



Syrien Aktuell

Pressespiegel Oktober 2010

1. Syrien erlässt Haftbefehle im Zusammenhang mit dem Hariri-Tribunal

Nachdem die syrische Justiz wegen Falschaussage bei den Ermittlungen zum Mordanschlag auf den früheren libanesischen Ministerpräsidenten Rafik Hariri 33 Haftbefehle in Abwesenheit gegen prominente Richter, Offiziere, Politiker, Journalisten sowie libanesische, arabische und ausländische Staatsbürger erlassen hatte, hat die libanesische Regierung den libanesischen Justizminister beauftragt mit seinem syrischen Amtskollegen in dieser Angelegenheit zu kooperieren. Haftbefehle wurden auch gegen UN-Sonderermittler Detlev Mehlis sowie seinen Assistenten Gerhard Lehmann erlassen (al-Watan 5.10.2010). In einem Interview mit dem türkischen Fernsehsender TRT bezeichnete Präsident Bashar al-Assad die gegenwärtige Lage im Libanon als besorgniserregend und erklärte, die Haftbefehle seien rein juristisch und nicht politisch motiviert (Teshreen / al-Baath / al-Thawra / al-Watan 7.10.2010). Diese Aussage bestätigte er in einem Interview mit der überregionalen arabischen Tageszeitung al-Hayat am 25. Oktober, welches breite Resonanz in der syrischen Presse fand.

Syria issues 33 arrest warrants

“The repercussions of false witnesses’ case in the assassination of former premier Martyr Rafik Hariri are still coming to light with the Syrian judiciary issuing 33 arrest warrants against judges, officers, politicians and journalists of Lebanese, Arab and other nationalities, who are considered to be close to Prime Minister Saad Hariri. The false witnesses’ case was brought to court by former Jamil As-Sayyed who in December 2009 filed

a lawsuit in Damascus because he says he does not trust Lebanon's judiciary, which he has accused of supporting false witnesses. Syria issued the arrest warrants after repeated state summons for the people concerned were ignored. (...) Hariri's quarter was shocked by the Syrian arrest warrants, prominent ministerial sources told the daily An-Nahar. Prominent Future movement sources wondered at the warrants seeing as they were issued after Hariri made positive initiatives towards Syria, As-Safir reported. They stressed however that the Future movement will remain committed to the rapprochement with Syria. The warrants are a direct political message whose meaning is not yet clear, they noted.”

Champress, 4.10.2010

Präsident al-Assad gegenüber der Zeitung al-Hayat

„Präsident al-Assad sagte, es gebe kein Problem oder Entfremdung zwischen ihm und Ministerpräsidenten al-Hariri. Das Problem sei jedoch, dass es im Libanon die Erwartung gegeben habe, Syrien werde sich in jedes Problem einmischen. ‚Ich war allen gegenüber klar, die ich im Libanon getroffen habe, einschließlich al-Hariri, dass Syrien kein Interesse hat, sich in libanesische Details hineinzubegeben, insbesondere wenn wir sehen, dass es kein libanesisches Verlangen nach einer Lösung gibt. Auf der anderen Seite wurde Syrien zweifellos viele Male beschuldigt, sich in libanesische Angelegenheiten einzumischen. Sobald die Libanesen sich auf eine syrische Rolle einigen, sind wir bereit‘. (...) Bezüglich der Haftbefehle sagte Präsident al-Assad ‚Im Libanon interpretieren sie alles

politisch. Aber wenn wir eine politische Erklärung wollen, kann irgendjemand derer, die die Haftbefehle als eine syrische Botschaft an al-Hariri verstehen, den Inhalt dieser Botschaft, ihren Zeitpunkt oder ihre Grundlage erklären? Ich fordere sie auf, einen praktischen Inhalt zu deuten, der eine Botschaft im Interesse Syriens ergibt. Dieses Gerede ist nicht logisch. Ich habe nach einer Botschaft gesucht, sogar in den Medien, aber ich habe nichts außer Anschuldigungen gegen Syrien gefunden. Deshalb will ich die Haftbefehle nicht mit der vorherrschenden Stimmung im Libanon in Verbindung setzen. (...) Das ist ein juristischer Prozess, der seinen normalen Gang geht, und wenn er einmal begonnen hat, muss er in einer bestimmten Richtung weitergehen.“

SANA 27.10.2010 (www.sana.sy)

are concerned. Officially disclosed salaries in the Syrian private sector range from the minimum full-time wage of \$125 to \$42,000 a month. (...) This is our current state of affairs in a nutshell and 15 years after the government cut the leash and set loose a whimpering private sector in an attempt to help rebuild the dismal economy. What did the rising stars of the Syrian open market and trendy society, the Nouveau Riche and Old Money, the crooks and their offspring, the deserving self-made millionaires and the rarest of them all, the honest entrepreneurs contribute to this country besides sucking it dry of resources, potential and wealth and devastating its environment? (...) Who in the hell gets paid a salary of \$42,000 a month in Syria?”

Abu Fares, 3.10.2010 (www.abufares.net)

2. Diskussion über die Konsequenzen der wirtschaftlichen Liberalisierung

Während die syrische Regierung im elften Fünfjahresplan für 2011-15 weiterhin auf eine Steigerung des Bruttoinlandsproduktes und eine Liberalisierung der Wirtschaft setzt, sind deren Folgen im Alltag aller Syrer inzwischen deutlich zu spüren. Der immer offensichtlicher werdende Abstand zwischen den Gewinnern und den Verlierern dieser Veränderungen gibt Anlass für erhitzte Diskussionen und führt zu einer Spannung, welche nach Ansicht von Beobachtern zu einer Zunahme der Religiosität unter der syrischen Bevölkerung führt.

The Syrian Private Sector: A Socioeconomic Farce

“According to a recent publication by the Syrian Central Bureau of Statistics the average 2009 monthly salary was SYP 11,000 (US \$234). The same document listed the average household expenditure during the same year at SYP 30,000 (US \$638) per month. Equally disturbing is the fact that government jobs paid higher than those in the private sector. One last finding, which might be of interest to some, was that women were fairing slightly better than men as far as average wages

The Sin in Syria is Low Wages

“To be sure, Abu Fares’ article makes for entertaining reading. It is hard to disagree with his negative portrayal of the current income disparity in Syria. However, his story is akin to taking a snapshot of a movie without watching its start, middle or end. What is noteworthy is that while Abu Fares lashes out against the rich, both the nouveau and old money, he conveniently omits any discussion of why the poor make a measly monthly salary of SYP 11,000 (US\$ 234). (...) Those making a salary of \$42,000 a month are the general managers of the country’s private banks. Is this an excessive salary? No. The compensation system of such banks is decided on by an independent board and the institution’s human resource department. (...). Syrian universities cannot produce qualified bank executives that can manage \$1 billion balance sheets. Indeed, Syrian universities cannot even produce English speaking graduates that can take basic starting jobs at financial institutions. As a result, the boards of these banks have had to recruit their top managers from abroad. (...)

To look at the problem in a different way, we should not be shocked at the bank manager who earns \$42,000 a month but the accountant who goes home with only

\$400 at the end of the month and must face his family. Syria is slowly taking its place in the global market place. Rather than venting against the reformers and the private sector, people must direct their anger at the socialist planners whose ill-advised past policies had held back their country's infrastructure, education, health care, competitiveness, productivity, incomes and standards of living for way too long. While Abufares and the Syrian public have the right to wonder about income disparities, they should direct some of their anger and frustration at Syria's past economic mismanagement rather than present reforms. The vast majority of Syrians who seek out an existence on pitiful salaries should not be seen as the norm."

*Ehsani, Syria Comment 17.10.2010
(www.joshualandis.com)*

A General Socio-Political View of Contemporary Syrian Society

"Over recent years manifestations and symbols of religiousness have been more evident in the public sphere, to the degree that they have aroused the resentment of the authorities. (...) It seems that the social religiousness and the growth in class consciousness in general, is linked to irreversible economic and social processes at play in the country. These include the relative 'economic liberation', the accompanying degree of social and media liberalism, and the expansion of private education. They also include the collapse of public and educational services (and especially health services), the spread of unemployment and the growth of the informal economic sector. (...) Today the economy is 'liberated', and the state has in practice withdrawn from its obligation to provide acceptable conditions of life for broad sections of the population, while maintaining its monopoly on the establishment, and forcefully resisting the creation of independent organisations and unions.

Added to this is a moral and cultural vacuum created by the social transformation itself, and the collapse of the nationalist and leftist ideological values which were dominant in Syria until the nineteen eighties. All of this increases the demand for religiousness, and for its tokens and symbols. This is certainly not a political religiousness. It is a social religiousness towards which Islamist politicians in particular are moving, whilst distancing themselves from the adversarial politics of the authorities, and from political partnerships with other opposition elements. (...) It can be concluded from this that these changes do not demonstrate a supposed revival of civil society in Syria. Governmental policies have weakened the civility of doomed society (the banning of independent social initiatives and organisations). It appears today that creeping capitalism, in an absence of political liberalisation, is driving a further weakening of social participation."

Yasin al-Haj Salih, SRCC 21.10.2010

(www.strescom.org)