

Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, which violates international law and cannot be justified in any way, has already lasted for more than half a year and has caused immeasurable suffering and destruction. War crimes, such as attacks on homes, shopping malls, hospitals, universities, and other civilian facilities, demonstrate the full atrocity of Russia's actions.

Germany and the EU show solidarity with the people of Ukraine. We emphasise Ukraine's right of self-defence and support political, financial, economic, and military measures that will contribute to a speedy ceasefire and an end to this war. We stand by this: NATO or individual western states must not become party to the war, because inevitably this means that the conflict will escalate into a Third - possibly nuclear - World War. The spiral of escalation must be stopped. Therefore, with every delivery of weapons, it is important to carefully weigh up and consider where the „red line“ lies; a line that could be perceived as entering a war and thereby provoking corresponding reactions. The establishment of no-fly zones, the delivery of battle tanks or fighter jets would certainly tip things over the edge.

We stand with those Russians who bravely stand up against the war. Increasingly, Russians want to refuse military service or desert. They refuse to be part of a war that violates international law. They must be granted residency in the EU. The right to conscientious objection is a human right and applies to everyone, including Ukrainians.

### Time for diplomacy

This war can have no military victors. Continuing the war will only result in more deaths and destruction. We need a ceasefire as soon as possible, as a starting point for comprehensive peace negotiations.

Therefore, It is time for diplomacy. The EU and its member states must step up their diplomatic efforts to promote a ceasefire. To this end, exchanges with hitherto neutral countries such as Indonesia, India, and South Africa, and even China, must be intensified in order to persuade them to play a mediating role between the warring parties. The United Nations must also launch new initiatives.

The war threatens to plunge the world into a recession with rising unemployment. We can already see far-reaching effects on everyday life, including here in Germany. Inflation and dwindling energy resources hit the poorest citizens in particular. That is why we have to make war profiteers pay and tax high incomes more heavily. This not only strengthens the welfare state, but is also a question of justice. Far more dramatic are the impacts on the countries of Africa. According to the UN World Food Program, 50 million people are on the brink of starvation, and 750,000 are at risk of starvation in some African countries. To prevent these famines, the war must be stopped as soon as possible.

### Law-based global security architecture

With the war, Russia has destroyed the belief of many people in a cooperative security architecture in Europe. This hope was also supported by the policy of détente and peace, for which Willy Brandt received the Nobel Peace Prize. This policy has done much good already. In view of the drama of global crises, such as the increase in hunger, climate change, other horrifying wars, the migration and refugee movements, a new attempt at global détente is required, which seeks cooperation on the basis of common interests, while at the same time robustly rejecting imperial actions like Russia's in Ukraine. This is because a stable peace order, based on international cooperation and solidarity stands in the way of any attempt to establish or maintain an imperial order.

We do not want - after the hopefully early end of the war in Ukraine - to fall back into an era that will always be on the brink of nuclear war, since both Russia and NATO do not renounce a first use of nuclear weapons. Security and peace cannot be built against each other. We are sceptical to dismissive of the rearmament plans, because NATO is already spending much more on arms than Russia. A policy based

exclusively on military confrontation, rearmament and deterrence is not a reliable basis for stability. This was evident for example during the period of the Cold War, in which arms races and proxy wars prevailed and the world was on the brink of a nuclear abyss several times. We need a global security architecture based on law and not military strength. We remain committed to arms control and disarmament.

A lengthy transitional period of conflict, confrontation and cooperation is to be expected. Ultimately, a fundamental improvement in relations between Russia and the EU and the West will only be possible in a post-Putin era. But until then, a modus vivendi must be found with the Russian government, based on the acknowledgment of realities that one does not like, which rules out a further escalation of the war. In the end, there will have to be an agreement between Ukraine and Russia.

**Now diplomacy must seize the initiative. The weapons must fall silent! We call for civil society activities to give peace a chance. The Anti-war day on 1 September with Trade Union rallies and the peace movement is a good opportunity for this. Willy Brandt was right: "Peace is not everything, but everything is nothing without peace."**

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