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1. Weitere Eskalationsgefahr an der israelisch-libanesischen Grenze

An der Grenze zwischen dem Libanon und Israel droht eine weitere Eskalation. Nahezu täglich kommt es zu gegenseitigem Beschuss, und Spekulationen über den Einsatz von israelischen Bodentruppen werden lauter. Rund 60.000 Menschen aus dem Norden Israels können bereits seit Monaten nicht mehr in ihren Häusern leben. Ähnlich viele Binnenflüchtlinge gibt es auf libanesischer Seite. Seit dem 7. Oktober feuert die schiitisch-libanesisch Hizbollah – erklärtermaßen aus Solidarität mit der Hamas im Gazastreifen – Raketen auf israelische Ortschaften ab, was inzwischen zur Verwüstung eines Großteils der evakuierten israelischen Ortschaften geführt hat. Die wirtschaftliche Situation im Norden Israels ist prekär – die Landwirtschaft und der Tourismus liegen brach, viele Betriebe und Geschäfte sind geschlossen, und die erhoffte staatliche Unterstützung lässt auf sich warten. Erst wenn der Krieg im Gazastreifen endet, könnten auch die Angriffe gegen Israel enden, signalisierte die Terrororganisation Hizbollah. Vorher ist mit einer Beruhigung der Lage an Israels Nordgrenze kaum zu rechnen. Die Hizbollah wird mit Geld und Waffen aus dem Iran unterstützt. Die jüngsten massiven Angriffe auf Stützpunkte der israelischen Armee gelten laut Hizbollah der Vergeltung für die Tötung

eines hochrangigen Kommandeurs der libanesischen Milizen.

The north has become Israel's main front

(...) Since the war began, Hezbollah has launched about 340 short-range rockets carrying between 100 and 500 kilograms of explosives, causing significant damage. (...) Since the war began, there have been over 420 casualties on the Lebanese side, including approximately 330 Hezbollah personnel. Despite these tactical successes, they will not be enough to bring northern residents back home. (...) Nasrallah ties the end of the war to the cessation of hostilities in Gaza. Thus, all eyes are now on the negotiations with Hamas. The outcomes of these talks will influence the northern front's future. However, there is growing skepticism among senior officials about the possibility of ending the northern conflict with an agreement. (...) diplomacy alone won't resolve the northern conflict. Military pressure on Hezbollah will need to increase significantly, possibly including a ground incursion, or residents won't be able to return home for many more months. Historically, Israel has been willing to pay a high price for peace and quiet. If an agreement with Hamas also secures peace in the north, the political leadership may be persuaded to accept it.

Yossi Yehoshua, YED, 02.06.24

Israel Caught in a Strategic Trap on Lebanon Border – Thanks to Netanyahu's Scorched-earth Policy

(...) The night of the fires in the Galilee was simply another, more extreme, expression of the mess that the war, which will be eight months old on Friday, has degenerated into. (...) Israel has been caught in a strategic trap up north. It has proven unable to force Hezbollah into a cease-fire as long as the fighting in Gaza continues, whereas the Lebanese organization has managed to create a kind of "security zone" devoid of residents inside Israeli territory, despite suffering much higher losses than the IDF has. (...) Even though the south suffered an incalculably greater blow, it's up north that there is greater concern about the chances of eventually returning residents to border areas. Not only is there no military solution on the horizon, but the time that's passed has led many to consider leaving the area permanently (...) the Shi'ite organization doesn't think it's losing the war. It draws encouragement from the complaints of northern mayors about the deterioration of the security situation. (...) Netanyahu is currently busy with feverish preparations for his planned upcoming speech to Congress. In contrast, he has almost completely stopped talking to the Israeli public, whose sons continue to be killed in a war whose goals have become ever less clear and consensual. (...) The only thing his office produces are carefully crafted video clips in which the prime minister seems disconnected from reality outside.

Amos Harel, HAA, 05.06.24

For Israel and Hezbollah, Full-scale War Is Question of When, Not If

Hezbollah has dramatically intensified the frequency, lethality, and range of its attacks against Israel (...). By all indications, both sides are inching closer to a full-scale war. (...) By transitioning these last eight months from being a merely menacing presence on the Lebanon-Israel border to actively drawing blood, the group had driven this fear home into the psyche of northern Israel's residents, some 60,000 of whom were ordered by Israeli authorities to evacuate their homes and are now refusing to return without a permanent guarantee of their security. (...) In the interest of avoiding a conflict of unprecedented destructiveness, the international community – particularly France and the United States – have proposed several peaceful alternatives. (...) These proposals would theoretically be ideal solutions, particularly as they envision eventual implementation of all the terms of UN Resolution 1701, which

include distancing Hezbollah north of the Litani River as a preliminary step to its total disarmament. But, in reality, the resolution (...) is unworkable, because it depends upon Lebanon to implement either its minimal or maximal terms. And Beirut cannot peacefully implement the Resolution's terms. (...) Hezbollah cannot be forcibly relocated or disarmed without risking a civil war in Lebanon which the group would, because of its superiority of arms and training, handily win. (...)

David Daoud, Ahmad Sharawi, HAA, 06.06.24

Hezbollah improves drone capabilities to hide from IDF

The drone attack (...), which (...) wounded 12 people, one who is in critical condition, requires a harsh response (...). Hezbollah draws encouragement and sees itself as victorious in the psychological warfare, as a result of the fires in the north, despite the fact that citizens in southern Lebanon suffer no less from fires and destruction, perhaps even more than Israelis. However, it seems that Hezbollah decided to ignore the issues of its people, probably also to assist Hamas in negotiations over the hostages. (...) Over the many years of conflict between Israel and Hezbollah, the latter has learned how to evade IDF countermeasures. The drone's low altitude also helps it avoid detection and the activation of sirens. (...) Despite not wanting to wage full-scale war, the IDF is ready to enter Lebanon within hours. Israel prefers to avoid a military confrontation as long as there is an opportunity to reach an agreement concerning the release of the hostages held in Gaza and reach a diplomatic settlement in Lebanon. The implication for us is that we need to tread carefully, between a firm response and further escalation.

Ron Ben-Yishai, YED, 06.06.24

Only a Deal Can Stop Israel's Bleeding and End the War

Israel headed by Benjamin Netanyahu is being swept up in a dangerous dynamic with Hezbollah, which could get out of control. The recent fires in the Upper Galilee and Golan Heights have severely harmed people's sense of personal security and led to a general feeling of loss of direction. (...) Perhaps Netanyahu believes military escalation in the north will deter Hezbollah; but it's also a risk that the situation could spin out of control. The dynamics of escalation could lead to war, which will mean great damage to the Israeli home front, in the center of the country as well, and severe damage to vital infrastructure and human lives. Yet war isn't a stroke of

fate; it's an outcome of a decision, directly linked to what is going on in the Gaza Strip. In fact, Israel must choose between a difficult war, one expected to spread over almost all fronts – Hezbollah, Iran, pro-Iranian militias in Iraq and Syria, Houthis from Yemen, the Gaza Strip and riots and terror in the West Bank – and accepting the deal with Hamas that U.S. President Joe Biden has presented. Hezbollah has already made it clear that as soon as a cease-fire is called in Gaza, it will stop fighting. Israel must strive for a deal – to bring back the hostages and stop the ongoing killing of IDF soldiers. Such a deal can also prevent a comprehensive war. To make the right step Israel must overcome the agents who want to set the region on fire and drag the state to disaster – Bezalel (...) Smotrich and Itamar Ben Gvir. (...) Any other way could lead to a bloody abyss.

Editorial, HAA, 06.06.24

Why an all-out war with Lebanon is very risky proposition

(...) Israel has been in a strategic bind with regard to Hezbollah for a long time, with many tactical achievements not adding up to a significant advantageous position in the confrontation. (...) there is pressure by the public and the media to take more drastic action in the north, given the widespread destruction there and the lack of a resolution for 60,000 internal refugees while hostilities continue without any result on the horizon. Such circumstances could also drive the two sides into an all-out war. (...) How did it get so bad? The answer is: Benjamin Netanyahu and his extreme right-wing government of irresponsibility. The war in Gaza should have ended a long time ago. (...) The end of the war in the south could have led to a deal to bring back the hostages and to a cessation of the war of attrition in the north, and the prevention of an all-out war in against Hezbollah. But the Netanyahu/Ben Gvir/Smotrich coalition does not want to end this war. (...) Netanyahu and his far-right partners have brought much shame and shame to the people and the state of Israel. It is time for them to go, to be replaced by some sane, honest, responsible, albeit imperfect leaders.

Ron Kronish, TOI, 13.06.24

2. Biden drängt auf Einigung

Der Drei-Stufen-Plan, den US-Präsident Joe Biden vorgelegt hat, um den Krieg im Gazastreifen zu einem Ende zu bringen, ist in den Augen von Israels

Regierungschef Benjamin Netanyahu „unvollständig“. Netanyahu beharrt auf das seit Beginn der Kriegshandlungen erklärte Ziel, die Hamas vollständig zu zerstören. Auch die Hamas forderte eine Reihe von Veränderungen. Der Biden-Plan zielt letztlich auf einen Rückzug der israelischen Streitkräfte aus dem Gazastreifen und auf den Wiederaufbau des zerstörten palästinensischen Gebiets, ohne dass die islamistische Hamas dort erneut die Kontrolle übernimmt. Dieser Vorstoß für eine Beendigung des Kriegs sei, so Biden, die "bestmögliche Gelegenheit für eine Einigung" in den festgefahrenen Verhandlungen. Alle bisherigen Anstrengungen seitens der USA, Katars und Ägyptens, Israel und die Hamas zu einer Feuerpause und dem Austausch von israelischen Geiseln und palästinensischen Häftlingen zu bewegen, blieben ergebnislos.

Half Pregnant – The Current Ceasefire Proposal

(...) President Biden delivered a speech in which he publicized the terms of Israel's ceasefire offer to Hamas. It's a standalone agreement that calls for an end to the war and the release of hostages without addressing a "day after" plan. Biden claims that if this three-phase agreement is successful, it will open the doors to possible Saudi normalization, and a more secure, prosperous life for Israelis and Palestinians. (...) this proposal appears to be half pregnant. (...) with an Israeli withdrawal and no agreed upon alternate governing structure, Hamas will definitely remain in power. (...) phase three of the plan sees billions of reconstruction dollars pouring into Gaza, which also means billions of dollars available for Hamas to siphon off to rebuild their military infrastructure. Once rebuilt, it is a fool's notion not to believe Hamas's desire to repeat October 7th over and over again, as promised on international television by both Mashal and Hamdan. (...) We unilaterally withdrew from Lebanon and we unilaterally withdrew from Gaza. Neither withdrawal had a well laid out agreement for the "day after", nor even an inkling of a strategy to mitigate the risks involved. It was (...) a grand failure in so much as we arrogantly thought we could control everything without proactively mitigating the risks of such unilateral actions. (...) Israel can partner with the Americans, Western allies and "moderate Sunni" states to create a comprehensive day after plan consisting of a slow, methodical withdrawal from Gaza, being replaced as it withdraws by a non-Hamas, local Palestinian administrative rule, the exiling of all Hamas leadership

preferably to somewhere distant like Algeria, a new regional defense alliance to successfully counter the Iranian Axis of Evil, a broader economic integration of Israel into the region, and a long term framework of this new Gaza First experiment, which if successful, to be extended incrementally in the West Bank. This is a fully multilateral as opposed to unilateral plan that may improve Israel's reputation and international relations, but it certainly will strengthen Israel's position in the region. (...)

Parry Rosenberg, TOI, 02.06.24

The obstacles in Netanyahu's path to a hostage deal

(...) Biden presented three phases in a plan to end the war in Gaza, however, Likud MKs and other right-wing government partners, such as National Security Minister Ben-Gvir and Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich, clarified they would dismantle the government if such a deal were accepted. (...) The hostage deal, assuming Hamas agrees to it, is politically complex (...) Ben-Gvir and Smotrich (...) are promising to dismantle the government. (...) For a long time, it seems Netanyahu has lost his deterrence not only externally but also within his government and even his party. An increasing number of Knesset members and ministers criticize his moves, flank him from the right, and warn that their vote can no longer be counted on for certain issues. (...) The likelihood that all of these will unite into a full-fledged rebellion within the Likud is not high, but a scenario in which at least some of the party's senior members decide to make a move against Netanyahu is on the table.

Moran Azulay, YED, 03.06.24

The proposed hostage deal and what happens next

(...) Israel has made exceptional concessions in the new proposal, including continuing negotiations after the deal's first phase without resuming fighting. However, beyond the uncertainty surrounding Sinwar, there is some regarding Netanyahu, who might still backtrack on the deal. Those close to the prime minister believe the chances of Hamas accepting the deal are slim. They also think that ministers Itamar Ben-Gvir and Bezalel Smotrich won't follow through on their threats to dismantle the government if the first phase of the deal is approved. (...) Netanyahu is aware that its final approval and execution could likely mean the end of his government. (...) Some in Israel speculate Netanyahu's agreement to a deal with Hamas could signify a shift to the left,

since the deal is expected to create a domino effect leading to a diplomatic settlement on the northern border, the return of Israeli residents to their homes, normalization with Saudi Arabia, and a regional defense alliance, alongside a willingness to commit to a political horizon and a two-state solution with the Palestinians. This path might also reflect an understanding that, by the end, Netanyahu will head to elections with a series of achievements, primarily the normalization with Saudi Arabia and the return of the hostages. (...) Meanwhile, many at the Hostages and Missing Families Forum are pressuring Netanyahu to agree to the proposal, calling it the "Netanyahu Deal" – a hint at who's behind it and is expected to support it after Hamas responds. (...)

Itamar Eichner, YED, 03.06.24

The Hostages Are Running out of Time

(...) Israel is fighting an existential public relations war for its right to self-defense (...). Insanity in the international diplomatic world reign supreme. (...) A non-existent state, Palestine, goes to the International Court of Justice to accuse a 76-year-old legitimate democratic member nation of the United Nations, of genocide against a political movement situated on a piece of land that is also not a nation but a terrorist entity officially bent on the destruction of Israel and the Jewish people. You couldn't make this up. Israel may have no choice but to accept the proposal on the table forcing Hamas to do the same unless they find a way to weasel out of it and, only then, will we know the real details of the contents of the document. As I've said before, if we find it intolerable, we can always walk away from it. But one does get the feeling that some of our "friends" are not being totally honest with us on this issue.

Sherwin Pomerantz, TOI, 04.06.24

Netanyahu and Sinwar: Two masters of cynicism sending their people to hell

The possibility that either Yahya Sinwar or Benjamin Netanyahu will change his strategy in the immediate future seems extremely unlikely. Neither leader appears willing to change his course of actions, which could lead to dubious results for both of them. Neither wants his last line of defense to be scuttled. Netanyahu already over-reached himself in the military campaign in which people are dying because of his unsubstantiated claim to wipe out Hamas. (...) Netanyahu has made an enemy of the president of the United States (...). He is a pawn trying to show that he is as powerful and as impregnable as the king. (...) Sinwar's options are appar-

ently just as clear. If he returns all the hostages, he will leave himself and his murderous thugs vulnerable to an onslaught by the massively armed Israeli army. Even if he signs an agreement with Israel about leaving Gaza, he cannot trust that Israel will respect it. In one sense, he has already won the war. He caught the Israeli military by complete surprise. He caused the Israeli government to respond impulsively, leading it to devastate Gaza, like a raging bull let loose on a defenseless population. Hamas has furthermore succeeded in turning much of the world's opinion against Israel, reverting the obvious disgust with Hamas's horrific slaughter of October 7 into incredible support for the citizens of Gaza to the extent that Israel's very existence is held in doubt. (...) there is an amazing symmetry between these two leaders, both of whom have proven to be masters of cynicism and to hell with the people. (...) Mordechai Beck, JPO, 05.06.24

While the possible ceasefire plan is flawed, we should say 'yes' to the deal

(...) The country is now firmly divided. There are those who say that a ceasefire now, no matter how one-sided or dangerous for the future, is the only way to enable the return of any hostages who are still alive. Others argue that toppling Hamas so that it is incapable of committing another October 7 and will not continue controlling Gaza is paramount. (...) the country cannot continue careening on the hazardous path it's currently on, seemingly without a driver. Hostages are dying, the North is ablaze, and the country's citizens are returning to their pre-war, judicial reform era of blame and animosity. Netanyahu is stuck between a rock and a hard place. In an effort to keep his coalition intact and remain in power, he apparently is telling the US one thing, his right-wing coalition partners something totally different, and the Israeli people pretty much nothing. One way out is to let Ben-Gvir and Smotrich quit and to take opposition leader Yair Lapid's offer to serve as a safety net for the government to implement the Biden plan. (...) Granted, the ceasefire agreement is full of flaws: it does not provide an alternative to Hamas, and it wrongly assumes that Hamas is no longer capable of inflicting damage on Israel. But it does create a mechanism to free some hostages and provide some relief to the North, assuming that Hezbollah will refrain from attacking Israel during the implementation of the ceasefire plan. (...) Editorial, JPO, 05.06.24

Netanyahu Insists on 'Total Victory' in Gaza Because He Can't End the War

(...) what does winning mean? One possibility is occupying Gaza and keeping it under Israeli control. This Netanyahu doesn't want because he doesn't want two million more Arabs. Another possibility is, as Defense Minister Yoav Gallant suggested, "the day after Hamas will be achieved only by having Palestinian figures in control, as an alternative to Hamas." An alternative to Hamas means the Palestinian Authority, and Netanyahu hastened to reject that out of hand.

(...) A person who doesn't want to rule Gaza and also isn't prepared to hand control over it to the Palestinian Authority cannot end the war. Hence, he cannot and does not want to win. And this is regardless of Netanyahu's desire to continue the war to keep his government in power, or to postpone the October 7 inquiry commission. He wants to continue the war because he isn't prepared for any real-world form of the day after the war. So he's stuck – that is, he's sticking everyone – in the eternal present. The United States is offering Israel a regional alliance including normalization with Saudi Arabia; an Arab-American coalition to supervise the Palestinian Authority, which would take over the control in Gaza; and a resumption of negotiations on the permanent arrangements that would lead to a Palestinian state. If Israel wants a "day after the war," this is what it looks like. Refusing it means eternal war, defeat, world isolation and annihilation.

Carolina Landmann, HAA, 13.06.24

3. Geiselnbefreiung mit zahlreichen palästinensischen Toten

Die geglückte Befreiung von vier israelischen Geiseln aus einem palästinensischen Flüchtlingslager im mittleren Gazastreifen wird vom Tod eines der Angehörigen der israelischen Einsatzkräfte während der Befreiungsaktion und von der hohen Opferzahl auf palästinensischer Seite überschattet. Nach Angaben der von der Hamas kontrollierten Gesundheitsbehörde im Gazastreifen sind bei der Operation israelischer Spezialeinheiten mehr als 270 Menschen zu Tode gekommen, was international zu scharfer Kritik gegen Israel führte. Das UN-Menschenrechtsbüro sieht angesichts dieser Zahl das Prinzip der Verhältnismäßigkeit, das das humane Völkerrecht vorschreibt und das darauf abzielt, Kollateralschäden so gering wie möglich zu halten, verletzt. Die Behörde räumte allerdings ein, dass auch auf palästinensischer Seite

Kriegsverbrechen begangen worden sein könnten. Eine der Geiseln berichtete darüber, in den vergangenen acht Monaten von Wohnung zu Wohnung gebracht worden zu sein. Die drei befreiten Männer berichteten von Folter und Erniedrigungen. Die drei Männer und eine Frau waren am 7. Oktober vom Nova-Musikfestival entführt worden. Insgesamt konnten in den vergangenen acht Monaten des Krieges nur sieben Geiseln lebend durch die israelischen Streitkräfte befreit werden. 120 israelische Geiseln befinden sich weiterhin in den Händen der Islamisten im Gazastreifen.

Gaza hostage rescue: near-perfect execution in broad daylight

The release of four Israeli hostages from captivity in Gaza has brought a sense of relief to many Israelis after months of anticipation. (...) Though most hostages remain in captivity, the operation (...) marks a significant achievement by the security forces. (...) The success of the operation hinged on the element of surprise and swift execution. (...) Shin Bet's operational force, known for its covert operations and technological capabilities, and the police's Yamam counterterrorism unit executed the rescue. The IDF provided comprehensive support, including transport, air, naval and artillery cover, enabling the extraction despite heavy resistance. (...) The importance of Nuseirat to Hamas is underscored by the successful targeted killing of Marwan Issa, the deputy commander of Hamas' military wing, in March. With this operation, Hamas is likely to increase efforts to conceal the remaining hostages and bolster their security, potentially necessitating further Israeli operations in the future.

Ron Ben Yishai, YED, 08.06.24

Was the Hostage Rescue Disproportionate?

The June 8th rescue of four hostages from Gaza was celebrated throughout Israel as joyful family reunions were broadcast throughout the country. Unfortunately, the rescue also resulted in numerous Palestinian casualties. This led to accusations that Israel had used disproportionate force in rescuing the hostages. (...) Hamas claims over two hundred people were killed and hundreds more injured. Israel disputes this and says the death toll was much less. (...) By placing the hostages in the midst of a residential area, Hamas was using nearby civilians as human shields. This means that Hamas deliberately put the hostages in a civilian area so that there would be no way for Israel to rescue them without

causing a disproportionate number of civilian casualties (...). The argument that this was disproportionate is clear. First, the number of civilian casualties is vastly higher than the number of rescued hostages. In addition, there seemed to be a reasonable possibility the hostages could have been freed via negotiations rather than military action, calling the operation's necessity into question. However, a case can also be made that the rescue was proportionate. This would begin by recognizing the gravity of the crime of hostage taking, particularly in this context as the holding of hostages is one of the main drivers of the entire war. It would also lean heavily on the view that Hamas bears responsibility for the fate of civilians it used as shields. (...) While we are all elated that four of the hostages have been returned home, there's no denying the rescue operation raises troubling legal and ethical questions. There is really only one good way forward- Hamas needs to free all the remaining hostages and end the war. Shlomo Levin, TOI, 10.06.24

Israel's hostage rescue raid in Gaza

(...) According to the Hamas-controlled Ministry of Health, 274 Palestinians, including civilians, were killed during the course of the mission. Among the fatalities was Abdallah Aljamal, a journalist and Hamas member in whose flat three of the hostages were held. The high Palestinian civilian death rate was regrettably unavoidable. Israel had no alternative but to deploy maximum force to free the hostages, who were imprisoned in a densely populated urban area. (...) Hamas' cynical modus operandi is to use civilians as disposable human shields and then self-righteously accuse Israel of war crimes. (...) Israel had every moral and legal right under international law to launch this raid. Hamas responded ferociously, forcing Israel to take whatever measures were required to rescue the hostages and bring them back safely to their homes and families. (...) In the past eight months, Israel has managed to rescue only seven hostages. Several more have been accidentally killed in botched rescue operations. (...) The Israeli government should do everything in its power to free the rest of the hostages, but its first priority should be the defeat of Hamas and the affiliated armed groups aligned with it. This may be a difficult idea for some Israelis to swallow, but Israel has no choice but to pursue this crucially important and necessary objective until it is achieved. Israel cannot and must not end this just war with Hamas still standing.

Sheldon Kirshner, TOI, 10.06.24

Israel Cannot Count on More Heroic Rescue Operations. A Hostage Deal Must Come Next

(...) the way to free the 120 hostages still held by Hamas, only about half of whom are still alive, is through a deal. This is also the position of the military and senior defense officials. Not only the security risks, but also the number of Palestinian civilians killed in the operation, including children, must be considered. Eight months of war have proved that the idea that military pressure would advance the hostages' release is an utter lie. We must not let those who want to prolong the war exploit the operation's success to continue placing the war's continuation at the top of our national agenda, ahead of bringing home the hostages. We must not let them sow the delusion that it's possible to return the rest of the hostages with additional rescue operations (...). We must not let the far right sacrifice the remaining hostages on the altar of its messianic ambitions. After the successful rescue, Israel must cooperate with the United States and advance a hostage deal in all earnestness.

Editorial, HAA, 11.06.24

4. Weitere Themen

Kriegskabinetts ohne Benny Gantz

Where is the Left?

(...) our country is more fractured than ever. Even the protestors are splitting into factions: Bring the Hostages Home; Take Down the Government; End the War; Get Rid of Yariv Levin. (...) Benny Gantz and his faction issued an ultimatum to the government. Now that the deadline for his ultimatum has come due, he finds himself backed into a corner. If he quits, it will have little effect, as Bibi still has solid coalition backing that allows him to keep the war going indefinitely. If he stays, it will have little effect. Gantz's demand to create a plan to end the war is unmet, and it will remain unmet either way. If he stays, he will only remain relevant in getting the restraints on the hostage negotiators loosened. If he goes, he will only remain relevant if he takes a firm stand on the need to bring down the present coalition and call new elections, and if he takes action to bring about that change. He needs, in other words, to remake his wishy-washy image and become a real leader. (...) The true political left has shrunk to the already shriveled Labor Party, now headed by Yair Golan, and Hadash, the communist-Arab coal-

tion. Meretz had already quietly sunk into a swamp of irrelevance and does not seem likely to arise again. The center-left opposition is enervated; they have not presented us with new ideas or plans; they stay away from protests by request, to keep them from being identified with a political party. (...) The left is on the streets. But we need parties preparing for the Knesset "day after," who are prepared to take bring the anger of the streets into the seats of power. We need a true political left, and we need them right now.

Judy Halper, TOI, 07.06.24

Loss of Gantz and Eisenkot's moderate voices destabilizes already fragile government

(...) Gantz's announcement (...) was disheartening for those who hoped that reasonable, experienced voices like his and Eisenkot's would influence the direction this war is taking. These two people, who cast aside their political and ideological differences to try to imbue some of their influence where it was sorely needed, found themselves unable to make the desired impact. This raises questions about the potential for moderation in managing the war. (...) While his move will not collapse the government, it will leave Netanyahu more dependent on his far-right partners, figures who have expressed fewer reservations about paying higher military prices for "victory" and are less enthusiastic about a diplomatic solution. (...) Netanyahu has successfully isolated one of the few reasonable voices on the outside that would sit at the table. (...) The hope lies in the remaining moderate voices. In his parting speech, Gantz pleaded with Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, calling him a brave and determined leader and telling him that now is the time to say what is right and "do what is right." Gantz was crystal clear; Netanyahu just needs to choose to listen.

Editorial, JPO, 11.06.24

Zum Tod von Ex-Außenminister David Levy

David Levy, Former Israeli Foreign Minister and Deputy PM, Dies at 86

Israeli statesman, Likud member, former foreign minister and deputy Prime Minister David Levy died on Sunday at the age of 86. Levi (...) was among the prominent representatives of Israeli politicians of North African origin. (...) he was one of the first to express the demand of many for distributive and social justice. David Levy is an Israeli leader whose life has been woven into the history of Israeli political

and social action for over five decades. He performed all his roles in national leadership with supreme dedication and utmost responsibility. (...) In 1985, when the national unity government voted on the withdrawal from Lebanon to the so-called security zone, Levy was the only Likud minister who supported the act. His approval broke the tie and greenlit the decision. Levy was appointed Foreign Minister in 1990 under Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir. During his term, he renewed international relations with dozens of countries, including establishing diplomatic relations with China for the first time and with former Soviet Union countries. (...) Levy was married to Rachel Edri, whom he met on the ship on their way to Israel. The couple had 12 children, including Jackie Levy, mayor of Beit She'an, and Orly Levy-Abekasis, former MK and a minister. His brother, Maxim, was mayor of the city of central city Lod.

Ofer Aderet, HAA, 02.06.24

Bidding farewell to David Levy, a trailblazer for a generation of Mizrahi politicians

With his carefully coiffed hair, baritone voice, and grandiose manner of speaking, David Levy – who passed away Sunday at age 86 – made his presence felt on this country's political stage for more than three decades. (...) Levy, who immigrated to Israel from Morocco in 1957 at age 19 and soon after settled with his family in Beit Shean, where he had lived ever since and raised 12 children with his wife, Rachel, is the quintessential Israeli rags-to-political-riches tale. (...) It was Levy, a construction worker and hard-working labor organizer, who linked up with Herut's Menachem Begin in the 1977 elections and helped break the Labor Party's stranglehold on Israeli politics. Levy opened the door for Mizrachim, many resentful of the treatment they received from the Ashkenazi elite, to vote for the very-Ashkenazi Begin – no mean feat. Begin rewarded Levy by making him immigration absorption minister and, two years later, housing and construction minister. There, he left his mark both by building affordable housing in development towns and by providing incentives for young couples to move to settlements in Judea and Samaria. But more than anything else (...) Levy will be remembered for giving a political voice to Mizrachim, who, before his appearance on the political stage, felt discriminated against and largely disenfranchised. He genuinely broke the glass ceiling for Mizrachim in politics, all the while never forgetting and being very proud of where he came from. (...) Levy was a man of keen

political instincts and a genuine representative of the periphery. That his death elicited an outpouring of praise from both the Right and the Left, political allies and foes alike, is a testament to the degree to which he was viewed as a hard-working politician and patriot who provided a voice to those who largely lacked one before he rose to political prominence. Editorial, JPO, 04.06.24

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