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**1. Krieg gegen die Hamas**

*Durch Schüsse der eigenen Armee starben drei israelische Geiseln, die sich kurz zuvor aus den Händen der Hamas hatten befreien können. Die Soldaten schossen irrtümlich auf ihre Landsleute, die sie für Terroristen hielten, obschon sie sich mit nacktem Oberkörper und improvisierten weißen Fahnen genähert hatten. Die Proteste gegen die Regierung, mehr für die Befreiung der Geiseln zu unternehmen, dauern unterdessen an. Die israelische Regierung steht auch unter wachsendem internationalem Druck, beim militärischen Vorgehen im Gazastreifen mehr Rücksicht auf die Zivilbevölkerung zu nehmen. Dessen ungeachtet setzt die israelische Armee die Kämpfe, die sich verstärkt auf den südlichen Gazastreifen konzentrieren, mit voller Kraft fort. Für die Menschen im Gazastreifen wird das Überleben immer schwieriger. So gibt es keine sicheren Rückzugsorte, viele Menschen hungern und haben weder Zugang zu frischem Wasser noch zu medizinischer Versorgung.*

**Israel's roadmap to triumph: 5 key steps for overcoming Hamas**

The fighting in Gaza was renewed because what Hamas is currently proposing to Israel is an agreement of complete surrender to all its demands in exchange for the release of more Israeli captives. If Israel were to accept even some of them, it would be exposing itself to a long-term existential threat. (...) The most critical components at the current

stage of the war are neutralizing Hamas' leadership and severely impacting the communication, command, and control system in their control. Without them, Hamas will weaken and eventually become a nuisance. (...) If the IDF operates with determination and the appropriate caution, it can dismantle Hamas' operational, military, and political abilities in Gaza within weeks to a few months. By doing so, it can also undermine what Americans and Europeans refer to as the "concept" of Hamas, which has been seeded in the hearts of Palestinians and others in the broader Arab world. (...) Hamas' dismantling, however, is only one of the war's goals. Another no less important one is the return of Israeli captives. The IDF must take into account, as it operates against Hamas, the possibility that it may harm this crucial goal. There's the danger that captives may be harmed when they get caught up in the fighting. There's also the possibility that when Hamas' leadership realizes their time is coming to an end, they may harm Israeli captives within their reach. The likelihood of such a scenario occurring isn't high because the captives are and last bargaining chip in the terrorist organization's hands, and they will hold on to it at almost any cost, even if they suffer a decisive blow. (...)

Ron Ben-Yishai, YED, 03.12.23

### **With southern Gaza next for IDF, a geopolitical mess could be upon us**

(...) this is no apples-to-apples comparison. While Israel's sick and elderly are long-time kibbutz stalwarts and founders, theirs are murderers sentenced to life imprisonment. While the Israeli hostages are medically neglected in captivity, the Palestinian prisoners receive rock-star treatment in Israeli prisons. (...) Now, as the dogs of war are barking again, the biggest dilemma involves the hostages. Whatever happiness exists for the 114 already released is interchangeable with melancholy regarding the 136 still in the clutches of the Palestinian death squads. Most of them are thankfully still alive, but some are dead, and their bodies need to be brought back to Israel for proper burial. They are likely located somewhere in Khan Younis in southern Gaza, right alongside what remains of Hamas leadership that isn't enjoying spas and continental breakfasts in luxurious Qatari hotels. And, whether Hamas has declared so or not, they will treat hostages as human shields if need be. (...) In a move that is anything but strategically sound, the IDF is going into Khan Younis with no "morning after" plan. This area is swarming with civilians who want nothing to do with this war, have no shelter, no hope and no respite from the constant bombings just minutes away from them. (...) If there's one thing IDF troops have come to understand is that Hamas is as resilient as it is unscrupulous, with pockets of resistance still alive and kicking even in areas that IDF ground forces have cleared extensively. And the clock is ticking, both because of the state of the Palestinian population and pressure exerted by the Biden administration. (...) It might be prudent to lower expectations a bit, as a complete victory is somewhat unlikely in the current conditions, and focus on bringing back all the hostages and healing the nation. (...)

Nahum Barnea, YED, 03.12.23

### **Massacre Doesn't Justify Massacre: Israel, Gaza and War Crimes**

(...) Israeli political leaders and military leaders (...) have repeatedly spoken in ways that dehumanize, and indicate a desire by some to destroy Gaza and even remove its population as a whole. This has two effects. First, it acts as incitement to the troops on the ground. Second, it can indicate an intent which, when combined with specific actions, could potentially be used as evidence of genocidal actions. (...) According to the Geneva Conventions, of which Israel is a signatory, and the rule of proportionality

that is part of these conventions, this exceedingly high civilian toll may well appear as disproportionate to the military goals set and achieved, as well as to the political goal desired, which has not yet been articulated by the Israeli government (...) if the IDF dropped a 2,000-pound bomb on a site with hundreds of displaced people because underneath there were a couple of Hamas commanders, killing scores or hundreds of civilians alongside these commanders, the law of proportionality may rule such an action to be a war crime. Multiply such actions by a factor of ten, or a hundred, and the actions behind the 15,000 dead begin to emerge. (...) An occupying army, even if it is fighting a criminal organization, is responsible for the fate of the civilian population in its areas of operations and occupation. (...) acts of military aggression are by definition breaches of international law except in cases of self-defense. Israel can rightly claim that its actions were in self-defense. What it cannot claim is that massacre justifies massacre. (...)

Omer Bartov, HAA, 06.12.23

### **As Gaza breaks down, Hamas rulers hide underground**

Despite Israel's past concerns over a ground incursion into Gaza, the current war is proving to be on the right course. (...) large numbers of men, some who had surrendered to the troops and others who were captured, sitting stiped of their clothes on the ground under Israeli troop's guard. The military's aggressive maneuvers have succeeded in eliminating Hamas's military capabilities, where battles were fought. (...) already now, it is evident that the central governance of Hamas, in Gaza City and around Khan Younis, is collapsing in full view of the Middle East that is receiving the message well. If the war continues, Hamas will face military defeat. (...) Slow but increasing condemnations of Hamas are being heard in Gaza, while most civilians there still support the group and its popularity surges in the West Bank. But after Hamas terrorists usurped humanitarian aid delivered by the UN for the civilians, and fuel that was needed for critical infrastructure, and as Hamas leaders hide in underground tunnels leaving the population over ground and exposed to the war and the elements, there is a growing anger towards the long-time rulers. Gaza is falling apart. (...)

Avi Issacharoff, YED, 07.12.23

## **Israel Cannot Beat Hamas. It's Time to Halt the Fighting and Think Ahead**

(...) the time has come to recognize that victory is not in the cards, no matter how many cruel blows we administer on Gaza and its hapless population. The bitter truth is that Hamas and Hezbollah have dragged Israel into a war they started, and we failed to prevent. Nevertheless, military operations will not succeed in changing the political reality that has been created. What can be done, then? First, Israel must strive to resume the cease-fire, to obtain a comprehensive agreement for the release of all the hostages and to settle accounts with everyone who bears responsibility for the debacle. Afterward, we must commit to the establishment of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip in exchange for a long-term cease-fire, of around 15 years, and move to realize this promise. Such a proposal would win support from the West, the Arab world and the Palestinian Authority. Hamas will have no choice but to join this initiative, which is similar to one its own leaders proposed in the past. The Palestinian nation is not going anywhere, and the only way to live here in security is by recognizing its legitimate rights and demands for independence.

Tom Mehager, HAA, 07.12.23

## **Fighting for its existence, Israel does not need to justify defending itself**

The starting point of the discussion in this article, amid the war in Gaza, is that Israel no longer needs to explain anything to anyone. After October 7, the days of explanations are over. (...) The pictures published recently around the world, showing starving Gazans or unclothed Hamas militants in the streets of Gaza, have caused some uproar. (...) we should not be overly disturbed by them. Israel is at war. War is not a laboratory. (...) if people are seen starving in Gaza, and if there is some humanitarian disaster or another – Israel must act. (...) Do you want to influence the perception of the world in the West? Bring food to Gaza, distribute it yourself - and show the world that Israel is fighting Hamas, not screaming Fatima. (...) Israel is a moral country. It fights to protect its citizens. (...) Along the way, it tries to liberate Gaza from Hamas. This is its right. (...)

Attila Somfalvi, YED, 13.12.23

## **2. Meinungsunterschiede zwischen Jerusalem und Washington**

*Israels Ministerpräsident Benjamin Netanyahu schwebt für die Zeit nach dem Krieg eine unbefristete Sicherheitspräsenz im Gazastreifen vor. Vorgeesehen ist offenbar die Errichtung einer Pufferzone, die Palästinenser\_innen von der Grenze zu Israel fernhalten soll. Die USA hatten Israel hingegen dringend vor einer Neubesetzung des Gazastreifens gewarnt und wiederholt zu einer Rückkehr zu Gesprächen mit der Palästinensischen Autonomiebehörde (PA) aufgefordert. US-Präsident Joe Biden und andere ranghohe US-Vertreter halten fest daran, dass eine "revitalisierte" PA eine Rolle im Nachkriegs-Gazastreifen spielen und Israel sich um eine Zweistaatenlösung unter Einbindung der PA bemühen müsse. Netanyahu schließt wiederum eine politische Rolle für die PA und Palästinenserpräsident Mahmoud Abbas im Gazastreifen aus.*

### **Israel must present a 'day after' plan**

(...) the US increasingly wants to know what end-game in Gaza it is supporting. While it has clearly signed on to Israel's aim of crushing Hamas militarily, it wants to know what Israel is planning once that is done. And here, Israel and the US are at odds. (...) the American vision for the day after is a "revitalized" PA in control. (...) The US continues to have a romanticized image of the PA as a body that wants to live in peace alongside Israel and whose security forces wish to fight terror fiercely. (...) Washington continues to look at this body and see what it wants to see, not what is actually there. (...) here is a corrupt body that cannot control the West Bank, that has allowed Hamas to gain significant inroads there, that lost Gaza once before, that educates its children to hate Israel, and that pays terrorists a stipend for killing Jews. This is not an entity to whom Israel will hand control of Gaza after the war, and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has made that clear. (...) Netanyahu is correct. The problem, however, is that it is not enough for Netanyahu to say what cannot be in Gaza after the war – no Hamas, no Palestinian Authority – he must articulate a vision of what can be. What comes next? This is crucial because articulating a vision will help sustain US support as American officials will then be able to say that Israel is not only trying to destroy Hamas but that it also has a plan for what is to emerge from the wreckage. (...) Israel should take the initiative and present a vision and a detailed plan. (...)

Editorial, JPO, 06.12.23

### **The ridiculous US plan for 'the day after'**

'A revitalized Palestinian Authority' – that is what US Secretary of State Antony Blinken is calling it. (...) it means absolutely nothing. And yet, this new mantra has become "the plan," as visualized by the United States of America under the leadership of President Joseph Biden, for "the day after" in Gaza and the West Bank. (...) Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has made it very clear that Abbas and the PA cannot be part of the rebuilding of Gaza. (...) we are beginning to see what it will not be. From Israel's point of view, it will not be the Palestinian Authority. As for free elections, they are nothing more than another Western pipe dream. (...) The West, led by the United States, is so self-absorbed and cocky that they cannot understand that Democracy (...) is not just about elections. And even if it were, at this stage, it is impossible to safely actualize elections. (...) Certainly, elections are important, but understanding democracy and freedom are essential to building blocks leading to elections. Given the situation then and now, there is no doubt that Palestinians would overwhelmingly cast their ballot for Hamas. One of the most significant reasons Israel is embroiled in its current war with Hamas today is the 2006 free popular election. (...) Hamas should have never been permitted to run. (...) Democracy must defend itself (...). Should "a revitalized PA" come to pass, none of the old guards can be allowed to be up for election. They represent – they embody, they symbolize – the anti-democratic PA regime. (...)

Micah Halpern, JPO, 05.12.23

### **Enough with painting all Palestinians with a broad brush**

(...) in every society, just like among the Jewish People, there are some like that and some like that. It is not easy to throw out generalizations like "all Jews are the same," or "all girls want the same thing." There is nothing more simplistic than that. To say that there is no difference between Hamas and the PLO under Fatah's leadership is the ultimate way of saying that Israel is not prepared to talk to the Palestinian entity that recognized us, whose leader opposes the use of violence and believes in a two-state solution. The "theory" of "no difference" is factually wrong, of course, but historically helps the peace refusers: If they are all "the same," it means that the pragmatic agent willing to compromise will eternally be misleading. (...) the return of the PA will involve a return to the peace process, after which a Palestinian state will be established in the West

Bank and Gaza (...). After the war, we will find ourselves in a conflict regarding the return of the PA to Gaza vis-à-vis a US administration that is closest to Israel than ever before. The events of October 7, in addition to the intelligence failure, are the result of a mistaken policy that favored Hamas, which was not ready for a political compromise, over the Palestinian cause that wants such a compromise. Whoever refuses to negotiate with the PLO continues to adhere to the old "concept," like the same blind horse that falls into a pit time and time again, and puts us all at risk.

Yossi Beilin, IHY, 10.12.23

### **Israel must start talking about Gaza's postwar future**

Prime Minister Netanyahu's refusal to promote discussions about Gaza's governance postwar is concerning for the Israeli public. (...) The critical phases of the exceptionally just war in Gaza might conclude soon. (...) Alongside military efforts, instilling hope in the civilian population is crucial, offering a vision of a brighter future. Conversely, the loss of political momentum and the prolonged presence of the Israeli forces in combat zones, subjected to the anger and immense suffering of the locals, may trigger a catastrophic situation, entrenching us in the turmoil of Gaza and potentially leading to heightened violence. (...) The PA has demonstrated its inability to control the territory and, in fact, has encouraged the terrorist elements to this day by transferring allowances to terrorists and educating the younger generation on the values of jihad. So, unfortunately, it is no longer part of the solution. (...) The only direct way to ensure the success of a withdrawal from the Gaza Strip is in exchange for demilitarization and strong international supervision to prevent Gaza from turning into a terror stronghold. (...) The sooner Palestinians embrace disarmament and prioritize educating future generations for peace – measurable through surveys and research – the quicker the transfer of responsibility for their territory and people will occur. (...)

Uri Halperin, JPO, 12.12.23

### **Biden mistrusts Netanyahu motives as he itches for a public fight**

(...) The president's words reflect the deep divide between the administration and the government in Jerusalem which has emerged into public view over two points, the first being the continued war in Gaza. (...) Biden is facing a presidential election next year and the images of civilians killed in Gaza, has

prompted his unusually harsh accusation that Israel was indiscriminately bombing the Strip in its war against Hamas. But the U.S. is also looking ahead at the day after the war and was enraged by the public remarks made by Netanyahu that he would not allow the involvement of the Palestinian Authority in the management of Gaza. (...) The prime minister's position would prevent a two-state solution, which in the U.S. position is the only viable end to the conflict, and would also upend any chance for a deal that would normalize relations between Israel and Saudi Arabia, which Biden had hoped would be his main foreign policy achievement ahead of the elections. (...) The president's seemingly off the cuff comments show Biden's frustration and concern that he is once again being misled by Netanyahu who may be seeking a public showdown.

Itamar Eichner, YED, 13.12.23

### **Israelis Must Reject Government's False Promises of 'Perfect Security'**

We can already discuss a victory image, because there won't be a greater victory than what we're seeing now in Gaza. Even if we kill a few thousand more Gazans, destroy hundreds of additional tunnels and serve up the head of Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar on a silver platter, the situation that has been created in Gaza is the "trophy" that we will continue to grapple with. (...) In Gaza, over two million people with nothing to lose are about to explode, because the population in Gaza can't be defeated any more than it has been. No security buffer, international force or messiah can stop them from becoming a breeding ground of the threat that will develop against us if it is not dealt with immediately. (...) Netanyahu's solution is a buffer zone deep inside Gaza, which means in practice that the entire Gaza Strip will become a security zone and that the Israeli military will remain there for years. The same is true of Lebanon (...). According to the "zones" strategy, Israel will directly rule over more than six million people who live in three extremely hot territories – the West Bank, south Lebanon and Gaza – that will bear most of the brunt of the IDF's strength and suck up the state budget. There is not and cannot be any other practical translation of the government's false promises of "perfect security." (...) A possible solution is for the war cabinet to make way for a real political-economic cabinet which will draw the road map that will serve as the basis for a renewal of normal life, from the understanding that some threats will continue to exist. This understanding obligates us to recognize that the PA, even in its

present state, is an essential support structure for administering civilian life not only in the West Bank but in Gaza too, while the IDF continues to operate alongside it to prevent the renewal of Hamas military activity, as it does in the West Bank. Bringing calm to these two arenas could also affect the northern front, which was ignited due to the war in Gaza. It's a front that isn't going anywhere, because even if Hezbollah is distanced beyond the Litani River, long-range missiles will continue to pose a threat. But at least in the immediate future, it's possible that bringing quiet to Gaza with extensive humanitarian aid would also restore the Lebanese border to the relatively quiet, mutual-deterrence balance that has characterized it since the 2006 Second Lebanon War. (...)

Zvi Bar'el, HAA, 14.12.23

### **3. UN-Vollversammlung für sofortigen Waffenstillstand**

*Die UN-Generalversammlung hat sich mit der notwendigen Zweidrittelmehrheit in einer Resolution für einen humanitären Waffenstillstand im Gazastreifen ausgesprochen und die sofortige Freilassung aller Geiseln verlangt. Zehn Mitgliedstaaten stimmten gegen die von Ägypten eingebrachte Resolution, 23 Mitgliedstaaten enthielten sich bei der Abstimmung, darunter auch Deutschland. Als Grund nannte das Auswärtige Amt in Berlin die Tatsache, dass das Hamas-Massaker vom 7. Oktober in dem Text keine Erwähnung fand. In Israel und andernorts mehrte sich unterdessen die Empörung darüber, dass die am 7. Oktober gegen israelische Frauen verübte grausame sexualisierte Gewalt auf so wenig Aufmerksamkeit stößt. Bei dem Massaker am 7. Oktober kam es zu Massenvergewaltigungen und grausamen Verstümmelungen von noch lebenden Frauen und an Leichen. Die Vereinten Nationen und insbesondere Frauenorganisationen wie UN Women, so der Vorwurf, hätten angesichts der sexualisierten Gräueltaten der Hamas zunächst zu lange geschwiegen und dann nicht eindeutig genug reagiert.*

### **The world has turned a blind eye to Hamas sexual violence**

In the immediate aftermath of the horrific and inhumane abuses, sexual assaults, and rapes inflicted on Israeli women by Hamas on October 7, the world remained largely silent. For more than a month and a half, the condemnation that was undeniably necessary never materialized. (...) Future generations

will surely look back with disdain at today's youth who, while trampling on Israeli flags worldwide, seemingly dismiss the terrible traumas suffered by Israeli women. (...) Only at the end of last week did UN Women finally condemn the rapes against Israelis (...). One day, when the world reflects on the atrocities committed and the collective blind eye turned towards them, those who ignored the suffering of the victims will be viewed as complicit – akin to those who once, not long ago, disregarded the plight of the Jews.

Editorial, JPO, 12.12.23

### **'Genocide' panel is another UN failure**

The United Nations, established in the aftermath of the Holocaust with the promise of preventing atrocities, is failing its founding principles. (...) Instead of promoting justice and fairness, the UN continues its obsession with censuring Israel, diverting attention from the crimes committed by Hamas. (...) The international community must be aware of the implications of such actions, and recognize that a fair and balanced approach is essential for fostering lasting peace in the region. (...) While the plight of the Palestinian people is undoubtedly a legitimate concern, the UN's disproportionate attention to this specific cause contributes to the impunity enjoyed by Hamas. By failing to foster moderation in Palestinian areas, the UN – perhaps inadvertently – becomes a cover for Hamas to perpetuate an environment that enables conflict while condemning Israel. (...) The UN's distorted focus on Israel is a disheartening betrayal of its founding principles. For the organization to fulfill its intended role as a promoter of peace and justice, it must abandon biased narratives and embrace a fair, comprehensive approach to addressing the complexities of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. (...)

Editorial, JPO, 13.12.23

### **UN Women's Halting Response to Hamas Attack Requires US Action**

The UN Women organization calls itself a "global champion for women and girls" but has failed in its response to the countless acts of violence—including sexual violence—committed by Hamas against women and girls on October 7. The US must demand UN Women redress this scandal — or face consequences. (...) UN Women remained silent about the sexual violence (...). All the while, the organization (...) tweeted over and over and over in support of a ceasefire, which would allow Hamas time to regroup and attack Israel again. UN Women

also tweeted about the toll the war took on the people of Gaza, without blaming Hamas for causing the death toll due to its use of human shields. UN Women uncritically cited data from Gaza's Hamas-run health ministry. UN Women has also published profiles of affected women in Gaza but never featured stories of women and girls victimized by Hamas on October 7 and since. (...) It took until December 1, 55 days after the Hamas attack, for UN Women to release a statement (...). Women and girls around the world—including those murdered, sexually assaulted, and kidnapped on October 7—deserve much better.

Alan Goldsmith, TOI, 13.12.23

### **Israel should embrace UNGA ceasefire resolution...in a bear hug**

(...) The resolution includes three demands. Almost all the attention has been paid to the first demand, an immediate humanitarian ceasefire. Little attention has been paid to the other two demands. (...) Israel would get all the hostages back immediately and unconditionally. (...) Since Israel doesn't hold any hostages, this provision only applies to the terror groups. No terrorists would be released to terrorize and murder again. The wording seems somewhat strange, given that there would be no need for humanitarian access if they were released immediately. But in case it wasn't feasible to release them all at the same time, this would provide for Red Cross access to immediately deal with health issues if the release took a few days. The second reiterates the demand "that all parties comply with their obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law, notably with regard to the protection of civilians." This also would only affect the actions of the terrorists in Gaza, since Israel complies with international law anyway. It entails an end to terror attacks, including rocket attacks. It also entails no more using civilians as human shields and no more attacks from civilian areas, since both endanger civilians. (...) complete adherence to the UNGA's ceasefire resolution would fulfill all of Israel's war aims other than making all the perpetrators pay a price, and Israel could still go after them if they left Gaza. If the terror groups agree, it's a win for Israel and life can slowly return in the Gaza envelope. If the terror groups refuse to agree, they will undeniably be to blame for whatever happens to the people living in Gaza. Good enough reason for Israel's government to embrace the ceasefire resolution in a bear hug.

Alan Stein, TOI, 13.12.23

### **The Ambassador of Israeli Immaturity**

Israel's ambassador to the UN, Gilad Erdan, continues to bring shame onto Israel, casting it in a ridiculous light. It's unfortunate that at such a critical time, there was no consideration of sending this childish ambassador home and replacing him with someone of stature to represent us in a more dignified way. (...) Erdan's style is not just an expression of his mental maturity. His consistent choice of gimmicks (let us not forget the yellow Star of David he wore as a sign of protest, relegating the State of Israel to the status of a death camp) is indicative of a broader issue, which is that Israeli intelligence is trapped inside a mindset of hasbara that "explains" Israel. It appears that Israel really believes it can remove problems through some "ingenious" display or another. After all, we are living in the era of Netanyahu, the maestro of presentations. (...) Israel doesn't have a notion of what it is, of where it is going, and what vision it has for the future in its relations with the Palestinians living under its military rule. Israel (...) refuses to share responsibility for what happened to it, preferring to see itself as a Jewish victim facing a spontaneous wave of antisemitism (...) rather than bearing the heavy burden of responsibility, without which it will be impossible to change reality. So maybe, just leave Erdan where he is after all.

Carolina Landsmann, HAA, 15.12.23

## **4. Weitere Themen**

### **Geiseln im Gazastreifen**

#### **While making tough choices, we must keep a unified front**

(...) For Israel, seeing 110 captives – 86 Israelis and 24 foreigners – freed during dramatic nightly releases was a cathartic event that brought the country together in a giant embrace of the reunited families. (...) Israel did everything possible to keep the truce going while Hamas stonewalled, deceived, and made it clear that it couldn't be relied upon to uphold any agreement to enable more hostages to come home. (...) As the country's political and military leaders have rightly pointed out, the success in forcing Hamas to agree to release the 110 hostages was due to the IDF's military campaign in Gaza. Only such overwhelming pressure on Hamas can enable the release of the remaining 130 or so cap-

tives still held by Hamas. Both sides of the equation, hostages first or toppling Hamas first, have validity, but presenting a unified national front at this time is of utmost importance. We must keep in mind that the common enemy is Hamas, not each other. Editorial, JPO, 04.12.23

#### **Protests undermine hostage rescue effort and strengthen Hamas' negotiation position**

(...) From day one they mobilized hundreds of thousands of soldiers and went to war. Soldiers have subsequently died, while hostage protesters have demonstrated, in front of the Knesset, in front of Netanyahu's office, and house, in front of the Defense Ministry's Tel Aviv headquarters, and around the country. Netanyahu, and the Israeli government, though, are not the ones who took hostages. (...) When Hamas sees Israelis respond to hostage situations by protesting their own government, Hamas sees that the Israeli government is under pressure to make further concessions. That only (...) strengthens Hamas's negotiating position, weakens Israel's, and makes it harder to secure the release of the very people the protests are intended to save, endangering their lives. (...) this is a moment of crisis that calls for unity, and for working together, not for (...) for protesting one another. (...) Baruch Stein, YED, 08.12.23

### **Kritik an Netanyahu**

#### **Netanyahu has been exposed as a skilled manipulator**

Recent polls indicated that only a quarter of voters, and half of Likud voters, believe the current Benjamin (Netanyahu), is better suited to be prime minister than the other Benjamin (Gantz), who garners the support of half of those polled. Gantz's numbers are no surprise – in difficult times, people seek change and hope. (...) As a skilled manipulator, Netanyahu strives to inculcate that Judaism and the Left are diametrically opposed, in which case the Left threatens our very basic identity as Jews. Only Netanyahu will protect it (...) and defend it (...) against those who rise up to threaten it (...) after it (...) survived 2,000 years of Diaspora, and so on. (...) People, like situations, are complex, not the simpletons as we are viewed and treated when hollow slogans are directed at us in a deep baritone. We have numerous real challenges and true divides. The time has come to dispense with the fake ones. Tova Herzl, JPO, 04.12.23

### **My Brothers in Arms, Stop Netanyahu Now**

One cannot but marvel at the enlistment of civil society during this time of severe crisis for Israeli society. The large void left by the government, which didn't function during the first weeks of the war, was filled by civil society. (...) But existing in the warm heart of consensus carries a great danger to the organization itself, and consequently to Israeli society at large. It blurs the main issue and goal the organization set itself upon establishment. There is an existential need to fight the dangerous trends in our society, whose concrete manifestation until the outbreak of the war was the attempt to effect a regime coup. (...) The truth revealed daily is that a man who is corrupt to the bone, who is responsible for the destruction of the state's institutions and the greatest disaster in its history, shows no signs of remorse or willingness for self-reckoning, even in the face of 1,200 deaths, some murdered with the greatest cruelty imaginable. What guides him, even at this time, are personal and political interests. Benjamin Netanyahu won't change. (...) I call upon you, my brothers and sisters in arms, not to become intoxicated by the warm embrace of the consensus and to enlist again for the struggle. Ignoring the need to remove Netanyahu immediately may prove to be a strategic error and a missed historic opportunity to create the change, without which Israeli society's future is in doubt.

Uri Arad, HAA, 07.12.23

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