraordinarily high – and, undoubtedly, Israel emerged a winner.

Michael Dickson, JPO, 19.05.19

### **In Iceland, hate has prevailed from the Nazi SS to Eurovision 2019**

The nasty appearance of the Icelandic group Hatari (...) is nothing new to that cold Arctic island. Iceland has shown a consistent disdain for Jews and for Israel going back to the 16th century (...). Hatred and the pride dwelt entirely among the Icelanders, who generally met no Jews until a few Jewish refugees fleeing the Holocaust arrived on their shores and found a very chilly reception. (...) Jews were expelled or fled Iceland, usually for refuge in Scandinavian countries. (...) Fast forward to Icelandic Hatari singing "Hate will Prevail" in Tel Aviv, and we are entitled to ask: Has anything changed in Iceland between the Nazi years and now?

Barry Shaw, JPO, 29.05.19

### **3. Deutschland und die Juden**

*Israels Ministerpräsident Benjamin Netanyahu hat den Bundestag für einen Beschluss gegen die israelkritische BDS-Bewegung gelobt. Die Bewegung und ihre Unterstützer sollen demnach kein Geld mehr von der Bundesregierung erhalten. "Ich schätze besonders, dass der Bundestag Deutschland dazu aufgerufen hat, keine Organisationen mehr zu finanzieren, die gegen die Existenz des Staates Israel arbeiten", kommentierte Netanyahu. Der gemeinsame Antrag der Union, SPD, FDP und den Grünen war mit großer Mehrheit im Bundestag verabschiedet worden. Der Aufruf zum Boykott israelischer Künstler sowie Aufkleber auf israelischen Handelsgütern, die vom Kauf abhalten sollten, erinnerten "an die schrecklichste Phase der deutschen Geschichte", heißt es dem Antrag der Parteien. Auch der Zentralrat der Juden in Deutschland begrüßte die Entscheidung. "Endlich wird die anti-israelische Boykottbewegung auch auf Bundesebene klar als das benannt, was sie ist, nämlich antisemitisch", erklärte Josef Schuster, Präsident des Zentralrats. Mit diesem wichtigen Beschluss werde explizit der Kampf gegen Antisemitismus und die Sicherheit Israels als Teil der deutschen Staatsräson bekräftigt. Linke Intellektuelle in Israel positionierten sich indes dagegen, BDS als eine antisemitische Kampagne zu bezeichnen. Umstritten ist auch die Empfehlung von Felix Klein, dem Antisemitismusbeauftragten der Bundesregierung. Klein riet aus Sorge vor Übergriffen gegen Juden davon ab, in der Öffentlichkeit eine Kippa zu tragen.*

#### **Will it work in real life?**

The legislation that passed in the Bundestag last week, which defines the boycott, divestment and sanctions movement as anti-Semitic, has strong symbolic importance. For the first time, a country has declared that the boycott movement isn't simply a legitimate political trend but rather an outcast racist movement. (...) Now, after this historic recognition, we will see how it plays out in real life. Germany will be tested based on how it plans to implement the decision. So, will it work? Supporters of BDS on the far Left of Israeli and Jewish society have already come together to fight this decision. This development may result in the German authorities trying to find different ways to devoid the ruling of its actual meaning. For example, who will decide now which groups are supporters of BDS or identify with its policies? (...) Only after we see the actual decision implemented and come to fruition will we be able to declare success. Until then, expect the Israeli supporters of BDS movement (...) to assist the authorities to find ways to bypass this legislation.

Eldad Beck, IHY, 20.05.19

### **Israel shouldn't rest on the laurels of Germany's BDS decision**

(...) The decision of lawmakers in the Bundestag, including some from the German far-left Die Linke party, decided a Working Definition of Antisemitism (...) is the one should be adopted by the state. (...) The German parliament's motion, however (...) states that a BDS campaign uses anti-Semitic tactics to fulfill its political goals. (...) One of the main problems in the fight against the BDS lies in the deceptive definition of its goal to "pressure Israel into ending the occupation." (...) the movement's true goal isn't to end the occupation. The BDS opposes the very existence of Israel, and the movement's leaders admit that. The fact that the Bundestag had the courage to call the movement by its true name (...) is excellent news for Israel. But, this is no time to rest on our laurels. The BDS movement - which has many branches and organizations operating in its name in the Western world - continues to gain momentum in the two most important spheres: media and academia. Some of the most prominent figures who participate in whitewashing of the movement's true nature are, in fact, Israelis. (...) The Bundestag's decision, however, is non-binding and Germany still funds plenty of pro-Palestinian groups that work for (...) the BDS. In order to inflict a severe blow on the movement, it's important to stop funding the organizations that make it their mission to vilify the State of Israel in the eyes of the world. If the funding continues, the German decision will become a merely symbolic one.

Ben-Dror Yemini, YED, 21.05.19

### **Bundestag members, am I anti-Semitic?**

I want nothing from you, whether bad or good, Germany! That's what I have to say, as a Jewish Israeli woman, to Germany, whose politicians have determined – under cover of opposition to the boycott, divestment and sanctions movement – that I and my colleagues in the battle against Israeli policy deserve to be called anti-Semites. The fact that you murdered my mother's family (...) doesn't give you the right to determine who is anti-Semitic (...) It wasn't the issue of BDS (...) that stood at the heart of the resolution (...). The vast majority of the long text defines anti-Semitism. In so doing, German legislators produced a tortuous, garbled and confused text whose true core is the equation of anti-Semitism with criticism of Israel's policy. The resolution doesn't contain even a hint of the processes Israel and Israeli society have undergone in recent years. (...) This country has been ruling millions of people deprived of any rights for more than 50 years, steals their land, demolishes their homes, denies them freedom of movement and the ability to earn a living and, under the aegis of its enormous military power, grants all the rights of a dignified life solely to Jews who have settled on the land belonging to those millions of people. As if an apartheid state like that could still be considered a democratic country. (...) You don't have the right to define me as anti-Semitic because I believe that under the current circumstances, sanctions and boycotts are the only effective, nonviolent tool remaining to force Israel to let go of the occupied territories and its civilian control over them. A political boycott of this sort has absolutely nothing to do with the brutal, racist boycott the Nazis in your country imposed on Jewish businesses in April 1933. (...)

Ilana Hammerman, HAA, 24.05.19

### **German warning**

(...) the fight against antisemitism in Germany has failed. Eighty years after the start of World War II, the European country with the most troubled history regarding the Jewish people said it cannot protect its own Jews. (...) Responsibility for the welfare, the freedom and the right to religious belief of every member of the German Jewish community is in the hands of the German government and its law enforcement agencies. (...) fears about the security of German Jews are a capitulation to antisemitism and an admittance that, again, Jews are not safe on German soil. (...) Bild's editor-in-chief, Julian Reichelt, (...) urged readers to "explain to your children what the kippah is, and post pictures on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter." And above all, Reichelt called on readers to "Go on the street wearing the kippah." We thank him for his heartwarming gesture and concur with his sentiments. It is unconscionable that Jews should be scared to wear a kippah in public, anywhere. Germany itself needs to understand the implications of what stands behind Klein's warning: If German Jews feel threatened, then all of Germany is at risk. Hatred never stops with the Jews.

Editorial, JPO, 28.05.19

### **Germany's problem goes beyond the kippah**

(...) Germany is far from the only European nation where Jews face routine violence in the streets. In the United States, we know that anti-Semitism comes from both the far Right and the intersectional Left. (...) In Europe, threats to the Jewish population come from both the far Right, as well as from the growing population of immi-

grants from Muslim nations. But too much of the commentary about this situation seems to be influenced by worries about the rise of right-wing nationalist parties, along with a refusal to confront the truth about Muslim hatred of Jews and Israel. (...) the recent massive influx of immigrants from Muslim and Arab countries has created a vast new constituency. (...) Muslim expressions of hatred for Israel and Jews are now indistinguishable from traditional European anti-Semitic invective. This has created a bizarre alliance between Muslims and leftist academics and other elites who engage in similar delegitimization of Israel, Zionism and the Jews. (...) What is important is to realize that the sickness that once destroyed European Jewry has not only been revived, but that this virus has morphed into a new variant in which Israel has become the stand-in for traditional Jewish stereotypes and the excuse for a new wave of hatred directed against all Jews. (...) What is happening in Europe is proving once again that wherever anti-Zionism is legitimized, anti-Semitism grows and anti-Jewish violence follows.  
Jonathan S. Tobin, IHY, 29.05.19

#### 4. Medienquerschnitt

##### **Schwere Zeiten für Jordaniens König**

###### **The forecast for Jordan's stability is rocky with considerable risk**

(...) the past two years have seen increased criticism both of the King's approach to the kingdom's fundamental problems, and of the personal conduct of the King (...). Since its statehood, Jordan has grappled with existential economic problems stemming from a lack of natural resources and other local sources of income (...). In addressing these fundamental problems, the Jordanian government is compelled to rely on grants and loans from donor countries and international institutions. (...) While the international community has helped Jordan cope with the financial burden of absorbing the Syrian refugees, Jordan will continue to bear the long term economic, legal, and political burden inherent in the presence of such a large minority (...) that lacks a clear status. (...) In addition, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict continues to stir up public opinion in Jordan (...) If the new Israeli government initiates or accepts legislative moves toward annexation to Israel and/or the application of Israeli jurisdiction to areas of Judea and Samaria, Jordan will head the Arab camp that will urge the international community not to recognize these measures, condemn Israel, and even impose sanctions unless Israel refrains from such moves. (...) The already cool relations between Israel and Jordan, and especially between the King and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, will be heavily tested within the next few months. (...) Israel has an interest in Jordan's stability (...) and therefore what is necessary is strategic Israeli thinking, along with Jordanian and Israeli willingness to avoid provocative steps despite internal pressures in both countries. A comprehensive dialogue is also required between them, and at the senior level, in order to stabilize and ensure the relations to the fullest extent possible.  
Oded Eran, TOI, 22.05.19

##### **Gefährliche Anspannung zwischen Washington und Teheran**

###### **The war between the U.S. and Iran has begun, in case you didn't notice**

(...) If you hadn't quite noticed, it's because that how Iran wants to fight the war: quietly and anonymously. The United States and its allies are going to be hard-pressed to find ways to fight back. It's a classic David and Goliath conflict, with David armed with drones, limpet mines and cyberwarfare tools while Goliath is weighed down by aircraft carriers and B-52s he hesitates to use. (...) Militarily, Iran is in no position to take on the U.S. or make good on threats to close the Strait of Hormuz, through which close to a third of the world's oil exports pass. But it can disrupt the production and exports enough to raise oil prices and insurance rates, and perhaps on a lucky day when a mine or a drone or a cyberattack makes a direct hit, to disrupt supply for a while. (...) The Saudis would prefer not to take this lying down, but neither they nor the Americans are in a good position to stand up to the Iranians if the oil war is going to be conducted like this on Tehran's terms. (...) The U.S. long ago stopped importing Iranian oil, so sanctions impose no direct cost on the American economy. (...) Most of Europe and Asia, on the other hand, doesn't have the luxury of serenely watching a virtual war in the Gulf. (...) Even if the U.S. may well be positioned to handle a big disruption of the oil market, the rest of the world isn't and could send a world economy already looking worse for the wear into a downturn. But even in places like the faraway Persian Gulf, "America first" is the order of the day.

David Rosenberg, HAA, 20.05.19

## Perspektiven für Gaza

### **Absent a political track, the Gaza ceasefire will fail**

(...) Historically in violent conflicts, ceasefires only succeeded if they contained two important supporting elements. A robust, on-the-ground observation team to ensure both sides' compliance, and, more importantly, a serious political track aimed at addressing the various reasons that caused the eruption of the violence in the first place. In the Palestinian-Israeli experience, the overwhelming military power of Israel, and its arrogance in believing that it is the only democracy in the region, have led to the repeated refusal by Israel to have any neutral observers on the ground. (...) With Netanyahu abhorring and rejecting the idea of international presence in Palestine, at least what can help bolster the ceasefire could be a political process. (...) the ceasefire is now held on thin grounds, namely improving living conditions. Hamas negotiators, working through their Egyptian counterparts, have insisted on a series of demands aimed at lessening the decade-long siege that Israel has placed on the Gaza Strip. Ironically, a similar commitment was made in the last round by Israel, but according to Hamas, the Israelis have reneged on fulfilling what they committed to the Egyptian. (...) Ironically, Israeli army officials are pushing hard to convince Israeli cabinet members of the need for a parallel political track to the military one. Even Israeli military officials are convinced that not all problems can be solved with military solutions. (...) The latest round of violence, once again, points out the absolute need for a major political solution that takes into consideration Palestinian aspiration and desire to live in peace, but also with freedom of movement and with a clear political horizon. Without such a necessary component, the current ceasefire might continue for a short time but is unlikely to replace a political process that aims at addressing the underlying problems in the protracted conflict.

Daoud Kuttab, JPO, 18.05.19

HAA = Haaretz

YED = Yedioth Ahronoth / Ynetnews

JPO = Jerusalem Post

IHY = Israel HaYom

TOI = Times of Israel

GLO = Globes

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