

Auf der Suche nach Gemeinsamkeiten

Tel Aviv, London, München im Juni 2013

Aus Anlass einer Konferenz in Amman im Mai, an der zahlreiche Experten aus der israelischen, der palästinensischen, der arabischen sowie der belgischen und der britischen Friedensszene teilnahmen, und nach einem Kommentar von Judith Bernstein „A Farewell to Peace“ im Gefolge ihres zwei Monate langen Aufenthalts in Israel und in den palästinensischen Gebieten entspann sich der folgende Austausch von Eindrücken und Vorschlägen, die Zivilgesellschaften in die Bemühungen um die Beendigung des israelisch-palästinensischen Konflikts stärker als bisher einzubinden. Es ist zu hoffen, dass dem Dialog weitere Anregungen für die gemeinsame Arbeit folgen.

Beteiligt an dem Gedankenaustausch waren Dr. Alon Liel, israelischer Botschafter in Südafrika während der 1990er Jahre und später Generaldirektor im Auswärtigen Amt in Jerusalem, Dr. Tony Klug, ehemals stellvertretender Vorsitzender des „Council of Jewish-Palestinian Dialogue“ und gegenwärtig stellvertretender Vorsitzender des „Arab-Jewish Forum“, London, sowie Ilan Baruch, der Ende 2012 von seinem Posten als israelischer Botschafter in Südafrika aus Protest gegen die Politik von Ministerpräsident Benjamin Netanjahu aus dem diplomatischen Dienst ausschied.

Von: Dr. Reiner Bernstein [mailto:mail@reiner-bernstein.de]

Gesendet: Dienstag, 18. Juni 2013 21:37

An: 'Alon Liel'; 'tonyklus@compuserve.com'; 'ilan.baruch2011@gmail.com'

Betreff: re.

Dear Alon,

Since we are rather often in Israel – Judith was born in Jerusalem and our daughter Shelly Steinberg lives in Tel Aviv –

we are quite familiar with what most Israelis think. Of course, we know exactly that the continuation of governmental declarations and international resolutions coming from Europe and the UN didn't change anything. In the meantime, however, we have the impression that even the German government cannot prevent for long to label goods which are imported on preferential terms from the settlements in the West Bank. The blockade comes from Washington which is regarded here (and not only here) as the major political player in the whole area. This – to my mind problematic – conviction is leading to considerable diplomatic restraint.

In September 2011 and in November 2012 we observed the debates in the UNGA from Ramallah and reported in Berlin about the hopes and expectations there.

In the last 48 years I dealt with Jewish history and Israel/Palestine. Since the beginning of 2004 I have been perhaps the only one in Germany to support the Geneva Initiative in Berlin and elsewhere on our own material account because of three reasons: The Accord was the product of the Israeli and Palestinian civil society despairing from official policies and seemed to be an important signal of public awakening. Second, it did not argue about the rights of both peoples to national sovereignty. Third, it underscored the importance of political reason and rationality – with other words: It gave a decisive farewell to dangerous ideologies such as religious and nationalistic aims and determinations.

A last remark for tonight: I believe that there exists a non-negligible interdependence between the meager strength of international pressures on the Israeli policy and the weakness of the Israeli peace camp to come to terms among themselves, besides of what we experience and learn from the encouraging demonstrations like in Silwan and Sheikh Jerrah, the vigils of the "Women in Black" on Friday afternoon, and the many (but rather uncoordinated) projects of NGOs. Let me add: One international conference after the other does not change the dire situation on the ground. Since, when I look for instance into public opinion polls what the Israelis are prepared to accept for solving the problem in Jerusalem with the Palestinians, I cannot be surprised when senior officials in the German government and members of parliament respond with the rhetoric question, whether they should interfere against the majority in Israel...

Sincerely,
Reiner Bernstein

Von: Alon Liel [mailto:alonliel@netvision.net.il]
Gesendet: Dienstag, 18. Juni 2013 18:58
An: 'Dr. Reiner Bernstein'; tonyklug@compuserve.com;
ilan.baruch2011@gmail.com
Betreff: RE: Farewell to Peace

Dear Judith and Reiner,

From what I sense in Israel the only two issues that can put pressure at this stage on the Israeli government are the labeling of settlement products and a UN Security Council vote on Palestine as a UN member-state. All the rest – statements, requests etc. – nobody here cares about.

Alon

From: Dr. Reiner Bernstein [mailto:mail@reiner-bernstein.de]
Sent: Tuesday, June 18, 2013 5:27 PM
To: alonliel@netvision.net.il; tonyklug@compuserve.com;
ilan.baruch2011@gmail.com
Subject: AW: Farewell to Peace

Dear Tony Klug,
dear Alon Liel,
dear Ilan Baruch,

You are right that we should not give up leaving the Israeli and Palestinian peace forces alone. The only question is what should we do in term of influencing our political class? In recent years we have been visiting our MPs and our representatives in the Foreign Office and the Office of the Chancellor in Berlin. They all know how the situation on the ground is, but do not dare politically interfere in "domestic affairs" as Israel puts it. They all fear the growing anti-Semitism in Germany but draw the wrong conclusions. They believe that they must protect the Jews and Israel from anti-Semitism by supporting the Israeli government. Sometimes they are so helpless that they ask *us* what to do. After all, they listen to us and welcome our reports but this is not enough. We make this experience for years now and ask ourselves how we can make politicians to turn their rhetoric into action since we believe that without pressure from the outside, nothing will move in Israeli politics.

We suppose that in other European countries the situation is similar. Therefore, we would appreciate having your opinion how to deal with this issue.

Best wishes,
Judith & Reiner Bernstein

www.reiner-bernstein.de

Von: Ilan Baruch [mailto:ilan.baruch2011@gmail.com]

Gesendet: Dienstag, 11. Juni 2013 18:55

An: mail@reiner-bernstein.de

Cc: alonliel@netvision.net.il

Betreff: FW: As P2P is fading out, the "Soft Struggle" needs to be kicked in.

Dear Judith, Reiner,

A letter you have written jointly to friends has arrived at my shores and I am very thankful for that, as it hit one issue of many which is deeply frustrating for those who care for Israel and for peace.

Dr. Alon Liel, a former Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has mailed it to me. He is currently a professor of Political Science at the TAU, needless to say – a highly regarded friend. Alon is joining me in expressing interest in interacting with you.

My background is diplomatic. I worked for the MFA [Ministry of Foreign Affairs] for many years. My last posting was Southern Africa, where I was assigned as Ambassador to South Africa and the neighboring countries. I resigned the GOI a little over two years ago, on grounds of principle. I thought I could not anymore represent a foreign policy which I felt was unsustainable both politically and morally.

Now I am a peace activist. I do some voluntary work on various fronts but I concentrate on three projects:

- Institutionalization of the role the Peace NGOs Forum is playing in the foreign diplomatic environment in Israel and Palestine.
- Development of a viable and effective instrument of Public Diplomacy for the Palestinians vis à vis the Israeli society (see the attached, a column I published today in the Jerusalem Report).
- Development of structures for a New Mediterranean Dialogue. This endeavor is powered by my vision to enable constructive exposure of political analysts from the new Islamic elites in the NENA area, and political analysts from Israel.

From the little I could read beyond the lines of your poignant letter, I have the feeling you might find interest in dialogue with likeminded players here in Israel.

I am open to such dialogue.

I hope to hear from you.

With warm regards,
Ilan Baruch

Von: Tony Klug <tonyklug@compuserve.com>
Datum: 14. Juni 2013 14:21:56 MESZ
An: alonliel@netvision.net.il, amiram@vms.huji.ac.il,
mossiraz@allforpeace.org, ilan.baruch2011@gmail.com,
ariel@nisped.org.il, karen.levi@yahoo.com
Kopie: mail@reiner-bernstein.de
Betreff: Re: FW: Farewell to Peace

It was good to see you, Alon, at the conference in Amman. I'm sorry we had such little time to speak.

Thanks for forwarding this heartfelt but rather depressing piece from Judith Bernstein. I'm sure she expresses the views of many of us but I don't think we can afford despair to be our overwhelming response. The important question at every point, I believe, is what can be done? I tried to address this question in my presentation at the Amman conference. As you had to leave just before my intervention, I am taking the liberty of herewith attaching the unexpurgated version.

Otherwise, I hope all is well with you.
With every best wish,
Tony

From: Alon Liel <alonliel@netvision.net.il>
To: 'Amiram Goldblum' <amiram@vms.huji.ac.il>; 'mossi raz' <mossiraz@allforpeace.org>; 'Ilan Baruch' <ilan.baruch2011@gmail.com>; 'Ariel Dloomy' <ariel@nisped.org.il>; 'Tony Klug' <tonyklug@compuserve.com>; 'Karen Levi' <karen.levi@yahoo.com>
Sent: Mon, Jun 10, 2013 9:04 am
Subject: FW: Farewell to Peace

From: Dr. Reiner Bernstein [<mailto:mail@reiner-bernstein.de>]
Sent: Monday, June 10, 2013 10:26 AM
Cc: 'Judith Bernstein'
Subject: Farewell to Peace

Dear Friends,

Following my stay in Israel and Palestine I wrote a short comment, which I would like to bring to your attention:

http://www.judith-bernstein.de/pdf/veroeffentlichung/Judith_03.06.13-English.pdf

Sincerely,
Judith Bernstein
www.judith-bernstein.de
