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1. Katar verspricht Millionenhilfe nach neuerlichem Schlagabtausch zwischen Israel und den Islamisten im Gazastreifen

Die Regierung in Doha will mit 480 Millionen US-Dollar helfen, die Wirtschaftskrise in der Westbank und im Gazastreifen zu lindern. Die Zuschüsse und Kredite sollen in Gesundheit und Bildung in den palästinensischen Gebieten sowie die Infrastruktur im Gazastreifen fließen. Bei einer erneuten Eskalation zwischen Israel und palästinensischen Extremisten im Gazastreifen sind vier Israelis und, nach Berichten der palästinensischen Nachrichtenagentur Maan, 27 Palästinenser getötet worden. Der ägyptische Geheimdienst und UN-Vertreter vermittelten zwischen Israel und Hamas, die sich gegenseitig boykottieren. Die Ägypter erreichten den Waffenstillstand unmittelbar vor Beginn des islamischen Fastenmonats Ramadan sowie den Gedenkfeierlichkeiten für die gefallenen Soldat_innen und Terroropfer, den Unabhängigkeitstag in Israel und den Eurovision Songcontest, der in diesem Jahr in Tel Aviv stattfand. Innerhalb von nur zwei Tagen griff Israels Luftwaffe 350 Ziele im Gazastreifen an, aus dem umgekehrt knapp 700 Raketen und Mörsergranaten auf Israel abgeschossen wurden. Etwa ein Drittel davon konnte vom Raketenabwehrsystem „Eisenkuppel“ abgefangen werden. „Wir haben die Hamas und den Islamischen Dschihad mit großer Macht geschlagen“, kommentierte Israels amtierender

Regierungschef Benjamin Netanyahu und kündigte an, dass „der Feldzug noch nicht vorbei ist“. Fast im Wortlaut resümierte auch Sami Abu Suhri, Sprecher der Hamas. Der Konflikt sei erst beendet, wenn die Palästinenser „ihr Recht bekommen“. Seit gut einem Jahr ebbt die Gewalt alle paar Wochen auf, es kommt zu Raketenangriffen gegen Israel und Luftangriffen auf Gaza, bis beide Seiten rasch wieder einlenken und die Waffen ruhen lassen. Der letzte Schlagabtausch war härter als die vorherigen. Die Gewaltbereitschaft auf beiden Seiten nimmt erkennbar zu. Zum ersten Mal seit dem Krieg 2014 kam es wieder zu vielen Toten und zu der gezielten Hinrichtung eines Hamas-Funktionärs. Kritik an dem Waffenstillstand äußerte Bezalel Smotrich, Abgeordneter der Partei Vereinte Rechte, potentieller Koalitionspartner Netanyahus. Aus taktischen Gründen, so twitterte Smotrich, hätte die Schlacht in Gaza „mit 700 toten Terroristen“ enden müssen – „einen für jede Rakete“. Ex-Generalstabschef Benny Gantz, Chef der größten Oppositionspartei Blau-Weiß, sprach von einer „weiteren Kapitulation“ vor der Hamas.

Hamas, Islamic Jihad and the test of the Gaza factions

(...) Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar knows Israelis all too well. (...) The timing of this round could not be better for him, with Israel about to mark its memorial

day for fallen soldiers, celebrate its 71st Independence Day and host the prestigious Eurovision Song Contest, which if cancelled, will reflect badly on the country and impact Israel's economy and tourism. He can ramp up the pressure on Israel, knowing it cannot escape its commitments, both domestic and international. (...) In Cairo, talks continue between Egyptian mediators and Hamas and Islamic Jihad leaders. (...) Sinwar's list of demands has been known in Israel since it was made, before the outbreak of this violent exchange. It includes an increase of aid money - to be delivered in cash, engineering projects to be sanctioned, and a substantial extension to the Gaza fishing zone to name a few. Israel so far has not been willing to comply, but concessions will have to be made when the inevitable ceasefire is negotiated. Israel would be wise, when presenting its own demands, to insist that Hamas rein in the Iranian-backed Islamic Jihad. Whether Sinwar can or will is another matter. Elior Levy. YED, 05.05.19

Things have to change

The citizens of Israel are paying a bitter price for the last 18 years of an absence of a policy on the Gaza Strip and the "containment" approach to the events of the past year. (...) Hamas is raising its head. It is expanding its rocket fire to communities far from the border and lobbing insane barrages at the Israel-Gaza frontier. (...) If the decision-makers had meted out an unequivocal response a year ago, or a year and a half ago, when the border incidents began, this wouldn't be our reality now. (...) an entire region of the country has become the victim of a terrorist organization that is extorting our entire nation. This equation has to change. This is a region that played a historic role in the founding of the state. A part of the country whose pioneer elderly were the ones that laid down the country's borders. This past year, they have seen their grandchildren and great-grandchildren exhausted by terrorism. This reality has gone on for 18 years straight and increased over the past year. (...) We have been patient, we trusted the decision-makers' considerations and allow them to explore various ways of restoring quiet throughout the area. A 10th escalation is too much. It's time to act bravely and daringly to bring about a change. The prime minister received a mandate for another four years in office from us, the citizens of Israel. I am calling on him to honor that mandate and live up to his obligation to us.

Gadi Yarkoni, IHY, 05.05.19

Another ceasefire

(...) Although officials denied that the timing of the Eurovision had anything to do with the efforts to quickly end this round of hostilities, it was clearly on people's minds. (...) Similarly, that the end of the hostilities coincided with the start of Ramadan is also no coincidence. It is doubtful that either Hamas or Islamic Jihad wanted Gaza to be under war conditions during the month when Muslims fast during the day but have festive meals and gatherings every night. (...) Despite Gazans' public joy at every Israeli fatality and at perceived PR victories, the ordinary residents of the Strip are not eager to suffer another devastating war. (...) There is a feeling that a ceasefire is just that: a temporary halt in the hostilities. Both sides know this. There can be no chance of peace without a real change to the status quo involving diplomatic measures. (...) Netanyahu seems set on a course of permanently separating the Palestinian Authority-controlled areas in the West Bank from Hamas-controlled Gaza and linking Gaza's fate in some way to Egypt. Possibly, Netanyahu is waiting for US President Donald Trump's long-anticipated "deal of the century" for a more comprehensive approach. Since the Palestinians have already rejected the deal, sight unseen, it has very little chance of success. Sadly, another round of hostilities likely lurks just over the horizon. If Hamas cared for its own people, they could prevent it. Editorial, JPO, 06.05.19

Netanyahu and the right are weak in the face of Hamas

(...) Netanyahu and the right are weak. The Israeli prime minister is the weak right. (...) No one in Gaza is afraid of him, and rightly so. When fighting terrorism, everything is psychological (...) emotion and perception determine the end result, not facts. The word terror literally means great fear, and this is the secret of its power - not the ability to overcome the enemy, but the ability to sow great fear. As such, in confronting Hamas, psychology is much more important than the disparity between army strength. Thus the organization of several thousand fighters without armor, without an air force, without intelligence capabilities and with rockets built from irrigation pipes, has managed to madden one of the strongest countries in the world for more than 10 years. (...) The prime minister of Israel asked, pleaded Hamas to keep accepting the tribute that he pays the terror group every month. (...) tens of millions of dollars in cash, delivered every month in suitcases from the rich uncle in Qatar to keep the

Hamas regime alive. Netanyahu needed quiet in Gaza to win the elections last month, form a right-wing government that will protect him from his corruption indictments, and pass the weeks until the Eurovision Song Contest and Ramadan are over. (...) Hamas had a clear interest in Netanyahu being elected, and so kept quiet until that happened. But now that he has been elected, the terror group is no longer willing to play his game. (...) Netanyahu is trying to undermine the Palestinian Authority, which both strengthens and emboldens Hamas. (...) Netanyahu does not take initiative to really improve the situation there. Instead, he leaves it the Qatari uncle, while he focuses on weakening the PA as much as he can and dragging his feet on every initiative aimed at bringing about real economic change in the Strip. For Netanyahu, like all the weak right, has no strategy other than to do nothing and hope nothing comes of anything. (...)

Yoram Yuval, YED, 06.05.19

Lift the siege on Gaza

(...) The time has come for a fundamental solution, and there is only one such thing: the complete removal of the Israeli blockade of Gaza by land, air and sea. (...) every resident of Gaza who asks to leave should be able to do so without interference. (...) To advance this solution, a dialogue and coordination with Egypt, with other Arab bodies, with Washington and with the international community must be forged – with everyone who will be asked to take part in building the project. Doesn't this hold a risk for Israel? Of course, but the military balance of forces allows us in Israel to take the risk, considering the benefit and accomplishment we hope to achieve. It will likely require a long interim period of mutual deterrence, similar to what we have with Hezbollah on the Lebanese border. Let's not make it conditional on the political status of Gaza: It doesn't matter if it's an independent country, whether the connection with the Palestinian Authority is tightened and preserved, or even whether we see an Egyptian protectorate in which the Gaza Strip will be part of the Sinai Peninsula. Once the new government is formed in Jerusalem, it should fundamentally rethink these matters and strive for a permanent solution. This is the answer we must provide to the residents of the Israeli communities near the Gaza Strip. They are desperate for such a solution. The new government must not disappoint them.

Shlomo Gazit, HAA, 07.05.19

The real danger of not winning in Gaza

(...) If one surveys Israel's enemies in terms of fire-power and ability to do harm to the Jewish State, Hamas has to rank near the bottom. (...) Hamas is reported to have a stockpile of between 5,000 and 20,000 mostly short-range rockets. But Hezbollah reportedly has around 14,000 Zelzal-2 rockets, which have a range of up to 200 kilometers, and between 100,000 and 150,000 non-precision rockets. (...) Iran has been busy upgrading these missiles with far greater precision. (...) Of course, fire-power and numbers of weapons are not the only thing that matters in warfare. If it were, Hamas would not last a day for the unrelenting punishment Israel could achieve against it. What is missing in Israel (...), is the lack of commitment to victory and its ability and desire to complete the mission until the opponent feels defeated. (...) What is most ironic is that the Israelis most under fire generally call on the political leadership to let the IDF win. (...) The people call for victory because they know anything short of that prolongs their misery. (...) First and foremost, it frees the people of the South to regain their lives (...). Secondly, it would free the Palestinian people in Gaza living under Hamas from being pawns in their unrelenting war against Israel, intrigues against other Islamist groups, and the wider Arab and Islamic world which uses them to score political points one against the other. Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, it would send a strong message to Beirut and Tehran, among others, that the era of Israeli deterrence is returning. Israel is not prepared to countenance any threat and will react with overwhelming force. (...)

Alex Selsky, TOI, 13.05.19

2. Holocaustgedenktag, Gedenken an die gefallenen Soldat_innen und Terroropfer und Unabhängigkeitstag

Eine Woche nach dem Holocaustgedenktag gedenkt Israel der gefallenen Soldat_innen und Opfer von Krieg und Terror. Um 20.00 Uhr am Vorabend und um 11 Uhr am Gedenktag selbst fordern Sirenen für zwei Minuten zum kollektiven Innehalten auf. Vier Israelis waren erst wenige Tage zuvor bei erneuten kriegesischen Auseinandersetzungen mit der islamistischen Hamas und dem Islamischen Dschihad getötet worden. Auf der palästinensischen Seite starben 27 Menschen bei den israelischen Luftangriffen im Gazasteifen. Parallel zu den offiziellen Veranstaltungen am Vorabend des Gedenktages versammelten sich rund 9000 Israelis und 100 Pa-

*l*ästinenser_innen zur alternativen Gedenkveranstaltung für die Opfer des Konflikts. Für einige Dutzend israelischer Extremisten bot der Abend im Tel Aviver Hayarkon-Park willkommenen Anlass, ihrem Zorn gegen die Leute im Land Luft zu machen, die noch an einen Frieden glauben. Mit vulgären, rassistischen Beschimpfungen empfangen sie die Teilnehmer_innen der Veranstaltung: „Es gibt einen anderen Weg“, bei dem Israelis und Palästinenser gemeinsam um ihre im Konflikt getöteten Angehörigen und Freunde trauern. Die alternative Gedenkzeremonie findet seit 2006 statt. Am Unabhängigkeitstag, der unmittelbar auf den Gedenktag für die gefallenen Soldat_innen und Terroropfer folgt, lockte die traditionelle Flugschau der Luftwaffe Tausende Besucher_innen an den Strand von Tel Aviv. Israel feierte in diesem Jahr seinen 71. Geburtstag. Laut Zentralem Statistikamt leben heute 9.008.700 Menschen in Israel und damit mehr als zehnmals so viele wie zur Gründung des Staates im Jahr 1948.

Why the March of the Living is so important

(...) One of the greatest challenges of Holocaust remembrance is bringing the information about the atrocities that occurred some 80 years ago to the younger generation. It's a huge task, as evidenced by the latest surveys (...) which reveal that an incredibly large number of people either don't know or don't believe that six million Jews were murdered in the Nazi genocide. Many have never heard of Auschwitz. This is a very worrying statistic, which points to the younger generation being incredibly ignorant about the horrific events of the Holocaust. Dwindling knowledge of the Holocaust is (...) a social one, with people treating the Holocaust less and less as a grave lesson in history. This is evident by the rise of anti-Semitic attacks all throughout the world, which have skyrocketed in recent years. Political leaders, institutions and even ordinary people are becoming more accepting of hateful and inciting discourse, which sometimes carry an apologetic undertone toward the Nazis and their successors. (...) our ability to combat this phenomenon is diminishing. Holocaust survivors are dying at an unprecedented rate and those still alive are both physically and mentally weak in order to continue telling their stories which describe the horrors committed by the Nazi regime. In a few short years there will not be a single Holocaust survivor left. The heavy responsibility of keeping the memory alive will be shouldered by their sons, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, in order to remind the world of where anti-Semitism, racism, hatred and ignorance

can potentially lead to. (...) This is our burden, this is our mission, and this is our indispensable contribution to humanity as a whole.

Dr. Shmuel Rosenman, YED. 02.05.19

Worrying trends 80 years after the Holocaust

These past few months alone we have witnessed horrific attacks on cemeteries and university campuses (...) 80 years after the Holocaust, in which one-third of world Jewry was murdered, a Claims Conference survey showed that almost half (49%) of millennials in the United States could not name a single concentration camp or ghetto. (...) they never even heard of Auschwitz, Treblinka or the Warsaw Ghetto. (...) This is the time for educators and clergy to do something (...). Hollywood must rise to the occasion, especially when the bedrock of Western civilization is under threat. If we look at the tens of thousands of films that have been produced over the past decade, we will be shocked to find how small a percentage of them deal with the crucial subjects of hate, bigotry and antisemitism that now threaten our planet. (...) We must be certain that our children and grandchildren know the unbelievable truth: that out of the 13 men who sat around the table at Wannsee plotting the extermination of an entire people, seven had earned the equivalent of a PhD from Europe's most prestigious universities. (...) it's not enough to just imagine yourself as having been a slave. Rather, you should rise up – in your community, in your classroom, in your place of employment – and demonstrate through some humanitarian act that you understand the difference between imagining a bitter herb and tasting one, of what it means to have been a Holocaust survivor, a slave or a victim of hate. When we understand that, our world will be a lot safer, and America will continue to be the land of the free and the home of the brave – and the State of Israel's greatest friend. (...)

Marvin Hier, JPO, 05.05.19

Danger: Peace combatants

(...) the state has denied the requests of 181 Palestinians to take part in the Israeli-Palestinian memorial ceremony on the eve of the Memorial Day for Israel's fallen soldiers (...) claiming that on Memorial Day, closure is imposed on the West Bank. Last year (...) the High Court of Justice revoked the decision, ruling that it was "tainted with real lack of balance and lack of reasonableness." A year later, the defense establishment has not learned any lesson from the High Court's ruling. It has returned to its evil ways, blatantly ignoring the High Court's previ-

ous ruling (...). The memorial service is one of the last joint, hope-inspiring events that are still held by both peoples. (...) even this heartwarming meeting, held by the victims' representatives from both nations (...) is one step too far for the Israeli defense establishment. Its officials know that every such get-together could again raise the subversive notion that the Palestinians are human beings, just like the Jews. That their mourning is like the Israelis' mourning, and their bereavement is identical to the Israeli kind. The gathering apparently generates in the defense establishment's eyes another grave danger: It could raise the idea that there are still partners to peace among the Palestinians. This is the threat that the Israeli defense establishment is determined to quash in any way possible, even by preventing a joint memorial rally. The very idea that Palestinian peace activists have to ask for the occupier's permission to enter Israel for a memorial rally is outrageous (...)

Editorial, HAA,03.05.19

Israel is independent, but not free

Seventy-one years have passed since Israel declared its independence but the country has yet to fully achieve sovereignty. (...) Generations of pupils no longer know to sketch out a map of the country and can't distinguish between Kiryat Arba and Kiryat Gat (...) or Shfaram and Nablus. Generations of students haven't learned and won't learn about the Palestinian struggle or the Nakba. (...) As it begins the eighth decade of independent statehood, Israel doesn't yet know the meaning of freedom. It is imprisoned inside a dual siege, the one imposed by the residents of Gaza and the West Bank and the one that is smashing its values from within. (...) Peace means demarcating final borders, sufficing with some partition plan, narrowing the realm of illegal sovereignty and giving up most of the nationalist weeds that have sprouted beyond the Green Line. (...) And yet the sense of being besieged from within is much more dangerous. (...) It lies in schoolbooks, in racist legislation, hateful demands by rabbis, nasty political declarations, in posts by hate-filled ignoramuses. It's a siege that disguises itself as culture, Jewish identity and national awareness. It recruits loyal volunteers and gatekeepers who locate and mark those who dare to break through. (...) Israel is under siege, is guarded by thought police, yearns for fresh air but it's an independent country. Independent, but not free.

Zvi Bar'el. HAA, 08.05.19

Joint Memorial Day event a deception

The moment the refugee problem came into being, the demand for their return was not for the sake of peace but rather for the sake of the destruction of Israel. (...) In recent decades, the Palestinians were repeatedly offered options for the establishment of a state on 95% of the territories (...). They rebuffed all offers. The main issue was not the settlements but the Palestinians demand for the "right of return." (...) Palestinian stubbornness against recognizing the idea of two states for two peoples is based on the fact that such an acknowledgement will prevent a mass return of refugees, explicitly or implicitly. In order to advance a peace agreement, the peace camp should have not only pressured the government against building outside of major settlement blocs, but also declare to the Palestinians that the demand for the right of return is a demand for national suicide. (...) when a group like the Combatants for Peace adopts the rejectionist Arab and Palestinian stance and encourages the demand for the "right of return," it is not advancing the cause of peace but rather of rejectionism. They are adopting the stance of those who seek to destroy. They are not fighting for freedom, independence or an end to the "occupation," but against the very existence of the State of Israel. (...) Most Israeli leftists support compromise, reconciliation and two states for two peoples. They do not support the fantasy of destroying Israel through demanding the "right of return." The Left-wing Meretz Party also opposes the "right of return." The moment the organization behind the joint Memorial Day Ceremony openly declares its support for a demand intended to deny the right of Israel to exist as a Jewish and democratic state — it has crossed a line. The joint ceremony is a deception. (...) The ceremony does not deserve support, not of leftists nor of the High Court.

Ben-Dror Yemini, YED, 07.05.19

The man responsible for the Nakba

It was the Mufti who fabricated the myth of "al-Aqsa is in danger," according to which the Jews are plotting to destroy the mosque at the Temple Mount complex and rebuild the Third Temple on its ruins. He was the main instigator to the anti-Jewish riots of 1920 and 1929. (...) The Nakba did not begin in 1948. It began with the exodus of the elite, fleeing the Mufti's terror. And who supported the Mufti? Nazi Germany. (...) The victims of this coalition were mainly Muslims though. Arab society in Palestine began to unravel while the Jewish Yishuv (settlement) prospered as they built a new port and began

producing their own foodstuffs so as not to be reliant on the local Arab population. (...) the Mufti was hated by many of the refugees who knew that he was responsible for their plight. The man who took an extremely radical line, eliminated his opponents, caused Arab flight from Palestine before the partition decision, brought about the anti-Jewish riots in Baghdad, opposed any arrangement — he is the man most responsible for the Palestinian Nakba of 1948. There were many opponents to the Mufti in the Arab world. (...) The day the Arabs recognize their responsibility for the Palestinian AND Jewish Nakba and undergo rehabilitation from the false Palestinian narrative, the chance for an agreement and reconciliation will be greater. It must happen, for us and for them. (...)

Ben-Dror Yemini, YED, 15.05.19

3. Gefährliche Spannungen zwischen USA und Iran

Die Spannungen zwischen dem Weißen Haus und dem Iran, die sich seit dem Ausstieg der USA aus dem Atomvertrag mit Teheran stetig verschärfen, nehmen bedrohliche Formen an. Die USA haben eine Flugzeugträgerkampfgruppe in die Region beordert und US-Bürger vor Reisen in den Irak gewarnt, wo der Iran erheblichen Einfluss ausübt. Auf Sabotageakte gegen Schiffe nahe der Straße von Hormus folgten Drohnenangriffe schiitischer Houthi-Rebellen aus dem Jemen auf saudi-arabische Ölanlagen. Der Iran hat jüngst angedroht, nach 60 Tagen wieder mit der Anreicherung von Uran auf mehr als die im internationalen Atomvertrag mit dem Land erlaubten 3,67 Prozent spaltbaren Materials zu beginnen, wenn es kein neues Atomabkommen gebe. Iranische Funktionäre erklärten, das Land könne innerhalb von nur vier Tagen eine Anreicherung auf 20 Prozent erreichen. Wissenschaftlern zufolge wäre dies ein großer Schritt in Richtung einer Anreicherung auf 90 Prozent, der Schwelle für Atombomben. Analysten vermuten, dass bei einer militärischen Auseinandersetzung zwischen den USA und dem Iran auch Israel in den Konflikt einbezogen werden würde, sei es durch Raketenbeschuss von irakischem Boden aus oder direkt aus Syrien, wo die iranische Luftwaffe mehrere Stützpunkte unterhält.

Why is pressure mounting between the U.S. and Iran?

(...) the Trump administration sees Iran's behavior as another instance of why it pulled the U.S. out of

the deal in the first place: the Iranian regime is not trustworthy. (...) Under the 2015 deal, Iran was permitted to enrich uranium for peaceful medical research purposes but was required to sell its surplus. Iran is now immediately keeping its surplus low-enriched uranium, which it had sold overseas. Low enriched uranium may be repurposed to make nuclear weapons. In 60 days, unless its partners take steps to ease its economic isolation, Iran has threatened to remove caps on uranium enrichment levels and resume work on its Arak plutonium nuclear facility. (...) Trump (...) added new sanctions on Iran's metals sector, on top of sanctions already on Iran's financial and energy sectors. (...) Trump (...) wants (...) the deal to collapse and for Iran to acquiesce to its demands that it end all nuclear activity; that Iran stop producing ballistic missiles; that it stop interfering in the region and elsewhere (...); and that it improve human rights for its citizens. (...) The other partners to the deal are committed to resisting the pressure (...). What happens next? Someone blinks. (...)

Ron Kampeas, JPO, 11.05.19

Iran's dilemma

(...) The Iranian regime's ultimate objective is to ensure its own survival, and saving the nuclear deal gives it the ability to manufacture unhindered a large nuclear arsenal within 11 years. In Tehran, officials are worried that the pressure applied by the U.S. administration is meant to expedite regime change, not just curb Iran's nuclear and hegemonic ambitions in the region. Iranian leaders (...) could introduce austerity measures and also wage "economic jihad" (...) by attempting to extort from Europe, through threats, compensation for the financial losses they are expected to incur as a result of the sanctions. They are also seeking to deter the U.S. by threatening them and their allies with the use of military force, under the assumption that President Donald Trump and segments of his administration don't want an escalation. It's (...) possible these threats toward the West are merely a trial balloon, and that the Iranians believe they can avoid having to back them up. These threats put the regime on a course that will only exacerbate its anguish: Europe will be compelled to move toward shedding the nuclear deal and there will be a greater probability of an escalation. (...) the Iranians would rather wait until the next U.S. presidential election before making their decision, in the hope that Trump is replaced by a Democratic candidate who will restore the nuclear deal. (...) The Americans want to knock the

Iranians off balance and force them to make a move before the next U.S. election. The Iranian regime's dilemma: Adhere to the nuclear deal or trash it outright and jeopardize its survival, or succumb to the pressure and agree to renegotiate the deal. At this stage, the regime is rejecting the possibility of surrender, although their failure to boost the economy, together with festering popular unrest, could ultimately induce it to choose this course. Israel needs to support the U.S. in its efforts to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons. It must be prepared for the possibility that an escalation in the Persian Gulf will lead to a clash with Iran's regional proxies, chief among them Hezbollah, Palestinian Islamic Jihad and Hamas.

Yossi Kuperwasser, IHY, 13.05.19

Trump and Iran: How the war will start

The warning lights are flashing more brightly than ever. (...) How will America handle this form of escalation with Iran? Will a direct, premeditated attack on U.S. troops by Iranian proxies in Iraq and Syria draw the United States into a conflict at the core: a major, all-out U.S. war against Iran? (...) there's potentially a lot more than just good old-fashioned "gunboat diplomacy" (...) Were it to transpire, make no mistake, this would be a very big war, one that could rapidly escalate into a conflict that would unfold in a much more violent and costly way than the two Gulf Wars involving the United States and Iraq from previous decades. (...) The U.S. Congress, (...) must pause and turn its gaze to the real and immediate danger of escalation at the edge. (...) At this critical juncture, America's elected representatives in both chambers will need to soberly consider the nation's carefully worded 1973 War Powers Act (...) rarely enforced, it strives to balance the power placed in Congress to declare war with the need for the Commander and Chief to have utmost flexibility in meeting the national security exigencies of the United States in confronting any real or imminent military conflict (...). Recent votes on the National Emergency border wall and the Yemen conflagration reveal that a number of Republicans in the Senate are willing to stand up with a loud "No." When it comes to a major confrontation with Iran and its proxies, the stakes will be far higher. As a nation, Americans collectively pull together at vital moments when American lives and treasure are at stake. No foreign adversary should doubt American resolve in responding to threats abroad, even during times of domestic uncertainty.

Warren Getler, HAA, 13.05.19

A U.S.-Iran confrontation will inevitably include Israel

(...) there are at least four scenarios for a possible Iranian attack in Israel. The most likely scenario is the launch of missiles from Iraq. The second scenario includes firing missiles and dispatching armed drones from Syria, alongside terrorist activity along the border fence between the two countries. A third scenario, which is viewed as less likely, involves Hezbollah military activity from Lebanon. This is seen as a lesser threat as Hezbollah is at present at one of its economic low points, and it is doubtful that its leader Hassan Nasrallah would give Israel the opportunity to best him. (...) Israel has been aware of the threat from Iraq for a while. (...) There are still no preparations underway in Israel to deal with this potential threat, but there is a level of awareness among the intelligence agencies. Israel's ability to gather intelligence on what is happening in western Iraq is immeasurably greater than in 1991, when its intelligence agencies were blindly searching for Saddam's mobile rocket batteries and reliant on American satellite images. Israel's offensive capabilities in air and on land against second-tier countries like Iraq are also very different from what they were in 1991. Moreover, Israel has more diplomatic cover than ever before should it choose to embark on a military operation in western Iraq. (...)

Alex Fishman, YED, 15.05.19

4. Medienquerschnitt

ESC 2019 in Tel Aviv

Between the Eurovision and making Hamas face the music

(...) imagine trying to reach safety in 15 seconds if you have to first grab your kids, elderly parents and pets. That's without (...) without creating panic. (...) Interestingly enough, there was not a wave of protest in the Arab world, which is growing tired of the Palestinian insistence on victimhood and handouts. Refreshingly, even the European Union supported Israel's right to defend itself. (...) Life resumes what passes for normal. There will be sirens and fireworks. (...) The babies born this week in Ashkelon will grow up on the stories of how special their births were – tales of joy and fear. And there will be music. Israelis love to sing. Especially this time of year. We sing to remember, we sing to forget; we sing when we're happy and we sing so much when we're sad (...) in times of war, terrorism and remembrance

days. Hence in Tel Aviv, the show had to go on: The Eurovision Song Contest, after all, is nothing if not a form of escapism. Participants and tourists were barely aware of the bombardment of the South at the start of the week. It was obvious that Israelis would much prefer to watch the Eurovision in peace, or just get on with their daily lives, than have to worry about hits of the non-musical kind. It's time for international pressure to force Hamas to change its tune.

Liat Collins, JPO, 09.05.19

Operation Peace for the Eurovision

It is evident for all to see that Hamas held its fire in Gaza only after being handsomely paid. (...) It's hard to shake the feeling that Israel lost twice. First by paying Hamas off and second by ending the fight with no guarantee of quiet on the border. (...) According to the narrative promoted by defense officials, the last three days of fighting were a result of Islamic Jihad's efforts to disrupt the Eurovision Song Contest (...). Their attempts at provocations, however, were not successful. Until last Friday that is, when a sniper in Gaza hit an IDF officer. Israel, though recognizing the provocation for what it was, decided to respond by targeting a Hamas commander, a man responsible for the production of long-range missiles. Israel played into the hands of its enemies, and did so knowingly, opening the door for Hamas to join the party. In fact, it all played out at the exact time that Hamas leaders were discussing a long-term ceasefire with Egyptian negotiators. Could that have been intentional? Hamas may have initially hoped to contain the situation, but was dragged into a longer and more violent round of violence. Both factions suffered massively by hundreds of Israel Air Force attacks and over 2,000 targets in Gaza hit. In the end (...) Israel agreed to accept the second phase of the long-term ceasefire agreement, which means, among other things, construction projects in the Gaza Strip. (...) defense officials talk about a renewed deterrence. But if such a deterrence is now felt by the Palestinian factions, what was the need for the negotiated ceasefire? (...) Israel's military operated under the guidelines set by the government, namely that they should avoid all-out war. They complied. Military actions were carried out with precision. But the political objectives were to save the Eurovision (...). This was undoubtedly the least necessary round of fighting this year. The political leadership must explain the reasons for it. (...)

Alex Fishman, YED, 10.05.19

Trump's Jahrhundertplan für Frieden im Nahen Osten

Why does Israel need the American peace plan?

(...) the plan will be unveiled sometime in June (...) after a new government has been formed in Jerusalem, after Israel's Independence Day and Remembrance Day, and after Ramadan. (...) it seems that the plan will not call for the evacuation of Israeli settlements. (...) while it seems, the Palestinians will get some sort of presence in Jerusalem, it will be minimal and in areas which 99.9% of Israelis have never visited. Such a plan breaks a lot of conventional wisdom when it comes to Israeli-Palestinian peace. The continued presence of settlements and the IDF in the West Bank are enough to keep the Palestinians far away from the negotiating table. This is where the plan potentially gets interesting, and the issue on which American officials are quietest: How will they entice the Palestinians to engage? (...) there are the Gulf states, countries like Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates that Trump has been trying to woo to his side (...). Second is to drop a large amount of money on the table, enough to force the Palestinian leadership to think twice before rejecting. (...) why does Israel even need this American plan? Why doesn't it simply decide for itself and by itself what it wants and then implement that vision? (...) Do we not know how to decide how to end our conflicts and work toward peace? If he only wanted, Netanyahu could decide to do whatever he wants when it comes to the Palestinians. (...) Sovereign nations (...) determine their fates on their own. They don't wait for foreign powers – no matter how supportive or friendly they might be – to tell them what to do. (...)

Yaakov Katz, JPO, 03.05.19

The Palestinian Authority is collapsing, and annexation could follow

(...) freeze is still in effect and, day by day, is bringing the PA closer to collapse. The settlers may end up realizing their annexation fantasy by way of the pocketbook. (...) The occupation and PA corruption have prevented the emergence of a private sector that could create jobs and economic growth, so the PA became by default a major employer and engine of the economy. (...) for those who have work, the public sector is not only a major employer but a well-paying one. (...) it's hard to imagine that rising unemployment and poverty won't spur violence, boost Hamas recruiting in the West Bank and quite possibly lead to the collapse of the PA itself. The Oslo

peace process is dead in the water. Trump's Deal of the Century (...) apparently does little or nothing to satisfy Palestinian political aspirations. With no political role to play, the PA's last raison d'être has been to send money percolating through the West Bank and Gaza and prove a modicum of law and order. Now it's struggling to fill even that role. Abbas has been playing a losing game of poker. He was reportedly counting on the transfers resuming after either a centrist government was elected in Israel, or that a re-elected Netanyahu would resume his pre-election pragmatism. (...) Netanyahu and Kahlon may be anxious, but you can imagine there are many inside the future government and in the settlements, who are glad to see it happening. If the PA goes down, it will be Israel that fills the vacuum. We'll have a pre-Oslo occupation. No more pesky Areas A, B and C as the last remnant of official Palestine and the Oslo process disappears. Bibi fired up the annexation locomotive with the aid freeze and gave an "all aboard" signal when he threw his support to the idea. The train is pulling out of the station.

David Rosenberg, HAA, 01.05.19

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