

# Joschka Fischer advocates aggressive foreign policy against Russia

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Under the title “Europe, stay strong!” in Saturday’s edition of the liberal daily *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, Joschka Fischer spoke out in favour of the major European powers pursuing an imperialist foreign policy. The European Union (EU) could not accept the “conflicting interests of its neighbours to the south and east,” Fischer wrote. Therefore, Europe had to intervene as a “powerful political actor.”

To justify his warmongering, Fischer painted a picture of an aggressive Russia pushing to achieve a “dominant role in Europe.” Russian president Vladimir Putin was again pursuing “Russia’s status as a global power as his strategic goal.... Ukraine was and is at the centre of this strategy,” Fischer declared. “Putin’s next target is eastern Ukraine and, connected with that, the permanent destabilisation of the whole of Ukraine.”

While Russia was conducting “great power politics” and pursuing a “strategy of power,” the EU stood for “the right of the people to self-determination, the inviolability of borders, the rule of law and fundamental democratic principles.” This “fundamental strategic conflict” could not be “countered by weakness, which Russia (would) understand as encouragement,” the former foreign minister wrote.

Instead, a “policy of containment” was necessary, meaning systematically pushing back Russian influence. Europeans had to understand “that the EU is not merely about an economic community, but rather a powerful political actor, a political unit with shared values and security interests,” Fischer asserted. “The strategic and normative interests of Europe have returned with a vengeance.”

Fischer’s argumentation is absurd. In fact, it was the United States and the European powers that developed an extremely aggressive policy towards Russia following the collapse of the Soviet Union, attempting

to subordinate the country to their influence. In the process, international law applied just as little to them as democracy or the borders of national states.

As Green Party defence minister, it was Joschka Fischer who in 1999 led Germany into its first international combat mission since the Second World War. The war against Serbia not only breached German and international law, but also violated the borders of the country, which was militarily forced to give up the region of Kosovo. The war against Iraq, the isolation of Iran, the war against Libya and the arming of Islamist militants in Syria all served the offensive by Western powers to push back Russian influence.

Then in Ukraine, Germany and the US organised a coup led by extreme right-wing forces to overthrow the elected president, Victor Yanukovitch, who was replaced by a government in which three ministers and three further key positions are occupied by open fascists. In this way, they seek to forcibly subordinate Ukraine to the EU.

Within the EU, the social and democratic rights of the people are under attack. In Greece, strikes and demonstrations have been banned or attacked by the police. The security forces collaborate in this connection with the forces of the fascist party Golden Dawn. Due to the austerity measures dictated by the EU, hunger is pervasive on the streets of Athens. Large sections of the population no longer have access to medical treatment.

Under such conditions, when Fischer speaks of defending “European values,” he means the economic and geopolitical interests of the ruling elite. He is even forced to admit that Russia does not have “the political and economic power” to annex other territories. Thus, the offensive against Russia he demands is nothing other than the subjugation of the country to European,

and above all German interests.

But Fischer's appetite is still not satisfied. Along with "eastern," he speaks of "southern neighbours," which have "conflicting interests" and which must be pushed back.

Previously, Fischer gave his backing to wars in North Africa. "Along with the Balkans, the southern coast of the Mediterranean Sea is part of the EU's immediate security zone," he wrote in April 2011, to justify German participation in a war against Libya. "It is simply naïve to think that the EU's strongest economy and the state with the largest population can and should keep out of it." According to Fischer, foreign policy meant "taking responsibility for hard strategic decisions, even when they are anything but popular in domestic politics."

Fischer and the Greens have been the loudest advocates of an Atlantic alliance against Russia and a comprehensive German military policy for a long time.

Between 2009 and 2013, Fischer was a consultant for the consortium of the failed Nabucco pipeline, which was to have transported gas from the Caspian region directly to Europe while bypassing Russia. Green politicians, like parliamentary group chairwoman Katrin Göring-Eckardt and federal party chairwoman Simone Peter, are continuously urging the German government to decrease its dependence on Russian gas exports.

In recent weeks, the Greens have been the most strident proponents of an aggressive foreign policy towards Russia, raising military options as a possibility. In so doing, they articulate the interests of privileged middle class layers that have continuously moved to the right over the past 30 years, and assert their demands aggressively against workers and the majority of the population.

Joschka Fischer exemplifies this milieu. In the 1970s, he was involved with the petty-bourgeois group "Revolutionary Struggle" and fought street battles with the police. When he joined the Greens in 1982 and began his rapidly ascending career, the main thing he retained from this youthful episode was his contempt for the working class.

Then in 1998, the former street fighter took over the post of foreign minister in order to mobilise his party and the social layers that supported it behind German militarism. In April 1999, Fischer justified the illegal

war of aggression against Serbia by comparing the possible killing of Kosovars by the Serbian army with the industrial slaughter of European Jewry by the Nazis.

Fifteen years after this disgusting falsification of history, he supports cooperation with Ukrainian fascists and declares openly that nothing else matters but the economic and political interests of Europe.

The EU is at the heart of his imperialist calculations. Because "the European community is by no means as peaceful" as had been thought, the process of European unification had to be pushed forward more quickly, according to Fischer. In this context, further eastward expansion in particular was an essential component of the security of the EU.

For Fischer, the EU is not simply the instrument with which Germany can dominate the continent. It also serves as a means to eradicate democratic structures and impose a policy of aggressive war against widespread popular resistance. Already a year and a half ago, Fischer was urging the establishment of authoritarian forms of rule in EU institutions.



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