



Schlaglicht Israel Nr. 5/08

Aktuelles aus israelischen Tageszeitungen

20. Februar - 8. März 2008

1. Eskalation zwischen Israel und Hamas

In den letzten zwei Wochen eskalierten die Kämpfe in und um den Gazastreifen weiter. Während die israelische Armee mehrmals in das Gebiet eindrang und sich heftige Gefechte mit Hamas-Kämpfern lieferte, setzte sich der Raketenbeschuss auf umliegende israelische Gebiete fort. Neben den Kassam-Raketen auf Sderot wurden nun auch Raketen des Typs Grad mit einer längeren Weitreiche auf die israelische Stadt Ashkelon gefeuert. Seit Ende Februar wurden bei den Kämpfen über hundert Palästinenser, darunter viele Zivilisten, sowie ein israelischer Zivilist und drei israelische Soldaten getötet. Die Eskalation der Gewalt führte dazu, dass die amerikanische Außenministerin Condoleezza Rice in die Region reiste, um einen Abbruch der regelmäßig stattfindenden Gespräche zwischen Palästinenserpräsident Abbas und dem israelischen Ministerpräsident Olmert zu verhindern. Abbas hatte zunächst angekündigt die Gespräche angesichts der Gewalt in Gaza auszusetzen, nach einem Attentat in Jerusalem, bei dem am 6. März acht Israelis getötet wurden, sprach er sich jedoch dafür aus, den Friedensprozess fortzusetzen.

In den israelischen Medien wurde intensiv diskutiert, wie der Gazastreifen unter Kontrolle zu bringen und die Gewalt einzudämmen sei.

The very last moment

“There is no choice but to talk to Hamas, indirectly or directly, and without preconditions. On the agenda: a cessation of hostilities and a total, long-term halt.

It is uncomfortable and even ostensibly unreasonable to negotiate with those who do not recognize your existence. But the act of negotiating itself is a kind of recognition, and only it will lead the parties to a temporary calm. [...]

Hamas will take advantage of the break in hostilities to grow stronger, arm and train - that is the usual, eternal argument against a cease-fire. History shows that Israel has more than once agreed on temporary cease-fires that have held. Moreover, who says Hamas uses time more efficiently than we do? [...] With a hiatus in the hostilities, we may finally learn to develop the defense system against rockets and missiles - at least this.”

Jossi Sarid, HAA 02.03.08

They had their chance. Now take back Gaza

“Let's be honest: after years of retreat, it is time to try something else. [...] It is not too late to correct the error of withdrawal, and to finally declare an end to the delusions of reaching a false peace with those who seek our demise. Simply put, Israel should reassert complete control over Gaza, topple the Hamas-led regime, arrest and try its leadership, and finally declare that this land is rightfully ours and we shall never again abandon it. [...]

The Palestinians had their chance for autonomy and independence, and they blew it. Israelis should not have to continue paying dearly in blood just to give them another shot. Like it or not, it is time to take Gaza back. Only this time, we must never give it up again.“

Michael Freud, JPO 04.03.08

No need to kill them

“The IDF is capable of destroying the entire Gaza Strip, but it cannot do so because we simply cannot kill the civilian population. [...] So here is an idea, which can be utilized alongside the current IDF operations: Every time a rocket is launched, Israel will respond against the civilian population – but using non-lethal means. Tear gas cannons will fire it all across the Strip, with growing frequency. Giant speakers will make terrible sounds – sirens, screeches, and loud explosions – first it would last 10 minutes, then 15 minutes, and eventually hours.

This could also include Israeli music, or chants of " Hamas is doing this to you," just like a brainwashing campaign, time and again, and everything at very high volume that does not allow for normal functioning.

This should be supplemented, of course, by complete disengagement from Gaza – at the very least, we should cut off the supply of fuel to the Strip that we transfer through a private Israeli company, or the trucks filled with duty money that we transfer every month. In my estimate, after 10 days like that, with Gaza citizens sleepless, their eyes burning from tear gas, their ears ringing, and covered in red paint, they would stop anyone firing rockets at Israel with their own hands."

Guy Bechor, JED 06.03.08

'Restraint' is deceitful and 'forbearance' is vain

"The claim that as opposed to them, we do not intend to kill children and civilians, is also overused and deceptive. [...] If the Palestinians had Apache helicopters and sophisticated drones like ours, we can assume that they would choose more strategic targets [...] The Qassam is the weapon of the poor and helpless. [...] The residents of Sderot, and now Ashkelon as well, have to look and see beyond the fence that is meant to protect them, and is imprisoning their neighbors. To understand that as long as things are so bad there, things will be bitter for them as well. That as long as we don't talk to them, nothing will change. [...] A large operation is now at its height. It has not helped at all so far; it will never help. Neither will the siege, the assassinations, the raids or the bombings."

Gideon Levy, HAA 02.03.08

Es gibt eine militärische Lösung

„Die Regierung muss die Armee dazu anordnen, den Kassam-Beschuss zu beenden. [...] Dazu ist die Armee fähig. Wenn man etwas aus dem Misserfolg des Libanonkrieges lernen kann, dann ist es, dass man nicht an einem Militäreinsatz verzweifeln darf, sondern ihn einfach ordentlich durchführen muss. [...]

Mit viel Kraft der IDF, die wie eine Dampfwalze eingesetzt wird, Schritt um Schritt mit massiver Feuerdeckung, kann der Gazastreifen von Terroristen, von Kassam-Raketen und Sprengstoff gesäubert werden.

Und dann? Der Rückzug aus einem Großteil des Gebietes, das Verbleiben in einigen Regionen, aus denen die meisten Kassam-Raketen abgefeuert wurden, und internationale Intervention – wenn sich

jemand findet, der zu einem Einsatz dort bereit ist. Die Terroristen werden jedenfalls viel Zeit brauchen, bis sie sich erholen. Es mag keine Zauberlösung für den israelisch-palästinensischen Konflikt geben, aber wenigstens für das Problem der Kassam-Raketen gibt es eine militärische Lösung, und wir haben sie in der Hand.“

Amos Regev, IHY 28.02.08

Bank of political objectives

"By Saturday, the Palestinian leadership had announced it was suspending negotiations with Israel because of the escalation in Gaza. [...] Israel once took similar measures after each deadly terror attack in its territory.

But these messages already embody a sort of victory for Hamas in Gaza, which opposes all peace negotiations with Israel. The suspension of the talks, even if temporary and even if they have achieved nothing so far, hands veto power - and in effect the monopoly over the peace agenda - to Hamas.

This does not serve either the Palestinians or the Israelis.

HAA 03.03.08

International condemnation is good for Israel

The only long term way we can change the situation is by moving ahead more swiftly with our negotiations with the Fatah administration to create a Palestinian state in the West Bank, so that the Gaza Palestinians see a genuine alternative. If and when that happens, there is a chance that in the next elections in Gaza, the Palestinians will realize their mistake and vote Hamas out. Until that time, in the short term, our only option is to react forcefully when we are attacked, without getting dragged into Vietnam-like quagmires.

We therefore need to resist the temptation to begin Ehud Barak's "tangible" ground operation. It will not achieve the outcome we want [...].

Alex Sinclair, JPO 04.03.08

2. Oberstes Gericht bestätigt Vergleich mit Katsav

Nachdem mindestens 10 Frauen den damaligen Präsidenten Moshe Katsav wegen Vergewaltigung oder sexueller Belästigung angezeigt hatten, war Katsav am 1. Juli 2007 zurückgetreten. Aufgrund mangelhafter Beweise hatte sich Generalstaatsanwalt Mazuz jedoch mit Katsavs Anwälten auf ein Teilgeständnis im Gegenzug zu Strafminderung geeinigt. Als Reaktion reichten mehrere israelische NGOs daraufhin Petitionen beim Obersten Gerichtshof ein, um diesen Vergleich annullieren zu lassen. Am Dienstag dieser Woche lehnte der Oberste Gerichtshof diese Petitionen jedoch ab. Erwartet wird nun eine Anhörung vor Gericht, bei der Katsav sich gemäß der milden Anklage für eine Reihe von kleineren sexuellen Vergehen schuldig bekennen, jedoch einer Haftstrafe entgehen wird. Dem Gericht steht es allerdings frei zu beurteilen, ob seine Straftaten moralisch besonders verworfen waren. In diesem Falle würde Katsav Zuschüsse in Höhe von 1,1 Millionen NIS jährlich verlieren, die ihm als ehemaligem Präsidenten zustehen.

Another blow for Israelis

"For the second time in the past few weeks, Israeli citizens see how fundamental values that were the basis for the establishment of the state – accountability, the rule of law, and equality before the law – disappear under mountains of words and legal casuistry. [...]"

In the case of the [Second Lebanon] war, it was the avoidance of an official state inquiry, and in the Katsav case it was the decision to go for a plea bargain instead of a day in court, where the victims and not only the aggressor have the right to speak up.

The sense of mistrust and betrayal stems from this twilight zone, where things are decided behind closed doors. This is not good news for democracy." Uri Misgav, JED 27.2.08.

Katzav's legacy

"Katsav will receive a light sentence not because it is the appropriate price to pay for his contemptible behavior. Rather, technical legal circumstances [...] are the factors that motivated Attorney General Menachem Mazuz to retract the original letter of indictment he had formulated. It should be stressed that Mazuz made this retraction not because he did not believe the versions of the complainants against

Katsav, but because doubt overcame him as to his ability to prove them in court.

Katsav brought shame on the office of president and for this he will be remembered in disgrace. His shrewd lawyers are beginning to pressure Mazuz to withdraw his demand that the Magistrate's Court rule that Katsav's offenses involve moral turpitude. But even if they succeed, moral turpitude is clearly the stamp that Katsav leaves behind, to the glory of the State of Israel."

Uzi Benziman, HAA 27.02.08.

A great day for rapists

"The State Prosecutor's Office, greedy attorneys, the police, and the High Court of Justice won. The woman only known as 'A.' lost, along with other battered women, but A. tops the list. [...] She lost on behalf of all women; any woman who seeks to charge a man who hurt her in the face of heartless lawyers. [...] From now on, and we already said it before, women will no longer file complaints. No woman would want to face an arsenal of power, money, and prestige that would butcher her publicly. She will know that when it comes to Israeli justice, she has no chance. [...] The lesson is that when facing off against power and money, no justice will prevail in this country."

Yoram Kaniuk, JED 26.02.08

The devil's advocate

"Moshe Katsav has not so much had his day in court as nearly two years in a kangaroo court. Lynching is outlawed but the modern equivalent, being strung across banner headlines in tabloids, has been his lot ever since the sex scandal story hit the Israeli public in 2006. [...]"

Whatever you might think of the former president, or of politicians, or, indeed, the country's legal establishment and court system, keep in mind that there is a thin line between prosecution and persecution. Once we've crossed it, there's no saying where we'll end up.

The learned judges of the High Court of Justice could have ruled out the plea bargain and didn't. The kangaroo court should not jump in and act as an even higher court. There's no justice in that."

Liat Collins, JPO 01.03.08.

3. Kosovo als Präzedenzfall für Palästina?

Nach der unilateralen Unabhängigkeitserklärung des Kosovos wurde in den israelischen Medien diskutiert, welche Bedeutung diese Abtrennung von Serbien für Israel und die Palästinenser habe. Nicht nur die Palästinenser in den besetzten Gebieten würden sich den Kosovo zum Vorbild nehmen, auch die arabische Minderheit in Israel würde in Unabhängigkeitsbestrebungen bestärkt, hieß es aus dem rechten Lager.

Angefacht wurden die Diskussionen auch von Abed Rabbo, Mitglied des palästinensischen Verhandlungsteams und Berater von Präsident Mahmoud Abbas, der angab, auch die Palästinenser könnten sich gezwungen sehen, unilateral die Unabhängigkeit zu erklären, sollten die Verhandlungen mit Israel zu keinem Ergebnis führen. Abbas und andere palästinensische Politiker wiesen seine Worte jedoch als verfrüht zurück.

Zwischen dem Gazastreifen und dem Kosovo – ein politisches Gleichnis

"In den letzten Tagen wird immer wieder der Standpunkt geäußert, Israel dürfe sich nicht beeilen, die Unabhängigkeit des Kosovos anzuerkennen, damit kein Präzedenzfall geschaffen wird. [...]"

Wir leiden eindeutig unter Islamophobie, doch nicht alles was islamisch riecht, kommt dem Extremismus à la Al Qaida, Hamas oder Hisbollah gleich. Im Kosovo haben wir es mit einem moderaten und säkularen Islam zu tun, der weit entfernt von Fundamentalismus ist. Darüber hinaus haben die Führer des Kosovos nur Lob für Israel und betrachten es als Modell zur Nachahmung. Welchen Grund haben wir also, die ausgestreckte Hand zurückzuweisen?

Die Analogie zwischen dem Kosovo und der Möglichkeit einer Unabhängigkeitserklärung der Palästinenser ist übertrieben, denn zwischen den beiden Fällen gibt es absolut keine Ähnlichkeit. Im Kosovo konzentriert sich der Konflikt auf die Frage der Souveränität des Kosovos. Es gibt keine Diskussion über das Existenzrecht Serbiens [...].

Darin liegt der Unterschied. Der Konflikt zwischen uns und den Palästinensern dreht sich um das Existenzrecht des Staates Israel. Wenn es der einzige Wunsch der Palästinenser wäre, einen palästinensischen Staat in einem Teil von Eretz Israel zu gründen, wäre ihnen dieser Wunsch schon längst erfüllt worden. [...] So lange die Palästinenser das Existenzrecht des jüdischen Staates nicht

anerkennen, beweisen sie, dass sie keine echten Partner für Frieden sind. Solange dies der Fall ist, darf kein palästinensischer Staat gegründet werden."

Uri Heitner, IHY 26.02.08.

Kosovo is already here

"Kosovo's declaration of independence has sparked concern in certain circles in Israel. The day may not be far off when the Arabs of Galilee start clamoring for political independence, too. [...] The Muslims of Kosovo constitute an absolute majority of the population, and the same is true for the Galilee Arabs. Quite a few Jews have been leaving the Galilee, especially since October 2000, and not many are joining the sparse Jewish population there, despite an array of financial incentives. [...] Israeli governments have resigned themselves to the blatant, unconcealed separatist actions of the Galilee Arabs, and this only perpetuates the phenomenon. [...]"

Kosovo is already here, even without a formal declaration of independence. Looking at the government's mode of conduct in the periphery, and even its response to the Qassam rockets in the south, one realizes the futility of expecting it to wake up and fight against those who are challenging Israeli sovereignty in the Galilee.

The leaders of this separatist policy in the Israeli Arab community know very well that apathy and lack of self-confidence also characterize the approach of the agencies of the state [...] in their dealings with the Arab public. This only increases the motivation to gnaw further at Israeli authority and sovereignty. [...] This inertia will probably continue, with the Zionist state financing, via education, health, national insurance and other state monies transferred to citizens, a population that is de facto establishing a Palestinian state within the sovereign State of Israel - separate, of course, from the Palestinian state that the Arabs are pushing for in Judea and Samaria."

Israel Harel, HAA 21.02.08.

Kosovo's stark warning

"Kosovo's US-backed declaration of independence is deeply troubling. By setting a precedent of legitimizing the secession of disaffected minorities, it weakens the long-term viability of multi-ethnic states. In so doing, it destabilizes the already stressed state-based international system. [...]"

Setting aside the global implications, it is hard to see how Kosovo constitutes a viable state. Its 40 percent

unemployment is a function of the absence of proper economic and governing infrastructures. [...] The fledgling failed-state of Kosovo is a great boon for the global jihad. [...]The emergence of a potentially destabilizing state in Kosovo is clearly an instance of political interests trumping law. Under international law, Kosovo has no right to be considered a sovereign state. [...]

For Israel, Kosovo's US-backed declaration of independence should be a source of alarm great enough to require a rethinking of foreign policy. Unfortunately, rather than understand and implement the lessons of Kosovo, the Olmert-Livni-Barak government is working actively to ensure that they are reenacted in the international community's treatment of Israel and the Palestinians. Today, Israel is enabling the Palestinians to set the political and legal conditions for the establishment of an internationally recognized state of Palestine that will be at war with Israel."

Caroline Glick, JPO 21.02.08.

Recognize Kosovo

"Kosovo expects dozens of countries to recognize its independence. We have to hope that Jerusalem has properly weighed the reasons in favor of responding to the call of the new European state, in the face of pressure from Serbia. Although most of the residents of Kosovo are Muslims, the district has not identified with extremist Islamic tendencies and has kept a distance from Israel's opponents in the Arab world. [...]

The struggle of the persecuted Kosovar people for independence is reminiscent of struggles by other nations for the right to self-determination. The State of Israel, which was established in the wake of the Jewish people's struggle for a national home, should stretch out a hand to other nations seeking self-determination.

Israel maintains diplomatic and economic relations with Arab and Muslim countries around the world. The government has a unique opportunity to stretch out a hand to the new state, and to prove that the Jewish state is not an enemy of the Muslims."

HAA 20.02.08.

HAA = Haaretz
HZO = Ha Tzofe
JED = Jedioth Ahronoth
JPO = Jerusalem Post
MAA = Maariv
IHY = Israeli HaYom

Die Artikel aus HZO und IHY wurden dem Medienspiegel der Deutschen Botschaft Israel entnommen.

Veröffentlicht am: 12. März 2008

Verantwortlich:

Hermann Bünz,
Leiter der Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Israel

Redaktion:

Maike Ziesemer

Anita Haviv

Homepage: www.fes.org.il

Email: fes@fes.org.il