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1. Streit um Richter_innenwahlausschuss

Die gescheiterte Wahl von zwei Parlamentarier_innen in den Richter_innenwahlausschuss führte zum Aussetzen der Gespräche über einen Kompromiss über die umstrittene Justizreform. Die Ernennung der Richter_innen des Obersten Gerichts in Jerusalem ist einer der zentralen Punkte der geplanten Reform. Der Ausschuss ist dem Justizministerium unterstellt. Er umfasste bislang Politiker_innen, Richter_innen und Mitglieder der Anwaltskammer und konnte nur mit einer Stimmenmehrheit von sieben der neun Mitglieder Entscheidungen treffen. Die geplante Neuregelung würde die Kontrolle in die Hände der Regierung verlagern. Ein Parlamentarier oder eine Parlamentarierin sollte jeweils aus den Reihen der Opposition wie aus den Regierungsfractionen kommen. Die Kandidatin der Opposition, Energieministerin a.d. Karin Elharar wurde zwar mit einigen Stimmen der Koalitionsparteien in den Ausschuss gewählt, jedoch war die Koalition nicht in der Lage, sich auf eine_n eigene_n Kandidat_in zu einigen, womit nun ein weiterer Wahlgang in einem Monat notwendig wird. Die Opposition sieht im Nichtzustandekommen des Richter_innenwahlausschusses einen Bruch der Vereinbarungen für die Weiterführung der Verhandlungen über die Justizreform und hält diese unter den gegebenen Voraussetzungen für sinnlos.

How Much Longer Can the Judicial Overhaul Protests Ignore Israeli Occupation?

For 22 weeks, hundreds of thousands of Israeli citizens have been taking to the streets to fight for democracy. That is impressive and moving, evoking in me great respect. (...) these hundreds of thousands of demonstrators are my future partners in creating a better life for this country. (...) The vast majority of Israelis and Palestinians wish to live in security, without war, without conflict. But even though there are many people working to bring about peace, the occupation is becoming harsher and peace is receding into the distance. (...) our tragedy is (...) consisting of a reality in which a majority of both peoples supports negotiations for a true peace, based on two states, but there are no talks taking place. This is tragic because most people, having despaired, aren't dealing with the issue. Israelis know that the only long-term solution that is not reminiscent of dark regimes is a peace agreement between the two nations. (...) the occupation is the umbilical cord of Israeli fascism. In every other place in the world, fascism grows either out of big capital or out of the ranks of army generals, but here, both the generals and big capital oppose the overhaul of the system of government. Here, the source of fascism is the occupation and the settlements (...). Therefore, the demand to end the occupation must be an integral part of the protest, based on the understanding that there is no democracy along with an occupation, and that the occupation

needs the judicial overhaul to feed this self-perpetuating cycle. (...) all tyrants are destined to fall in the end (...).

Ayman Odeh, HAA, 04.06.23

Stifling supporters of the judicial overhaul is a danger to democracy

The judicial overhaul is dead. Israel won't be a dictatorship. The protest against it inside and outside of Israel was likely the most successful and significant one since the state was founded. However, we must be cautious of a victory that's too great. Because millions of Israelis who support a change in the judicial system may feel defeated. Their criticisms against the oligarchy, both justified and not, are here to stay. (...) At the stage we're in, the halt to the proposed legislation is (...) a victory of a majority who thought, and rightly so, that the proposals led by Justice Minister Yariv Levin and Knesset's Constitution, Law, and Justice Committee Chairman Simcha Rothman were very frightening. (...) But supporters of the judicial overhaul are still a majority in Israel. (...) Many good people criticized the judiciary before. The right has expertise in presenting valid points along with incorrect conclusions and plans. The (...) protest is (...) reaching a dangerous point because barring any changes to the judicial system will be a Pyrrhic victory. It will only serve to frustrate those demanding an overhaul. (...) We live in interesting times. On the one hand, the coalition has a majority to pass any legislation, including draconian laws. On the other hand, the protest has a public majority, and this majority knows that draconian legislation works against national interests. They also know that an overhaul, even before it happens, affects relations with Israel's most important ally, the U.S. Moreover, this majority knows the impacts of such a scenario on the economy, which current data already supports. However, continuing down the same lane as before isn't an option anymore. The alternative is a fair judicial overhaul with broad consensus. And if there's no compromise, the frustration of the overhaul's supporters will only grow, and soon turn to anger. (...)

Ben-Dror Yemini, YED, 06.06.23

Israel's Far-right Finance Minister Talks Nonsense and Calls It Economics

We have never had a finance minister as oblivious and delusional as Bezalel Smotrich. (...) He argued if the government is subsidizing students, it must subsidize married, young-adult yeshiva students as well. (...) Students at Bezalel aren't a burden. They

pay tuition fees totaling 11,000 shekels (\$2,950) a year and work while they are studying. Comparably aged yeshiva students, by contrast, are total burdens. They pay no tuition and don't work, but get a monthly government stipend of 1,170 shekels, adding up to 14,000 shekels annually. They also get a monthly stipend from their yeshiva and a 90 percent discount on municipal taxes. (...) More importantly: The minute the students complete their studies, they become productive members of society who work, pay taxes and contribute economically, socially, and culturally. Bezalel produces artists, architects, and designers. It creates visual artists, graphic artists, metalwork designers, fashion designers, and photographers. (...) By contrast, the endless poring over of passages from the Talmud in yeshivas contributes nothing to the GNP. It's just idleness and shirking, and it's leading us backward into a world dominated by poverty and ignorance. (...) The real solution for the economy's sluggish growth would be to bluntly declare that the judicial overhaul is truly dead. Were this to happen, the most major source of uncertainty would disappear, investors would come back, and the economy would bloom. (...) Someone should put the minister in his place and sue him for the financial damage he caused. Maybe a hard hit to his wallet will make him change his ways.

Nehemia Shtrasler, HAA, 06.06.23

Netanyahu must focus on lowering Israel's cost of living

(...) The battle against rising prices and inflation should have been the priority from day one of the government's existence. (...) The Consumer Price Index has risen 5% over 12 months (...) and 2% since the new government was sworn in at the start of the year (...). So far, the government has not taken any significant measures to combat the rising cost of living and inflation. It has taken some steps, including a plan to bring in thousands of workers from India and China to help lower costs (...). But economic experts say that much more needs to be done in every sphere of the economy. (...) While prices of basic food items and services continue to go up, many Israelis are struggling to make ends meet. When Netanyahu served as finance minister two decades ago, he was credited with steering Israel out of its worst recession and performing what was called "an economic miracle." We can only hope that the prime minister and his new committee will use this opportunity to focus on seriously tackling the issue that clearly tops the national agenda for most Israelis – making life in Israel more afforda-

ble for all its citizens. More than another committee, we need lower prices.

Editorial, JPO, 06.06.23

Don't Forget the Other Likud Voters

(...) Among the government's supporters are extremist, messianic-minded, corrupt people along with those having a limited conception of democracy. There is no point in appealing to all of these. However, other government supporters are not happy with the attempted coup and its ramifications, certainly not with the toxic agenda, filled with hatred towards state institutions (...). These are citizens who may want to see Netanyahu as prime minister, but who oppose an upheaval that will serve mainly extremist and religious forces. These people are secular, or traditional (...). Their sons and daughters serve in the army, some of them in mixed-gender combat units. (...) There is a chasm lying between such families, who educate their children to contribute to the state, and those who label the mixed-gender service of their children as "progressive madness," as one coalition member recently did. These Israelis work, pay taxes, serve in the reserves and look for a better quality of life. They are worried about the high cost of living and their personal security, not about the judicial "reasonableness" clause. (...) Things were easy for them as long as the public discourse revolved around Bibi or not Bibi. (...) They don't want to be called the "Second Israel." (...) Likud voters may be of one stripe when it comes to preferring Netanyahu, but they are multi-hued with regard to a liberal democracy. Public office holders Yoav Gallant and Haim Bibas see life differently than Yariv Levin and Shlomo Karhi do. This reflects differences among Likud voters. (...) The government will go on challenging the liberal-democratic camp for its entire term, and the key to dealing with it is to maintain eye contact with right-wing/Likud supporters who understand the danger this extremist coalition poses for democracy, the IDF and other state institutions. They will still be here after Netanyahu departs.

Sami Peretz, HAA, 06.06.23

No Rest Until the Judicial Coup Is Completely Shelved

(...) the public got a perfect view of Israel under Benjamin Netanyahu's sixth government: complete chaos. The Knesset was supposed to choose its two representatives to the Judicial Appointments Committee. (...) there currently is no Judicial Appointments Committee. Coalition control over this com-

mittee was the top priority for proponents of the judicial coup. Yet not only did the coup's architects fail to elect two candidates of their own, as they had initially hoped to do, they couldn't even get one of their own elected. The price of that is that there's no committee (...). The coalition's inability to function has prevented it from moving ahead with changing Israel's system of government. But it's not only the coalition's breakdown that is responsible for this. So is the enormous protest movement that has flooded the streets and refused to let up, as well as the opposition in the Knesset. Effective public diplomacy and political organization resulted in several coalition MKs showing national responsibility: In the secret ballot, they joined with the opposition in voting for an opposition MK on the committee. This expansion of the ranks of the coup's opponents is good news for the battle to save democracy. (...) The goal is clear: The protests must continue and intensify until the judicial coup is shelved completely. Editorial, HAA, 15.06.23

2. Pride-Parade in Tel Aviv und Jerusalem

In diesem Jahr standen die beiden Pride-Events im Schatten der innenpolitischen Spannungen. Mehrere Minister_innen in Benjamin Netanyahus Koalition vertraten klar homophobe Positionen. Die Pride-Parade in Tel Aviv ist die größte im gesamten Nahen Osten und dient auch dem Regierungschef gern als Aushängeschild für die Liberalität Israels. In der Mittelmeerstadt kamen rund 150.000 Menschen zu dem bunten Happening an der Strandpromenade zusammen. Deutlich ruhiger und politischer fiel die Parade in Jerusalem aus, wo ein Sonderaufgebot an Sicherheitskräften im Einsatz war, um erneute gewaltvolle Übergriffe zu verhindern. Vor acht Jahren hatte ein ultraorthodoxer Mann eine 16jährige Israelin getötet, die aus Solidarität mit queeren Freund_innen an der Parade teilgenommen hatte.

Jerusalem is precisely the place for a Gay Pride parade

Tel Aviv is the city of Pride. Its Gay Pride parade is the biggest, most colorful celebration of diversity, inclusivity and freedom, rivaling San Francisco in its own way. Jerusalem, on the other hand, is threatening to become the City of Shame. In a prelude the Jerusalem Pride Parade, frenzied death threats have been made public, and coalition members, even within the Likud, have been quoted as saying the Pride Parade is an abomination, or claiming that parents make their sons gay by giving them dolls to

play with. (...) The police are beefing up security for the Parade, but fear is in the air. (...) It is precisely through Jerusalem that this parade needs to pass. (...) the flamboyant, proud gays and their supporters will show the city's inhabitants there is still a chance for it to be a beacon of human rights and equality, rather than a bastion of homophobia, hatred and fear. They could remind us that many Orthodox and Haredi LGBTQs are still in the closet, struggling with their identities in the face of religious edicts against them. (...) The Pride Parade is (...) about the right to live openly in the way one has been created, if you will; to love who one chooses; and to be free to live that way in our society – in Jerusalem as well as in Tel Aviv. (...) Jerusalem may never become the city of Pride, but let us hope it can at least avoid the mantle of shame. (...)

Judy Halper, TOI, 01.06.23

Jerusalem should embrace its diverse residents

(...) A deeply religious city with a large religiously observant and haredi (ultra-Orthodox) population, Jerusalem is not only a flashpoint for Jewish-Muslim tensions but also the scene of an ongoing power struggle between the conservative and liberal elements of the city. There's no issue that brings that to the forefront like the annual Jerusalem March for Pride and Tolerance (...). Unlike its festive and much larger Tel Aviv counterpart (...), the Jerusalem event is more a march than a parade and is subject to heavy security and restrictions due to vehement opposition by many of the city's residents. (...) What makes this year's march unique is the makeup of Israel's current government, which (...) features two of the most outspoken opponents of the march: National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir and Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich. As of earlier this week, the government also boasts homophobic deputy minister Avi Maoz, who has branded LGBT individuals as "deviants." (...) Thankfully, aside from a far-right group posting many threatening messages in an internal chat group wishing for the deaths of the pro-LGBT marchers, preparations to secure the march have exceeded public opposition to it. Participants should be able to celebrate their identities in a safe and welcoming environment, while respecting the city's character and the sensitivities of the religious public. Opponents of the march should just stay away. Jerusalem, as the capital of Israel, should take pride in its diversity and embrace the many colors of its residents. (...)

Editorial, JPO, 01.06.23

Once an opponent of the pride parade in Jerusalem, I now march in it

(...) back in '05 (...) I expressed my opposition to the LGBT Pride Parade in our eternal capital. Subsequently, a young man approached me and inquired about my knowledge of suicide rates among homosexuals. (...) it did not alter my perspective. (...) As time passed (...) I had the opportunity to meet more individuals from the LGBTQ+ community. (...) I encountered remarkable people who shattered the stereotypes that were previously ingrained into my consciousness. What once seemed distant and unfamiliar became personal as I got to know them on a personal level, attaching faces and names to their stories. It became crystal clear that personal acquaintance made a significant difference, just as it does in many aspects of life. Throughout this journey, I remained steadfast in my faith without compromising its principles. The unique sanctity embedded in the bond between a man and a woman, as well as the Torah's prohibition on same-sex relations, remained core beliefs for me, and I held onto them without any doubts. Concurrently, I also gained new insights. I met individuals who were born with a different orientation, for whom entering into same-sex relationships was the only viable option. Choosing otherwise would have led to profound existential sadness or even jeopardized their well-being. It was from their prism that I had become aware that they, too, aspired to lives characterized by sanctity and the desire for a loving family. (...) While I do not conduct wedding ceremonies for same-sex couples due to the Jewish law's prohibition on sanctified unions between two men or two women, I actively participate in the Pride Parade. This is because those very couples, those very individuals, reside here in Jerusalem, in Israel, and in the world. They deserve to live their lives authentically, including with pride.

Aharon Leibowitz, YED, 01.06.23

Less Glitter, More Anger: Jerusalem's Pride March Is No Party, It's a Demonstration

(...) Tel Aviv Pride is a street party, and the entire world is invited. Onlookers on balconies cheer along and spray revelers with hoses to beat the heat, dancing to the music and hoisting up their own drinks. It is loud, it is bright, it is sensual – and glittering and stifling and everything all at once. The Jerusalem march, put simply, isn't. (...) Few attendees bare skin, and the crowd is dotted with older people, parents pushing strollers and waves upon waves of high schoolers wearing TikTok-

inspired eyeliner and Pride flags as capes. A group of mothers offers hugs to anyone who may not get them from their own parents. (...) there is no music, just protest calls and responses. (...) Speakers discuss the work the Jerusalem Open House put into organizing the event, a passion not shared by the local municipality. They also talk about the death threats, the need to show that we're not going anywhere, that there is a place for the LGBTQ Haredi who changes clothes to come to the march and the Arab who comes from East Jerusalem. (...) In Tel Aviv, which sees itself as an LGBTQ haven, Pride is about celebrating how far we've come. In Jerusalem, which tries to push the community out, it's about demanding what hasn't yet been achieved, be it legal rights, the end of social stigmas or personal safety. (...)

Linda Dayan, HAA, 03.06.23

The Right's ill-advised embrace of the anti-LGBT obsessionists

(...) on both sides of the national camp, there are signs of open hostility to gender identity. On the ultra-Orthodox Right, it is the Noam party, which now waves the ideological banner of family values (...). In recent years, certain sectors of the secular, seemingly liberal Right, have also had some incomprehensible obsession with gender discourse in general, and with transgender people, in particular (...). This is the political space that created the conditions for the upward social mobility of the Sephardi underclass; the same economic and sectoral leadership that puts so much stress on and threatens the centers of institutional power – in particular in justice, culture, and academia. (...) This disproportionate, obsessive anti-LGBT discourse has also had a bad cultural effect on the Israeli Right, which increasingly marks itself as inherently reactionary, rather than as a trailblazer: as a camp that is involved in formulating the memorandum against the partially imaginary "progressive craziness," instead of cultivating its own ideological identity; as a countermovement, whose agenda is overwhelmingly dictated in reaction to the beliefs that are dispersed on the other side of the road, and not as a sustainable movement that is setting its own agenda. (...) It is a shame; a real shame that the Israeli Right, who is greatly unique in relation to right-wing movements around the world and has become an agent of tolerant and pluralistic social change now finds itself – and pardon the cliché – on the very indecent side of history.

Eithan Orkibi, IHY, 04.06.23

A psychologist's perspective on 'Pride': What Orthodox people need to know

(...) vulnerable teens (...) often come from families where their queer identities are not accepted. They took the risk to march at a public event with such a significant Orthodox Jewish presence, and they deserved to be greeted with encouragement, not scorn. (...) Pride literally means "reasonable self-esteem" or "confidence and satisfaction in oneself." Queer people, particularly those from unaccepting or less accepting environments, such as the Orthodox Jewish community, are highly prone to feeling shame just for being who they are. The manifestations of shame are as diverse as the queer community itself. Whether it's a gay man who repeatedly makes up stories as to why he isn't interested in being set up with a woman or an observant trans person who stopped attending synagogue because of not knowing how they will be received, the day-to-day experiences of many queer people in the Orthodox community can be both fear-laden and shame-ridden. (...) Being queer in the Orthodox world is not only complicated and challenging but also fraught with opportunities for being misunderstood, invalidated, rejected, oversexualized, and seen as other. Pride is the queer community's intentional effort to counter the psychological effects of these communal realities. We wear rainbow gear, fly colorful flags, and apply glitter — all to feel positively about who we are and reaffirm our worth as people and Jews in the Orthodox community who deserve dignified, meaningful lives. Pride is the queer community's annual vacation from shame, and it is well-deserved. (...)

Dr. Jeremy Novich, TOI, 10.06.23

3. Tödliche Schüsse an der ägyptischen Grenze

Bei einem Schussüberfall an der ägyptischen Grenze und dem anschließenden Schusswechsel zwischen israelischen Sicherheitskräften und einem ägyptischen Grenzpolizisten – dem mutmaßlichen Attentäter – starben zwei israelische Soldaten und eine Soldatin sowie der ägyptische Grenzpolizist. Eine Untersuchung soll genauere Hintergründe klären. Die bisherigen Indizien deuten auf einen gezielten Angriff gegen die israelischen Soldat_innen. Der Zwischenfall an der Grenze der beiden Länder, die vor über 40 Jahren ein Friedensabkommen miteinander vereinbarten, ist äußerst ungewöhnlich. Die Regierung in Kairo tat sich anfangs schwer, den Zwischenfall zu kommentieren.

Auch war zunächst davon die Rede, der ägyptische Grenzer habe Jagd auf Drogenschmuggler_innen getan.

Gunshots at border were heard clearly in Cairo and Tehran

The deadly attack (...) took place amid a critical moment in Egypt's relations with Israel, and with Middle Eastern countries in general. (...) The Egyptian spokesperson (...) insisted that it was an incident in which he pursued drug smugglers who crossed the Israeli border and got involved in a firefight in which an Israeli male and female soldier were killed. (...) It was only after reports in the Arab media about a joint investigation committee between Egypt and Israel that the vague Egyptian statement surfaced, which committed only to an Egyptian investigation. On the Israeli side, on the other hand, there was a rush to emphasize the importance of cooperation between the countries' security forces and the need to preserve it (...), the current attack comes at a time when joint activities are becoming complicated in the face of Egyptian preparations for possible cooperation with Iran. The initiative from Tehran has not yet received a positive response from Cairo, but it is clear to everyone that, at this time, Egypt is not interested in presenting to the world any joint efforts with Israeli security forces. Jill Biden's visit to the presidential palace in Cairo may indicate that Egypt has not made a decision on the matter yet, but there is concern that the money shipments from Iran and Saudi Arabia will distance Sisi from Israel. On top of all of this, the Egyptian police officer is being portrayed as a hero on social networks. (...) The Iranian-Saudi effort to lure Egypt into the new military alliance will not be an easy pill to swallow for Israel (...), and senior officials in Israel have already warned their counterparts in Cairo about the dangerous Iranian telegrams. Soon, both the Israeli and Iranian embassies in Cairo will also operate concurrently, and in Jerusalem they must tread cautiously with Egypt. These relations also are crucial for joint activities against Hamas in Gaza and for cooperation on issues related to the entire Arab world. (...)

Smadar Peri, YED, 04.06.23

Israel's ties with Egypt after the attack

(...) The soldiers were killed in the line of duty while on active service on the Egyptian border, making it a military matter. On the other hand, the perpetrator was an Egyptian policeman-turned-terrorist. (...) The Egyptian Army initially issued a statement that said

the Egyptian man was a police officer who was chasing drug smugglers (...). The incident has obviously caused embarrassment in Egypt. (...) Our relationship with Egypt is of vital importance to both Israel and the Egyptians. (...) It is important for both sides to fully investigate what happened and how to prevent such an incident from recurring. At the same time, it is also essential that the investigation does not affect the strong diplomatic and security ties that exist between the two countries. (...) It is vital that security and diplomatic cooperation between Israel and Egypt not only continue, but that it is boosted to prevent further incidents and threats to both countries.

Editorial, JPO, 05.06.23

Southern border heat

It was an appalling attack – shocking in more than one sense of the word, both unexpected and brutal. Three IDF soldiers were killed by a rogue Egyptian policeman (...) along Israel's mostly peaceful southwestern border. (...) Egypt was clearly embarrassed by the affair. It should also be ashamed of its initial response. The Egyptian Army issued a statement describing a police officer who was chasing drug smugglers (...). The vaguely worded statement did not explain how the police officer ended up shooting the IDF soldiers. Even more jarring was the way the Egyptian Army expressed condolences "to the victims on both sides," equating the murderous policeman with his victims. (...) This was a planned, deliberate terror attack, not a spontaneous act carried out in the heat of the moment. (...) The incident (...) spotlights the murky ties that often exist between drug smuggling (...) and terrorism, which relies on both arms and funds. (...) The IDF's probe must address (...) how the army expects soldiers to do 12-hour guarding shifts, particularly on a very hot night? (...) Another question is why there was a failure to carry out a radio check with the soldiers on an hourly basis, as regulations require. And why did it take so long from the last radio contact, reportedly some three hours, before a team was dispatched to check on the soldiers at their outpost only to find them dead? Terrorists with a more sophisticated plan could have snatched the bodies, or possibly kidnapped live soldiers during that time and whisked them away to Sinai or to the Gaza Strip. (...) the shared border of some 200 km. is generally considered quiet, despite ongoing drug-smuggling incidents. (...) Care must be taken that the bullets that took the lives of the three IDF soldiers last week do not wound relations with Egypt. (...) the fatal bullets

must serve as warning shots. Even on seemingly peaceful borders, Israel cannot afford to drop its guard.

Liat Collins, JPO, 08.06.23

Israel's Peace Agreement With Egypt Is a Fiction

Israel is in too big a hurry to sweep under the rug last week's attack on three of its soldiers on the Egyptian border. (...) Egypt and Israel have a peace agreement, and a terror attack by a member of Egypt's security forces should raise questions beyond the number of hours the soldiers were on guard duty and why a helicopter didn't take off on time. If the shooter was an outlier, that would be one thing. But he wasn't, and the widespread hatred of Israel in Egypt, from criticism of the occupation to outright antisemitism, isn't characteristic of a country you have a peace deal with. The truth is, the peace agreement between Israel and Egypt is a fiction. It's more of a nonaggression pact that serves the interests of the Egyptian and Israeli security elites. There is no peace between the peoples. (...) Trade relations between the countries are kept under wraps. (...) Egypt, for some reason, is a sacred cow. Imagine that an Israeli police officer, a Kahanist let's say, used his or her guard post on the border to cross into Egypt and kill three Egyptian soldiers. Calling this an "isolated incident" wouldn't be nearly enough. It would spark soul-searching about the meaning of peace, the growth of hatred in our midst, and the measures by the police and army to eradicate racism. But the Egyptians merely mutter a few statements that at most resemble a flimsy apology, and then all is well as far as they're concerned. (...) It's time to stop going easy on Egypt. (...)

Chaim Levinson, HAA, 08.06.23

4. Medienquerschnitt

Gewalt im arabischen Sektor

Israeli Arab sector violent crime is a national problem

(...) The number of people killed in the Arab community this year is on the trajectory to reach more than 200, far outstripping the worst year of violence when 126 Israeli-Arabs were killed in 2021. (...) As the violence spiraled out of control in 2021, the Bennett-Lapid government budgeted some NIS 2.5 billion for the task and drew up a holistic approach to tackle the issue. The plan (...) included steps aimed at dismantling organized crime, hitting the sources

of funds for organized crime, cracking down on arms smuggling, strengthening the governance in the Arab sector, and building trust and increasing cooperation with the Arab local authorities. It is a long-term plan that would take time to implement, yet by the end of 2022, the murder rates in the Arab sector had dropped by some 13%. This trend was halted in its tracks in January. (...) statements by National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir and Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich make it clear that their priorities are the Jewish population of Israel. (...) action now needs to take the place of words. As each day goes by, more Arab citizens of Israel are being killed, and the vast majority of law-abiding, peace-loving members of Israel's Arab society are living in fear. It's not an Arab problem, it's a national one. Both the government – and the police – need to internalize that (...).

Editorial, JPO, 07.06.23

Iran auf dem Weg zur Atommacht

Can Israel stop a new Iran deal?

(...) Based on comments by senior Israeli politicians and military officers in recent weeks, it seems that Israel might once again be in a bit of a "2010 moment", one which, on the surface, seems like a path to war, but on the other hand might be again a bluff aimed at getting the world's attention. (...) There is no denying the escalation in the rhetoric. (...) IDF Chief of Staff Lt.-Gen. Herzi Halevi said that Israel is not "indifferent" to what is happening in Iran and might need to take action to stop it. (...) And then there was Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, who said (...) that Israelis did not need to worry themselves with the new hypersonic missile that Iran unveiled earlier that day and that if a war were to break out with Tehran's proxy, Hezbollah, Israel would send it back to the "stone age." (...) What Israel seems to be doing now, is using its threats to put pressure on the Biden administration as it negotiates a new interim deal with Iran as a way to stop its enrichment of military-grade uranium. Based on the intensity of the Israeli rhetoric, it seems that the US-Iran talks are proceeding at a faster pace than initially anticipated, and might even be on the verge of an agreement. (...) deep down, Israel wants a diplomatic resolution to the Iran nuclear challenge. It knows that a military option – while viable – will only delay Iran's pursuit of a bomb and pave the way for the mullahs to gain the legitimacy they need to plow ahead under the claim that a bomb is needed to

protect the republic. (...) in the best-case scenario, Iran will only suspend its high-grade enrichment but will not abandon its desire to one day get the bomb. In exchange for this enrichment freeze it will see significant economic benefits. (...) Israel would be negligent not to escalate its own talk against Iran right now. It might not be as glamorous as a speech before Congress or an invitation to the White House, but everything does need to be done to stop Iran.
Yaakov Katz, JPO, 08.06.23

2005 evakuierte Siedlung wieder bewohnt

Netanyahu's Nightmare Government: Everything Stupid and Malicious, Everywhere, All at Once

(...) From one day to the next, from caravan to water pipe, the illegal return to Homesh, which in practice annuls the 2005 disengagement plan, has become an irreversible reality. This will be a disaster with long-term implications, and we'll think of it only when it's too late. (...) The goal, never hidden, is that this will be followed by a return to the other settlements evacuated in 2005: Ganim, Kadim and Sa-Nur. (...) The greater objective is to completely annul the disengagement agreement and reverse its historical narrative in order to prove to Israelis, Palestinians and the world that such an eviction will never happen again. In other words: to finally bury the two-state solution. (...) this settler narrative of quashing the two-state solution has found its way into the mindset of quite a few Israelis in the center and on the left of the political spectrum, as well as among the diplomatic community. (...) The growing despair of achieving a separation between Israel and Palestine, including the evacuation of settlements, not only fails to promote a vision of one big and happy state (...), but provides a daily green light to the apartheid policies that prevail in practice. Ignoring what is happening in Homesh enables a continued legitimization of the settlement policy, which will culminate in the permanent setting of a supremacist Jewish state between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean. (...)

Noa Landau, HAA, 11.06.23

Annäherung zwischen Saudi-Arabien und Israel denkbar

Normalization between Israel and Saudi Arabia is increasingly likely

(...) Paradoxically, a normalization agreement between Saudi Arabia and Iran could actually expedite and support the normalization between Israel and Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia recognizes that forging ties with Israel carries the risk of Iranian aggression and heightened regional security escalation. It can be assumed that Riyadh's calculations regarding normalization with Iran also revolved around the potential for a future political agreement with Israel. The aim in Riyadh was to persuade Tehran to enter into an official agreement that would protect against military aggression in the event of normalization with Israel, or at least mitigate the security escalation that may follow such an agreement. Thus, the path from Riyadh to Jerusalem goes through Tehran. (...) Iran's race towards acquiring a military nuclear weapon takes on heightened significance in the near future. Saudi Arabia recognizes that Jerusalem is the only entity capable of halting Iran's pursuit of such a weapon. (...) A historic normalization agreement with Saudi Arabia will lead to the end of the conflict between Israel and the Arab people officially, since Saudi Arabia is considered the leader of the Arab world (...). Most important of all, the agreement will be a death blow to the Palestinian issue and will significantly reduce its influence and consequences on Israel in the inter-Arab and international arena (...). In addition, the agreement will have enormous economic consequences for Israel, due to the possibility of Saudi investments, especially in the fields of commerce, technology, and military industry, and in infrastructure and transportation projects that will lead to better connections and access between Saudi Arabia and Israel, by sea and land. (...)

Omer Dostri, JPO, 01.06.23

HAA = Haaretz

YED = Yedioth Ahronoth / Ynetnews

JPO = Jerusalem Post

IHY = Israel HaYom

TOI = Times of Israel

GLO = Globes

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