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**1. Parlamentswahlen – für oder wider Benjamin Netanyahu**

*Zum fünften Mal seit April 2019 wurden Israels wahlberechtigte Staatsbürger\_innen am 1. November an die Wahlurnen gerufen. Zu den Neuwahlen kam es, weil die heterogene Acht-Parteien-Koalition, die sich gegen Ex-Ministerpräsident Benjamin Netanyahu gebildet hatte, gescheitert war. Das Bündnis, dem auch die Arbeitspartei, Meretz sowie die islamistische arabische Partei Ra'am angehörten, war unter der Führung des rechts-liberalen Yair Lapid und des nationalreligiösen Politikers Naftali Bennett im Juni 2021 zustande gekommen. Ein Jahr später entschied die Knesset mehrheitlich über die Auflösung des Parlaments. Damals übernahm Lapid das Amt des Ministerpräsidenten von Bennett. Die Frage des Für und Wider Netanyahus als Ministerpräsident bestimmte wie schon bei den vorherigen Wahlen die Kampagnen. Umfragen gaben dem Pro-Netanyahu-Lager zuletzt einen leichten Vorsprung. Dieser erwies sich bei den tatsächlichen Wahlen sogar als größer als erwartet: Aufgrund des besonders hohen Stimmenzuwachses, den die rechts-nationalistisch-religiöse Partei Hatziyonut Hadatit sowie die ultra-orthodoxe Partei Shas erzielten, verfügt der Netanyahu-Block nun über 64 der 120 Knesset-Sitze. Die Arbeitspartei sank auf lediglich 4 Mandate. Ihre linke Schwesterpartei Meretz schaffte erstmals seit ihrer Gründung vor 30 Jahren den Einzug in das israelische Parlament nicht.*

**Israel's political swamp must be drained, lest we drown in it**

Both the Right and the Left of Israel's politics have their feet sinking deeper and deeper into a swamp called the Israeli political system. Instead of draining that swamp and make it prosperous, the politicians are running around trying to catch mosquitoes, and boasting about who caught the biggest one. (...) The political system which Israel has employed in the past 75 needs to be recalibrated. The way things are at the moment, even when we do form a government, it can barely function. (...) Two changes in legislation could lead to the betterment of the current political system. The first one is increasing the electoral threshold to 10% and brining back the two-party system to help form a Knesset majority with relative ease. The second change must help balance power between the legislative, executive and judicial branches. At the moment, the Knesset, government and judicial authority are in a constant power struggle, which prevents them from focusing on actually doing their job and making the lives of the Israeli public easier. (...) Changes are also required in Israel's economic sector, and the most important step to take is to lower the number of monopolies on the market. The current situation is outrageous, few companies dictate pricings of basic goods, such as food, housing and more. (...) The bottom line is that the relationship between the government and civil society must be changed - from conflict to partnership. (...) Most importantly, we

must the change Israel's cultural narrative, making it more humane and civilized. (...)  
Ovad Yehezkel, YED, 16.10.22

### **Israel's Arab Citizens Want an Honest Partnership**

The low voter turnout anticipated in the Arab community on Election Day is creating increasing, and totally justified, pressure in the "anyone-but-Bibi" camp in general and among the Arab parties in particular. (...) The Arab parties have yet to find a way to alter the trend, especially among undecided voters who are torn between going to the polls and giving in to apathy and their lack of confidence in the candidates. (...) when the representatives of the Arab parties won a record 15 Knesset seats, there was no real change; and (...) even the presence of the United Arab List in the coalition in the past year did not bring about a significant change in the government's attitude towards the Arabs, with the exception of a few budgetary and civic improvements. (...) One of the most common arguments is that if this time Netanyahu is once again unable to form a government, he will end his political career – and in that way the plug will be removed and once again there will be an option of forming a broad-based government with the participation of Likud. And it is precisely this argument that discloses part of the problem that is disturbing the Arab community. Since, in such a situation, it wouldn't be surprising if leading figures such as Gideon Sa'ar, Zeev Elkin and even Avigdor Lieberman find a way to return to Likud with the familiar excuse of "the good of the country." Even Benny Gantz and Yair Lapid are once again saying that in their opinion Likud is an ideal option for forming a government without Netanyahu. But this version means only one thing – if the Arab citizens go out and vote en masse they will be doing the job of the plumber, who is supposed to clear the blocked drain and then leave. All the leaders of the Arab parties (...) know that after the election, even if they do what is expected of them, they may find themselves outside any circle of influence. (...) if the center-left bloc still wants a real change rather than a cosmetic one, first its members must internalize the fact that the Arab citizens aspire to an honest partnership, a true partnership. They don't want to be only an instrument to keep Netanyahu out. (...)

Jack Khoury, HAA, 19.10.22

### **Progressive Politics Are Not Just an Ashkenazi Value**

(...) Cities have become economic powerhouses and have encouraged residents' pursuit of education, which has a dual effect. It increases salaries and tends to make people more tolerant, open to new ideas and into proponents of a cosmopolitan outlook. Consequently, these urban populations have developed peculiar characteristics: They enjoy economic and social privileges, tend to favor economic and political justice initiatives and are much more likely to be culturally progressive than those who remain in the periphery. More than three quarters of all Meretz voters live in Tel Aviv or in nearby affluent cities. In Israel, this divorce between the left and the working classes has an additional dimension: the history between Mizrahi Jews and Ashkenazi Jews. (...) Mizrahi immigrants were far less likely to be settled in urban centers than Ashkenazi ones. These Mizrahi newcomers pursued education less systematically; they accumulated less wealth; they remained attached to tradition and family values. (...) Meretz – like left-wing parties elsewhere – came to be viewed as elitist, white, smug, unpatriotic. Ironically, Meretz – which was the only party to insistently call for universal human rights – was ethnicized and came to be defined as Ashkenazi. (...) Once the party was branded as "white Ashkenazi," some Ashkenazim (...) and most Mizrahim detached themselves from the very values and ideals defended by Meretz: the separation between religion and state (...); and universalist values (...). The tragedy of Israeli politics is that secularism and universalism, the two key political inventions of modernity, have become ethnicized and viewed as "Ashkenazi." (...) Minorities may seem to be better defended by sectorial parties like Shas or Agudat Yisrael. But this is true only in the short term. In the long run, rejecting universalism as well as separation of state and religion encourages ethnic or religious supremacy, strife, conflict, and violence. Mizrahi Jews are far better defended by universalist politics than by identity politics. To declare this view "Ashkenazi" or white is to give up on a fundamental tool for political struggle and equality.

Eva Illouz, HAA, 19.10.22

### **Israel Elections: Upcoming vote is crucial to save the courts from Likud**

The threat is obvious and concrete. The Likud leadership (...) plan an attack on the foundations of Israeli democracy, through a two-pronged assault against the Supreme Court. The first prong endan-

gers the vital independence of the Supreme Court. (...) The second prong of the Likud attack aims at the supremacy of court rulings. Likud leaders have declared that they plan to pass a law that will enable the nullification of any Supreme Court decision that is not to their liking by a mere 61 votes. Since every coalition rests on 61 MKs at least, the danger of this proposal is clear: The Rule of Law will thus become the Rule of the Cabinet, and hence civil rights – that in Israel are not protected by a constitution – will no longer be secured. Another line of attack is aimed at the professional independence of the legal advisers of government offices. They are the “first responders” to a legal challenge of a proposed unlawful decision. Yet the Likud plans to enable cabinet ministers to nominate them personally so that the legal advice they receive would conform to their will or whim. (...) These proposals represent an attempt to abolish the principle on which a democracy is based: the dispersal of the enormous power that is vested with the government. This distribution of power is the mechanism that saves us from the arbitrary decisions that are typical of an autocracy. If Likud’s plan succeeds, our state will no longer possess the essence of democracy. (...)

Ze’ev Begin, JPO, 21.10.22

### **Israel has been worn out by election campaigns and slogans**

(...) When national elections occur with this frequency, it is not easy to come up with new campaign slogans, ideas, and promises to persuade the voters. The entire political sphere is simmering, and only the Left and the Right remain stiff as concrete. It is almost painful to see such a waste of hours paid to consultants, creative directors, campaign and public relations managers. They come up with what they believe are amazing mottos that generate buzz - only for that buzz to fade away within a matter of hours. (...) Into this creative void came flying down Zehava Gal-On with her interview in laughably poor English. To those who missed it, the chairwoman of the Meretz party sat down for the interview against the background of a library, and spoke about a burning issue - far-right lawmaker Itamar Ben-Gvir. (...) Her performance almost made us forget other comedy highlights from the past week. (...) For a sweet while, even Religious Zionist Party Chairman Bezalel Smotrich’s plan to cancel the offenses of fraud and breach of trust - which has nothing to do with the ongoing trial of Netanyahu who is, by coincidence, accused of these very same offenses - was pushed aside. Such a morally corrupt demand that

goes against the public interest and reeks of self-interest could have been considered a form of fraud and breach of trust in and of itself. (...)

Einav Galili, YED, 21.10.22

### **Netanyahu's desperation will change Israel's future**

Benjamin Netanyahu no longer tries to hide it. He might not want to be seen on the same stage as Itamar Ben-Gvir, but even he knows that there is no choice but to give the extremist MK, who is No. 2 on the Religious Zionist Party’s list, and his partner, Bezalel Smotrich, what they want after the election. Assuming that his right-wing bloc reaches and even passes the sought-after 61 seats, Netanyahu will be forced to give his new coalition-mates plum ministries. (...) He probably still believes that Ben-Gvir is unfit but he also knows that he has no choice and that he has chained himself to a group of Jewish extremists in order to try and retake the Prime Minister’s Office. (...) Netanyahu will only have himself to blame. He legitimized Ben-Gvir and he paved the way for him to be on the cusp of serving as a top minister in the next government. This was his doing, ever since he played a key role in uniting Ben-Gvir’s Otzma Yehudit with Smotrich’s Religious Zionist Party a couple of elections ago. Now, he will have to pay the price, and that will be not just by allowing Ben-Gvir to serve as a minister in the government, but also by giving into some of his legislative demands. And this is where the situation truly has the potential to become dangerous for Israel. The country that Ben-Gvir and Smotrich are looking to create is one (...) where Jewish women and Arab women give birth in separate hospital wards (...), it is one where Arabs can easily be expelled if they are not considered loyal to the state and it is one where members of the LGBTQ community do not have rights, will feel persecuted and will have a potential top minister in the government who thinks they are like animals. Netanyahu knows this is coming, but apparently he doesn’t care. The one issue on his mind right now is whether he can somehow evade his trial and stay out of jail. (...)

Editorial, JPO, 27.10.22

### **Israel is going to vote for its future on Tuesday**

(...) Naftali Bennett, a consistent opponent of a Palestinian state, led a government with Meretz and Labor. (...) anything is possible. (...) Israel, just a few months shy of its 75th Independence Day, has power unimaginable just a few years ago. Economically (...) when you compare Israel to other countries, our

national currency is strong, unemployment is extremely low and we have unique energy independence. (...) There is no doubt that a government of 61 led by Netanyahu including Itamar Ben-Gvir and Bezalel Smotrich would aim to change Israel. It would look to reform the rule of law, the courts, the judicial system and the ways Jews and Arabs get along in this land. With only one year, they would have the potential to change the country as we know it. (...) This is what the Tuesday election is about. It is not just about Netanyahu or Yair Lapid. It is not about the Ra'am Party being in the coalition or not. It is about the type of country we want to have when celebrating three-quarters of a century of statehood and dreaming about the centenary. That is what we are voting on.

Yaakov Katz, JPO, 27.10.22

### **It's No Longer Just Ben-Gvir**

The meteoric rise of MK Itamar Ben-Gvir and his party, Otzma Yehudit, has sparked fear for the future in liberal circles both in Israel and abroad. And when the devoted student of Meir Kahane threatens to become the third strongest force in Israel's legislature, there are indeed reasons to worry. Ben-Gvir's legitimization in the media and public opinion (..) are evil omens. (...) the lurking danger goes far beyond that. Kahanism has already spread well beyond the bounds of Otzma Yehudit and the party with which it formed a joint ticket, Religious Zionism – it has reached the entire right wing, headed by Benjamin Netanyahu's Likud. It sometimes seems as if all the Likud MKs are Ben-Gvir. As Ben-Gvir and his partner on the joint ticket, MK Bezalel Smotrich, disseminate their racist doctrine, along with Smotrich's plan to destroy the justice system, no opposition or even reservation about their plans has been heard from Likud or any of the other rightist parties. (...) Does the silence from Netanyahu and the rest of Likud's top ranks indicate that they agree with Ben-Gvir? There's no way to interpret their silence other than as consent. In other words, Likud itself is gradually becoming a Kahanist party. It isn't merely embracing Kahanists in order to form a government, but is going even further and embracing their ideas. This is a new moral and political situation for Israel. Kahanism has not only been legitimized, it's spreading into the center of the political map. (...) No news could be more threatening than that.

Editorial, HAA, 28.10.22

### **Israel's Labor Party Is Responsible for Its Own Failure**

(...) Labor (...) was a center-left party that addressed diplomatic issues from a state security perspective, whereas in the economic sphere it espoused competition, responsible budgeting and economic growth accompanied by aid for the weak, the sick and the destitute. Most of its voters came from the middle class. Now, it is a radical leftist party, wanting to install a Marxist economy, with abundant government intervention and a huge deficit. It is a social-populist niche party that has lost its traditional voters, while new ones fail to join. (...) lawmaker Naama Lazimi (...) suggested in these pages to increase government spending without pausing to make calculations: to raise wages, to reduce classroom size to 20 students and much more (...). She presented no demands. Not a reduction in the number of ministers or the abolition of redundant ministries, not addressing permanently tenured positions in the civil service. When you're Santa Claus, the sky's the limit. (...) Completing the absurdity, Lazimi is in favor of shortening the work week to four days, even though fewer work hours mean fewer products and services and fewer taxes collected. So how can one improve the standard of living and finance all the gifts she wants to dispense? Lazimi isn't alone. Labor now presents an economic platform that is based on an extensive broadening of government expenses. The plan calls for free education from birth to the age of three, the cancellation of school fees, an increase in old age benefits, free disability insurance, an increase in the subsidies for medicines, an expansion of free public transportation, an increase in the minimum wage, an addition of 10 vacation days for employees, an extension of maternity leave, subsidized construction of apartments for rent, a reduction of wait times in the health care system, and much more. And how does Labor intend to finance this enormous stream of benefits? By increasing the state budget's deficit. Not by imposing taxes or through a decrease of other expenses. (...) A large deficit means a social and economic crisis. A deficit creates inflationary pressure, leading to increased interest rates, resulting in reduced investments and a collapsing stock exchange. It weakens the currency and growth is adversely affected. More debt means increased payments on interest, leaving less for education, health care, welfare and investments. The deficit doesn't disappear. It creates a debt we'll have to repay at a heavy cost. (...)

Nehemia Shtrasler, HAA, 31.10.22

## 2. Eskalation vor dem Wahltag

*Wenige Tage vor den israelischen Parlamentswahlen fordert der seit Monaten andauernde Konflikt im palästinensischen Westjordanland weitere Opfer. Beim militärischen Vorgehen gegen die neue Palästinensermiliz „Höhle der Löwen“ kamen in Nablus fünf führende Mitglieder zu Tode. Die überwiegend jungen palästinensischen Männer der „Höhle des Löwen“ schlossen sich in Reaktion auf wiederholte Razzien des israelischen Militärs in den Autonomiegebieten zusammen, bei denen seit dem Frühjahr weit über einhundert Palästinenser\_innen, darunter auch Minderjährige erschossen worden waren. Mit den Razzien reagierte die Armee auf eine Terrorserie zu Beginn des Jahres. Die Gewaltspirale droht sich noch weiter hochzudrehen. Beobachter\_innen wollen auch eine dritte Intifada nicht mehr ausschließen.*

### **Settler lawlessness in Israel's West Bank must be stopped**

An attack on Israeli soldiers by Jewish settlers overnight is a sign of growing lawlessness in the West Bank and must be treated seriously. (...) For too long, Israel has permitted lawlessness in parts of the West Bank (...). Authorities must take this seriously and politicians across the political spectrum, as well as settler leaders, must call out the extremists and stop appeasing them. (...) The settler attacks have mostly targeted Palestinians and because Israel has never extended any laws to the West Bank these attacks are rarely punished. That means there is impunity for people to stone Palestinians, to attack their cars and riot; and there are no authorities who will make a report and follow up. (...) The overwhelming majority of Jews living in Judea and Samaria reject violence against soldiers and know that these actions stain the public's view of the settlers. However, there are also powerful voices on the far Right that do not call out the violence and encourage that the perpetrators be brought to justice. (...) enabling extremists to run wild and feel they have impunity to attack cars, and now soldiers, will eventually lead to more violence. We've seen this cycle before and it rarely ends well. (...) This needs to be stopped before it gets worse.  
Editorial, JPO, 20.10.22

### **The line between escalation and stability in the West Bank is fragile**

The West Bank has been experiencing a very tough time recently in terms of its security situation: riots,

terror attacks, clashes between settlers and Palestinians, and so on. Nonetheless, some positive things have also happened in the past few weeks that could maybe yield a more stable future: 1- The Palestinian Authority is back in business. It may not be going at the pace or depths that Israel would like it to, but still the Israeli side is expressing partial satisfaction with the Palestinian security apparatus as it steps up its anti-militant activity, especially in Nablus and Jenin. (...) One of the relatively surprising elements in PA's security mechanisms is its return to the "wanted persons' agreement," which means the arrested wanted individuals are offered amnesty deals from Israel in exchange for turning in their weapons. (...) The general Palestinian public is still keeping their heads down and trying to avoid getting involved in violence. (...) most of the Palestinians are only trying to go on with their day-to-day lives. Nonetheless, we can't ignore the (...) terror attacks are migrating south. (...) one Israeli success in thwarting a terror attack, or one failure, could set the tone for how things play out in the near future in the West Bank. The same could be said about the settler violence against Palestinians. Every incident could be the one to break that fragile line between widespread escalation and relative stability.  
Avi Issacharoff, YED, 20.10.22

### **Israel enacts new policy to reduce West Bank violence**

(...) The Israeli security forces were told to be creative but mindful of three restrictions: Reduce the number of Palestinian casualties when they do not directly endanger the security forces operating among the local population; allow the Palestinian Authority and its security services to strengthen and in some cases restore their control often lost when facing such small terror groups; refrain from a large-scale operation in the West Bank, so the uninvolved civilians won't suffer because of the terrorist's actions, and Israel will not head into elections in the midst of a massive military operation. The effort to reduce the number of casualties is clear: Every dead Palestinian, whether armed or killed in an exchange of fire, becomes a martyr on social media and the word quickly spreads among thousands of angry Palestinian youth. (...) The IDF is able to launch a one time large scale operation, to eliminate this group - which numbers only dozens, but Israel prefers that the PA solve the problem in its own manner, by combining persuasion, an increase of security forces and higher salaries, and sometimes the use of brutal force. This preference (...) aims to give

the PA the opportunity to reclaim its governance in Nablus. (...) This policy indeed leads to a decrease in the number of terror attacks.  
Ron Ben-Yishai, YED, 23.10.22

### **Pogroms, the IDF and Palestinians: How Israel's Military Is Desecrating Its Moral Code**

Israel's military occupation of the West Bank is at a perilous juncture. The IDF is not merely under scrutiny for a growing number of fatalities of Palestinian civilians – most the result of shootings by Israeli soldiers, but others due to brutal manhandling or sheer emotional terror, such as the deaths of a 78-year-old Palestinian-American or of a seven-year-old boy last month. The IDF is also losing its ability, and perhaps its will, to prevent violent attacks by Jewish settlers against Palestinians. (...) both the IDF and the police – are doing little, often nothing, to prevent these attacks. Such inaction reflects multiple realities, including the rising numbers of settlers within IDF troops (...) it seems, at issue is not – or not merely – the IDF's rules of engagement that should be reviewed; it's also, and more pressingly, the growing trend of its soldiers' disengagement: of disengagement from the duty, of their dereliction of duty, to act to prevent injury to the Palestinians under Israeli occupation. (...) The most horrific instance in which the IDF turned a blind eye to attacks against Palestinians was not in the West Bank or, for that matter, the Gaza Strip, but in Lebanon. That the September 1982 massacre by Christian Phalangist militiamen of Palestinian civilians in the Sabra and Shatila camps in Beirut happened under the IDF's watch is an indelible stain on the moral record of the IDF and, more specifically, the defense minister at the time, Ariel Sharon. (...) what is happening in the West Bank now is not a massacre. (...) Prime Minister Yair Lapid and Defense Minister Gantz (...) are perhaps more genuinely distressed by the violence. The only problem is that they are politically powerless to decry it, let alone act to stop it. On some level, none of this is entirely new. It has been the story of the occupation from the very beginning. (...)

Yonatan Touval, HAA, 27.10.22

### **After Israel brings the fight to the Lion's Den door, has it put an end to their terror?**

(...) In almost two months, the Lion's Den was able to carry out more than 20 terror attacks against Israel, and sometimes even two attacks in a single day. (...) However, after the Israeli security forces changed their method from daily West Bank raids, to

precise operations, it is safe to say the terror group members change from the hunters to hunted. The new policy does not necessarily indicate the end, but it certainly provides a warning to Lion's Den members in Nablus. (...) while the daily West Bank raids did manage to pressure the militants, as some of them were even seen surrendering and walking with their hands behind their heads, the terror attacks continued. To maintain the delicate balance on the West Bank, that Israel worked so hard to keep, the Israeli leadership implemented a new tactic. The goal was to suppress the current terror wave but to do it in a way that will prevent a general uprising by Palestinians, while still moving the fight back to their own backyard, so that instead of planning the next terror attack against Israel, the Lion's Den members would be busy with their own survival. (...) If Israel, along with the Palestinian security services will be able to prevent further violence in the long-term balance in Nablus, it will mean the infrastructure of the Lion's Den was significantly damaged. But if the terror group will succeed in carrying out more attacks and cause casualties, it will be a completely different story.

Elisha Ben Kimon, YED, 27.10.22

### **3. Israels Regierung ratifiziert Einigung mit Libanon**

*Das israelische Kabinett hat dem Vertrag über die Seegrenze mit dem Libanon zugestimmt. Die beiden Nachbarstaaten hatten sich zuvor unter Vermittlung der USA auf das Abkommen geeinigt, das die Gasförderung im Mittelmeer ermöglichen soll. Regierungschef Yair Lapid freute sich über den diplomatischen Erfolg. "Es kommt nicht jeden Tag vor, dass ein feindliches Land den Staat Israel in einem schriftlichen Abkommen vor der internationalen Gemeinschaft anerkennt", sagte er zu Beginn der Sondersitzung des Kabinetts in Jerusalem. Libanon und Israel unterhalten seit 1948 keine offiziellen diplomatischen Beziehungen. Seit dem Krieg 2006 besteht ein Waffenstillstandabkommen zwischen den beiden Nachbarstaaten. Die Einigung über die Seegrenze setzt einen Schlusstrich unter einen jahrzehntelangen Streit. Beide Länder unterzeichneten die Vereinbarungen separat voneinander. Libanon hofft mit den Einnahmen aus der Gasförderung die aktuelle Wirtschaftskrise im Land lindern zu können.*

### **Will the Israel-Lebanon deal play a role in elections?**

If the approaching election were a normal election, about authentic choices relating to real issues, the current agreement between Israel and Lebanon, concerning the maritime border between the two states, would certainly be playing a major role in how people would vote. But that is not what the election is about. For the Center/Left camp, it is once again about “yes Bibi or no Bibi,” for the Right/religious camp it is about getting rid “of this awful, dangerous government,” and for the Arab parties, it is about trying to fight indifference in the Arab sector. (...) In the agreement, Israel will be getting royalties for whatever gas will be produced from the Lebanese installation, but these will amount to “only” 17% of the profits, even though originally much higher figures were mentioned. The question the HCJ will have to deal with over this issue is whether economic waters can be considered “sovereign territory.” (...) the very tight timetable was dictated by realities in Lebanon: especially the approaching retirement, at the end of this month, of Lebanese President Michel Aoun, who favors the agreement with Israel, and elections for a new president, which are expected to further destabilize the already unstable Lebanese regime. (...) Netanyahu declared that if and when he will form his new government, he will refuse to accept any agreement with Lebanon that might have been signed beforehand. (...) The question is whether Netanyahu really objects to the agreement on principle, or whether his objection is primarily the result of his negative approach to anything the Government of Change has suggested or promoted in the last 16 months. One may assume that since the negotiations began when he was still prime minister, Netanyahu is familiar with the various issues involved. (...)

Susan Hattis-Rolef, JPO, 18.10.22

### **Is the Lebanon deal wonderful or terrible?**

Israel's maritime border agreement with Lebanon has met with extravagant praise and vituperative condemnation, but neither side is right. (...) The deal, brokered by the US, (...) is neither wonderful nor terrible, but rather the best that can be hoped for under the circumstances. (...) Israel gets the totality of the Karish field and the rights to 17% of the revenues from the Sidon field, otherwise under Lebanese control. The revenues will be received by the field's developer, the French company Total, and Lebanon's share will not be disbursed until Israel is paid its share. Once the Sidon rig is completed by

Total and is operating, Hezbollah loses all incentive to destroy the Israeli Karish rig, since Israel would immediately retaliate by destroying the Sidon rig. One aspect of the agreement is questionable. Total will pay Lebanon's share of the Sidon earnings only to the Lebanese government, not to Hezbollah; however, since Hezbollah has effective control of Lebanon, it can undoubtedly force the government to turn over all or part of the payments. All-in-all a reasonable agreement. The US is to be congratulated on its contribution to resolving a difficult problem in the Middle East, where the Biden administration's overall record is dismal.

Norman Bailey, GLO, 18.10.22

### **Lebanon deal is a capitulation contract for Israel**

The maritime border agreement between Israel and Lebanon is a capitulation contract for Israel. (...) Israel gave up all of its sovereign, economic and security demands. These concessions are fundamental and have the potential to worsen Israel's position in the regional arena. (...) the Israeli government not only agreed to give up its original demand (...), but also agreed to accept Lebanon's demand (...). As for the royalties for the production of the gas, according to the agreement, the companies that expected to produce the potential gas in the Qana field (...) are supposed to compensate Israel for the rights in the field, but not within the maritime agreement. Thus, Israel may lose a considerable amount of money if it signs an agreement at a price that will later turn out to be low compared to the gas discoveries in the field. Israel was not able to reach an achievement even in the political and foreign policy field. The agreement between Israel and Lebanon is not bilateral; nor does it address normalization with another Arab country in the spirit of the Abraham Accords. Instead, Israel's agreement was signed with the US and the UN. (...) the negotiation between Israel and Lebanon had reached the point of an agreement during periods of high-security tension between Israel and Hezbollah. (...) Even if Israel was not really impressed by Hezbollah's threats when it rushed to approve the agreement with Lebanon, it really is an appearance of Israeli surrender and fear of Hezbollah's threats. According to supporters of the agreement, its approval will prevent the start of a war with Hezbollah, which – they claim – was inevitable. (...) Lebanon and Hezbollah have a lot to lose. Lebanon is still a country with critical national infrastructures that are expected to be damaged by Israel in the event of war. In the bottom line, Israel did not achieve any

political or diplomatic breakthrough in the agreement, nor economic achievements or improvement in its security situation. On the contrary, it further worsened its geo-strategic, political and security situation in the region.

Omer Dostri, JPO, 20.10.22

### **There Is No Partner...Until There Is**

(...) Mossad director David Barnea in an Israeli security cabinet meeting defended the deal, saying that people who claim the maritime border agreement is a win for Hezbollah know nothing about the situation in Lebanon. Barnea stressed that the agreement is a de facto recognition of Israel—something Hezbollah is opposed to. (...) The current agreement has only been made possible by a rare convergence of circumstances, with Lebanon financially broke, forcing its remaining leaders to understand that it is now or never. (...) Israel is in the same boat. If it turned down the deal, it would face years of arbitration and would risk attacks on its Karish gas field adjacent to the border with Lebanon rather than starting immediate production at a time when there is a particularly intense appetite for alternatives to Russian energy. Without an agreement, the dispute will drag on, constantly teetering on the verge of war. The outcome also represents an unheralded success of quiet intermediation organized by the Biden administration. (...) It would seem that this deal is all sunshine and rainbows – but the same forces that helped get this agreement signed make this agreement weak and tenuous. The Israeli elections that are just a few sunrises away have turned this agreement into fodder for voices from the right to attack those who forged this deal. (...) If this agreement were to fail now, all the gains this treaty brings would be lost and the same kind of “perfect storm” might never come again. (...)

Mark Gold and Hiam Simon, TOI, 30.10.22

the Nazi planes during World War II. The Russians allegedly target infrastructure, bombing electricity and water supplies (...). Ukraine's vulnerability is its inability to defend against air strikes (...). The Ukrainians say they understand Israeli defense establishment's inability to provide lethal weapons because of the sensitive relations with Russia. "But what is their excuse for refusing defensive weapons?" a Ukrainian officials asked over the weekend. "And what is the argument when Iranian weapons are killing Ukrainian civilians?" This is a critical point. Tehran denies any involvement in the war, but intelligence officials have no doubt that the suicide drones the Russians are using are made in Iran, and that Iranian advisors are on the ground instructing the Russians on their use. (...) Russia likely understands that receiving direct assistance from Iran is a step too far and is keen to present Israel with another red line – one it must not cross, especially after some of the criticism of Russia expressed by Jerusalem. Israel continues to pay a price for its policies: the Ukrainians are angry with the lack of military support, Russia continues to benefit from the Iranian weapons, while Tehran charges on with its belligerence against Israel in other spheres. The provision of lethal weapons to Russia should start a strategic discussion on Israel's policies towards Ukraine. (...)

Nadav Eyal, YED, 18.10.22

HAA = Haaretz

YED = Yedioth Ahronoth / Ynetnews

JPO = Jerusalem Post

IHY = Israel HaYom

TOI = Times of Israel

GLO = Globes

## **4. Medienquerschnitt**

### **Kiew hofft auf israelische Luftabwehrsysteme**

#### **Israel must rethink its Ukraine policy as Iran joins Russia in war**

For Russian President Vladimir Putin, the gloves were off from the start, but now, he has discarded any semblance of shame as he continues to wage war on Ukraine. The recent massive strikes on Kyiv were meant to spread terror, similar to that felt by residents of London during the nightly bombing of

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