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**1. Weiter gefährlicher Schlagabtausch an der israelisch-libanesischen Grenze**

*Die libanesisch-schiitische Hizbollah betrachtet laut ihres Generalsekretärs Hassan Nazrallah die gezielte Tötung des Militärkommandeurs Fuad Shukr, der als Nummer drei der Terrororganisation galt, mit den jüngsten massiven Raketenangriffen auf Israel offenbar als ausreichend gerächt. Nazrallah schlug einen ungewöhnlich versöhnlichen Ton an. Er habe keine zivilen Ziele treffen wollen. Allerdings stünden Vergeltungsschläge aus dem Iran und Yemen noch aus. Teheran macht Israel für den Mord an dem Hamas-Politbürochef Ismail Haniyeh vor einigen Wochen in Teheran verantwortlich. Die Hizbollah und die israelische Armee führen seit Beginn des Krieges im Gazastreifen einen teils sehr heftigen Schlagabtausch, der auf beiden Seiten bereits zahlreiche Opfer gefordert hat. Die libanesische Terrororganisation begehrt die Angriffe erklärtermaßen aus Solidarität mit der Hamas. Als Bedingung für eine Waffenruhe nannte die Hizbollah das Ende des Krieges im Gazastreifen.*

**An Israeli War of Vengeance in Lebanon? Not in the Druze Community's Name**

(...) a terrible disaster occurred in Majdal Shams. Twelve children lost their lives to a Hezbollah rocket,

and another 24 are in hospitals, fighting for their lives. (...) The pain is dreadful. (...) It is true that Hezbollah fired the rocket and that it likely struck these children mistakenly, a matter of bitterly bad luck. However, the calls for revenge in Lebanon made by a few people were out of place. Revenge will not bring our children back to us or ease our pain. (...) I am asking the government – and I believe I express the position of a great many Golan residents – not to bring us into a war in the north on account of this disaster. (...) If the government genuinely respects our dead and wounded, it should move immediately to reach a deal for the return of the hostages and a cease-fire. (...) This heavy loss is bad enough for us. The time has come to stop this terrible dance with the devil.

Salim Brake, HAA, 01.08.24

**Netanyahu is right, 'challenging days are ahead'**

(...) This is a time for Israelis and our friends and allies to rally together in a show of genuine unity, strength, and resoluteness. And it's certainly not the time to be at each other's throats. (...) The infighting, backstabbing, and finger-pointing among Israelis – especially our politicians – have got to stop. This does not mean that we should refrain from expressing our opinions, but we need to be aware that public spats feed our enemies. Let's not

forget that Iran remains Israel's primary enemy, supporting and encouraging its proxies – Hamas, Hezbollah, and the Houthis – to carry out terrorist attacks against the Jewish state. (...) As we approach ten months of this war, the longest in Israel's history, let's remind ourselves who our natural enemies are, and not take our anger and frustration out on one another. While we all want the hostages home after more than 300 days, their families still have a right to protest, and they should be respected, not insulted (...) this is not the time for protesters to break into army bases such as Beit Lid and Sde Teiman to riot (...). Instead, we should be doing all we can to support our soldiers and the IDF, especially those fighting our enemies in the North and the South. (...) We are not alone. We have powerful friends in the United States and worldwide, and we appreciate their support for our tiny but mighty nation.

Editorial, JPO, 02.08.24

#### **Iran could keep Israel on its toes for a bit**

(...) Officials believe the Iranians are seeking to inflict pain but not cause a regional war and only deter Israel from further attacks. But if there are casualties of harm to critical targets, the Israeli response could lead to war. To reach a deal with Hamas that would lead to a cease-fire on Israel's northern border as well. Sources with knowledge of the recent telephone conversation between U.S. President Joe Biden and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu last week said there was indeed tension and the president asked that Israel attempt to finalize a deal but also that Israel not involve the U.S. in its targeted killings. (...) The Americans were probably not surprised by the killing of Fuad Shukr in Beirut and were not upset by his death but they likely had no prior knowledge of the timing of the assassination of Ismail Haniyeh that was attributed to Israel but not officially confirmed by the IDF. (...) a deal to release the hostages would reduce the risk of a regional war. Amid the pressure from Washington, Netanyahu dispatched the delegation to the talks, to Cairo headed by Mossad chief David Barnea, (...).

Yossi Yehoshua, YED, 04.08.24

#### **Assassinating Hamas Chief Ismail Haniyeh Helps Netanyahu – but Not Israelis**

It's hard not to interpret the assassination of Ismail Haniyeh, certainly in light of its timing and location, as anything but an attempt to delay the deal to bring back the hostages in Gaza in exchange for a cessa-

tion of the fighting. And not just to continue the war, but even to expand it into a direct military confrontation with Iran, instead of being harassed by its emissaries while it carries on with the development of its nuclear project. And on top of all that, an attempt to bring the United States into the war, under an international framework of a clash of civilizations. (...) the assassination has directly and immediately sabotaged the chances of rescuing the hostages, while it's causing an entire country that's already anxious to be on neurotic, defensive alert, and increases the risk of a regional war (...). Assassinating Haniyeh at this specific point in time and in this specific location merges with the stubborn refusal to discuss "the day after." This isn't just in the sense of constructing an alternative to Hamas rule along with the war against it, but also in the overall sense of the gravity of the consequences of various acts that are framed as courageous. (...) We are imprisoned in a belligerent and very masculine combination, with a clearly infantile bent, in which mutual blows against symbols (...) are the top priority of policymakers, often in the guise of essential steps for achieving strategic or security benefits. (...)

Ravit Hecht, HAA, 04.08.24

#### **Escalation vs. restraint: The strategic dilemma in Gaza and Hezbollah's attrition war**

(...) warnings and the many calls for restraint are understandable, particularly for Western audiences, but they are not very useful. (...) In contrast to Western attitudes that view the use of force as uncivilized and anachronistic, Middle Easterners see it as a legitimate option in the toolbox of international actors. (...) Israelis cherish successful targeted killings, and these are also well appreciated by its Arab allies. In many situations, climbing the escalation ladder is probably the best way to put an end to violence. (...) Israel's reluctance to preempt in Lebanon allowed Hezbollah to build a formidable missile arsenal. This organization (...) succeeded in emptying the north of Israel of its residents and in forcing the IDF to deploy large military formations south of the Lebanese border that are needed to attain a faster victory in Gaza. Attrition warfare is the best outcome for the population-centric Iranian strategy and the worst possible scenario for Israel. The continuous existence of over one hundred thousand missiles in the hands of Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah, after he crossed the Rubicon of waging a long war of attrition, is an intolerable situation for Israel. Only escalation intended to eliminate the missile arsenal can put an end to the

war of attrition. In the Lebanese case, the “diplomatic solution” the Americans and the French are pushing for is a mirage. (...) The only effective persuasion is the use of force. This requires willingness to escalate the struggle for freedom and other Western values. Islamist radicals need to be defeated. The timing of escalation can be debated but not the course of action.  
Efraim Inbar, JPO, 04.08.24

### **Why Israel Must Declare War Now and Preemptively Strike Iran & Hezbollah**

In the current geopolitical climate, Israel stands at a critical historical juncture. Faced with a multitude of enemies and threats, Israel cannot afford to continue its current “sitting duck” or tit-for-tat strategies with Hezbollah and Iran. (...)

Israel’s attack on Hodeida in Yemen has inflicted enough damage to keep the Houthis occupied in the short term, although they will likely need reminders. The assassinations of Ismael Haniyeh in Tehran and Fouad Shukr in Beirut have demonstrated Israel’s ability to strike at the heart of enemy leadership, in the heart of their capitals, and signaling its readiness to defend its sovereignty, however and wherever necessary. But as Israel braces for potential retaliation, it must act decisively to neutralize these threats and restore its deterrent capability. (...) Hezbollah’s recent actions, such as moving weapons, equipment, and personnel out of its Beirut headquarters, indicate its preparations for potential conflict. These and other actions suggest an anticipation of escalation, planning and further emphasizing the urgent need for Israel to act decisively against these growing threats. Israel’s current (...) situation is unsustainable but also presents a unique opportunity to act decisively. (...) there is a profound need for vigilance and proactive defense. The Torah’s guidance is clear: “If someone comes to kill you, rise early and kill him first.” This principle should help our leaders with their strategic and moral decision-making and for Israel to act decisively to protect its citizens. (...) Critics of preemptive military action often warn that such moves could escalate into broader conflicts across the Middle East. However, Israel’s primary obligation is to safeguard its national interests and the security of its citizens. The reality is that regional tensions are already high, and conflict may be inevitable regardless of who initiates it. By taking the initiative, Israel can shape the strategic environment to its advantage and deter further aggression. (...)

Elazar Gabay, TOI, 05.08.24

### **Israeli Eyes Are on Iran, but Iran Is Already Here**

The Israel led by Benjamin Netanyahu appears to be losing its mind. (...) With eyes wide open, he is challenging fate and planting landmines in the negotiations to bring the hostages home. His subordinates, who ostensibly disagree with him, assassinated senior Hamas official Mohammed Deif, and later Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh – and the latter on Iranian soil no less. This operation was a blatant invitation for Iran to respond and open the gates of hell. (...) those who hold key government posts (...) don't see the close connection between the raids that militias from the government's messianic/dictatorial wing carried out on the Sde Teiman army base and the military court in Beit Lid and the wave of assassinations. The former feeds the latter, and vice versa. Netanyahu (...) knows the assassinations are popular with Israelis, and he knows they embarrass his political rivals, who oppose them not because they are overly fond of the Palestinians, but because of fear that they will lead to a bad outcome. It turns out that Netanyahu's opponents, in both civilian life and the army, don't have strong enough spines to say that such assassinations (...) only prolong the war, preclude any chance of bringing the hostages home, will lead to a regional war and also keep the messianists in power. (...) While all eyes are on Iran, Israel is becoming another version of it.  
Odeh Bisharat, HAA, 06.08.24

### **Hassan Nasrallah's mixed signals**

(...) In his confused speech, Nasrallah sent mixed signals regarding Hezbollah's intentions toward Israel following the assassination of their top commander, Fuad Shukr. (...) Teetering on the fine line between threatening Israel and trying to appear victorious for his viewers, Nasrallah hinted at a future response to Shukr's assassination as he listed Israel's strategic assets and elaborated on the economic devastation a Hezbollah attack would visit upon it. (...) Nasrallah hinted at a coordinated military response involving Iran, Hezbollah and Yemen's Houthis (...) it was also clear from his speech that he does not intend to go to war for the Gazans. Hamas will manage without him. (...) In Lebanon, the speech was received with great skepticism but also with fear of escalation as the Lebanese people continued to flee their homes. Several prominent figures, such as Claudine Aoun, the former president's daughter, called on Lebanese officials to reach a cease-fire and a diplomatic agreement with Israel.  
Smadar Perry, YED, 07.08.24

### **Israeli intelligence countered Hezbollah's plans and prevented regional war**

Early intelligence indications from the IDF's Military Intelligence Directorate (MID) about Hezbollah's extensive preparations for a strike on Israel, including the center of the country, prevented potentially severe damage and a possibility of significant casualties during the terror group's attack (...) information from Israeli intelligence agencies, enabled the IDF to carry out a preemptive strike on thousands of rocket launchers of various types in Lebanon which were intended to target strategic military sites in central Israel, including the Gush Dan region. (...) the IDF's preemptive strike disrupted Hezbollah's plans to launch a combined rocket and drone attack on the holy Shia day of Arbaeen, which commemorates the martyrdom of Imam Hussein in the Battle of Karbala. (...) the IDF's preemptive strike (...) disrupted the attack's timeline. A coordinated attack of rockets and drones requires precise synchronization between the slower-moving drones and the faster ballistic rockets. Overall, it appears that Hezbollah intended to (...) avoid sparking a regional war that might have erupted if it had launched a widespread attack in the central region. (...) Hezbollah opened fire from southern Lebanon alone, including the area between the Litani River and the Awali River, with the clear intention, (...) that Israel in its response would avoid striking the Beirut and Baalbek regions, where Hezbollah's heavy missiles such as the Fateh-110 and Zelzal are located. (...) In any case, Israel mustn't allow Hezbollah to keep it in a state of readiness and uncertainty as it has in recent weeks and in the slightly longer term: The situation in which the north is subjected to a war of attrition and continuous attacks must be brought to an end.

Ron Ben-Yishai, YED, 25.08.24

### **Israel's decisive preemptive strike thwarted a major Hezbollah attack. It's about time**

(...) Nearly 11 months after Hezbollah – completely unprovoked – started firing on Israel, forcing dozens of communities in the North to evacuate, and upending life for hundreds of thousands of people, (...) this is the most significant military act that Israel initiated to change the rules of the game in play since the war started and to signal to Hezbollah that what was, and what has become a crazy new normal, will not last. (...) No country can tolerate a situation where a wide swath of its territory is rendered uninhabitable because of rockets fired at it from its neighbor's territory. That is a clear violation of sov-

ereignty. (...) Ever since Hezbollah and Iran vowed vengeance for the back-to-back assassinations of Shukr and Haniyeh, Israel has largely been in a defensive crouch that is corrosive to morale. It feeds a sense of powerlessness, even helplessness. But this country is neither powerless nor helpless, nor dependent on the grace of our enemies not to strike us. It can effectively forestall those attacks. (...) The situation in southern Lebanon needs to change fundamentally to make it possible for northern border residents to return home. (...) With the intensity of the fighting in Gaza much reduced compared with a few months ago, Israel now has greater bandwidth to deal with Hezbollah. As such, it needs to keep its foot just above the gas pedal in Lebanon, ready to press down and strike Hezbollah with overwhelming force at a minute's notice (...).

Editorial, JPO, 26.08.24

### **Hezbollah rocket attack: Israel's urgent call for decisive action in North -**

(...) The ongoing Iranian-backed menace, exemplified by the horrific attacks of October 7, has left many Israelis living in perpetual fear. (...) At the moment, Israelis are living with the realization that Iran and Iranian proxies can attack the Jewish state with tremendous force at any moment. The situation is compounded by the failure of international mechanisms designed to protect Israel. (...) UNIFIL failed to enforce resolution 1701, with Hezbollah positioned right on Israel's northern border fence, continuing to amass and deploy weaponry with impunity. The international community and the United Nations' inability or unwillingness to enforce their resolutions only underscores the futility of relying on international diplomacy to secure Israel's safety. (...) The Israeli government should not delay critical military action based on uncertain political futures. The State of Israel's right and obligation to protect its citizens from Iranian threats is too pressing. The current situation has already dragged on for nearly 11 months, and further delay is untenable for Israelis. (...) the current Biden administration (...) is busy with election season, there is now a window of opportunity for Israel to undertake necessary military actions. (...) Israel must seize the opportunity to act, while the current US administration offers a semblance of support, ensuring that Israeli citizens can return to their homes and live without fear.

Avi Abelow, JPO, 27.08.24

### **Iran still intends to attack Israel**

Nearly a month after the assassination of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran, Iran has yet to fulfill its pledge to attack Israel in a retaliatory strike. (...) Hezbollah may well be satisfied that its tit-for-tat exchange with Israel was a sufficient reprisal. (...) Iran may not have carried out its threat until now because it is still unsure whether it can restore deterrence with Israel while simultaneously avoiding a full-scale war. Reports suggest that, while Iran certainly wants to inflict serious damage on Israel, it may be hesitant to cause mass civilian Israeli casualties, an outcome that could surely trigger a regional war and, perhaps, drag in the United States. (...) Iran's calculations may be related to Israel's indirect negotiations with Hamas on reaching a ceasefire/hostage/Palestinian prisoner deal. Iran is counting on an agreement under which Israel would observe a long-range truce and withdraw from the Gaza Strip, thereby leaving Hamas, one of its proxies, in power. (...) The American factor is a consideration for Iran as well. The United States, Israel's chief ally, has sent two aircraft carrier groups and a guided-missile submarine to the region to deter Iran, while US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin has reiterated the United States' commitment to "defend Israel" if necessary. (...) Washington has warned Iran that an attack would be counter-productive and could be as militarily ineffective as its first direct strike on Israel this past April. (...) Clearly, there is no way of knowing when the Iranian regime will exercise that "right," but in all probability, Iran has no intention of backing down and is indeed planning an attack. Sheldon Kirshner, TOI, 28.08.24

## 2. Krieg im Gazastreifen

*Nach der Bergung der Leichen von sechs in den Gazastreifen verschleppten israelischen Geiseln verschärfte sich der Protest gegen die Regierung von Benjamin Netanyahu weiter. Die Gewerkschaft Histadrut rief zu einem Generalstreik auf und forderte die Regierung zu einem Abkommen für die Befreiung der noch lebenden Geiseln auf. Auch Verteidigungsminister Joav Gallant drängte zu mehr Kompromissbereitschaft bei den Verhandlungen. Netanyahu müsse von der Entscheidung zur andauernden israelischen Militärpräsenz im sogenannten Philadelphi-Korridor, dem Grenzstreifen zu Ägypten, ablassen. Kritiker\_innen der Regierung werfen ihr vor, die Verhandlungen gezielt in die Länge zu ziehen. Dagegen fühlen sich Befürworter\_innen einer unverändert fortgesetzten Kriegsführung im Gazastreifen durch die jüngste*

*Befreiung einer 52jährigen Geisel durch die Armee in ihrer Haltung bestätigt. Informationen des Gesundheitsministeriums in Gaza zufolge sind seit Kriegsbeginn bereits über 40.000 Palästinenser\_innen zu Tode gekommen. Israel stimmte derweil zeitlich begrenzten Feuerpausen zu, um die Impfung von Kindern gegen Polio zu ermöglichen.*

### 'Pidyon Shvuyim' calls for a hostage deal now

Pidyon shvuyim, the mitzvah, or commandment, of redeeming captives, is deeply rooted in Jewish tradition. Israel should emulate the US-Russia prisoner exchange and hold by it. (...) Maimonides decrees that one who ignores ransoming a captive is guilty of transgressing several commandments – and that those who delay in ransoming a captive are considered as murderers (...). But pidyon shvuyim is not an absolute. Redeeming captives must be weighed against the welfare of the entire community. There is also reason to fear incentivizing further kidnapping. (...) Israeli society has focused on this question of deterrence – how to avoid incentivizing future hostage-taking by ensuring Hamas could never commit such heinous acts again. But it is now grappling with a question of what it means to sacrifice freedom for eventual safety. For too many in Israel, it seems as though the hostages have become an afterthought, with the elimination and eradication of Hamas taking precedence. This raises a critical dilemma: how do we balance the immediate need to save lives with the long-term goal of ensuring security and peace? (...) Israel cannot afford to fall into the trap of an endless game of whack-a-mole with our enemies while so many hostages wait for us. We cannot tell hundreds of family members, loved ones and friends that, for a little while longer, the hostages' safety must come second to the eventual greater safety which we may now never see. (...) Our love for the captives and the imperative to bring them home is not just a humanitarian act but a strategic necessity to prevent future tragedies. Though Hamas's rockets have been destroyed on the ground and in the air, on the international stage, they've been armed with more ammunition than we ever could have imagined. (...) By prioritizing a hostage deal – even at this difficult moment in negotiations – Israel can demonstrate that it values human life above all, potentially mending relationships and restoring its standing globally, at least somewhat. (...) by bringing them home now, Israel protects its own future, ensuring that rather than falling into further isolation, it can begin to repair its image

and relationships with the world, and ensure a strong democratic future with vibrant diplomacy rooted in shared values. (...).  
Steve Rabinowitz, JPO, 05.08.24

### **We are losing this war**

(...) In the north, Hezbollah has free reign to rain down rockets on Israeli civilians. (...) Hezbollah is also Israel's best armed and trained enemy that sits on its border. Iran of course is the biggest threat. It stands on the threshold of nuclear capabilities. (...) Defeating it requires an international Western coalition that will help apply sanctions, cut off its funding, and bolster Israel's air defenses in case of attack. Yet the current government has continued to anger allies, by insulting them (...). Given that we are currently losing a multi-front war and the current government has no strategic plan to reverse that loss, what happens if we don't have a cease-fire/hostage agreement – until what point do we keep risking our soldiers for a fight we cannot win, because it does not have victory as its aim. (...) We can kill some Hamas terrorists or destroy some of their tunnels. But that is not the same thing. So how much longer do we continue fighting? (...) the current government suffers from a legitimacy crisis. Many, on the right, left, and center, feel that it bears some responsibility in the October 7th tragedy. A government elected by the people after that tragedy would not suffer from the same legitimacy crisis. The increased government legitimacy would translate into better morale for public and soldiers alike. (...)  
Shayna Abramson, TOI, 05.08.24

### **Striving for 'Total Victory'? Sometimes It Actually Pays Off to Lose**

(...) Is there still a possibility for any kind victory? Maybe. As the government increasingly entrenches itself in a cruel policy of refusing to approve the hostage deal, more and more leaders are emerging from the protest movement – among them young activists who are learning the ins and outs of Israeli politics and diplomacy from within. When MK Simcha Rothman violently kicked Danny Elgarat, whose brother is in Hamas captivity, out of a Knesset House Committee meeting a month ago, dozens of Elgarat's fellow activists were roaming the halls of parliament, lobbying ministers and Knesset members across the political spectrum. (...) these activists are building the foundation for a politics that doesn't just "live" from election campaign to election campaign, but could actually create a stable future on the edge of this volcano. While children are bur-

ied, while the hostages' death toll grows and civilians are forced to protect themselves on all fronts, it's hard to imagine that something good could come out of this catastrophic year. But it might be worth leaving some room for hope.  
Danna Frank, HAA, 09.08.24

### **Israel's Hostages Must Return. The War in Gaza Has to End**

(...) The horrific images from (...) the Tab'een school compound in Gaza City are further proof that each day of fighting brings the region closer to a significant escalation. (...) The November elections in the United States and the growing pessimism in Qatar and Egypt will make it difficult to reach a deal in the near future and will increase the fear of a regional escalation. (...) The pursuit of an agreement is based on significant developments on the ground: (...) the outline presented by Biden won support in principle from both sides and the talks between Israel and Egypt regarding supervision of the Rafah crossing and the Philadelphi route are progressing toward understandings.  
(...) Israel's government and prime minister must be attentive to the public, to the suffering of the families of the hostages and to the economic collapse of tens of thousands of families. The war must end and the hostages returned. Missing the deal at this time is liable to seal the fate of the hostages.  
Editorial, HAA, 11.08.24

### **Is No Israeli Soldier Willing to Say 'Enough' to the Suffering of Gaza's Children?**

The Israeli strike on the Al-Taba'een school in Gaza City went beyond any tolerable limits. We've become a distorted mirror image of our enemies. The footage from Gaza will haunt each one of us, just as the footage of Hamas' massacre in Israel's Gaza border communities and those of the hostages should haunt any moral person. These images will haunt even those who support the calls to end the Israeli occupation and establish a Palestinian state. (...) Protecting schools is a moral imperative of the highest order. If we respect schools, educators and the children who attend these institutions, the first rule we must adopt is the protection of schools at all costs. Schools can indeed become hiding places for Hamas members and even cover tunnel shafts, but avoiding striking them is the price that a moral army must pay in exchange for the legitimacy of its actions. (...) More and more unfortunate Gaza residents fleeing the horrors of war are being trapped in them time and again. (...) Isn't there even one sol-

dier who'll stop and say, "Enough is enough"? (...) The way the IDF had fought until now has legitimized the war just as much as the army's preliminary objectives have. Defense is a worthy goal, but wild and unjustified attacks are to be condemnable. It's time to pull the brakes and stop. The first line being drawn is clear: children must be protected, including their schools and play grounds. (...) Yuli Tamir, HAA, 14.08.24

### **Netanyahu Keeps the Wheels of Insanity Spinning with His Talk of 'Total Victory'**

For the past 10 months Israel has been waging a war from hand to mouth. Another raid on a "terror infrastructure," another senior official assassinated, another tunnel blown up. (...) The time has come to put a spoke in this wheel of insanity and to come to a courageous conclusion: We won't be any more victorious than this. Only one task remains, to return the hostages, and with them to return to life. The divine promise that military pressure is what would bring back the hostages turned out to be an illusion. (...) Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu roared that if necessary "we'll fight with our fingernails," but he meant American fingernails, which look like aircraft carriers, missile boats, and thousands of tons of ammunition. Because the Israeli fingernails, those that are prepared for any scenario, have already been bitten to the quick. (...) This war must end (...). But just as is the case for Sinwar, for the Netanyahu government time is of no importance. Nothing is urgent, certainly not the rescue of the hostages whose bodies are gradually piling up with every day that passes. Soon it will be possible to release the stagehands who continue to maintain the backdrop of the negotiations, and to stop measuring the "breadth of the mandate" that Netanyahu granted to the negotiating teams. The only thing left to do will be to complete preparations for the official memorial ceremony for all of them. Zvi Bar'el, HAA, 21.08.24

### **Israel must stand firm on the battlefield and also the hostage negotiation table**

(...) it has been suggested that if the ceasefire brings an end of the war, as many expect, Saudi Arabia will return to the negotiating table on normalization with Israel, and the anti-Iranian axis that the US is working to build will emerge. (...) However, this perspective is no more than wishful thinking: Perhaps Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar intends to continue fighting to bring about the "unification of fronts" against Israel? Even if we assume that the

terrorist leader's difficult military situation pushes him toward a deal, his goal is the end of the war and the withdrawal of the IDF from Gaza. (...) It is also uncertain whether Hezbollah will call an end to its war of attrition in the North, as the war aligns with the strategy dictated by Tehran: to harm Israel's civilian population. Why would Hezbollah relinquish a significant achievement like emptying northern Israel in the area near the Lebanese border of its inhabitants? (...) And who can guarantee that the Houthis will stop launching rockets and drones from Yemen into Israel? (...) An Israeli military failure in Gaza will lead Arab states to distance themselves from Jerusalem, as it will be seen as ineffective against Iran. (...) the American hope for a "reformed" Palestinian state is naive or foolish. (...) There is, of course, a moral obligation to return hostages. The IDF has acted to free hostages and even risks soldiers for bodies (...). The ransom for the hostages should not be excessive (...). While setting a reasonable price is subject to debate, the principle is correct. (...) History proves that more victims of release agreements with terrorist organizations are a certainty. Therefore, the emerging deal is problematic from a moral standpoint. (...) Efraim Inbar, JPO, 22.08.24

### **Netanyahu's Inconsistency and the Urgent Need for Last Chance Hostage Release**

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's handling of the hostage crisis (...) reveals a troubling disconnect between his public statements and actual actions, raising concerns about his effectiveness in addressing the crisis. (...) Political pressures from his extreme right-wing coalition have influenced his strategy, suggesting a greater concern with internal politics than with effectively securing the hostages' release. His mixed signals and (...) alignment with hardline factions and contradictory goals—such as dismantling Hamas's military and governance structures while managing the hostage crisis—exemplify the inadequacy of his approach. This contradiction reveals a failure to balance conflicting objectives and prioritize the immediate humanitarian crisis. As Prime Minister, Netanyahu is accountable for the failures of October 7 and must address the crisis with the moral and humanitarian urgency it demands. To resolve the situation effectively, he needs to prioritize the hostages' release and demonstrate genuine commitment by aligning his approach with both humanitarian needs and national interests. (...) Haim V. Levy, TOI, 23.08.24

### **Israel is in desperate need of a hostage deal and strategy**

(...) A hostage deal would allow a lull in fighting and open a window of opportunity for conducting elections in which the people have their say. Only then will the trust between the leadership and the public be restored in a way that enables us to better address the enormous challenges facing us. There can be no doubt that these are (...) compelling arguments (...). Against them is an even more important consideration – Israel's national security in the generations to come. As we know, our national security concept is based on three components – deterrence, early warning, and decisive defeat. A hostage deal before a clear resolution of the war against Hamas, the weakest of our enemies, would severely damage our deterrence. If the campaign against Hamas, which is not in itself an existential war, ends without a decisive defeat, we may face a future war that is existential. This analysis is no longer valid. We are at an inflection point and a hostage deal must be pursued (...). In war, even the victors pay a price, and it is a heavy one: the hostages, some of whom died during the fighting and some of whom, in a state of suspended animation, are still enduring their terrible captivity; hundreds of soldiers killed, and thousands wounded; tens of thousands of evacuees whose lives have been turned upside down, and on and on. (...) from an overall national perspective, a significant military objective has been fulfilled. A nation that values life must be willing to pay the price of sovereignty. (...) Israel has demonstrated its determination, decisiveness, and capability. (...) Deterrence has been largely restored, even if not perfectly. The strategic balance has changed for the better, and it is time for a deal. (...)

Yedidia Stern, JPO, 25.08.24

### **Hostage rescue proves military pressure works**

Rescued hostage Farhan Alkadi's return to Israel, healthy and on his feet, is a beacon of hope amid a challenging war that, despite its achievements, brings sorrow and hardship to many families in Israel. Beyond this good news, his rescue (...) offers a significant lesson in the ongoing public debate in Israel about the most effective ways to bring hostages home alive and recover the deceased for burial in Israel. (...) It's crucial to remember that military pressure not only allows us to exert influence over figures like Sinwar – who is reportedly disguising himself in women's clothing in Gaza to avoid detection and harm – but also enables us to bring hostages home, whether alive or dead. (...) It's

unsettling to consider there may be other hostages in situations similar to Alkadi's in Hamas tunnels, whom we might reach by chance – or not – and if we withdraw from certain areas, they might remain trapped. Thus, perhaps our genuine last opportunity to rescue as many hostages as possible is not the deal Blinken is eager for us to sign at any cost, but rather our determination to maintain a presence in Gaza. (...)

Naveh Dromi, YED, 28.08.24

### **3. Großangelegter Militäreinsatz im Westjordanland**

*In der Stadt Jenin im nördlichen Westjordanland setzte die israelische Armee ihren Großeinsatz länger fort als in anderen palästinensischen Städten. Es kam zu schweren Zusammenstößen mit bewaffneten Palästinensern. In Teilen der Stadt gab es Wasser- und Stromausfälle. Nierenkranke Patient\_innen mussten in medizinische Einrichtungen anderer Städte verlegt werden. Die breit angelegte Militäroperation ist offiziellen Angaben zufolge die Reaktion auf eine wachsende Zahl von Anschlägen und richtet sich in erster Linie gegen Terrorzellen der islamistischen Hamas. Seit dem Hamas-Massaker vom 7. Oktober vergangenen Jahres häufen sich zudem gewalttätige Übergriffe seitens israelischer Siedler\_innen im Westjordanland wie auch die Gefechte zwischen Palästinensern und der israelischen Armee. Laut Angaben des Gesundheitsministeriums in Ramallah wurden in der fraglichen Zeitspanne mehr als 640 Palästinenser\_innen getötet. Die Vereinten Nationen kritisierten die Härte des militärischen Vorgehens.*

### **Need for broad West Bank offensive**

As Israel continues the fight against Hamas in Gaza, and a war with Hezbollah looms in the north, we cannot lose sight of the situation in Judea and Samaria. (...) The PA is steadily losing control of the territories assigned to it under the terms of the Oslo Accords. (...) For this reason, the IDF has had to undertake periodic raids in these places to arrest wanted terrorists and (...) carry out a broad offensive aimed at wiping out all terrorist elements in Judea and Samaria, even if it means direct confrontation with the PA. Palestinian terrorists are desperately trying to turn PA-controlled territory into another Gaza, complete with tunnels and rockets. (...) Israel cannot afford to see PA-controlled territory in Judea and Samaria turn into another Gaza. Thus, it is of vital importance that the Israeli government authorize the IDF to undertake a large-scale operation in



PA territory, similar to current operations in Gaza, to eliminate all terrorists and terrorist infrastructure. Failing to do so could mean that Israelis will soon be dodging rocket fire from places like Jenin and Nablus. Or worse, it could mean a repeat of the October 7th atrocities.

Jason Shvili, IHY, 05.08.24

### **There is no excuse for violence in the West Bank, on either side**

Shameful scenes erupted in Samaria (...) as scores of Israeli civilians, many of whom were masked, entered the village of Jit near Nablus, hurling stones and Molotov cocktails and setting vehicles and buildings on fire. (...) one only has to imagine how this looks to the outside world as Israel constantly fights the global public diplomacy battle that has been ongoing since October 7. (...) We also cannot ignore the Palestinian terror against Jews that has been perpetrated for decades, resulting in the killing of many more Jews. In 2023, Palestinian terrorism increased significantly in the West Bank, with 179 major attacks compared to 86 – less than half – in 2022. (...) while we may be at war, and the West Bank is just one front in that war, there is no excuse for violence (...). Now is particularly the time for Levi and Ben-Gvir to show that there are no sides when it comes to pogroms and that any level of violence directed against innocent Palestinians is completely unacceptable. Ben-Gvir's ideology is well-known (...). However, he is now the national security minister, and under his watch, national security has degenerated. As opposed to Palestinian terrorists, Israelis who commit crimes within the West Bank are tried in Israel's civilian courts, and despite the geography of where they live, they will be treated and judged the same as if they live in Eilat, Netanya, or Afula. Violence and disruption of the lives of civilians, whether Palestinian or Israeli, should be denounced – and has been by a majority of Israeli leaders.

Editorial, JPO, 18.08.24

### **Financed by Iran, inspired by Hamas, West Bank terror battalions grow**

Iran's terror arm, closest to Israel is no longer the Hamas or the Islamic Jihad but the "battalions of terror" operating in the West Bank against civilians and security forces. The initiative for localized terror squads or battalions (...) and funding of millions of shekels a year, mostly from Iran, they grew. This investment has bolstered those initiatives that are well-armed thanks to weapons being smuggled

across the Jordanian border. (...) They operate where there is no local government and where the Palestinian Authority struggles to enforce order. (...) terrorists are influenced by Hamas in Gaza and often use explosive devices in their attacks. (...) The concern of security officials is that forces who raid the refugee camps on a near daily basis will come up against lethal weapons such as anti-tank missiles or military-grade explosive devices. Such a scenario could transform the West Bank into a proper warzone. Another concern is that terrorists will infiltrate into settlements to carry out attacks like the Hamas massacre of October 7, in coordination with PA security forces. The IDF carried out drills to respond to such a scenario. But most of all the concern is that the use of local battalions would spread to more areas in the West Bank. (...)

Elisha Ben Kimon, YED, 19.08.24

### **Israeli Settlers Have a Masterplan to Cleanse the Land of Palestinians**

They are not weeds, or a minority or a fringe. They are the Nachshon sent before the camp to prepare the area for the settlers' grand master plan for cleansing the land of Palestinians. They realize that they will never be able to live quietly in their villa on the hill, as long as they are surrounded by 2.8 million poor, unemployed and desperate Palestinians under occupation. For that reason, they know the shootings on the roads and the raids on villages must continue. (...) The method of the settler establishment is to publicly disavow the pogroms perpetrated by the hilltop youth and dismiss them as "weeds" in the settler garden. (...) The abuse of Palestinians is nothing new, but in the course of the war it has greatly increased. Entire communities have been driven from their homes and their property destroyed. Armed settlers wearing Israel Defense Forces uniforms have beaten and even shot them. They have burned olive groves, cars and homes. (...) It is no coincidence that during the pogrom the Jewish terrorists shouted at the residents of Jit, "We'll deport you to Jordan." Their shouts revealed the strategy behind the seeming chaos – setting aflame the entire Middle East, on the way to a war of Gog and Magog against the Arab world and Iran, enabling Israel to deport all the West Bank Palestinians to Jordan, including the Arab citizens of Israel. Then the Jews can settle quietly and peacefully in the entire Land of Israel. And representatives of these delusional terrorists were brought into the government by the most despicable man in the history of the Jewish people.

### **Jewish settlers in the West Bank are committing blasphemous acts of violence**

(...) As is almost always the case in (...) incidents of settler violence, there are no reports of any arrests. (...) As shocking as this latest attack of violence by settlers in the West Bank against innocent Palestinians was (...), it is unfortunately nothing new around here. (...) it has been going on for many years, with the security services (...) usually turning a blind eye and arrests of the perpetrators rarely made. The incitement to hatred by settler rabbis and other leaders (...) has been well documented in the media in Israel and abroad for a long time. Yet, since the formation of the new extreme right-wing government in Israel (...) not only has this phenomenon of settler violence increased, but it appears to be part of the implicit government policies of creeping annexation, attempts to scare and expel local Palestinians, more and more home demolitions and much more. (...) Settler violence against Palestinians in the West Bank and in East Jerusalem (...) is angering civilized leaders around the world, including the president of the United States, and European governments are beginning to impose sanctions on these people. This is (...) a stain on Israeli Judaism, and Israeli society as a whole. (...) it is time for rabbis in Israel and abroad, to loudly and clearly proclaim that this is chilul Hashem—taking God's name in vain, blasphemy. It is not only politically wrong. It is the antithesis of authentic Judaism. (...)

Ron Kronish, TOI, 21.08.24

#### **4. Israel und die US-Wahlen**

*Mit Spannung verfolgen die Menschen in Israel den Wahlkampf in den USA. Der Ausgang des Zweikampfes zwischen der Demokratin Kamala Harris und dem Republikaner Donald Trump dürfte unmittelbare Konsequenzen für die US-Außenpolitik und besonders für die bilateralen Beziehungen zwischen den USA und Israel haben. Israels Regierungschef Benjamin Netanyahu machte in der Vergangenheit kein Geheimnis aus seiner Vorliebe für die Republikaner und der engen Freundschaft, die ihn mit Trump verbinde. Die demokratische Spitzenkandidatin sicherte Israel die Fortsetzung der US-amerikanischen Militärhilfe zu. Allerdings kritisierte sie auch die vielen Todesopfer im Gaza-Krieg und forderte einen sofortigen Waffenstillstand sowie die Freilassung der noch von der Hamas festgehaltenen Geiseln. Zu Missmutsbekundungen in Israel führte die Tatsache, dass Harris Ende Juli*

*der Rede Netanyahus vor dem US-Kongress ferngeblieben war.*

### **Kamala Harris faces unwarranted criticism from right-wing pro-Netanyahu camp in Israel**

A toxic, racist, and misogynistic narrative has begun to flourish in the right-wing pro-Netanyahu camp in Israel since Kamala Harris was nominated Democratic Party candidate for the presidency of the United States. This narrative manifests itself in disdain for Harris, for her skills, and for her judgment, and in deliberate distortion of her impressive pro-Israeli record. This criticism is inspired by Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump, who has been generous with derogatory labels directed at Harris. (...) as usual, when it comes to insulting comments towards the leaders of friendly countries, they were led by the minister for combating antisemitism Amichai Chikli (...). The disparaging criticism of Harris is reminiscent of the Israeli Right's treatment of former US president Barack Obama. Of course, it has since become clear that Obama was responsible for Israel's largest-ever security assistance, and that the international coalition that he established to stop Iran's military nuclear capabilities contributed significantly to Israel's security, until Trump turned Iran into a nuclear threshold state by abandoning the agreement. (...) Why is the Right, both in the US and Israel, afraid of a daughter of immigrants from India and Jamaica, who fought antisemitism both as attorney-general and as a senator, and who took it upon herself as vice president, together with her Jewish spouse, Doug Amhoff, to lead the Biden administration's plan to combat antisemitism; a politician with a long record of support for Israel? (...) Harris's candidacy has injected new blood into the presidential race, which has again become an open race. This frightens the Trumpists and their Israeli allies, who are targeting her, that she not prevent Trump's return to the White House.

Nadav Tamir, JPO, 04.08.24

### **Deepening US reliance stalls Israeli preemptive strikes; time for a strategic shift**

Israel's restraint in the face of potential Iranian and Hezbollah retaliation finds its roots in Washington. The current Democratic administration is deeply concerned about the prospect of a regional war and is determined to prevent it, particularly as U.S. elections approach. (...) Both the Biden-Harris administration and the Republicans, led by former Presi-

dent Donald Trump, are committed to preventing a regional war and reaching a cease-fire for several reasons. (...) President Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris do not want to see U.S. soldiers and civilians returning in coffins from the Middle East, especially during the election campaign, as Trump will undoubtedly use it against them. (...) A regional war before the elections would be a disaster for the Democrats, as Trump would use it against them. (...) a regional war would confront the Biden-Harris administration with the progressive pro-Palestinian wing of their party, potentially costing the Democrats, led by Vice President Kamala Harris, critical swing states like Michigan. (...) Israel desperately needs active and massive U.S. backing, which, under current conditions, won't be available if it initiates a preemptive strike on Iran. (...) In the Middle East, the U.S. needs Israel and its military and intelligence capabilities almost as much as Jerusalem needs Washington. Therefore, mutual consideration of each other's interests must continue and strengthen, with the next step being implementing a hostage release deal that can extricate both countries from the current strategic deadlock.

Ron Ben-Yishai, YED, 10.08.24

### **Straddling the aisle: Israel must maintain bipartisan support in US**

(...) the cold shoulder that senior Israeli officials turn toward the Democrats is a mistake that may have strategic implications. (...) Israel can only be aligned with the West, led by the U.S. And (...) Israel must not be identified with any one side of the political map, Republican or Democrat and must not become a partisan issue. (...) A country that relies on another, which has a divided body politic, must maintain good relations with all the players. For decades, Israel's leaders and representatives were careful to display this parity. (...) This principle dissipated under Netanyahu. (...) It is too early to know what will happen in November, and this is not the place to compare candidates. But lose or win, both will wield influence over their parties in the coming years and Israel needs the support of both houses. In light of that, openly preferring one side in America's political divide is shortsighted and likely to harm Israel in the long term.

Tova Herzl, YED, 10.08.24

### **Give me Harris and Walz for the next four years**

(...) Republicans long have tried to win Jewish votes by portraying themselves as the pro-Israel party. (...) we will hear again and again that former president

Donald Trump moved the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. It's true, and this was a welcome development, but it possesses only symbolic value and fails to advance Israel's security and the search for peace. Republicans, once again, are peddling a false narrative. The Biden/Harris administration should get enormous credit for the way the U.S. has stood by Israel since that awful October 7 providing billions of dollars of additional military assistance — repeatedly working around a Republican controlled House that held up the administration's supplemental aid package for Israel and Ukraine — and defending Israel before biased and hypercritical international forums. The US joined with a coalition of regional forces to protect Israel from the barrage of Iranian missiles and drones last April. And we have deployed naval strike groups, as well as a nuclear submarine, to the Eastern Mediterranean to deter Iran further. These represent only a small number of examples of how the administration has concretely helped an Israel at war. (...) There will be a day after in Gaza, in fact, years of reconstruction and complex efforts to implement a post-Hamas governance structure. In addition, even if Hamas is neutralized, Iran and its other terrorist proxies will continue to pose severe threats to Israel's security. These are enormous challenges that Israel, with the help of the US, must address in the years ahead. (...) give me Harris and Walz for the next four years. Martin Raffel, TOI, 25.08.24

### **Israel, America's Hostage**

Even if Itamar Ben-Gvir were to become prime minister and Bezalel Smotrich defense minister, the big sister America would still provide Israel with arms, money and diplomatic support. (...) the American reports on the violation of the Palestinians' human rights fill the drawers of the State Department, as do reports on the government coup whose implementation will turn Israel into another proud Middle Eastern dictatorship. (...) the real relations between Israel and America (...) takes place in the corridors of the Pentagon and of Israel's General Staff. There the true relationship between America the giant and Israel its squire thrives. The Americans couldn't care less about the override clause and the reasonableness standard, what's important are their global interests. (...) The American goal is to maintain hegemony in the Middle East; it doesn't matter if this is done by democracy, dictatorship or with a lot of blood, Arab or Jewish. Whereas the theory is that Israel bends the superpower to its needs, in fact the reverse is the case. Israel is hostage to America's

global interests. If the superpower were so in love with Israel, it wouldn't have allowed it to drown in wars ever since its birth. (...) If America were truly in love, it would issue Israel an ultimatum: Either reach a peace arrangement now with the Palestinians, or goodbye forever. If they did this, a peace agreement would be sewn up within a week.

Odeh Bisharat, HAA, 26.08.24

### **Americans have one request of their presidential candidates: Show me the money**

(...) Kamala Harris (...) has yet to unveil a coherent economic blueprint or a comprehensive social agenda. While the joy factor is critical, motivating people to vote and be part of the celebration, the ultimate determinant of election outcomes remains the economy. To date, the vice president has not engaged in a structured interview to delineate her policy outlines clearly (...). She navigates cautiously between the Muslim community, which she seeks to win over, and the Jewish community (...). America's choice will hinge on economic forecasts. Undecided voters seek assurance from Harris on how she plans to ensure financial stability, enable affordable fuel, put food on the table and save for college education. (...) When America heads to the polls the electorate shows little interest in candidates' foreign policy stances. (...) A U.S. law prohibits arming nations that misuse their weaponry excessively or without sufficient regard to the safety of local populations. Biden has refrained from enforcing this law, continuing arms supplies to Israel. Should Harris ascend to the presidency, she is expected to enforce this law; it is on her agenda, with advisors recommending this course. (...) Yet, the crux of the matter lies in financial recovery and an economy that rekindles hope for the beleaguered middle class. (...)

Orly Azulay, YED, 29.08.24

## **5. Weitere Themen**

### **Pläne für den Gedenktag am 7. Oktober lösen Empörung aus**

#### **Miri Regev's flawed October 7 memorial plan sparks outrage**

(...) Assigned by the cabinet to design the first anniversary ceremonies of the October 7 massacre, Regev did three things that add up to mind-boggling insensitivity, cowardice, and sheer idiocy. First, she hastily introduced a plan without even consulting the communities that survived Hamas's massacres. (...)

The second decision Regev made was to plan a pre-taped ceremony rather than a live event with an audience. The third was to locate this ceremony in one town, Ofakim. Both choices mean that what guides Regev is not the good of the nation but fear of its wrath. The idea behind a sterile, staged, and taped event is to avoid the public's presence – physically, and even more so, emotionally. The choice of Ofakim is meant to distance the event from the heart of the massacre – the five kibbutzim along the Gaza border, where 245 Israelis were murdered, 100 of them in Be'eri alone. (...) Regev clearly chose it to diminish the centrality of the kibbutzim in this catastrophe. (...) The kibbutzim suffered, and still suffer, more than anyone, but Regev can't bring herself to embrace them. And why would she? Her boss hasn't attended one funeral of any of the slain kibbutzniks or paid a shiva call to even just one of their families. (...)

Amotz Asa-El, JPO, 30.08.24

### **Remembrance or denial?**

The Oct. 7 massacre remains an open wound in Israeli society. How does one commemorate an event that is still unfolding? (...) Instead of fostering mutual support among survivors who were massacred in the disaster and abandoned, in various ways, by the government, the latter is creating conflict and division between them and within society. This too serves to distract from its responsibility for the catastrophe, the failure, and the abandonment. The government's stance, announcing a ceremony prematurely, expresses a desire to "move on" more than a wish to remember the catastrophe. (...) The temptation to "move on," to avoid looking at what's painful and difficult, is built into our psychological makeup. (...) there is a certain purpose to the government's moves to hold a memorial ceremony or construct a narrative of heroism and victory for the Oct. 7 catastrophe and the war. This is done while ignoring all those who serve as evidence of failure – survivors of the massacre, hostages, evacuees from the burning south and north – or postponing a state commission of inquiry to a vague time "after the war." These actions are intended to bypass contact with helplessness, forget the colossal failure, and strive to construct a quick and organized narrative, thus restoring the illusion that we – the leader, the people, and the army with us – are heroes, strong and omnipotent. (...) Without a genuine connection to failure, truth-seeking, criticism, and learning from them, we weaken and deteriorate. (...) The pursuit

of truth and criticism are essential to our resilience and the possibility of change, healing, and hope.  
Sharon Shitrit, IHY, 28.08.24

### **Missbrauch im Gefangenenlager**

#### **The case of Sde Teiman is the canary in the coal**

(...) What may have happened at the Sde Teiman detention facility, and the attempt of radical civilians and politicians to circumvent a legal process of investigation and overrule military jurisdiction, is just one of the most recent and blatant examples of the weakening rule of law. (...) the Nukhba terrorist (...) have committed the worst crimes imaginable. (...) Regardless of the crime, torture is never an acceptable form of punishment. Sexual assault can never be normalized for any reason. If this happened, which we will only know after an investigation, it must result in punishment. (...) However, individuals do not have the authority to punish even those most deserving of punishment. That is what separates anarchy from a governed society. In one, vigilantism thrives; in the other, the state decides whether a crime was committed and how that crime should be punished. The details of this story are only one important aspect. What was truly shocking for many to watch was the brazenness of MKs and radicals infiltrating a military base to bar a legal process from taking place. Their ideological leader sits in the parliament and controls the police force. They do not believe the law applies to them. (...) There is a growing population in our country who believe the law does not apply to them and that they can harm others – and they are proven right. The state must make it crystal clear: Whether in Tel Aviv, the prime minister's office, or the occupied territories, no one is above the law and violent crime will be prosecuted. (...) In the absence of the rule of law, we need not fear our enemies from without, for we will surely collapse from within.  
Eden Raviv, JPO, 06.08.24

#### **The Tip of the Iceberg: Israel Cannot Whitewash Horrific Abuse of Palestinians by Its Soldiers**

It's not easy to commit crimes and get off scot-free. It requires legal expertise and a degree of sophistication, especially when you simultaneously have to contend with public opinion, both local and international. (...) the State of Israel and its sophisticated whitewashing mechanisms (...) have loyally served the Israeli system for generations. But it seems they have finally reached their expiration date and are

now collapsing under the weight of the internal contradictions they had previously managed to contain. (...) For decades, the Israeli system perfected its ability to use brutal violence against Palestinians without having to pay any price for it. (...) Until it stopped working, both locally and internationally. In the local scene, the political cost of investigations and the rare trial became too high, because the public won't even accept this meagre, decrepit shield. (...) In the international arena, too, the bluff gradually stopped working. After years of repeated reports from human rights organizations, it has become harder to deny what is really going on here – and still, that wasn't enough. (...) For a change, real investigations abroad are in store for very high-ranking figures. (...) International arrest warrants will come, and they won't target junior ranking Housing Ministry officials. These intersecting forces are the result of the crossing between Israel's system of government – pure, obvious Jewish supremacy – and reality. It's the reality of a non-normative state that can't avoid international legal risks. The old activation code has expired. Keeping it in use is not the way to fix what's broken.

Hagai El-Ad, HAA, 06.08.24

HAA = Haaretz

YED = Yedioth Ahronoth / Ynetnews

JPO = Jerusalem Post

IHY = Israel HaYom

TOI = Times of Israel

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