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1. Neuwahlen im Herbst

Die israelische Acht-Parteien-Regierung von Ministerpräsident Naftali Bennett ist nach nur einem Jahr am Ende. Nach der Abstimmung über die Auflösung der Knesset stehen am 1. November 2022 Neuwahlen an. Es sind die fünften innerhalb von weniger als vier Jahren. Ministerpräsident Bennett übergab das Amt des Regierungschefs für die Zeit bis zu den Wahlen an den bisherigen Außenminister Yair Lapid. Einer von der Jerusalem Post in Auftrag gegebenen Umfrage zufolge würde die Likud-Partei unter der Führung von Ex-Ministerpräsident Benjamin Netanyahu um 4 Knesset-Mandate auf 34 Sitze zulegen. Zusammen mit den traditionellen Koalitionspartnern, der national-religiösen und den ultra-orthodoxen Parteien käme der konservative Block aber noch immer nicht auf die notwendige Mehrheit der 61 von insgesamt 120 Sitzen. Die Parteien der derzeit regierenden Koalition kämen dem aktuellen Meinungsbild zufolge auf 55 Sitze. Somit bleiben laut der Umfrage die mehrheitlich arabische Vereinigte Liste mit 6 Sitzen und die islamistische Ra'am mit 4 Sitzen weiterhin Zünglein an der Waage.

Don't Let Bennett's Government Fall

(...) If this government does indeed fall soon, it will be a victory of bad over good, of falsehood over truth, of toxic discourse and hatred over serious work on behalf of the citizens. It is by no means a perfect government; there is no such thing. But it has many achievements to its credit, which are

worth citing. The biggest one: saving Israeli democracy from a totally corrupt person who actively worked to undermine law enforcement and the justice system. (...) In the economic sphere, the Bennett government passed a responsible two-year budget filled with reforms that sustain competition, after the Bibi governments operated without any budget and with no reforms. This government was also able to intelligently and effectively handle the coronavirus situation, when Bennett decided that Israel would be the first country in the world to offer a third vaccine, and also greatly increased the number of tests. The lockdowns were eliminated and so was employee's leave without pay, which enabled the economy to achieve high growth of 8.1 percent (...), and led to a sharp decline in unemployment, bringing the deficit nearly to zero (...). In terms of security, it was a quiet year in the southern communities near Gaza, after thousands of rockets rained down on Ashkelon, Tel Aviv and even Jerusalem under Bibi. Bennett decided to respond to every incendiary balloon, and thus created deterrence, contrary to Netanyahu's policy of weakness and failure to respond. In diplomacy, relations were repaired with Egypt and Jordan (...). Relations with the United States were repaired as well, and President Joe Biden will visit Israel soon. There was also the Negev Summit, in which a new regional alliance was established. The struggle against Iran intensified. (...) In the sensitive area of religion and state, competition was introduced in the kashrut industry,

important changes were made in the conversion process, a reform of the religious councils was introduced and the draft law passed its first vote. (...) for the first time in Israel's history, an Arab party (...) became part of a governing coalition, inspiring hope for a future of cooperation instead of hatred. (...) Nehemia Shtrasler, HAA; 16.06.22

Mansour Abbas' Success Is Israel's Topmost Priority

(...) supporting the current "government of change" is no trivial matter, in my view. (...) In the constant ambivalence regarding the current government there is one element that helps me catch my bearings, and that is Mansour Abbas. His partnership in a coalition is a necessary (...) if Abbas joined a government of the right and the ultra-Orthodox, I'd still be in favor of it. (...) his success is the topmost priority of this country. (...) in some respects, a Jewish-Arab partnership in a full-blown right-wing government is preferable, since it has greater potential to promote a change in what it means to be an Israeli citizen. Right-wing Jewish lawmakers who give legitimacy – with their seats – to Arab-Jewish partnership in a government herald a more dramatic change than a partnership between the left and Arabs. (...) right-wing Jews, who comprise the majority of the public, have to travel a much longer path in order to be capable of taking such a step. (...) Carolina Landsmann, HAA, 19.06.22

The tragedy of Naftali Bennett

Despite having turned his back on his right-wing constituents, he managed to pass a state budget, the first in years due to political turmoil that plagued the many governments of former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (...) he had survived countless political crises (...) coalition partners had succeeded in navigating their differences and functioning. (...) he has been able to prove that even without the assistance of his predecessor, Benjamin Netanyahu (...) Israel's economy is thriving. And most important of all, Bennett has shown Israelis how to conduct politics, while still behaving like a human being. His politics are inclusive in contrast with Netanyahu's insistence that it is all about him. (...) So, what went wrong? (...) Bennett failed to understand that his leadership lacks legitimacy. He ignored the cost of heading the government-backed by only six Knesset seats that his Yamina party had won in the last election. He ignored the risk of turning his back on his voters and "colluding" with the left-wing, as well as the risk of forming a government that is reliant on

an Arab party. This pits Bennett against half the Israeli voters, who are engulfed by their rage, ignoring the prime minister's accomplishments. (...) He refused to reach out to the ultra-Orthodox camp or to the Sephardi voters. He did not answer the understandable fears and suspicions of many citizens, which made the legitimacy of his rule a problem. (...) While he is doing well in governing the country, Bennett neglected to offer Israelis a better image of his coalition, presenting his government as a functioning technocratic machine, but one without vision. Therein lies a missed opportunity. (...) Ari Shavit, YED, 18.06.22

Elections Again????!! Oy Vey!!

(...) It's highly likely that another election will continue this momentum. G-d help us if Mansour Abbas and his ilk become the powerbrokers. Yesterday's events feel déjà vu. like we've turned the clock back to the Second Temple era when it was we Jews whose overtures to the Romans led to the loss of our independence. (...) These latest events are yet another example of our talent for self-destruction. (...) Our Torah teaches us the supreme value of unity even under a less-than-ideal government. During Ahab's reign, the Jews worshipped idols but they won wars because they were united! (...) The Ethics of the Fathers states that without government society would self-destruct. We are surrounded by enemies who'd like to drive us into the sea. A disbanded government and more elections signal weakness to our enemy and puts us all at risk. (...) Carol Ungar, TOI, 21.06.22

Israel Needs a Leader, Not a Promoter

(...) This country, polarized and divided, is in the midst of an existential war of attrition: Israel vs. Bibistan. This is but another round. In this sort of war, each side fights with all its might, and every round can be the last. It is not a battle for the faint-hearted, and you can't tire midway and wave a white flag. (...) Lapid entered politics 10 years ago and managed to serve as finance and foreign minister, opposition leader and alternate prime minister. There is no one in the current political arena more fit to lead the struggle for democracy and statesmanship and face off against the alliance of Bibi-ists, Kahanists, Haredim and nationalist Haredim. Enough with this promoter business. A promoter gets a lot of money to sell goods to the public by dint of being famous, with no true affiliation with the product. (...) But, Lapid's goods are real. He believes in Israeli-ness with all his heart, and doesn't

tire of trying to articulate it, to make it ever more precise and comprehensive. It is his life's work, starting from the heyday of his journalistic career. (...) Lapid is an optimistic man. This is of course reflected in the name of the party he started from scratch: Yesh Atid – "There Is a Future." He is genuinely convinced this place has a future. (...) he's not built to stay with the negative. And the truth is, the anyone-but-Bibi camp has a positive story to tell. Leading the country through a compromise coalition of sane and decent Israelis is a hell of a story. So is saving Israeli democracy and protecting the institutions of law and order. (...) Lapid has been wrong in the past, but that works in our favor: He will not repeat his foolishness. He may be a mensch, but he's not a sucker. Or a promoter. He's a leader, and he can win.

Uri Misgav, HAA, 23.06.22

A united front, or the game's up

(...) Anyone who really believes in the vision of a Jewish, democratic state and that Zionism is not an anarchistic concept, cannot allow the peace process to stop. The parties that believe in dividing the country should form a united front (...). The agreed-upon target could be to search for a two-state solution (...), and if not that, then a unilateral move. The risk of a de facto single state from the Mediterranean to Jordan is greater than the security difficulties that could result from a non-consensus solution. The shared front should be formed before the election campaign, and Prime Minister-designate Yair Lapid should be the consensus leader. In recent years, he has proven his political and leadership capabilities. If a broad front like this cannot be formed, we should welcome any alliance that can be formed in the peace camp – primarily one between Labor and Meretz. In any case, it would be a painful missed opportunity if the same parties that ran in the last election run in this one. (...) The main effort should be in getting people on the center-left to vote in order to block a Netanyahu-led government that would necessarily include Itamar Ben-Gvir and his problematic friends. We aren't talking about word games like "It's Bibi or Tibi," but actually making Israel into a different country. Netanyahu was the one who brought Ben-Gvir –who has been convicted twice for supporting a terrorist organization, and about twice more for possession of propaganda for a terrorist organization and for incitement to racism – into the Knesset plenum. A "Bibi/Ben-Gvir government" isn't just a scary election slogan, it's the most likely scenario.

Yossi Beilin, IHY, 24.06.22

Political madness once again prevails over Israel's national interests

(...) Bennett's government was neither the best we've ever seen, nor was it the worst. The problem in today's politics is that there is no longer any correlation between a government's accomplishments and public discourse. Political parties have turned into soccer teams. Public support has no connection to success of a given political bloc, with the most important principle being the hatred for the rival team. (...) The lies have taken over the discourse in both pro and anti-Benjamin Netanyahu camps. (...) National order? Equal sharing of the burden? Settlements? These (...) topics used to be on the political agenda. Not anymore. (...) It's impossible to build up expectations with the constant incitement in the background, even though expectations and optimism are in the national interest - which is in dire need of rehabilitation. (...) we can't go on like this. Both blocs have the common interest of preventing rebel MKs, regardless of which political side they're on, from dragging the country into pointless elections when the thing the state needs most is stability. Meanwhile, the madness has prevailed over the interests of the state once again.

Ben-Dror Yemini, YED, 25.06.22

Netanyahu is standing in the way of stable government

(...) The conditions for the government of 'change' to survive within the Israeli reality were simply not allowed to prevail for any long-term length of time and the opposition (...) made optimal use of its power to obstruct, both in its parliamentary conduct, and in its efforts to encourage defections from some of the coalition partners (...) the performance of Israel's current opposition – but especially the Jewish opposition led by the Likud – has been the most obstructive (...) though it can be argued that (...) the coalition also contributed to breakdown of the proper working of a democratic system (...).

Opposition leader Benjamin Netanyahu is expected to play every trick in the game to try and attain his dream government, made up exclusively of the Likud, the ultra-Orthodox parties, religious Zionists, and any new or existing rightwing party that joined the Government of Change. (...). The Likud's campaign will continue to refer to the Government of Change as a dangerous and totally incompetent government, and to Netanyahu as the greatest leader Israel has ever had. In return, the campaign

of Yesh Atid (Lapid's party) and those of the other just-not-Bibi parties, will focus on the achievements of the Government of Change (...); on the fact that Netanyahu is performing under three indictments and is currently standing trial; and on his authoritarian inclinations, which manifest themselves in some of the laws he plans to introduce (...). All the current opinion polls suggest that Netanyahu's chances of attaining the majority he requires to form the government are reachable. However, there are several unknowns in the equation at this point. The first is that Lapid has between four to six months to demonstrate the quality of his performance as transitional prime minister, while under constant attack by the current Jewish opposition, which we know can be vicious and accompanied by endless fake news. The second is (...) what the turnout will be this time: whether the Arabs will rush to the voting booths or prefer to stay at home. (...) The third unknown is the exact make-up of lists that will run in the elections: whether a liberal-Right party willing to join a government under Netanyahu will run; whether some of the parties that are members in the current coalition and are in danger of not crossing the 3.25% qualifying threshold will decide not to run or will decide to run together in a single list with another party; and whether some attractive new actor will join the race (...).

Susan Hattis Rolef, JPO, 26.06.22

2. Abtreibungsrecht in den USA und Israel

Der Zeitpunkt war zufällig, dennoch könnte das Zusammenfallen zweier parallel gefällten Entscheidungen politische Folgen für Israels Wahlkampf haben. In den USA hatte der Oberste Gerichtshof das seit 1973 geltende Recht auf Abtreibung gekippt, als in Israel – gerade umgekehrt – Frauen, die ungewollt schwanger sind, der Weg zum Abbruch deutlich erleichtert werden soll. Der zuständige Ausschuss in der Knesset strich mehrere bislang nötige Auflagen für Frauen, die eine ungewollte Schwangerschaft beenden möchten. So soll ein Gespräch mit einem oder einer Sozialarbeiter_in nicht mehr verpflichtend sein. Zudem würden Abtreibungspillen künftig in mehr Gesundheitseinrichtungen ausgegeben. Für einen Schwangerschaftsabbruch benötigten Frauen in Israel dennoch weiterhin eine offizielle Genehmigung. Diese gewährt ein Gremium, das sich aus Vertreter_innen des Krankenhauspersonals, das den Abbruch vornehmen soll, zusammensetzt. Voraussetzung für die Erlaubnis kann sein, dass eine Frau außerhalb der Ehe

oder minderjährig schwanger geworden ist. Beobachter_innen mutmaßen, dass die Erleichterung der momentanen Praxis im bevorstehenden Wahlkampf zu einer weiteren Polarisierung innerhalb der israelischen Gesellschaft führen könnte.

Reject the import of US polarization to Israel

In recent years, US politics has grown increasingly polarized. Ahead of the Supreme Court's decision to overturn its 1973 ruling in *Roe v. Wade*, tensions reached a boiling point. Now, they are boiling over. (...) It appears there are now two nations residing in the same territory. Israel must look west toward Washington with a certain sense of horror and reject the import of disputes at the heart of American society for the creation of domestic polarization in Jerusalem. In (...) Israel, there is still broad consensus, including on the subject of abortion. This is one of the areas in which Israeli society has found a healthy pragmatism to regulate contradictions and tensions on the basis of concern for individual cases as well as society at large. On the other hand, despite Israel's relatively liberal policy on abortions, the consensus around family values is maintained. (...) figures looking to divide the Israeli public on the US decision according to "dark" and "enlightened" forces made their voices heard. Behind these calls in the media are political strategists hired to work their magic ahead of the election. The Left will try to scare the public into believing radicals are planning to realize their vision of a Halachic state despite the fact that on an ethical issue such as surrogacy, both the religious Right and the radical Left are cooperating: The LGBT and religious communities are marching together under a black flag to bring about the enslavement of women into procreation slaves. The religious want more children in Israel, while the radical liberals want to distance mothers and women from the family unit and childrearing. It would be best if this contest was called off. It would be preferable to reach temporary agreements, the likes of which are not handed down by a court. (...) In the US, the bastion of liberal democracy, it suddenly turns out that the public's approval of the judicial branch is directly related to its approval of its rulings. The president himself attacks the Supreme Court, which now faces the kind of existential threat that is more serious even than the one it faced during the riots on Capitol Hill on Jan. 6, 2020. (...) The lesson for our Supreme Court is simple: Build public trust and avoid the strong tendency in recent years of ruling on every single issue. A court is a place with-

out compromise, and the world suffers from a shortage of compromise.

Amnon Lord, IHY, 26.06.22

Heading for a slippery slope

The United States Supreme Court ruling to overturn Roe vs. Wade thus stripping away women's constitutional protections for abortion could set back women's rights decades, which is unacceptable. For years, women's organizations have fought for the right to vote and be elected, for equal pay, equal opportunities and also for the right to choose whether to continue an unwanted pregnancy. When Row vs. Wade was pronounced in 1973, it was precedent-setting and life-changing for millions of women. The ruling (...) was meant to protect women's life and physical and mental health. Ensuring abortion rights sought to first and foremost young women and girls who clearly could not care for a child. Overturning the ruling essentially forces a girl who was raped to deliver a baby whose father was a rapist. The same goes for pregnancies from incest, as well as for pregnancies that are the result of causal sex. (...) The gaps that already exist will grow wider and the demagogic, conservative argument that life begins in the moment of conception utterly ignores women's right to free will. (...) There are those in Israel who also seek to ban abortions. They talk about the sanctity of life and halachic prohibition. We'll hardly be surprised if this issue gets thrown into the election rhetoric pushing for making the High Court of Justice conservative and subjecting the judicial nomination process to the Knesset. After all, we are very good at wanting to be like the United States.

Nechama Duek, IHY, 26.06.22

Israel abortion reforms approved amid Roe v. Wade crisis

Israel's Labor, Welfare and Health Committee approved abortion reforms in a preliminary reading amid the Roe v. Wade scandal that has shaken the US over the past few weeks. The amendment will allow women to apply to get an abortion online and would allow them to receive a pharmacological abortion in more accessible places. (...) The reform being presented at the committee would allow for a pharmacological abortion in public clinics in the community and would improve the procedure of the Pregnancy Termination Committee. It would (...) simplify the process (...). The amendment, although discussed for weeks, was pushed forward amid the US Supreme Court's decision to overturn Roe v. Wade, a ruling that recognized women's constitu-

tional right to abortion. (...) The justices, who passed the decision in a 6-3 vote, held that the Roe v. Wade decision was wrongly decided because the US Constitution makes no specific mention of abortion rights.

Tamar Uriel-Beer, JPO, 27.06.22

What a Netanyahu Comeback Could Mean for Abortion Rights

People the world over were shocked. (...) The Supreme Court ruling (...) is challenging American society and suddenly exposing the gap between religious and conservative Republicans from Alabama and Texas, and the "American Spirit," which is responsible for immortal artistic and cultural creations and is famous for its tolerance. (...) The upcoming election to the Knesset is liable to lead to a revolution similar to the U.S. constitutional revolution that has shocked the entire world. And it's not because there have been no prime ministers representing the nationalist camp – there have been five of them. But Benjamin Netanyahu is different. His return to power would herald a revolution the likes of which we haven't seen here. (...) This is a Likud that is different from the party of Menachem Begin. Its members are determined to carry out the revolution – to achieve political control over the judicial system – not only because of the defendant's attempts to escape trial, but because they accept the doctrine that he expounded when he stood at the entrance to the court and cursed all of the judicial system's branches. Shas, which "suffered" from the strong arm of that system, will be happy to get rid of it, and the Ashkenazi Hasidim won't accept the fact that MK Yaakov Litzman was forced to leave the Knesset because he believed that the rulings of the Admor of Gur take priority over those of the High Court of Justice. Moreover, the New Right will also grant a seal of approval to anti-Arab racism and will question the legitimacy of their membership in the Knesset, once they are defined as an "enemy" and as "supporters of terror." (...) The attitude to the media and to cultural and artistic works will also be influenced by their ultranationalist opinions. (...) The struggle by supporters of democracy in the United States and in Israel is what will determine their future.

Uzi Baram, HAA, 28.06.22

Abortion Rights in Israel Are Safe

The overruling of Roe vs. Wade by the U.S. Supreme Court has raised concerns here in Israel too. Voices on the left have hinted, or stated explicitly,

that Israel is next in line. (...) Thankfully, the reality is quite the opposite. There are excellent and encouraging reasons to assume that the campaign for prohibiting or limiting abortions will not come to Israel. One reason for the different approaches of American and Israeli conservatism is that they stem from totally different religious traditions. Opponents of abortion in America, constituting the "pro-life" movement, base themselves on a mainly Christian approach in which a fetus is considered a human being for all intents and purposes from the moment of conception, which is why terminating a pregnancy at any stage, according to this view, is tantamount to murder. Jewish religious law does not share this approach. The accepted law is that it's permissible to have an abortion in many instances before the third month of a pregnancy – and in cases of unknown fathers or unwed mothers, or when there is a medical risk to the mother, even later than that. Undoubtedly, there is still a big gap between the position of Jewish halacha and an unreserved support for abortion. However, this gray area creates a space in which Jewish tradition tolerates the freedom of choice of an individual or a family. (...) To the relative toleration of abortion is added the unique social situation in Israel, in which the family, a social institution that is on the wane in the Western world, is thriving. Members of the traditional-liberal camp see the family, not the state, as the place for discussing painful, complex and personal issues such as abortion. Transferring the decision on this issue from an adult surrounded by loving people to an official, rabbi, policeman or social worker is considered an extreme step that should be reserved only for extreme cases. (...) Israeli conservatives are more optimistic, preferring less centralization. They are convinced that tradition, heritage and Jewish family orientation give rise to people with wisdom and a conscience, equipping them to manage their lives without tight supervision and domination from above. (...)

Amiad Cohen and Rotem Sella, HAA, 30.06.22

3. Verhandlungen über einen erneuten Iran-Deal

Im Vorfeld der Israel-Reise von US-Präsident Joe Biden steht vor allem die Frage der Verhandlungen mit Teheran über die Wiederaufnahme des Abkommens zum atomaren Forschungsprogramm auf der Agenda. Israel warnte wiederholt vor einer Aufhebung der Sanktionen. Die Gefahr sei nicht nur, dass der Iran die getroffenen Abmachungen bricht, wie

jüngst erneut mit der Demontage zahlreicher Überwachungskameras in einer Atomanlage. Israel sorgt sich neben der atomaren Bedrohung vor allem vor einer verstärkten Finanzierung der iranischen Handlanger, wie die Hisbollah im Libanon. Ein erneutes Abkommen würde es zudem Israel erschweren, selbst Maßnahmen gegen das iranische Forschungsprogramm zu unternehmen. In den vergangenen Monaten waren iranische Behörden mehrfach Ziel von Cyberattacken. Iran machte stets zuallererst Israel für die Angriffe verantwortlich.

Iran is the divisive force in the Middle East

(...) Iran has widened its rift with the Sunni world by backing Shi'ite political parties in Iraq and Lebanon, instead of viewing the Middle East as the home of the united Arab nation. (...) the loss of political power by some Shi'ite parties in recent elections can be seen as a direct result of the anger leveled at Tehran, which has been brewing in Arab countries for quite some time. In fact, you'd be hard-pressed to find a Sunni Muslim in Lebanon who is not angered by Hezbollah - which up until a few weeks ago had a majority in the Lebanese parliament - and the recent election results are proof of that. Hezbollah is also immersed in sectarianism in its political alliances. The party demonstrates a lax position towards Lebanon's President Michel Aoun, who was suspected of having ties with Israel among other foreign interests affairs, when he was a general in the military. The Iran-backed organization has no such tolerance of Lebanon's Sunni leaders, as was evident by the death sentence given to former Sunni Imam Ahmad Al-Assir, who dared to criticize Iran. (...) such policies have consequences. Iran and Hezbollah have paid dearly for viewing Lebanon as an extension of Iraq and Syria, and not a sovereign state that it thrives to be. Iran was also harshly defeated in other geopolitical arenas when it sought to exploit those countries for its own interests. (...) Iran seeks to sow chaos and is focused only on its own interests instead of considering the entire Arab nation as one - irrespective of factional affiliation. Until it adopts a different policy, it stands to lose even the support of Shi'ite Muslims.

Yasser Abu Hilala, YED, 19.06.22

Tough talk won't keep Biden from restoring Iran nuclear deal

The internal Israeli dispute over how to approach the Iran nuclear accord is meaningless, as Washington will have the final say on the matter. (...) While under outgoing Prime Minister Naftali Bennett, Israel's

strategy has been to oppose a return to the nuclear deal, Foreign Minister Yair Lapid, who is set to replace Bennett next week, has yet to have formed an opinion on the matter. Numerous elements are therefore pressuring him to adopt a different approach and support a return to the accord. (...) Other security officials, on the other hand, believe a return to the deal would be a historic mistake. (...) They are of the opinion that Israel cannot be a partner to a terrible deal that will soon expire and does not provide an adequate response to the holes in the original accord as well as those that have been discovered in it since. They further warn that the billions of dollars Iran will receive once sanctions are rolled back will go in part toward its buildup in the region and the funding of global terror. Opponents of the accords also argue that support for the deal would prevent Israel from taking action against Iran's nuclear program should that become necessary. A deal would also limit Israel's ability to continue the aggressive campaign it is conducting, according to foreign reports, against figures and infrastructure connected to Iran's terrorist activity and nuclear program. (...) US President Joe Biden's administration has been determined to return to the accord from the outset and may even reach a deal with Iran prior to Biden's July Israel trip.

Yoav Limor, IHY, 27.06.22

US tries again to get Iran to accept hundreds of billions of dollars

For seemingly the thousandth time, the United States is returning to negotiations with the Islamic Republic of Iran to resurrect the flawed nuclear deal (JCPOA) of 2015, without insisting on any meaningful extensions of the sunset provisions delaying their nuclear program. (...) The knowledge Iran has gained since 2015 and its clandestine work, most notably in digging an even deeper nuclear centrifuge facility near the Natanz nuclear site, has made a return to the agreement without significant changes diplomatic malfeasance of the highest order. (...) It endangers American national security interests to keep begging the Iranians to accept hundreds of billions of dollars in sanctions relief for the promise of delaying their nuclear weapons program for just a few more years. The message to the rest of the world, particularly our allies, is that the US may have the world's most feared military but will allow itself to be manipulated over and over by a rogue state and just beg for more of the same. (...) the unspoken agreement with Iran is ending nuclear sanctions and not enforcing non-nuclear sanctions. There will be

no restraint on their terrorism. There will be no improved inspections to verify their activities, which is especially needed as the Iranians have cheated many times before. There will be no demand to improve their human rights abuses, which comes from an administration that campaigned not on real-politik but on a human rights platform. (...) There will be no guarantee preventing Iran from putting the final touches on nuclear weapons in a few years, when the current sunset limitations expire. And no end to their attacks against Israelis, Sunnis and anyone else that stands in their way. Watch out Jordan, you are next on their list of targets to add to Iraq, Lebanon, Syria and Yemen. The only realistic compromise that advances American interests is one in which Iran gets nuclear-related sanctions relief for permanently ending its nuclear weaponization program. Ending nuclear-related sanctions for nothing more than a delay in their program is foolhardy. (...) They only lack the ability to weaponize and compartmentalize nuclear material to place on a nuclear warhead, with estimates for this being in as little as 18 months. Iran is playing hardball not only because the US gave up leverage, but because its revolutionary Islamist ideology controls its people in a brutal authoritarian state. The administration inherited leverage in the negotiations from the maximum sanctions, which were devastating to the Iranian economy. Unfortunately, we chose appeasement and a lack of will to continue sanctions enforcement until Iran renegotiated the terms of the deal. Biden has minimized Iran's economic burden by looking the other way and allowing it to sell more fossil fuels to China and ignoring its cooperation with Russia to help it violate Western-imposed sanctions. (...) When will we end the kowtowing to a third-rate extremist Islamist dictatorship?

Eric R. Mandel, JPO, 28.06.22

IAEA should move on to plan B with Vienna talks

What could be described as a calculated criticism of Iran by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Board of Governors appears to have been the final warning to Tehran before breaking off negotiations and moving to a Plan B. (...) When Iran announced it would remove 27 surveillance cameras from its nuclear facilities, following the position of the IAEA Board of Governors, IAEA chief Raphael Grossi warned that it would be fatal to the nuclear agreement if the cameras were not returned within three to four weeks. (...) hopes riding on that agreement have not yet died. (...) Tehran will not compromise, but is likely to take countermeasures in

the context of a new tug-of-war in which the position of the Western side appears relatively weak (...). In the West, there are reports that America is moving to a Plan B, which was talked about just a year ago. These were mostly veiled warnings to the Iranian side. (...) the issue is not whether or not there is a plan, but rather the nature of the plan and its likelihood of success in light of current and past experiences. Media reports and analysis show that the alternative plan is built primarily on tougher sanctions against Iran. (...) The prospect of reviving the nuclear agreement has become a “maybe” that is not supported by facts and evidence. The main US message is that the Biden administration will impose additional sanctions on Iran if the nuclear agreement is not revived. This message does not deter Tehran or frustrate its regime, even though the sanctions already in place have had profound and undeniable consequences for the Iranian economy. But the experience with and getting used to these sanctions support the regime’s position. It will not change its behavior until it gets what it wants. Tehran’s biggest problem is the lack of negotiating tools, namely a state of international consensus. This is something completely out of reach, given the current world geopolitical situation and the lack of stick-wielding. The most worrisome scenario for the Iranians was in earlier times, especially after the invasion of Iraq in 2003, when Tehran voluntarily cooperated with the US for fear of being bombed by a military machine already on its borders. There are signs that Tehran is speaking more boldly about its deterrent capabilities and developing military sophistication that it believes can save it from a military strike, whether by Israel, the US, or both, using drones, an arsenal of ballistic missiles and proxies, which pose a grave threat to the security of Israel and the Gulf States. Salem Alketbi, JPO, 29.06.22

za” is the response to Arabs everywhere; that’s how Israelis see Gaza – a hostile place whose residents deserve collective punishment. With the mechanism of repression working overtime among Israelis, and despite the galling or purportedly reasoned silence regarding the siege, after 15 years the time has come to stop repressing the fact that Israel, despite the disengagement, is an occupying power that manages Gaza from a distance, by controlling the movement of its inhabitants and imposing economic and civil sanctions. To the Gazans’ regret, they can’t even “benefit” from the status of an occupied civilian population, with everything that entails in legal and international terms, since Israel is not physically present in Gaza. This dynamic “remains anonymous,” and on the Israeli side they have become accustomed to living alongside it and repressing its existence. (...) In the shadow of the military operations and the rockets that are fired from time to time, it’s easy for the Israeli side to continue to justify the sanctions and the siege. In fact, this atmosphere only perpetuates a terrible and destructive situation, in which people are born into these circumstances and therefore have no knowledge of a life that is not under foreign control.

The siege is the most extreme and repressed aspect of Israel’s domination over the Palestinian people. (...)

Sheren Falah Saab, HAA, 23.06.22

HAA = Haaretz

YED = Yedioth Ahronoth / Ynetnews

JPO = Jerusalem Post

IHY = Israel HaYom

TOI = Times of Israel

GLO = Globes

4. Medienquerschnitt

15 Jahre Gaza-Belagerung

For a Generation of Gazans, the Siege Is the Only Reality They Know

(...) Already in 2008 the UN Human Rights Council published a declaration condemning Israel and calling for a lifting of the siege on the Strip, for permitting the supply of food, fuel and medications, and for reopening the border crossings. Since then Gaza has turned into a large prison for millions of Palestinians. It’s no wonder that the expression “Go to Ga-

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