

G20 summit in Hamburg: A city in a state of siege

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The city of Hamburg, Germany, host to the G20 summit to be held July 7-8, is a city under siege. 15,000 police officers from every German state are practicing bringing a major city under state control. Tens of thousands of protesters are expected to take part in demonstrations during the summit.

A closer look at the planned measures makes clear that they are intended not just to protect the political elite attending the G20, but represent deliberate preparations for a civil war scenario that would not be possible under normal circumstances. The number of police and security forces involved is unprecedented, with camps set up to incarcerate G20 opponents.

These measures are accompanied by massive attacks on the basic rights of demonstrators and the city's population. The German army (Bundeswehr) is also taking part in the siege of Hamburg—in part publicly, in part undercover. Even bourgeois media outlets such as the *Huffington Post* write of “a city in a state of war”.

Police are assembling from all of Germany's 16 states, with several states dispatching special police units. GSG9, the special unit of the federal police, will take part.

It is “the biggest operation in the history of the Hamburg police,” declared police president Ralf Martin Meyer. The operation has been under way for several weeks, with civilian police posted to the most important points in the city center to conduct surveillance.

It is an unprecedented operation, and not just for the Hamburg police. The head of operations, Hartmut Dudde, told the press that “almost everything the German police has” will be in Hamburg.

Spiegel Online reported that every police officer will be equipped with a gun, a baton and teargas. The special units distributed throughout the city center have additional heavy armament, including “a variety of

pistols and revolvers, glare grenades, battering rams and the sniper rifle PSG1”, one of the most precise weapons available.

The new police vehicle “Survivor R” will be also be used for the first time. The 15-ton behemoth resembles the vehicles used by the US army in Iraq, which were then turned into police cars and used against protesters during the police lockdown of Ferguson, Missouri in 2014. The vehicle is manned by ten policemen, including a commander, a gunner and two targeteers. The launching system can be used for tear gas or fog grenades. A blade to destroy blockades is also included.

At the presentation of the vehicle last summer, it was said that the “Survivor” was the only police truck that can withstand shots from an AK-47. It is also equipped with detectors that report the presence of nuclear, biological and chemical agents, and it has its own ventilation system to protect those inside the vehicle. A “Survivor” costs up to 500,000 euros, depending on the equipment.

The Hamburg police also have the “WaWe 10000”—“the most modern water cannon in the world,” *Spiegel Online* writes. The vehicle can shoot up to 3,200 litres of water within 60 seconds, with the water jet extending up to 65 meters. The WaWe can create an artificial wall of water allowing police and special units to advance on demonstrators. The vehicle is also equipped with gas tanks and corresponding admixing systems, which make it possible to spray tear gas along with the water.

In addition to the above-mentioned vehicles, which are clearly aimed for use against the population in a civil war type situation, the police are carrying out numerous other measures. This includes a permanent presence in the waters of the port city, which transports goods along the River Elbe. The river and port are to be

watched over by a special unit of the Dutch police.

Stern magazine reports that “3,000 police vehicles, nearly 200 service dogs, eleven helicopters, around 50 police officers [...] and special units from several states” will be deployed. Special vehicles with translucent and bulletproof walls are due to be sent from France. They were previously deployed against demonstrators protesting the French Labor Market Act.

According to a report by the magazine *Focus*, the Bundeswehr is planning to use a maritime ship in the port of Hamburg as part of the G20 summit operation. The secret use of the ship, which is intended to rescue heads of state and government in the event of a terrorist attack, is clearly unconstitutional.

The ship could be sent at any time in the direction of the North Sea and has operating rooms on board. For camouflage, soldiers will wear civilian clothes. The pretext for the ship’s stay in the port is officially the procurement of missing spare parts. The federal criminal police office and the Ministry of Defence rejected the media reports. War ships were “not part of our deployment concept”, a police officer told the *Hamburger Morgenpost*.

In fact, according to the *Morgenpost*, the Bundeswehr is using the multi-purpose “Lachs” (Salmon) boat for so-called “administrative assistance.” It will be manned by personnel for various “security” tasks, as well as specialists for diving medicine. Finally, the German army is deploying an underwater drone to scan the Hamburg harbour basin for explosives.

The siege of the city is accompanied by a massive attack on the basic democratic rights of local residents and demonstrators.

A so-called general police decree enables the security forces to control the arrival and departure of the participants to the summit. The decree bans any demonstrations in a 38-square kilometre zone between the city’s airport and the Elbe, and roads can be blocked at any time. Another zone surrounding the hall where the summit takes place can only be entered by local residents.

Police have reacted to the plans for over two dozen demonstrations and protests by setting up a detention center, which could more accurately be described as a temporary concentration camp.

Up to 400 people can be detained on the site of a former food market covering an area of 11,000 square

meters. There will also be containers for lawyers as well as facilities for taking fingerprints and identifying personal data. A total of 70 collective and 50 individual cells are available, according to *Spiegel Online*.

An attempt by the city of Hamburg to ban the “Antikapitalistische Camp,” located in the city park, has failed temporarily. Following a ban order issued by the Hamburg Higher Administrative Court, the Federal Constitutional Court ruled on Wednesday that such a ban was inadmissible because it prevented participants from exercising their right of assembly.

However, the city court and police have given sufficient scope to proceed against the camp by other means. The police can limit the size of the camp, impose various regulations and even move it to a different place in the city.

On Thursday evening Hamburg’s interior affairs senator, Andy Grote (SPD), announced that prohibitive measures would be taken against the organizers of the camp if they build it illegally. While the Constitutional Court lifted a ban on the camp, the city council has failed to give its permission for a camp to be erected.



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