



## Schlaglicht Israel Nr. 16/21 Aktuelles aus israelischen Tageszeitungen 16.-30. September

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#### 1. Bennetts erste Rede vor der UN-Generalversammlung

Ähnlich wie sein Vorgänger Benjamin Netanyahu, nutzte auch Israels neuer Ministerpräsident Naftali Bennett die Bühne in New York für deutliche Worte an die Regierung in Teheran. Das Atomprogramm des Irans habe „alle roten Linien überschritten“, so resümierte Bennett in seiner ersten Rede vor einer UN-Vollversammlung. Das nukleare Forschungsprogramm habe einen Wendepunkt erreicht – so aber auch die Toleranz Israels. Bennett warnte wiederholt, Israel werde dem Iran nicht erlauben, in den Besitz von Atomwaffen zu kommen. Laut der Internationalen Atomenergiebehörde verstößt die Regierung in Teheran immer weiter gegen die Auflagen des Wiener Atomabkommens von 2015, das den Bau einer Atombombe verhindern sollte. Die iranische Führung streitet ab, dass es sich bei dem nuklearen Forschungsvorhaben um ein militärisches Projekt handelte, sondern es diene ausschließlich zivilen Zwecken. Bennetts Rede erregte in Israel allerdings aus einem ganz anderen Grund Aufsehen und Misstrauen. Bennett übte nämlich vor der UN-Versammlung indirekt Kritik an Mitarbeiter\_innen des israelischen Gesundheitsministeriums, die sich öffentlich gegen manche Entscheidungen der Regierung im Hinblick auf den Umgang mit der Covid-19 Pandemie geäußert hatten. Zudem bemängelten manche Kommentator\_innen, dass Bennett keine Stellungnahme zu möglichen Lösungsansätzen des

israelisch-palästinensischen Konflikts abgegeben hatte.

#### Bennett's UN address was not so different from Netanyahu after all

The former premier's rhetoric on the world stage was his greatest source of political power domestically and did very little to bring glory to Israel internationally. When Netanyahu picked up on this trend, he started to schedule foreign visits and addresses to his political needs back in Israel. (...) Bennett on the other hand stressed before his speech that his address will be stately and thorough and that he will do away with visual aids - utilized so frequently by his predecessor. (...) His attacks on Iran were coherent, as was the information regarding Tehran's suicide drone apparatus (...). What is more significant is him issuing a thinly veiled threat of an attack on Iran by saying that "talks will not stop the centrifuges." Bennett knows that any potential military action depends on the success or failure of the renewed talks on revival of 2015 nuclear deal. If they do fall through, the possibility of a strike becomes ever more realistic. If the world powers achieve their goal, Israel will not be able to act in any way that contradicts the U.S. policy. Therefore, the purpose of his remarks was to emphasize that the clock is ticking (...). The omission of the very word "Palestinians" from his speech was glaring and will no doubt serve Bennett domestically. He wants us to make sure we note their absence from the

speech, thinking it acts as proof he has maintained his right-wing values and his position in the government. In general, the attempt to paint a picture of a tremendous change in Israel's international policy from the Netanyahu era does not match the reality. The Iranian nemesis was mentioned more than 30 times, but the Gaza Strip and its Palestinian terror groups, a much more pressing and problematic issue in terms of Israeli foreign relations, were only mentioned once. (...) Bennett's greatest gamble of course was using the international stage to slam health officials who advise the government on the pandemic. The problem is that right now the country has one of the highest rates of (...) fatalities and infection rates since the start of the pandemic. His attempt to portray this as a success is questionable. (...) For Bennett now, it is glory or downfall, which all depends on how the pandemic will develop in the coming months. (...)

Nadav Eyal, YED, 28.09.21

#### **At UN, Bennett offers lesson in mediocrity**

(...) Prime Minister Naftali Bennett (...) is determined to turn lemons into lemonade; In other words, to present his lack of charisma as the mark of a new kind of quality leadership. He seemingly forgoes any attempt to be as original and dominant as Netanyahu. From now on, these qualities are to be seen as negative, an expression of narcissism covering for failure. Bennett is a new kind of leader: quiet, minor, and one who acts without saying much. (...) Mediocrity is king. (...) It took 12 years of harsh words, Bristol boards, and pompousness, alongside painstaking diplomatic efforts, for things to change and to enlist country by country (...) until suddenly, there exists a pro-Israel front. Netanyahu's speeches certainly did affect change in this world. Without creating his own moment, without presenting original ideas to be recognized as his from now on, Bennett entered a rhetorical genre Netanyahu himself invented to a great extent to prove to those watching from Israel that he is in fact capable of reciting those same lines without his knees buckling from the pressure. This was an anachronistic speech of low expectations (...) without any star power. Above anything else, it was a speech that wanted to get along with the world, instead of doing what great rhetoric does best: change it.

Eithan Orkibi, IHY, 29.09.21

#### **Bennett failed to deliver his message to the UN**

(...) one of the issues in the speech was that the fact that Bennett is not a leader representing a nation,

rather an Israeli delegate addressing an international forum did come through – in his monotone, sometimes erratic delivery, and his motionless face. (...) the Israeli public envisions a different leader, one who knows how to represent the people's strength. (...) There was an awkward tone to Bennett's remarks and it sounded like he was being defensive while on the most important stage in the world, talking about him and his friends who are going out to fight. (...) Tehran knows it won't have to sleep tonight with one eye open. In fact, the ayatollahs have been sleeping soundly for months. (...) the message that Israel will not tolerate a nuclear Iran didn't really get through. (...)

Amnon Lord, IHY, 29.09.21

#### **At UNGA, Bennett gave a domestic speech to an international audience**

Somewhere on the way to delivering his speech (...) to the United Nations General Assembly, Prime Minister Naftali Bennett got his audience mixed up. Although Bennett went to speak on the premier international stage to an audience that, at least in theory, included leaders from every country in the world, the speech he delivered seemed meant primarily for the few Israelis who tuned in (...). There was our prime minister speaking to the world (...) he honed in on the coronavirus and emphasized what a great thing it was that he built a diverse coalition. Both those issues – the coalition and his dealing with corona – are of interest primarily to a domestic audience, not an international one. (...) he tried again to convince his electorate that he is doing a bang-up job managing the crisis. (...) Bennett did not have to travel halfway around the world on the eve of a holiday to deliver that message. (...) he should have stayed home to do it. (...)

Editorial, JPO, 29.09.21

#### **Israel's prime minister now pretends the Palestinians don't exist. It's a brilliant move**

(...) Bennett's speech (...) was brilliant. It showed he understands where Israel is right now better than any of his contemporaries and the media. Bennett (...) did not mention the Palestinians even once in his speech and that was a stroke of genius (...). He knew that while some left-wing politicians and pundits would slate him for keeping the Palestinians out, nearly everyone else simply couldn't care less. (...) He understood that as far as the most of the world is concerned, you don't have to shrink the conflict. You can simply pretend that it doesn't exist. (...) In the last three and a half months since he became prime

minister, Bennett has noticed how seldom the Palestinian issue came up in his conversations with foreign leaders, and how half-hearted they sounded when they did bring it up. Especially the Arab leaders he met. As a newcomer to international diplomacy, Bennett has grasped the dirty secret: No-one gives a damn about the Palestinians, beyond lip-service. (...) Bennett is clever to be the first Israeli leader who has fully internalized that divide between talk and reality. (...) Western politicians, journalists and activists, couldn't talk a solution to the conflict into existence, let alone shrinking it. But the conflict won't just go away just because they eventually stop talking about it in the West. (...) Those who, unlike Bennett, believe in justice and equality for all those living between the river and the sea and that the conflict must not be ignored, need to understand that as well.

Anshel Pfeffer, HAA, 30.09.21

## 2. 100 Tage Bennett-Regierung

*Die ersten 100 Tage der Regierung ohne Benjamin Netanyahu sind überstanden. Noch hält das heterogene Bündnis der acht Parteien unter Regierungschef Naftali Bennett, dem Kritiker\_innen anfangs keine großen Überlebenschancen einräumten. Nur eine Stimme macht die Mehrheit der Koalition in der Knesset aus. Schon kleinste Unstimmigkeiten könnten die Regierung zu Fall bringen. Die erste große Hürde nahmen Bennett und Yair Lapid, Israels Außenminister, der nach zwei Regierungsjahren Bennett im Amt des Regierungschefs ablösen soll, mit der ersten Lesung des Haushaltsentwurfs. Das Erfolgsrezept der bunten Koalition ist, dass sich die Parteien auf die Gemeinsamkeiten konzentrieren. Keine\_r der parteipolitischen Partner\_innen will offenbar den Bruch der Regierung riskieren, die nur funktioniert, wenn alle an einem Strang ziehen.*

### Back to sane politics

(...) The main accomplishment of the first 100 days of the Bennett-Lapid government is the return to political normalcy. At times, it seems that Bennett is not the prime minister, rather a caretaker minister in the Prime Minister's Office, who has had to relinquish any and all ministerial whim to continue holding the coveted post. (...) Israeli politics has shrunk back to a saner size. The dialogue led by Bennett and Lapid is responsible and respectful. (...) the state budget stands to pass in a few weeks, and the government will finally be able to pursue policy moves. Perhaps, after proving stability and potential-

ly expanding, the government will also be able to deal with the ticking time bombs that are the Gaza Strip, Lebanon, and Iran. Unfortunately, the hazard that is the Palestinian Authority's takeover of Area C is likely to be sidelined, especially when Defense Minister Benny Gantz greenlights the formation of an Arab village in the heart of Gush Etzion. When you decide to stitch together a coalitionist at all cost (...) you could find that you are vulnerable to pressure by any minister and any sector. When you choose normalcy at any cost (...) you place lives in harm's way and have to deal with fatalities. Resuming the county's daily routine was a must and it was the right policy move for the government's 100 days grace period. Normalcy. But it cannot, under any circumstances, be a condition of going forward.

Yifat Erlich, IHY, 17.09.21

### The government's first 100 days, down the drain

(...) Sadly, we can't believe one word from the mouth of the person in charge of the Israeli government. These are not just election promises turned to dust, but countless declarations he has made since entering office: that the coronavirus pandemic was under control; that the breach at Ben Gurion Airport was addressed; that the cross-border arson terror attacks from Gaza were stopped; that a new equation opposite Hamas had been established; and more and more bluster – nothing but pipe dreams. (...) his numerous false claims would be damning enough for a prime minister of Israel. What credit then, if any, can we give Bennett and his government? After the two-year-long political crisis, Israel now has a functioning government, ministers with authority and outlined policies, a national budget that is expected to pass, and a prime minister who is encouraging his government to work. (...) We've seen a deterioration in law enforcement, as highlighted by the escape of the six security prisoners, and the unprecedented personal attacks against a deputy police commissioner and member of Knesset. (...) The COVID situation is terrible with record numbers of seriously ill patients (...).

Ariel Kahana, IHY, 17.09.21

### 100 days of Israel's government: Coalition built on lies and deception

(...) the failures of this government are evident, and they are even more spectacular than some feared they would be. (...) It has failed in the management of the coronavirus pandemic so far and imposed draconian taxes in order to pay off coalition partners. Politicians lie - it is in their nature. (...) But, never

has a prime minister paved his way to power with lies. (...) Bennett's political party spent tens of thousands of shekels in legal fees in an attempt to block the Islamist Ra'am party from participating in the last parliamentary elections, but now Ra'am is a valued member of the coalition. (...) In a democracy, the majority of voters determine their government. Millions of Israelis voted four times in the past two years and Bennett never emerged as a winner or even got close to it. (...) But in Israel of today, public support is not a factor and when a politician claims leadership under those circumstances, anarchy is sure to follow. The vote of millions who supported Likud and the ultra-Orthodox parties were cast aside as if their voices held no weight. (...) the worst of this government's failures is its disregard for human life. There is no other way to explain ministers' refusal to recognize the dangers of the coronavirus pandemic and act to mitigate them. (...) The government promotes none of the values that voters demanded of them. The coalition came into the world to do no more than remove Benjamin Netanyahu from office. (...) It is sad that the government is set on tearing apart the delicate fabric that holds us together and deprives millions of its citizens of their civil rights. This is the antithesis of a unity coalition, void of any values of truth and responsibility. It must be dissolved and the sooner it is, the better. Arye Erlich, YED, 22.09.21

### **Bennett's first 100 days were quiet, it's just the beginning**

(...) Israel today feels just a bit more normal. And this is the new government's greatest achievement in its first 100 days in office. (...) The goodwill that Bennett and Lapid have built up from the world leaders they interact with is due to the concern that if this kaleidoscope government falls, Netanyahu will come back. (...) To build everlasting goodwill, the government will need to enact policies and get things done for the country and its people. On the surface, this government's policies do not seem that different from the last. Gaza is still a problem and another operation might be on the way; the strategy to combat corona remains vaccinations; and while the new government wants to work more with the Biden administration on Iran, it remains – like its predecessor – opposed to a new nuclear deal (...). Of course, there are differences on substance. Gaza: This government is exploring the possibility of an economic initiative in the Gaza Strip, even as it ponders military operations, and it is not willing – unlike Netanyahu – to transfer suitcases of Qatari

cash to Hamas. Corona: Bennett is against lockdowns, and while the infection rate is still high, the country is wide open, people are going to the office, and so many took a hiking vacation this week for Sukkot. Had Netanyahu still been in office, it is possible that we would be in a fourth lockdown. Iran: While Bennett, like Netanyahu, remains opposed to returning to the JCPOA nuclear deal, he will not blowup relations with the Americans over it. (...) Bennett and Lapid are trying to conduct a new way of doing business in the United States and Europe. It's called working together. (...) dialogue and working together can create results. Despite the goodwill being shown by the Biden administration, Israel received a reminder this week of how tough is the battle in America (...). The opposition by members of The Squad to the bill that would have allocated \$1 billion to replenish Israel's Iron Dome batteries – and the Democratic Party's surrender to their dictates – shows just how contentious an issue Israel has become within America's ruling party. Iron Dome is a system that does one thing: it saves lives. What many fail to understand is that it doesn't only save Israeli lives, it also saves Palestinian lives. (...) Yaakov Katz, JPO, 23.09.21

### **Naftali Bennett Sticks to the Status Quo**

(...) Naftali Bennett has hewed to the status quo with respect to two major interrelated issues — the Palestinians and Israeli settlements in the West Bank. (...) As he has already indicated, Bennett intends to focus on domestic matters. He wants to contain the coronavirus pandemic, which has killed more than 7,000 Israelis since 2020. He seeks to revive the economy, which has been damaged by the deadly contagion. And he hopes to rebuild the country's infrastructure. These are non-controversial bread-and-butter issues on which all the ministers in his cabinet can agree. That's where the unanimity ends. Bennett realizes he does not have a mandate to deal with vital security matters pertaining to the Palestinians. It could upend his coalition. (...) He will neither annex territory in the West Bank, a course of action he has advocated, nor will he acquiesce to Palestinian statehood. (...) Bennett has made it crystal clear he will not meet Palestinian Authority leader Mahmoud Abbas due to his decision to bring Israel before the International Criminal Court in The Hague on charges of war crimes. (...) Bennett has every intention of maintaining the blockade of the Gaza Strip as long as Hamas is in charge and fires rockets at Israel. And he is ready to engage Hamas and Islamic Jihad in a fifth cross-border war, even if

he loses the support of Ra'am, whose backing keeps him in power. (...) For Bennett, it's all about the status quo.  
Sheldon Kirshner, TOI, 24.09.21

### **3. Progressive US-Demokrat\_innen versuchen, die Aufstockung der Militärhilfe an Israel zu stoppen**

*Um eine Milliarde US-Dollar sollte die Militärhilfe für die Finanzierung des israelischen Raketenabwehrsystems Iron Dome aufgestockt werden, was am Protest einiger linker Demokrat\_innen vorerst scheiterte. Das sogenannte Squad, eine informelle Gruppe des progressiv-linken Parteilagers, bezieht eine besonders kritische Haltung gegenüber Israels Besatzungspolitik. Die beiden muslimischen Politikerinnen Ilhan Omar und Rashida Tlaib, die dem Squad angehören, scheuen sich sogar nicht vor offen antisemitischen Äußerungen. Tlaibs Familie ist palästinensischer Herkunft. Sie selbst unterstützt die anti-israelische Boykottbewegung BDS. In Israel löste das Herausnehmen der Finanzierung des Raketenabwehrsystems Iron Dome aus dem amerikanischen Haushaltsvorschlag Sorge aus. Unter Israels früherem Regierungschef Benjamin Netanyahu, der eng mit dem republikanischen Ex-Präsidenten Donald Trump befreundet war, kühlten sich die Beziehungen zwischen Israel und den US-Demokraten deutlich ab. Umso größer war das Aufatmen in Jerusalem, als in einer separaten Abstimmung im amerikanischen Kongress die zusätzliche Finanzierung des Raketenabwehrsystems, das Israel strikt zur Verteidigung vor allem bei Angriffen mit Kurzstreckenraketen aus dem Gazastreifen einsetzt, bewilligt wurde. Erst im vergangenen Frühjahr schossen islamische Extremisten im Gazastreifen weit über 4000 Raketen auf Israel ab. Die meisten konnten mit dem Iron Dome abgefangen werden.*

#### **U.S. delay of Iron Dome funds is a serious wake up call for Israel**

It is safe to assume that Israel will eventually receive the \$1 billion in U.S. aid to replenish its Iron Dome missile defense system after the vote in House of Representatives, despite objections from progressive lawmakers in the Democratic Party. But those who write off the holdup as the result of "radical Democrats flexing their muscles," or as Foreign Minister Yair Lapid called it "the remnants of Benjamin Netanyahu's administration" – are ignoring the bigger picture. Netanyahu has indeed caused se-

vere damage to Israel's relations with the Democrats by forging close ties with former president Donald Trump, all the while the U.S. political system is drowning in toxic polarization. The Jewish state has boasted for years about how it enjoys bipartisan support from the U.S., but the opposite has been the reality for nearly a decade now. Into this quagmire stepped Netanyahu, brandishing his friendly ties with the most radical wing of the Republican party. (...) Netanyahu inflicted heavy damage to Israel's relations with the Democratic Party, and no less so with American Jewry, most of whom support the party. But the issue did not stem only from Netanyahu's attitude or progressive lawmaker's alleged anti-Israel sentiments. (...) In many Democratic circles, which include many American Jews and especially their younger generation, Israel has long ago lost the image of the small and brave nation surrounded on all sides by larger enemies who want to annihilate the only democracy in the Middle East. In their eyes, Israel is the only Western country that holds an entire nation under occupation, and does so while being fueled by nearly \$4 billion of American taxpayer money. For them, the gap between "Black Lives Matter" and "Palestinian Lives Matter" is much narrower than we are willing to admit. (...)  
Ofer Shelah, YED, 23.09.21

#### **Democrat Party Bows to Anti-Israel Power Base**

Though proposing a massive, unprecedented spending bill of \$3.5 trillion dollars, Democrats have decided to cut one \$ billion of already pledged aid for Israel's lifesaving, defensive Iron Dome system. This cut (...) is demanded by the Democrat Party's ever-growing 'progressive' wing as an opportunity to demonize Israel – a chance for them to say while every idiocy in the world is worthy of funding by this Congress, Israel is an unworthy cause. The we-hate-Israel caucus knows that without Iron Dome, Israeli citizens are victims of the thousands of missiles launched from all sides by Islamist organizations into populated Israeli neighborhoods. Those forever sermonizing about human rights seem indifferent to life when it comes to Jews in Israel. (...) Many Americans, including Christians of faith, are alarmed and concerned regarding this open hostility and demonization of Israel within a major political party here in America. (...) Will liberal and 'progressive' Jewish groups be alarmed enough to momentarily waive their loyalty to the Democrat Party so as to condemn this in-your-face anti-Jewish maneuver?  
Aryeh Spero, TOI, 23.09.21

### **A real alarm**

Israel received a brisk wake-up call (...) from its most significant ally, the United States. The removal of a provision that would have given Israel \$1 billion in emergency funding to restock its Iron Dome missile defense system from the U.S. House of Representatives spending bill – the result of pressure within the Democratic Party – proves once again that Israel is losing the bipartisan support that is so crucial to its foreign policy. This is a consequence (...) of the continuation of the occupation policy and the refusal to make peace, which is exacting a diplomatic price. (...) Nothing can be more drastic than a change to defense aid, a core issue in Israeli-American relations, which has until now been considered almost self-evident and nearly sacrosanct. (...) it would behoove Israeli decision-makers to treat this incident as a worrisome alarm. (...) This is only the beginning. Gone are the days when American taxpayers at both ends of the political spectrum are willing to take it for granted that the U.S. will continue to fund Israeli military rule of the Palestinians when there seems to be no diplomatic progress on the horizon. Bipartisan support will continue to erode, meaning a significant policy shift is needed. (...)

Editorial, HAA, 23.09.21

### **The Democrats' Iron Dome fiasco, and what it means**

(...) the Democratic Party is splintering over support for Israel. The Iron Dome system has prevented thousands of rockets and missiles from slaughtering Israeli civilians and reducing their cities to rubble. Removing this funding would signify that the party no longer wished to prevent this. (...) The fiasco was triggered by pressure from the party's "progressive" caucus, whose members hate Israel and want it gone. They reportedly told the party leadership they wouldn't vote for the bill if it included the Iron Dome funding. (...) The significance of this episode doesn't lie with the Iron Dome. It lies instead with what it tells us about the way the Democratic Party is going. For it demonstrates that the influence of this far-left caucus is considerable. (...) It shows that, when it comes to the issue of Israel, the "moderate" leadership can't control events when they have such a wafer-thin majority. As a result of this victory (...) the far-left will now have the wind in their sails, and this threatens more such battles over Israel down the line. (...) Iron Dome has got nothing to do with "Palestinian rights" but is solely a means of defending Israeli citizens against attack. (...) When Israelis are

murdered in the disputed territories of the "West Bank," the silence from the human-rights-obsessed, "anti-racist" left is deafening. (...) So what should Israel and its supporters do in response? (...) The chances (...) of Lapid ever understanding what is needed to deal with the wider "war of consciousness" are zero. What's necessary above all is for both Israel and its supporters to stop playing defense and get onto the front foot instead. (...) it's time for the Jewish world to find its fighting spirit and take the gloves off. Scant sign of that, alas. For you can take the Jew out of the ghetto; but, as is being so dismayingly demonstrated in both Israel and the Diaspora, you can't always take the ghetto out of the Jew.

Melanie Philipps, IHY, 24.09.21

### **America's relationship with Israel is stronger than ever**

(...) the new Israeli government recognized from the beginning of its term the need to maintain bipartisan American support for Israel as a strategic imperative. As a result, on day one of his premiership, Bennett and his team made it clear that they would seek to maintain the historic bipartisan balance that Israel has enjoyed for decades. (...) There is ample evidence of the strengthening of the foundations of the relationship, including Biden's support for Israel's right to self-defense during the recent outburst of Palestinian violence from Gaza. More fundamentally, Bennett has assembled a governing coalition that spans the gamut of Israeli politics, and this has meant compromise and accommodation at home and abroad. He is investing in Israel's Arab communities, reengaging with the Palestinian Authority, and promising not to make unilateral moves that could turn the situation into a hot conflict. (...) Under Biden, the US is fully engaged in confronting the Iranian threat, conducting hard diplomacy alongside our allies to achieve an effective nuclear deal, and in advancing the mutual security goals of both us and our regional allies. (...) Biden pledged unshakable support for Israel, including a tightened front against Iran, additional budget support for Israel's Iron Dome infrastructure, and strong opposition to Boycotts, Divestment, and Sanctions against Israel. Biden will need bipartisan Congressional support for each of these, and he is now able to get it, demonstrating the true breadth of support for Israel across America under his leadership. (...) Israel's relationship with America has never been stronger.

Jack Rosen, TOI, 24.09.21

### **Israel needs to repair its relationship with Democrats**

(...) Israel has a problem. Part of it is the fault of Israel and part of it has nothing to do with Israel. The part that is on Israel is the active role the previous prime minister played in undermining support for Israel in the Democratic Party. He did this by intentionally clashing with then-President Barack Obama, the way he spoke against the Iran deal in 2015 in Congress and the way he cozied up to former President Donald Trump, while knowing that it could push away Democratic friends. On the other hand, some of the trends seen today in the Democratic Party have nothing to do with Israel. The Squad wasn't created around Israel but rather to advance progressive, far-left issues in which Israel gets entangled. (...) The Iron Dome fiasco shows what (...) needs to be: trying to repair ties within the Democratic Party while building new alliances and relationships with minority groups throughout the US. Policy on Iran is important but that will anyhow be determined by the political echelon. Policy on the Palestinians is also important but everyone knows that not too much can happen now anyhow due to the unique makeup of the current government. Where the needle can potentially move is in the relationship between Israel and the current ruling party in the US. (...)

Israel needs to initiate, to communicate and to build relationships. What happened with Iron Dome shows how important all of this is.

Editorial, JPO, 25.09.21

### **The Squad keeps the dream of dead Jews alive**

People Love Dead Jews: Reports from a Haunted Present is the title of Dara Horn's new book. (...) members of the "Squad," far-left House Democrats including Rashida Tlaib, Ilhan Omar and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, blocked a bill to keep the federal government operating until it was stripped of funds to replenish Israel's Iron Dome. To be clear: The Iron Dome is not a weapon. It is a shield. It intercepts and destroys short-range missiles before they can reach their intended victims. (...) The Iron Dome saves the lives of Gazans, too, because, without this missile defense system, Israelis would not sit quietly as Hamas, which rules Gaza, rained death on them. They'd counterattack hard and fast, which would make it difficult to minimize civilian casualties to the extraordinary extent Israelis have managed in past conflicts. (...) Claims that Hamas has moderated over recent years are untrue. (...)

Clifford D. May, IHY, 30.09.21

### **Israel is losing its source of strength**

Democracies do not go to war against democracies is a well-known theory in International Relations. (...) In a nutshell, countries appreciate other countries with common values and respect the will and vote of the people in those countries. (...) Israel's strength does not come solely from its powerful military, advanced technology and stable economy. The source of its strategic strength was rooted from being the only true democracy in the Middle East, while serving as a stronghold of freedom in a region of tyranny. Democracy gave Israel internal and external strength. That strategic asset is withering away. The shriveling status stems from the anomaly that despite receiving only 5% of the vote its prime minister was appointed to head a multi-party government. (...) By doing so, Israel 2021 has put democracy on hold – and it has been costly. Israel's standing has steadily slipped with friends, foes and most importantly from within. The US administration has lost respect for Israel. (...) Israel's weakness is especially telling from within. The lack of legitimacy limits governing ability. A previously perceived right-winger, Naftali Bennett, is now mistakenly viewed by many to merely be a "useful idiot" serving the left-wing parties who appointed him. (...) Israel is strong enough to overcome the democratic and constitutional crisis it is tangled in. It can do so by returning to the basics. The Prime Minister and the government need to represent the will of the People and their vote. That is basic. (...)

Ophir Falk, TOI, 30.09.21

## **4. Medienquerschnitt**

### **Abschied nach 16 Jahren**

#### **Angela Merkel – a true leader and friend of Israel**

(...) Merkel, the first German chancellor born after World War II and the only one who grew up in what was the communist eastern part of the country until the fall of the Berlin Wall and German reunification, was well aware of her country's complicated legacy. In an address to the Knesset in 2008, she said, "The Shoah fills us Germans with shame. I bow my head before the victims. ... The break with civilization that was the Shoah has no parallel. ... I most firmly believe that only if Germany accepts its responsibility for the moral disaster in its history, will we be able to build a humane future." And indeed, Merkel proved that she had learned the lessons of history, when in 2015 she declared, "We can do this," and despite

heavy criticism, Germany absorbed a million refugees from the Syrian civil war. (...) Merkel kept her word. This was not just with regard to the defense ties between Israel and Germany, which was expressed in the sale of military equipment and joint military exercises, but also in bilateral civilian cooperation and the important contribution Germany has made toward strengthening Israeli democracy and civil society. (...) But for all that, she never hesitated to voice courageous criticism in her personal conversations with Israeli leaders - particularly with former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu - when she felt that Israeli policies were undermining democratic values and the two-state solution. (...) For the past 16 years, Germany has had an extraordinary leader, and Israel has enjoyed a true friend, who will be very much missed.

Editorial, HAA, 24.09.21

### **Kriminalität im arabischen Sektor**

#### **Bennett must change Israel's attitude toward its Arab citizens**

The National Council of Arab mayors in Israel is crying out in desperation, and it must be heard. (...) Eighty-eight Arabs have been murdered since the beginning of the year (...) 73 were Israeli citizens. The Arabs in Israel are living under the shadow of assaults by crime organizations as a matter of routine. (...) Prime Minister Naftali Bennett (...) must promote paradigmatic changes in the attitude of the state to Arab society and Arab citizens, first and foremost by harnessing the entire system to uproot crime in their communities. The Israeli government must show that it is committed to the personal security of its Arab citizens – a commitment equal to that it makes to its Jewish citizens. The Arab cities must be treated the same way as Tel Aviv. (...) This issue is clearly a national priority. All-out war must be waged against organized crime, clearing the streets of weapons and fighting violence against women. And no less important – the horrific percentage of unemployment in Arab society, which leads to violence and crime, must be brought down.

Editorial, HAA, 22.09.21

#### **Arab Lives Matter, or Lives Matter, Arabs?**

(...) Recently, the slogan Arab Lives Matter began. No doubt a variation on the US Black Lives Matter protest. However, the comparison is faulty. BLM is a protest against police brutality. But, most Arab unnatural deaths in Israel are caused by traffic, honor

killings, criminal hits, and revenge killings. (...) I doubt if more police are going to bring down Arab deaths in Israel.

(...) Arab Muslims and Arab Jews (...) Jews from Arab countries (...) largely have the same culture. But Arab Jews don't have a problem protecting life. The difference is not policing. It's being spoon-fed from the cradle that human life is holy. We need more education for many Gentiles in the world (...) it seems to me that Muslims, like many Gentiles, don't learn You [as a community] shan't murder as straight-forward as Jews. It's a nice principle unless you're angry and then it's understandable to kill? No, it is not. Muslims in Israel must take the lead in teaching themselves and all other religions that human life is very holy. So holy that you can't just blame fate when you fail to protect vulnerable people from car accidents, honor killings, criminal hits, and revenge killings. Fate or anger don't justify death. When Gentile-Arab society in Israel fortifies teaching its children the absolute holiness of human life, everyone will be safer. (...) stay away from the oppressive stereotype that Muslims are primitive. If you hate how fundamentalist Islam degrades women, look at how fundamentalist Christianity treats homosexuals. Or radical Atheists treat Monotheists. If you dislike the unfreedom that Sharia Law forces on women, remember how the West has sexualized and prostituted women. (...)

Moshe-Mordechai van Zuiden, TOI, 23.09.21

### **Ein Jahr Abraham Accords**

#### **Advancing and re-framing Israeli-Arab normalization**

A year after the signing of the Abraham Accords, the normalization process is at a crucial crossroads between becoming a game changer in Israel-Arab relations and becoming yet another marginal event in the long history of the Israeli-Arab conflict. On the one hand the agreement is a relative success in building ties between institutions, such as ministries and the business communities in Israel, the UAE and Bahrain. It had an undeniable effect on the volume of commerce between the countries. In a matter of one year, the UAE has become one of Israel's top 20 trade partners. In addition, it encouraged a wave of Israeli tourism to the UAE. Nevertheless, tourism and photo-ops aside, the accords have yet to fulfill the great expectations envisioned by their architects a year ago: They did not create a domino effect of spreading normalization with Israel



around the Arab world or a united regional front vis-à-vis Iran's military efforts. Specifically, they failed to change the basic public perception in the Arab world toward Israel and Israelis. (...) the major obstacle to turning the accords into a game-changer is the illusion upon which they were built – the concept that Israel's relations with the Arab world can be completely detached from the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. (...) Europe can help in incorporating the normalization states into the economic development of West Bank and Gaza. It can help create a multilateral framework that will include Israel, the UAE and the Palestinian Authority with the aim of tackling the two main urgent economic needs – the long-term development of Gaza and confronting the growing economic crisis in the West Bank. (...) The German government, whatever its future composition may be, should take upon itself promoting normalization as a central foreign policy goal. This mission relates directly to two major advantages of Germany as a foreign policy actor – utilizing economic development as a tool to promote peace, and conducting back-channel diplomacy. (...)  
Gil Murciano, JPO, 25.09.21

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

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