



**Schlaglicht Israel Nr. 3/22**  
**Aktuelles aus israelischen Tageszeitungen**  
**1.-15. Februar**

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**1. Amnesty International bezichtigt Israel der Apartheid**

*Eine Welle der Entrüstung löste die Menschenrechtsorganisation Amnesty International mit ihrem jüngsten Bericht aus, in dem sie Israel der Apartheid bezichtigt. Palästinenser\_innen in den besetzten Gebieten aber auch innerhalb Israels würden als „minderwertige“ Bürger\_innen behandelt. Israels Außenminister Yair Lapid warf Amnesty vor, sich auf "von Terrororganisationen verbreitete Lügen" zu stützen. Der Zentralrat der Juden in Deutschland sprach von Antisemitismus. Mit dem Bericht werde Israel das Existenzrecht abgesprochen. Auch die Bundesregierung distanzierte sich. Amnesty setzte dem entgegen, den Apartheidsbegriff im völkerrechtlichen verwendet zu haben. Eine Gleichsetzung der Situation der Palästinenser\_innen mit jener von Schwarzen Menschen im damaligen Apartheidstaat Südafrika sei damit nicht gemeint.*

**The missed opportunity in Amnesty's Israeli apartheid report**

The Amnesty International report (...) is an extremely pretentious document, one that tries to make a thorough accounting of all of Israel's sins against the Palestinians from the beginning of time, without differentiating between the territory of the State of Israel and the territories under its control. (...) the report gives the impression that it loathes Israel as a country that was founded and recognized as the nation of the Jewish people. While the report elabo-

rates on the founding of Israel, the mass expulsion of Palestinians, and the destruction of many villages, it fails to mention the war that Israel was forced to wage against those who sought its destruction. It essentially rejects the idea of Israel as a nation-state and homeland, as though the concept of a homeland was a Jewish-Israeli invention. The recommendations that appear in the report are an invitation (...) to lead Israel into national annihilation. (...) there is no real differentiation between Israel in its sovereign territory and the territories under its control in one form or another, between the Palestinians who are citizens of Israel and the Palestinians in the territories. This approach is evidently unfounded. (...) The report also misses the opportunity to construct a much stronger argument, even if not entirely convincing, that Israel's rule in the West Bank is an apartheid regime. (...) It would be wrong to dismiss Amnesty International as antisemitic. (...) In a sense, it is impossible to criticize the report's authors for ignoring the Green Line, the pre-1967 borders of Israel. This, after all, is what Israel has been doing for years, with its leaders standing in full public view and unblushingly declaring that the Ariel settlement is part of Israel. If Israel sticks to this line, it will find itself accused of apartheid.

Mordechai Kremnitzer, HAA, 02.02.22

### **Amnesty's war on fundamental principle of Zionism**

(...) Amnesty International declared war on the fundamental principle of Zionism. (...) Amnesty International explicitly negates Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state, (...) it was claimed that the goal of Israel's establishment was to impose Jewish control over the area, and that "apartheid began in 1948." (...) The report (...) exposes and very accurately characterizes the objectives of the movement to delegitimize Israel, spearheaded by "human rights" organizations. (...) In the eyes of its authors and their allies, the Jewish people must be denied their right to self-determination in a sovereign country. (...) ) The timing of the Amnesty report also indicates the launch of a broader campaign (...) to convince the world that Israel is an illegitimate country. (...) Recently, Israeli watchdog organizations NGO Monitor published a report that thoroughly examined the definition of the term apartheid, according to international law. Its analysis demonstrated that the definition used by NGOs such as Amnesty International, (...) lacks legal grounds and is tailor-made to apply it to Israel. Despite hiding behind legal terms and quotes from international charters, Amnesty's campaign is motivated by hatred of the idea of a Jewish state and the right of the Jewish people to self-determination. (...)

Yona Schiffmiller, IHY, 02.02.22

### **My Word: Amnesty's criminal report and 'apartheid' libel**

(...) The only good thing I can say about Amnesty's report is that it does away with the pretense that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is about the "settlements" and 1967 borders. Relating to all Israel, "the Occupied Palestinian Territory," (...) and Gaza, this clearly refers to pre-1948 boundaries. It even calls the Negev "Naqab," using its Arabic name. It is an attempt to erase Israel as the Jewish state. To add injury to insult, the report calls for the "return of Palestinian refugees" – not to Palestinian Authority areas or Gaza, and not to Jordan, where Palestinians are in the majority, but to Israel itself. The obvious aim is to make Israel another Muslim-majority country instead of the world's only Jewish state. (...) It's time to coin a new term for the type of war being launched on Israel by ostensible human rights groups. Perhaps "NGO combat" fits the bill. (...) There is no (...) recognition of a complex security situation. (...) The report, Amnesty said, was the result of decades of research. That's no excuse for deliberately ignoring the current situation when for

the first time an Arab party is a member of the coalition and a NIS 30 billion budget has just been dedicated to the Arab community. Incidentally, the report was issued the week that the country announced its first female Muslim District Court judge, Osaila Abu Assad, one of several Arab judges and jurists appointed to prominent positions in the latest round of appointments. (...) This is not a report, but a narrative: a warped rewriting of history. Calling Israel an apartheid state not only besmirches Israel, it belittles what black South Africans suffered under the apartheid system in which they had no rights or representation and were subjected to complete segregation. (...)

Liat Collins, JPO, 03.02.22

### **Amnesty's moral turpitude**

(...) The 211-page report, issued by Amnesty's UK branch, is an indictment of the Jewish state. It's a document that deems Israel's existence, not merely its policies, as an illegitimate, colonialist and racist entity. (...) the document is a disgrace to an organization with a record of battling on behalf of communist dissidents or apartheid – the real one, in South Africa. Along with its systematic failure to denounce human-rights abuses in Syria, Iran and Turkey, and repeated calls to take action against the United States and Europe, the report demonstrates that the NGO has been overtaken by politics. It exposes Amnesty's ideological approach that confuses the attacked with the aggressor; justifies Hamas terrorism; criminalizes countries concerned with an influx of potentially dangerous immigrants; and extols a sea of hatred against the Jewish state. (...) Amnesty International ventures into the insane accusation of equating Israel with apartheid, despite the fact that the country's Arab citizens hold high positions in government and on the Supreme Court, and work in its hospitals and universities alongside Jews. (...) In the NGO's report, this context is completely erased and replaced by the lie that Israel is imposing its grip on an innocent world. In reality, Israeli society is a kaleidoscope of cultures, ethnicities and religions, where Arabs and Jews intermix, especially in Tel Aviv and Haifa. And the passion with which Israelis rush to fraternize with the Arab countries joining the Abraham Accords is genuine. (...) The delegitimization of Israel is the real backdrop for anti-Semitic incitement and the terrorists' aim to annihilate the state. (...) Amnesty has stolen the very concept of human rights and debased it.

Fiamma Nirenstein, IHY, 04.02.22

### **The real losers in Amnesty's false 'Israeli Apartheid' charges**

In a world where criticism of the State of Israel and its policies is hardly unusual, the newly issued Amnesty International report stands out for its offensiveness and destructiveness. (...) Amnesty International in a report (...) went so far as to call Israel itself rotten to its core and born in original sin. All this is based on the proposition that a Jewish state is, by definition, illegitimate. (...) Like all countries, Israel hasn't always lived up to those ideals. There are many factors that go into that history, including the ambivalence of the Arab minority about living in a Jewish state or, in some leadership cases, their unwillingness to accept its legitimacy. And the fact that for so much of its history, Israel has been at war with Arab states and the Palestinians continue to reject Israel's existence complicates the situation within Israel. None of which is an excuse for Israel not to do better for its Arab citizens, and, indeed, Israel is moving in that direction, providing large government funding for improved employment and educational opportunities for the Arab citizens of Israel. Acknowledging gaps in Israel's pursuit of its ideals, however, is a far cry from demonizing those ideals themselves. To claim that Israel conducts an apartheid system toward its Arab citizens when there is no evidence to sustain that (...) bespeaks a bias against the very idea of a Jewish state. It is as if Amnesty is saying, if there is a Jewish state at all, then it has to be racist. (...) Using terms like apartheid and ethnic cleansing to describe Israel may well embolden those who seek to harm Jews to act upon their beliefs. (...) Amnesty has ill-served the people of the Middle East and its own commitment to human rights.

Kenneth Jacobson, TOI, 05.02.22

### **Israel's rejection of Amnesty's report does not change the reality of apartheid**

(...) The undeniable truth is that in the area under Israel's direct control there are clear differences in the rights between Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs, be they citizens of Israel or residents of the Palestinian Authority areas. (...) Israel has never denied that it is the nation-state of the Jewish people and it is not the state of all of its citizens. It even passed a law to send the message to the Palestinian Arab citizens of Israel: This country will never be yours! This is a very bizarre way for a so-called democracy to define itself. Almost two million Israeli Palestinian citizens of Israel are not defined by their own state as full citizens and the state in which they

were born and live tells them that this is not their state. The three and half million Palestinians living in the West Bank do not enjoy full citizenship of any country recognized by Israel. (...) For decades, the two-states solution advocates have warned that the failure to partition the land of Israel into two states (...) would lead to a one-state reality. We have been in that one state reality for decades, but with the failure of Israel to continue to adhere to a two-state solution and to advance it, what has emerged is a clear form of discrimination, which for lack of a better term is called apartheid. It is not racially based, as the official definition of apartheid is, and it is not based on full separation, as South African apartheid was, but it is clearly a situation of two peoples, two ethnicities, living in the same territory with two separate legal systems, two separate economies, with one side in power and control and the other at the mercy of the will of a great military force. There is not a single area of life in which Jewish Israelis do not have significantly more privileges than Palestinian Arabs, regardless if they live in Israel, east Jerusalem or the West Bank. (...) The Amnesty International report is a mirror of reality and even if the Israeli government rejects it, the reality remains with us and that is not changing.

Gershon Baskin, JPO, 09.02.22

### **Amnesty's claims of apartheid in Israel are baseless**

(...) the recent wave of allegations of an apartheid policy allegedly adopted by the Israeli government toward the Palestinians (...) are nothing but hot trash and it's embarrassing to seriously argue against it. (...) Incredibly, there is no mention of Hamas calling for the destruction of Israel or on the Gaza rulers' refusal to accept the Middle East Quartet's conditions for removal of the siege. There is no mention of the Palestinian opposition to any resolution of the conflict that is based on a two-state solution, but the Palestinian right of return is mentioned numerous times, articulating the notion that the Jewish people do not have the right of self-determination by having a state of their own. (...) Still, some of the claims listed in the apartheid report are valid and must not be ignored, despite the anti-Israel and antisemitic claims made in it. When former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced his intention to annex the Jordan Valley, while denying local Palestinians civil rights or even a residency, he fueled claims of a discriminatory policy – and all in the interest of his re-election with support from the far-right. The report also describes other attempts by

settlers to advance annexation of the West Bank land, while refusing to grant Palestinians any rights. Israel's attempts to annex land is foolishness for which Israel is made to pay in spades. It also exacerbates the conflict and validates Arab demands over their property. Amnesty's apparent bias does not excuse Israel's responsibility to deal with these issues as well as with the primary question: Do we want a Jewish and Democratic state? Or are we choosing to live in a non-democratic bi-national state? We owe it to ourselves to determine the answer. We do not owe Amnesty anything.

Ben-Dror Yemini, YED, 11.02.22

## **2. Polizei bedient sich der Spionage-Software Pegasus**

*Nach Berichten der Wirtschaftszeitung Calcalist über den polizeilichen Einsatz der Software Pegasus zur Beobachtung zahlreicher israelische Politiker\_innen, Journalist\_innen und Geschäftsleute, kündigte Regierungschef Naftali Bennett Maßnahmen an. Es seien „mutmaßlich Dinge passiert, die sehr ernst sind“, erklärte Bennett. Die Spionage-Software sei zwar ein wichtiges Instrument im Anti-Terror-Kampf, dürfe aber keinesfalls gegen unvorbelastete Staatsbürger\_innen eingesetzt werden. Zu den Opfern gehörten den Berichten zufolge führende Ministerialbeamte\_innen, der Chef der Supermarktkette Rami Levy sowie ein zentraler Zeuge im Korruptionsprozess gegen den früheren Regierungschef Benjamin Netanyahu. Die Polizei räumte einen nicht genehmigten Einsatz der Software ein und kündigte eine unabhängige Untersuchung an. Die Pegasus-Software kann Daten von Smartphones abfragen sowie Kamera und Mikrofon der betroffenen Geräte bedienen. Im vergangenen Jahr machte der Pegasus-Eigner NSO internationale Schlagzeilen, nachdem bekannt wurde, dass die umstrittene Spionage-Software in einer Anzahl von Ländern zur Beobachtung von Regierungschef\_innen, führenden Politiker\_innen, Menschenrechtsaktivist\_innen und Journalist\_innen missbraucht wurde.*

### **With or without Pegasus, Israelis are being spied on**

(...) If the police not only fails to warn us against potential dangers lurking between the line, yet also uses the automatic trust of citizens to sabotage them, how can they be credited with honor and loyalty? (...) focusing our attention on what is technically in order as a mechanism to conceal sketchy

practices is something we are familiar with in the world of technology. But, not as a tactic we are used to seeing employed by our national authorities. The police must remember that trust is built on the back of small details, and mishaps aren't easily forgotten. As opposed to bodies like the Shin Bet or Mossad, the police don't have the legitimacy to act autonomously in the shadows, and the more it continues to assume so, the faster it will see public trust plummeting. For the police, the Pegasus scandal is just another detail, while for the average citizen, it feeds the existing growing concern felt by many in the Western world. Concern about technology being used to uncontrollably violate our privacy. With time, the idea that the most intimate details of our lives are exposed to strangers for various purposes is becoming deeply embedded in our consciousness and a source of great anxiety. (...) Although the story discusses NSO and Pegasus, the wider conversation surrounding smartphones and the companies embedded in them is the headline, Pegasus is only the framework.

Nahum Barnea, YED; 07.02.22

### **Pegasus affair has snowballed from small scandal to major outrage**

Big Brother has been watching you. (...) First, the Police reportedly hacked into and sucked out the contents of people's phones without getting any court authorization to do so, as is mandated by law. Second, the people under surveillance were not suspected of any crime. It's as if the Police found itself in possession of a super-powered fishing pole, selected various people who appeared on their radar screen for various reasons, and "went fishing" to see what they could dig up. That's scary. That's undemocratic. That's intolerable. That's what they do in a police state. (...) Two things need to be done immediately. The first is a complete reckoning of how extensive the use of this tool was, who authorized it and who knew about its being employed. (...) Second, public confidence in the state's law enforcement institutions needs to be rebuilt. When those in charge of enforcing the law are actually breaking it, when those given power to preserve the law brazenly abuse that power to violate it, then a basic part of democracy's unwritten social contract is violated. This creates a dangerous schism that needs to be bridged immediately. (...)

Editorial, JPO, 07.02.22

### **Pegasus intelligence capabilities threaten state security**

(...) Upon hearing of the Pegasus affair, our first tendency is to look within. We check our personal devices and encourage our friends to check theirs. We seek answers from the police, and we expect the government and the justice system to do an in-depth investigation. But this serious incident of surveillance using spyware also has an immediate impact on state security. The majority of those Israelis being monitored by the system were fearful even before they were fully aware of the system's substantial capabilities. Now, however, the internal Israeli affair has publicized these capabilities for all to see. Not only do they have the ability to listen, but they can collect SMS and WhatsApp messages, retrieve deleted materials, and more. The enormous impact of this exposure on the Israeli intelligence world and the damage it does to our security must not be underestimated. The consequences demand that we appoint a national commission of inquiry. Every intelligence officer and each individual who trusts Israel to keep them safe must be bothered by the expected changes in our enemies' behavior as a result of the various exposures. (...) The tsunami that challenges our systems must be given the appropriate attention and the appropriate remedies. With regard to the violation of human rights and the rights of suspects, we have an opportunity to make changes. (...) All of us, elected officials and businessmen, those who lead social protests and those who interact with the police for any reason, must work to understand that this earthquake will have consequences. We must prepare ourselves and consider how we will rise up after the tsunami hits. Israelis deserve security from both external and domestic threats. The Israeli public deserves an ethical police force that adheres to the law and respects our rights.

Oded Revivi, JPO, 08.02.22

### **Pegasus snooping spared no one, and Israel Police fail to see what's wrong**

(...) the Israel Police have no restraint. (...) the NSO Group's spyware (...) became a daily investigative tool used against citizens. The surveillance with Pegasus and similar tools must end immediately and at the same time, a state commission of inquiry, led by a judge, must be appointed to investigate the use of these technologies and prosecute the offenders. (...) A future state commission of inquiry must have members who are independent – as opposed to a parliamentary commission of inquiry or a gov-

ernment commission of inquiry, as the police chief and several lawmakers have proposed – and it needs the widest investigatory powers. It must quickly and transparently investigate who approved the police's use of the spyware, when, under what authority, for which actions, whether laws were broken and whether the judges who signed the orders were aware of this use. (...) NSO's spyware and its ilk are not legitimate tools for tracking citizens in a democratic country. The fact that the police struggle to comprehend the scope of the failure emphasizes the burning need to overhaul the police and prosecute the lawbreakers.

Editorial, HAA, 08.02.22

### **NSO scandal proves thirst for power blinding Israeli police**

(...) Whoever introduced the police to the cyber world certainly knew the extent of power these tools possess, but were clearly not raised within the police force. The way the police collected intelligence seemed ridiculous to those same people; the man-based espionage field using agents or spies, turned into a small and insignificant branch of intelligence work. Most of the intelligence today is collected through the cyber world. (...) why not? Isn't this better than physically following him, planting microphones, and dealing with warrants? And if these tools already exist, why stop at conversations, when we can get all the relevant information in much less time using much less resources?

For the police, this was a revolution, and marked the point in which the Pegasus spyware turned into a harmful tool. (...) There is no doubt that this is a case for an investigation commission. The present day civilian already feels that he or she is transparent and exposed to a dark world. Civilians have little defense mechanisms against the technology, they can really only turn off their phone several times a day, making the cyber aggressor have to re-enter the scene and make the person understand he, literally, is being heard and not transparent at all. (...) Whoever introduced the police into the cyber world didn't prepare them for what was to come, and the aftermath lays before us.

Alex Fishman, YED, 09.02.22

### **And then the spyware came for us...**

(...) there is a critical message for all of us that is carried by the series of crises connected to the NSO group that have broken over the past few months. (...) the correct address to lay the blame is not NSO, but the government, and (...) the one who is ulti-

mately responsible for what has happened is we, the people. When for years, endless sources pointed to the damage that the Pegasus program was wreaking all over the world against human rights activists, journalists and dissidents, the Israeli public didn't bat an eyelash. We easily and happily accepted the excuses and explanations provided by NSO, by the Israeli courts and by the government who all defended NSO and the decisions made to allow it to provide its deadly weapons anywhere, regardless of who was likely to be targeted. These explanations, a combination of carefully worded denials and deft avoidance of responsibility, didn't hold water for a discerning listener who cared. But as long as it wasn't hurting us, we were content to brag about Israeli technological genius and celebrate the added income. (...) Therefore, with all due respect to the blame that the police and NSO deserve, our basic responsibility as citizens is to respond by first raising a voice opposing the Israeli policy that has allowed Israeli companies to sell weapons, whether they be cyber technology, rockets, drones, or guns, to governments that we know will use them in immoral ways against innocent civilians. (...) The shock and horror at the way in which Israel used this technology must be translated into a demand not to allow it to be supplied to governments for whom far more horrible uses of these weapons come as no shock at all. We cannot tolerate the hypocrisy of having our indignation stop at the edge of our own borders. We should not continue to be silent as Israeli weapons take innocent lives all over the world. After all, it has already "come for us." It is far past time, but still not too late, to speak out.

Avidan Freedman, TOI, 09.02.22

### **Pegasus investigation could destroy the coalition**

(...) The government has nothing to hide as it pertains to the "Pegasus" affair. The events in question allegedly occurred before its formation. Even if a state commission of inquiry or any other investigative committee were to be established, with broad authorities and sharp teeth, nothing bad will befall any of the members of this government. They weren't the ones in charge. (...) However, no one should be surprised if the senior members of this government do all in their power to temper the necessary investigations and avoid the prospect of any clear, unequivocal findings. Indeed, investigating these alleged improprieties involving Pegasus could very well expose how Netanyahu's indictments came into existence. (...) Who knows where things will lead

when or if an investigation is ever launched. In less than 24 hours, Bennett went from calling this is a grave affair that needs to be investigated, to downplaying it as two failed attempts to hack into cell phones and one successful attempt. Bennett, Sa'ar, Lapid, and the remaining ministers understood, too late, that even before it impacts the Netanyahu trial the entire wiretapping affair is sparking strong momentum for Likud, and they are looking on with concern at the junctions filling with demonstrators and the protest movement sprouting beneath their feet. (...)

Mati Tuchfeld, IHY, 10.02.22

### **3. Appell an israelische Staatsbürgerinnen, die Ukraine zu verlassen**

*Israels Regierungschef Naftali Bennett berief angesichts des sich zuspitzenden Konflikts im russisch-ukrainischen Grenzgebiet eine Sondersitzung von Kabinettsmitgliedern ein, um den Ernst der Lage zu beurteilen. In einer Reihe von Extraflügen wurden bereits die Familien von Botschaftsangehörigen in Kiew sowie israelisches Lehrpersonal an jüdischen Schulen in der Ukraine nach Israel geflogen. An ukrainische Staatsbürger\_innen, die sich aktuell in Israel aufhalten, ging der Appell, vorerst nicht in ihr Heimatland zurückzureisen. Umgekehrt rief die Regierung in Jerusalem die israelischen Staatsbürger\_innen zum Verlassen der Ukraine auf. Zwischen 10.000 und 15.000 Israelis sollen sich dort noch aufhalten. Sorgen macht man sich in Israel generell um die Juden in der Ukraine. Die Regierung bereitet sich für den Fall einer russischen Invasion darauf vor, so viele Menschen wie möglich aus dem Land zu bringen.*

### **What the West should offer Putin to save Ukraine**

(...) Europe did not pay heed to Russian concerns, or simply dismissed them altogether and supported the Maidan protestors. Russia responded swiftly strengthening its position in Belarus and invading Crimea and later taking over the Donetsk region of Ukraine. Instead of understanding Russian frustration and attempting dialogue, the West continued what Russia considered hostile policies in its own backyard. (...) the first lesson of geopolitics is simple: If you are going to try to undermine a powerful state: Expect reprisals. The U.S. did not tolerate Cuba having intercontinental missiles back in the 1960's and it would not tolerate Canada or Mexico joining its adversary camp today. (...) Historically,

Russians have considered themselves as an outermost European power, yet they have always been treated as complete outsiders. The mistrust on both sides is not new and goes back centuries. Regardless of whether Russia invades Ukraine yet again, the lesson is very simple: Russia demands respect and recognition. That surely is a starting point for a meaningful dialogue and discussion on key issues. (...)

Usama Butt, HAA, 14.02.22

### **Resolving the crisis in Ukraine**

The latest escalation between Russia and Ukraine doubtlessly could cause destructive consequences to the entire region and potentially endanger the closest allies of the two countries, including Israel. As leaders of international Jewish organizations (...) we support the Israeli government's decision to remain neutral on this issue. Relations with Russia and Ukraine are both strategically important for Israel. (...) In these challenging days, we are calling for immediate negotiations and hoping that the issue will be resolved through diplomacy. All forces of international organizations and the diplomatic offices of Europe, the United States, Ukraine and Russia must take an active part in resolving the issue in a non-violent way in order to keep the peace. (...) the probability of a Russian invasion of Ukraine is low. This statement has been repeatedly confirmed by President Vladimir Putin. (...) it is necessary to achieve de-escalation, ensuring that leaders can decrease tensions and not lose their authority. (...) Many of us were born in Russia or Ukraine. Our relatives, friends and partners live there. That is why we cannot remain indifferent in this difficult time. Despite the low probability of war breaking out, the voice of conscience urges us to make all possible decisions to stabilize the situation and maintain peace.

Michael Mirilashvili, JPO, 14.02.22

### **Is a Russian invasion of Ukraine actually inevitable?**

Is a Russian invasion of Ukraine "inevitable," a "matter of days," a "certain scenario" (...) or are other outcomes still a possibility? (...) The assessment that Russia is preparing for war is based on a combination of three factors: The Russian military's offensive posture along the border with Ukraine, the lack of progress in diplomatic discussions, and the United States' public declaration that its intelligence information indicates that a "Russian invasion could happen at any moment." It seems the Americans

genuinely believe such a scenario is imminent. (...) On the other side, Kremlin mouthpieces continue denying any intention to attack Ukraine. (...) The threat is real, but the final decision in acting on it depends on the results of the developments currently unfolding, which helps explain the lack of clarity regarding Putin's ultimate decision. (...) Israel has good relations with all the parties involved and must aspire to preserve this state of affairs. The crisis in Ukraine could adversely affect the Iranian issue. The crisis is already threatening to diminish its importance in the eyes of the international community. Israel must make sure the Iranians do not exploit the commotion to advance their interests, whether in the nuclear sphere or in other areas. At the same time, Israel will have to continue being vigilant and to ensure that the developments in Europe aren't used as justification for further concessions toward Iran. Meir Ben-Shabbat, IHY, 14.02.22

### **EU reluctantly getting tougher with Putin**

To date, Berlin and Paris have preferred to keep a low profile on the Ukrainian crisis. (...) Germany's refusal to deliver weapons to Ukraine is causing frustration in Kyiv and among NATO members. (...) The Social Democrats (...) have historically been more favorably inclined towards Russia. Since Willy Brandt's Ostpolitik in the early 1970s, the party has sometimes been dubbed *Russlandversteh*er, or "a Russia understander." (...) Germany, however, is not the only reason Putin is hardly facing a united European response. France is part of the problem, too. There is no French equivalent for the German expression *Russlandversteh*er, but there is a French equivalent for the attitude. (...) Unlike their German counterparts, French conservatives are not unanimously Atlanticists – far from it. (...) Macron (...) has hardly contributed to showing a united front vis-à-vis Russia. On the contrary, he described NATO as "brain dead" and called for "dialogue" with Russia two years ago. (...) While Macron's efforts to defuse the crisis are genuine, his diplomacy is not unrelated to France's upcoming elections. France's presidential elections will take place in April, and Macron cannot afford to go against French public opinion, which is split, with strong Russian sympathies that transcend right and left. (...) there are signs that Europe's stance on Russia may be hardening. At the beginning of his term, five years ago, Macron tried to impress Putin by inviting him to the Palace of Versailles and establishing a personal relationship at his vacation home on the Mediterranean coast. But Putin has mostly ignored Macron. Macron has also



been angered by the deployment of Russian mercenaries from the Wagner Group to Mali, where French troops are under pressure. Macron now calls Russia a "destabilizing power" (...). Besides the threat of economic sanctions, Macron has also deployed French troops to Romania to strengthen NATO's presence there. (...) Europeans surely remember what happens when you let an autocrat get away with grabbing territories hoping that this bite will be the last one. And if Putin gets away with conquering Ukraine, Chinese President Xi Jinping will feel confident about taking control of Taiwan. (...)

Emmanuel Navon, IHY, 15.02.22

#### 4. Medienquerschnitt

##### **Whoopi Goldbergs unglückliche Holocaust-Bemerkung**

##### **Why Whoopi Goldberg, and all of us, should read 'Maus'**

The American comedian Whoopi Goldberg (...) tied herself in knots trying to explain her belief that Nazi Germany's industrial extermination of Jews wasn't "about race," because both the murderers and the victims were white. For this she was pilloried in the media and suspended for two weeks by her employers from the television program she hosts. This strikes me as profoundly unfair. If a requirement for hosting a daytime talk-show is a broad knowledge of twentieth century history, two weeks won't be enough for Goldberg to fill the gaps. History aside, Goldberg was merely articulating a prevailing view in contemporary western progressive culture that race, and racism, is a black-white binary and therefore assuming that Jews and Nazis are both white and the Holocaust wasn't about racism is a perfectly logical, even moral, conclusion. Many have already noted the irony that Goldberg's misunderstanding arose during a conversation on the recent decision by a Tennessee school board to remove "Maus," the graphic novel by Art Spiegelman, from their curriculum because of the scenes of nudity and violence in Spiegelman's drawings and profanities uttered by his characters. (...) Spiegelman (...) grew up with parents or grandparents who were branded as slaves and survived the camps, knew them as human beings, with all their human faults and foibles. (...) By graphically portraying the Jews as mice, the Germans as cats, Poles as pigs and (non-Jewish) Americans as dogs, Spiegelman is showing us how

humans are seen by the racists. (...) One feels for the Black woman who chose "Goldberg" as her stage-name and has in the past claimed to have also Jewish heritage, though she's never explained where that comes from. It really is a minefield. We were persecuted and murdered for being members of a race as defined by false racial theories. We're victims of racism, but we're not one race or racial group as we come in all colors. (...) we don't want to be treated like saints or members of an endangered species, just human beings.

Anshel Pfeffer, HAA, 04.02.22

HAA = Haaretz

YED = Yedioth Ahronoth / Ynetnews

JPO = Jerusalem Post

IHY = Israel HaYom

TOI = Times of Israel

GLO = Globes

Veröffentlicht im: Februar 2022

Verantwortlich:

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