



Schlaglicht Israel Nr. 22/24
Aktuelles aus israelischen Tageszeitungen
16.-31 Dezember

Die Themen dieser Ausgabe

- 1. **Israel setzt Angriffe in Syrien fort** 1
- 2. **Verletzte bei Houthi-Angriff auf Tel Aviv**..... 3
- 3. **Krieg im Gazastreifen**..... 6
- 4. **Weitere Themen**..... 8

1. Israel setzt Angriffe in Syrien fort

Während Syriens neuer Machthaber Ahmed al Sharaa, Anführer der islamistischen Oppositionsmiliz HTS, erste Personalentscheidungen für seine Übergangsregierung trifft, setzt Israel die international kritisierten Angriffe auf militärische Einrichtungen im Nachbarland fort. Ziel sei es zu verhindern, dass das Kriegsmaterial in die Hände extremistischer Gruppen gerät. Bei dem ebenfalls umstrittenen Vorrücken israelischer Bodentruppen auf syrisches Gebiet handele es sich, offiziellen Angaben zufolge, nur um eine vorübergehende Maßnahme. Mit dem jüngst angekündigten Ziel, die Bevölkerungszahl auf den annektierten Golanhöhen zu verdoppeln, signalisiert die Regierung von Benjamin Netanyahu, dass eine eventuelle Gebietsaufgabe für sie nicht in Frage kommt. Das aggressive Vorgehen Israels hat nicht nur auf internationaler Ebene deutliche Kritik ausgelöst. Auch innerhalb Israels sorgen sich Beobachter_innen um die künftigen Beziehungen zur neuen Führung in Damaskus. Innerhalb von vier Jahren sollen nach den Worten der neuen Machthaber Wahlen in Syrien abgehalten werden. Bis dahin arbeite man an einer neuen Verfassung. Zudem müssten die zahlreichen und zum Teil rivalisierenden bewaffneten Gruppen unter das Kommando des Verteidigungsministeriums gebracht und in die neue syrische Armee integriert werden.

Iran's Axis of Resistance Has Collapsed. Now Israel Needs a Strategy

(...) For Israel, a sovereign and stable state along its border, i.e. one that can be deterred, is always preferable to non-state entities, especially extremist Islamist groups. The Assad regime, at least, maintained a quiet border for 50 years, arguably its only positive deed. The rebels are likely to focus, at least at first, on consolidating their rule and domestic reconstruction, rather than messing with us. However, some have already made their long-term intentions clear. Thus, Israel must make sure it completes its highly successful military operations it launched to prevent them from seizing all of the Syrian army's military capabilities (...). Israel must also renew previous collaborations with moderate rebel groups (...) and strengthen ties with Syria's Druze and Kurds to create a counterbalance to the Islamist rebels and to Turkey's growing influence in Syria. Concurrently, Israel must work to minimize future ties between Syria, Iran, and Hezbollah, especially military assistance, and to complete the disintegration of the "axis of resistance." (...) The collapse of Iran's axis of resistance will make it easier for Israel to stabilize its cease-fire with Hezbollah and maintain quiet along the border with Lebanon. (...)
 Chuck Freilich, HAA, 16.12.24.

Golan Heights – The Case for Israeli Sovereignty

Amid the collapse of the Assad dictatorship in Syria, Prime Minister Netanyahu reaffirmed that “the portion of the Golan Heights occupied and annexed by Israel” would permanently remain under Israeli control. (...) Syrian aggression against Israel was continuous throughout Israel’s initial decades (1948-67), with dozens of casualties. In particular, the Syrian army shelled Israeli villages and farms from the Golan Heights, with increasing intensity in 1965-66. Israeli children in the Huleh Valley’s kibbutzim slept in bomb shelters. In the spring of 1967, the armies of Egypt and Syria unified under the command of Gamel Abdul Nasser. They amassed troops and promised “to drive the Jews into the sea.” (...) On June 19, 1967, the Israeli Cabinet unanimously voted to hand back the entire Sinai to Egypt and all of the Golan Heights to Syria in return for peace and demilitarization. Yet on September 1, the Arab League met at Khartoum and responded with its infamous “3 No’s”: “no peace, no negotiations, no recognition of Israel.” (...) Assad wanted unilateral and unconditional Israeli withdrawal prior to any negotiations whatsoever. He could not agree to any concessions in the interest of peace and security. The bloody aftermath of Israel’s unilateral withdrawal from Gaza has disproven the effectiveness of this one-sided approach. (...)

Alan Silverstein, TOI, 18.12.24

Israel has the chance to help reshape Syria and form stable ties

The collapse of the Assad regime confronts Israel with a familiar dilemma (...) whether to intervene and contribute to the shaping of the emerging order in Syria or to opt for “splendid isolation” – observing the unfolding events from the sidelines and taking action only to protect Israel’s immediate security interests. (...) the process of reshaping Syria is already underway. (...) Iran has shown a remarkable ability to adapt to shifting circumstances. (...) the Iranians play a significant role in keeping Syria’s energy and electricity sector running. Iran therefore has significant cards to play against the forces trying to shape a new order in a devastated country despite the innate hostility between them and the rebels in Damascus. (...) Israel must strengthen its relations with major political actors in Syria – the emphasis is, of course, on the Druze in the south, and on Rojava, the autonomous Kurdish state that has emerged over the past decade in the strategic space of northeastern Syria. (...) At the same time, Israel should actively encourage and support the international and regional economic rehabilitation of

Syria. This reliance on foreign aid could serve as leverage to shape the future regime, conditioning assistance on the new government’s adoption of moderate policies both domestically and internationally. Europe and the GCC countries previously refrained from engaging in Syria’s reconstruction because they did not want to strengthen the Assad regime, but that argument is now void. (...) Israel must seize the current opportunity to foster a stable and non-hostile relationship with its strategic neighbor to the north.

Gil Murciano, JPO, 18.12.24

Israel faces a once-in-a-lifetime chance in Syria - it would be a shame to miss it

(...) Less than 24 hours after Syrian Prime Minister Mohammed Ghazi conceded that Assad’s regime had fallen to the insurgent opposition and rebel forces, the IDF announced it had moved troops into the buffer zone (...) these actions make sense. Most are logical, short-term precautions and the bombing of military infrastructure is an opportunity well seized. (...) However, while they are all immediate military steps, none of them are groundbreaking strategic moves. Syria’s current collapse also presents Israel with a strategic opportunity as the region is being reshaped for years to come. (...) while caution is necessary and healthy skepticism welcomed, here are three areas Israel’s decision makers should be looking at to see how they can best serve Israel’s interests. First, disrupting Iran’s supply routes to Israel’s borders. (...) Israel must strive to sever the supply routes established from Tehran to Beirut (...). Second is the question of Syria’s internationally recognized borders. (...) The collapse of Assad’s regime has the potential of changing what Syria is as a country. For Israel, this could present an opportunity to improve its position along the border with Syria, as the IDF is already doing, but in a more permanent manner. (...) The third and largest question is: What are the powers that will play a role in shaping Syria? (...) While a peace treaty between Jerusalem and Damascus might not be in the works now, it is in Israel’s interest to back-channel and work with those who finance Syria’s rebuilding. (...) Israel’s leadership must see what strategic gains are to be made over the next months and years (...). An opportunity like this comes once in a lifetime – it would be a shame to miss it.

Harley Lippman, JPO, 19.12.24

The strategic significance of the IDF’s actions in Syria

The Israeli blitz dubbed Operation Arrow of Bashan is the clearest manifestation yet of an Israeli preemptive doctrine. It eliminated the vast majority of Syria's strategic capabilities, and took over the buffer zone on the Syrian border (...). This concept is the direct result of the bankruptcy of the previous Israeli approach to securing its defenses, namely through deterrence-based containment, as evidenced by Hamas' October 7 attack. (...) it is now clear that soldiers of the IDF, believing they are engaged in an existential fight, are highly motivated and determined to vanquish their enemies. (...) In activating the new defense concept vis-a-vis Syria, Israel was not only seeking to address a potential strategic threat there but also to send a warning to its other enemies. (...) Tehran must now consider that any attempt to reconstruct its "ring of fire" around Israel will not only fail, but also expose it directly to severe Israeli retribution. (...) Lastly, the Israeli action in Syria is a surefire sign that Israel is no longer reliant on deterrence but has shifted to a preemptive doctrine. (...)

Avigdor Haselkorn, YED, 20.12.24

These are the options we face in Syria, and what is good for us

(...) The fall of Assad is another sign of the collapse of the Iranian axis (...). Israel must now prepare for the new reality that is rapidly emerging in front of our eyes. (...) Israel also did the right thing by exploiting the opportunity to destroy Syria's remaining military capabilities and ensuring that its air defense capabilities, military equipment and offensive weaponry do not fall into the hands of extremist forces. (...) Assad had an enormous stockpile of chemical weapons, and it can be assumed that the IDF airstrikes did not manage to destroy them all. If this weaponry falls into the hands of Islamist extremists, this could set a dangerous precedent not just for Israel but also for Western countries. (...) Iran's presence in Syria was key to the flow of weapons to Hezbollah and, without this, it will be difficult for Iran to rehabilitate the terror organization and to try to make it a significant threat to Israel once again. (...) The departure of Assad, who was expelled from the Arab League for massacring his own people, increases the motivation of the Gulf States to return the new Syria to the fold. (...) Israeli interest overlaps with that of the pragmatic Arab states, which are also aiming to reduce Iranian and Islamic influences in their countries. (...) Israel, for a change, must strive to influence the reality as it emerges and not just be dragged along by it.

Eyal Hulata, YED, 22.12.24

The fall of Assad is just the beginning: The struggle for Syria has resumed

(...) Syria has long been a focus for regional and international tensions (...) the idea of the struggle over Syria as a reflection of a broader struggle in the regional and international arenas remains entirely valid. (...) The rebels' assault, then, surprised everyone. They perfectly exploited the moment when Iran and Hezbollah were reeling from major blows inflicted by Israel, while Russia was bogged down in its war in Ukraine and distracted by the political conflict in Georgia. The external actors who saved Assad during the Arab Spring could not save him again this time around.

The problem is that the rebel forces are not a unified bloc. They came together in order to end the Assad regime, but the road to establishing a functioning Syrian national entity will be a long one, because each of the country's ethnic and religious groups (...) imagines a Syria in its own image (...). From a regional perspective, Syria has returned to its natural position in the Arab world (...). The removal from power of the Alawites, who are viewed as either infidels or Shi'ites (...), and the return of Sunni rule means that the alliance with Iran and Hezbollah is no longer relevant. Israel, of course, has benefited from the changes in Syria, which has ceased to represent a strategic threat for the foreseeable future, due both to the military setbacks it has suffered and to the severe economic consequences of the civil war. Moreover, Syria's exit from the Axis of Resistance (...) will make it much more difficult for Iran to transfer arms to Hezbollah in Lebanon. (...)

Elie Podeh, JPO, 22.12.24

2. Verletzte bei Houthi-Angriff auf Tel Aviv

Die vom Iran unterstützten Houthis aus dem Jemen lassen nicht ab von ihren Angriffen gegen Israel: Bei einem Raketenbeschuss auf Tel Aviv sind 16 Menschen verletzt worden. Israel reagierte mit Luftangriffen unter anderem auf den Flughafen unweit der Hauptstadt Sanaa im Norden des Jemen. Zum Zeitpunkt des Luftangriffs befand sich der Chef der Weltgesundheitsorganisation (WHO) auf dem Flughafen, der nach eigenen Worten „nur knapp dem Tod entkommen“ sei. Die israelische Führung gibt sich entschlossen, der Bedrohung aus dem Jemen ein Ende zu setzen. Israel ist im Kampf gegen die Houthis, die auch eine Bedrohung für den Schiffsverkehr im Roten Meer darstellen, nicht allein. Die USA, England und Deutschland beteiligen sich daran.

Für Ägypten bedeuten die wiederholten Angriffe auf Handelsschiffe im Hinblick auf die Passage durch den Suezkanal große finanzielle Verluste.

A gap in Israel's defense: The reasons behind failure to intercept Houthi missile

Several reasons may explain the IDF's failure (...) to intercept the ballistic missile launched by the Houthis (...). The military's Iron Beam laser interception system is expected to address the challenges posed by such launches, but until operational, Israel must gather intelligence on the missiles' launch and production sites and target them. (...) the missile was launched in a "flat" ballistic trajectory, possibly from an unexpected direction. As a result, Israeli or U.S. detection systems in Saudi Arabia may not have identified it in time, leading to its late discovery and insufficient time for interceptors to operate. The second and more likely reason is that the Iranians have developed maneuvering warheads. These warheads separate from the missile during the final third of their trajectory and execute programmed maneuvers — changing direction and course — before striking their target. (...) It seems that Iran, in collaboration with the Houthis, has developed a method to launch these missiles in low ballistic trajectories, complicating their interception. (...) The threat posed by maneuvering warheads on Iran's heavy, long-range missiles would become existential for Israel should Iran succeed in developing nuclear warheads for these missiles. A single nuclear-maneuvering warhead breaching Israel's air defense system could cause catastrophic destruction and loss of life. (...)

Ron Ben-Yishai, YED, 21.12.24

The Houthis Expose Yemen To Economic Ruin

The Houthis have fired more than 200 missiles and 170 drones at Israel since October 7, 2023 (...). Iran is ultimately at fault because it supplies the Houthis with weapons and encourages them to behave like pirates. (...) Israel will not hesitate to respond and bomb northern Yemen, which has been in the hands of the Houthi rebels since the outbreak of Yemen's civil war about a decade ago. (...) The Israeli Air Force, the finest in the Middle East, can strike Yemen at will. The Houthis also are aware that their strategy is basically ineffective. Virtually all of the projectiles they have launched have been shot down by Israel. (...) A sustained campaign is needed (...). It is clear that Israel will need to exert a lot more military pressure on the Houthis to convince them

that their unbridled aggression will be costly and counter-productive.

Sheldon Kirshner, TOI, 21.12.24

It will take more than words to stop Houthis

(...) The Houthis are increasing their attacks and showing they are not deterred by Israel's strikes or rhetoric. (...) Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (...) said Israel would act with force, determination, and sophistication (...). The Houthis have not been deterred by these words. (...) what the Houthis are doing is relatively new in the region. They are not a state seeking to blockade a waterway but are a terrorist group acting as if they are a state. (...) they steeled themselves in war against Saudi Arabia for years after Riyadh intervened in Yemen in 2015. Saudi Arabia had many of the latest warplanes and technology thanks to close ties with the US, yet Riyadh could not defeat the Houthis. The Houthis have dug in on the high ground of the mountains of Yemen. They have had Iranian backing and advice for years about constructing tunnels to hide missiles and how to deploy rockets quickly. The Houthis have developed a more sophisticated missile and drone program than Hamas and Hezbollah. (...) The Houthis are rolling missiles out of tunnels in the mountains, and it is incredibly difficult to preempt or predict. (...) Israel would do well to be careful about learning the wrong lessons from Gaza, Lebanon, Syria, and Iran. (...) whatever path forward is chosen, the Houthis will need to suffer more serious blows because, currently, they feel emboldened. (...) Seth J. Frantzman, JPO, 24.12.24

How the Houthis turned their weaknesses into strengths

Yemen's Houthis (...) focused on building a supremely loyal network of relatives and radical ideologues. (...) Despite their continued unpopularity, the Houthi regime is sustained by a relatively small collection of loyalists with familial ties and ideological commitment to the group. This "tyranny of the minority" has withstood immense military, economic, and political pressure without major internal fractures or defections. (...) the Houthis have managed to play Yemen's economic misery to their advantage. By playing up Yemen's dismal economic state and the impact of the Saudi-led campaign on the population, the Houthis helped usher in tens of billions of dollars in aid into their territory. They then systematically siphoned this aid off through a variety of means, from establishing front companies to brazen acts of theft. In addition, the Houthis lever-

age the misery of everyday Yemenis to force them into submission. Since there is barely any private sector economy within Houthi-controlled areas, the majority of the public is either living off of government salaries or aid, and the regime exploits this dependency to promote loyalty, or at the very least compliance. (...) Yemen's crushing poverty enables the Houthis to push their opponents into a dilemma: obey or starve. (...)

Ari Heistein, TOI, 25.12.24

Raising the cost for the Houthis: A severe blow to ties with Iran

(...) Israeli Air Force aircraft targeted functional government infrastructure used for providing civilian needs and operating military forces (...) including three Red Sea ports. The largest, Hodeidah port, is essential for the Houthi regime's ability to maintain basic economic production and civilian needs, as well as their missile and drone manufacturing operations. (...) The strikes (...) represent a calculated hit on symbols of Houthi authority, aimed at undermining public confidence in the regime and threatening its survival. (...) The precision strikes also targeted the Houthis' ability to receive smuggled weapons, spare parts and raw materials for missile and drone production from Iran. Hodeidah Port serves as the primary entry point for large components of long-range ballistic missiles, large drones and other missile systems. (...) Iranian Revolutionary Guard instructors and Hezbollah operatives, who assist the Houthis with missile assembly and provide intelligence support, primarily enter Yemen through Sanaa International Airport (...). The attacks on power stations directly impact weapons production and the assembly of Iranian-smuggled missile and drone components. (...) distance from Israel poses no obstacle to the Israeli Air Force's capability to conduct frequent, precise operations and deliver severe responses to missile launches, despite the high operational costs. (...) future strikes could lead to a complete halt of civilian aviation in Yemen. (...)

Ron Ben-Yishai, YED, 26.12.26

Before Israel Can Deter the Houthis, It Must Decide How to Act Against Iran

(...) the attacks by the Houthis (...) provided a reminder that the whole affair is still far from over. Israel finds itself in a new war, which this time is being conducted from Yemen, and indirectly from Iran. (...) for Israel to respond entails an enormous effort: an attack by warplanes that traverse 1,800 kilometers (...), requiring planning and the invest-

ment of large resources. (...) what was done will not be enough to put an end to the exchange of blows. (...) The rebels in Yemen, who are coping successfully with the local government, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, aren't fazed. It's tricky to threaten to send back to the Stone Age a regime that is more or less there, with the exception of its combat technologies. (...) The key variable, besides the rare position of weakness in which Iran finds itself, relates to American policy. (...) Trump is returning to power with a flagrantly anti-Iranian posture (...). The American president-elect will have to decide whether to try to formulate a new – and more demanding – nuclear agreement with Iran, or to back an Israeli military operation that would for the first time strike at the nuclear sites themselves. Besides being in an unusually weak position, Iran is more vulnerable than ever to an attack, in light of the destruction of its defense systems. The promise to prevent Iran from going nuclear, even if this requires force, has been a fundamental strategic tenet for Netanyahu for the past two decades at least. Accordingly, the possibility of an Israeli attack, which this time would focus on distancing Iran from the achievement of nuclear capability, will hover over the Middle East in the first months of Trump's second term. (...)

Amos Harel, HAA, 27.12.24

Houthi strikes on Israel are just practice for the real thing

(...) There is not enough intelligence on the Houthi rebels in Yemen or on the country. The geographical distance of over 2,000 kilometers (...) over the Red Sea and the lack of previous anti-Israel activity, had not compelled Israeli intelligence services to study this adversary. (...) But the real problem is elsewhere, in Tehran, and with the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). That is where the orders are originating and where the weapons are being sent. For now, Israel has not decided on any decisive action against Iran. (...) Israel would certainly like to find al Malaki al Houthi and dispatch him as the Hamas and Hezbollah leaders were dispatched. Nasrallah was a revered figure in Yemen and was a ceremony honoring him was held in Sanaa, after his assassination. But what is the Houthi's ultimate goal? What will 50 to 100 thousand armed fighters do if Israel and Hamas agree on a cease-fire? In Sanaa, sights are already being set on the real prize, control of all of Yemen, the poorest among the Arab nations and the strikes against Israeli targets are only practice drills ahead of the real battle.

Smadar Perry, YED, 29.12.24

The Houthis are not a nuisance – they are a strategic threat

Following the October 7 terrorist attack, Iran's proxies across the Middle East quickly joined Hamas in its war against Israel. (...) At first, the Yemeni threat was dismissed as a curiosity or, at most, a nuisance, especially given the immediate threats Israel faced from Gaza and Hezbollah in Lebanon. However, it has become clear that Yemen, now Israel's seventh front, is a significant battleground where Israel must establish dominance to restore deterrence in the region and counter the Iranian threat that still looms over the nation. (...) the Houthis themselves have become a tangible and escalating danger. Their actions threaten both Israel's daily life and regional stability. (...) The US pledged to address the Houthi "nuisance," but its military actions have been constrained and largely ineffective. Washington appears reluctant to entangle itself in Yemen and risk a broader regional conflict. Similarly, Israel has carried out a few PR-driven strikes on Houthi infrastructure, hoping to deter further attacks. These efforts, however, have proven insufficient. (...) Effectively countering the Houthis requires escalating military pressure while forming a local coalition, akin to the approach used against ISIS. Such a coalition should be built around the 70% of Yemenis who oppose the Houthis, aiming to reclaim northern Yemen and dismantle the Houthi regime. (...) Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states are also eager to expel this Iranian proxy from their backyard. The US must spearhead this regional and international effort, with support from Israel. Merely targeting the Houthis is not enough; their rule must be toppled entirely.

Eyal Zisser, IHY, 29.12.24

3. Krieg im Gazastreifen

Der Krieg im Gazastreifen fordert mit unverminderter Brutalität weiter viele Todesopfer. So auch bei einem Angriff der israelischen Armee auf das Kamal-Adwan-Krankenhaus im Norden des palästinensischen Gebietes. Die Weltgesundheitsorganisation (WHO) verurteilte die Angriffe. Israel zielt auf eine „systematische Zerlegung des Gesundheitssystems“, verlautete von der WHO. Nach Darstellung der israelischen Armee war das Krankenhaus zum Zeitpunkt des Angriffs nicht in Betrieb. Vielmehr habe sich darin eine Kommandozentrale der Hamas befunden. Bei dem militärischen Einsatz seien den Angaben zufolge etwa 20 Terroristen getötet und 240 verhaftet

worden. Unterdessen sind die Verhandlungen um eine Waffenruhe und den Austausch der noch immer im Gazastreifen festgehaltenen Geiseln gegen palästinensische Häftlinge einmal mehr ins Stocken geraten.

Israel should capitalize on the war's achievements and free the hostages

(...) The only worthy image of victory is one of all of the hostages back with their families. After over 430 days of fighting, the time of reckoning has come. (...) Based on the cumulative security experience of the movement's hundreds of members, we assert that the IDF's war achievements enable the government to make the obligatory decision: The war can be ended in order to return the hostages. (...) the government's conduct reflects conflicting interests. On the one hand, there are the declared objectives that are guiding the IDF, with wide public support: destroying the military and governmental capabilities of Hamas and returning the hostages. On the other hand, there is an extremist stream in the government that is promoting entirely different objectives: occupying Gaza, establishing a military government, and renewing Jewish settlement. These latter objectives have never been openly presented, raised for discussion, or voted upon. Instead, they are being advanced in a criminal way. This course of action threatens to entangle the IDF in an endless war, risking soldiers' lives and dooming the hostages, all for the sake of the delusions of an extremist stream among us. (...) After 430 days of warfare that achieved Israel's military objectives and with 100 hostages still held in Gaza, the government demonstrated, in reaching a ceasefire in Lebanon under even more complicated circumstances, that it is possible to make decisions. The time has come to make decisions about Gaza, too. (...) It is in our hands. (...)

Matan Vilnai, JPO, 18.12.24

Israel Is Losing Its Humanity in Gaza

(...) the investigative report Haaretz published last week paints a shocking picture of unbridled lawlessness on the part of some of the soldiers fighting in the heart of Gaza, especially north of the Netzarim corridor. The report detailed numerous incidents that can't be termed anything other than war crimes, and some indicate a loss of the soldiers' humanity. (...) The report keeps describing more and more nightmare scenarios. Together they comprise a horror film that, heartrendingly, is occurring in reality. (...) There are also acts of humiliation that reveal a com-

plete loss of discipline. (...) The more evidence emerges from Gaza, the clearer the nauseating picture of our loss of humanity becomes. (...) Editorial, HAA, 22.12.24

The Humanitarian Tragedy Created By Hamas

Hamas, in a long-established and self-defeating practice, has unconscionably misused schools in the Gaza Strip as command centers, weapons depots and hiding places. This has forced Israel to bomb scores of schools, resulting in the tragic deaths of Palestinian civilians who have sheltered there during the still ongoing Israel-Hamas war. (...) the optics are bad for Israel, which already has been falsely accused of genocide in waging its just and necessary offensive in Gaza. Israel's air strikes have severely tarnished its image, even though Hamas is clearly at fault for grossly misusing schools for its own ends. (...) The Hamas records that fell into Israel's hands prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the Qassam Brigades, Hamas' military wing, regard schools and other civilian facilities as "the best obstacles to protect the resistance" in its battles with the Israeli armed forces. These documents disclose that at least 24 teachers, principals, deputy principals and counsellors employed by UNRWA were active members of the Qassam Brigades. (...) Be that as it may, Gaza's 2.2 million inhabitants cannot be left to fend for themselves. UNRWA has provided vital humanitarian and educational services to Palestinians over the decades and still has an important role to play. But it cannot perform its duties properly unless it fully admits its mistakes and rectifies them as soon as possible. The ball is in UNRWA's court. Sheldon Kirshner, TOI, 25.12.24

Leave Gaza's Hospitals Alone

The Israel Defense Forces raided Kamal Adwan Hospital in Beit Lahia (...) for the third time. (...) Around 350 people who were in the hospital were forced to leave and to undress. (...) It appears that as part of the ethnic cleansing of the northern Strip, during which the army destroyed almost all the area's housing and infrastructure to prevent the return of hundreds of thousands of those expelled from there, it was decided to destroy the hospitals as well. In the absence of medical facilities, northern Gaza will be emptied faster, as the sick and wounded flee south in an effort to find care. Such a large area cannot be left without hospitals, especially in wartime. (...) Northern Gaza has been destroyed and devastated; the IDF is now mainly engaged in

completing its destruction. This is an illegitimate action, and in any case it must not include hospitals. Editorial, HAA, 30.12.24

How Israel Turned More Than 10,000 Children Into Collateral Damage

(...) There is a clear moral correlation between the total indifference to three babies having frozen to death in Gaza because of our handiwork and the abandonment of the hostages and indifference to their suffering. (...) A country whose moral infrastructure allows Gazan babies to die of hypothermia can accommodate Israeli women being raped in the tunnels. Abandonment of hostages and war crimes draw on the same indiscriminate evil. (...) One could argue the credibility of the data, but there is an agreement on the modest number of over 10,000 children we turned into collateral damage. This is what a bankrupt society looks like. A civilization that descended into barbarism. After the massacre, the prevailing moral principle, even among centrists, Zionist leftists and anti-Netanyahu liberals, was an explicit mercilessness toward Gazans for what they did. As if those people who slaughtered children in Gaza border communities gave us moral license to carry out the wholesale killing of children in Gaza. (...) Netanyahu's government will fall, eventually, but Israeli society will take generations to recover from the virus that caused it to ignore the death of children and babies on the other side of the fence. Iris Leal, HAA, 30.12.24

The IDF is stuck in an endless tango with Hamas in Gaza

(...) At the end of October 2023 (...) our forces were ordered to capture Jabaliya and its neighboring towns for the first time. They fought, were injured and killed in battle, but ultimately succeeded in purging the area of terrorists and weaponry. Yet, after capturing it, they withdrew, following orders from their commanders, decisionmakers or both. The same pattern took place in Beit Hanoun, where the Kfir Brigade and the Multidimensional Unit are currently engaged in combat. IDF forces have entered and exited Beit Hanoun multiple times. (...) Nearly 15 months into the war, we continue a tango with our weakest enemy. We take one step forward, paying a heavy price in casualties and wounded, only to inexplicably take two steps back, vacating the area and allowing terrorists to return. Then, we quickly retake the same step forward, enduring the same costs, only to withdraw again after a costly recapture. (...) In certain parts of Gaza, our forces

have entered and exited as many as eight times, leaving a vacuum for terrorists to reoccupy each time. What's happening behind the scenes that prevents us from pursuing victory? (...) this strategy is unsustainable. (...) The people of Israel deserve senior commanders and political leaders who know how to take responsibility, set a clear policy and act decisively without excuses or evasions. (...)
Amichai Attali, YED, 30.12.24

4. Weitere Themen

Eklat zwischen Jerusalem und Dublin

Closing Israel's embassy in Ireland: Many long-term losses for few short-term gains

(...) Experts recognize that Ireland's attitude towards Israel is indeed the harshest in Europe. Unlike other critical countries (...) in Ireland, all major parties are critical to hostile, as is the media, both traditional and social. In view of that, the step taken by the minister would appear to be fitting. (...) I beg to disagree. (...) It behooves us to remember that Ireland is an influential member of the European Union (...) and (...) the two countries have extensive trade relations (...) the Israeli software company Wix employs hundreds in Ireland (...). Moreover, there is a small but active Jewish community (...) closing an embassy is easy. Reopening, not always. (...) As Israel is facing unprecedented international adversity, is leaving the game helpful? Or is it better to conduct dialogue with critics, challenging as it may be? (...) the major benefit of the closure is to be found in demonstrative headlines and that the loss to Israel will prove greater than the gain.
Tova Herzl, JPO, 18.12.24

Ireland Is Not 'anti-Israel.' Criticism of Israel's Actions in Gaza Is Not Antisemitism

We were deeply disappointed to receive the news last weekend that Israel intends to close its embassy in Ireland. I am keenly aware that there are fundamental policy differences between our two countries. (...) Ireland is not "anti-Israel." Ireland is not antisemitic. Ireland is not unsupportive of the desire of the Israeli people to live in peace and security. (...) Cartoonish depictions of Irish policy do nothing to advance the just cause of mutual understanding. Ireland unreservedly condemned the brutal October 7 Hamas attack on Israel immediately and in stark terms. We continue to do so unreservedly. (...) Our foreign policy positions are guided by the principles of international law and the obligation on all states to

adhere to international humanitarian law. This (...) guides our response to the terrible events since then in Gaza. (...) There is not in fact a spontaneous outbreak of anti-Israeli sentiment but a determined appeal instead not to lose sight of the ideals that your country was founded on at a time of crisis and suffering. Our criticism is not happening in a vacuum. (...) attempts to undermine our considered policy with accusations of antisemitism are a disservice to the objectives of those who wish to work constructively with Israel and a disservice to the cause of countering the scourge of racism and hatred. (...) Diplomacy is most valuable at times of difficulty. (...) Our government has made the case for maintaining our diplomatic channels with Israel and for the value of dialogue, even in the face of disagreement. We will continue to do so.
Sonya McGuinness, HAA, 22.12.24

Netanyahu vor Gericht

What will Netanyahu's legacy be?

Benjamin (...) Netanyahu is (...) the only sitting Prime Minister to be charged with criminal offenses (...) facing charges of bribery, fraud, and breach of trust in three separate affairs. (...) Many believe that these charges are political more than anything else. (...) Netanyahu's errors and the various court cases concerning his personal affairs have not outweighed his apparent brilliance in managing the affairs of the state. Even a delay in negotiations to release hostages has barely affected his political standing. (...) His appearances both on the international stage and within Israel's political and security spheres have been successful. (...) Israel, despite a 14-month war, has remained resilient, steadfast, and determined to beat back the threat from Iran and its proxies. In the last few months, it has dazzled the Western world with its brilliant, unexpected tactics and victories. (...) Iran has been weakened and a revolution against the mullahs is within the realm of possibility for the first time. (...) Syria is in the midst of a revolution with Iran shunted aside. As for Gaza, it has been set back at least a generation, with the prospect of an IDF presence remaining there for the immediate future. Will Benjamin Netanyahu be treated in the history books as an unparalleled Western leader who helped to remake the Middle East, or as a failed leader who was convicted of criminal offenses during his incumbency. It could go either way.

Steve Kramer, TOI, 21.12.24

Netanyahu's trial is Israel's trial

(...) The prosecution of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is not merely about one man, but about the very fabric of Israeli democracy, stretched thin between justice and political vendetta.

(...) The prosecution paints a narrative of corruption where none existed, twisting conversations into conspiracies, thereby transforming legitimate political discourse into a criminal script. Case 2000 (...) reveals an even more chilling portrait of judicial overreach. A conversation with Arnon Mozes (...) is deemed a criminal act. Think of the dangerous precedent this sets. (...) But the issue goes beyond the charges, as such. The judicial process itself bleeds with irregularity. Witnesses have given testimony under psychological duress, their words shaped by unseen pressures. Selective leaks to partisan media reporters poison the public discourse, transforming a legal proceeding into a Kafkaesque political theater where truth becomes a malleable item. This is more than Netanyahu's trial: This is Israel's trial. It is a confrontation between entrenched elites desperately clinging to their hegemony and emerging forces seeking rightful representation, and one where the courtroom has become a battlefield of competing visions for the nation's future. (...) When legal interpretations become weapons and when context is sacrificed on the altar of political expediency, the very foundations of democratic society are shaken. (...) In the end, judgment will not be rendered solely in the courtroom but by history itself. (...) Netanyahu's trial is (...) a wake-up call for all of us to defend the principles that sustain our nation.

Yaron Schwartz, JPO, 22.12.24

HAA = Haaretz

YED = Yedioth Ahronoth / Ynetnews

JPO = Jerusalem Post

IHY = Israel HaYom

TOI = Times of Israel

Veröffentlicht im: Januar 2025

Verantwortlich:

*Dr. Ralf Melzer, Leiter der Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung
Israel*

Redaktion:

Susanne Knaul

Judith Stelmach

Homepage: israel.fes.de

Email: fes@fes.org.il