

New NATO headquarters planned in Germany

Johannes Stern
12 February 2018

The Bundeswehr (German Armed Forces) is to build a new NATO headquarters in Germany. According to information from the *Deutsche Presse Agentur* (DPA), the member states of the military alliance have agreed in principle to accept an offer from German Defence Minister Ursula von der Leyen (CDU, Christian Democratic Union). There were no other candidates for the headquarters. The official decision is due to be announced at the Defence Ministers' meeting this week.

A possible location for the new headquarters is the Cologne-Bonn region. The Bundeswehr already has its Joint Support Service and Armed Forces Office situated there. The Defence Ministry said that the establishment of a new planning and command centre for rapid troop and material transports was part of NATO's "ongoing modifications." According to a spokesman for the ministry, Germany was "one of the nations that is fundamentally eligible for the establishment and operation of this command, given its competences, its recognition in the Alliance and its central geographical position."

In reality, Germany, which has been massively upgrading its military capacity since 2014 and trying to increase its military weight within NATO, would become even more strongly involved in NATO preparations for war against Russia than before. Last autumn, a report in *Der Spiegel* quoted from a secret document of the military alliance underscoring how far the plans have progressed.

In the paper, titled "Progress Report on the Alliance's Strengthened Deterrence and Defence Posture," leading NATO military officials plead for a marked strengthening of military capabilities to be able to lead a so-called "Major Joint Operation Plus." The term describes a war in which the major military organizations of all NATO countries, and thus

hundreds of thousands of soldiers, are involved.

The secret report further states that NATO "must be able to rapidly reinforce a threatened ally or allies, to underpin deterrence in peacetime and crises, and to reinforce an ally or allies for defense in case of attack." It must be empowered to mobilize and retain troops quickly, "whatever the nature, demand, destination or duration of the operation, mission or activity." This would require "a robust civil/military logistics structure and enabling capabilities" with lines of communications ranging from North America to the eastern and southern borders of the Alliance territory, including "intra-European routes."

The plans drawn up behind the backs of the population are so far-reaching—among other things, to make the civil infrastructure (roads, rail networks and airports) combat ready and to better organize supplies—that even the newsweekly *Der Spiegel* concluded, "In other words: NATO is preparing for a possible war with Russia."

It is no coincidence that the construction of a new NATO headquarters in Germany—a second, according to the DPA, is to be built in the United States to secure the air and sea routes between North America and Europe across the Atlantic—was made public just a day after the agreement between Social Democrats (SPD) and Christian Democrats (CDU/CSU) to form a new edition of the grand coalition. In the coalition agreement, the parties pledge "to make an appropriate contribution to preserving the deterrence and defence capability of the [NATO] Alliance and to a strong European defence."

The section, "Germany as a Reliable Partner in NATO, OSCE and the Council of Europe," also states, "We want to strengthen the European contribution to the transatlantic partnership and are committed to

closer cooperation between NATO and the EU. We want to achieve the agreed NATO capability goals and fill in capability gaps.”

With this formulation, the CDU/CSU and the SPD are obviously committed to raising defence spending to the agreed NATO minimum of two percent of Gross Domestic Product by 2024. But what else is included? What specific war plans have the SPD and CDU/CSU representatives already approved when they negotiated the coalition agreement as part of a veritable conspiracy behind the backs of the people?

Would the German government, which played a central role in the pro-Western coup in Ukraine in 2014 and has had combat troops stationed in Lithuania for more than a year, take part in a US-led NATO war against Russia? Or does the ruling class in Germany see the new headquarters primarily as an opportunity to prepare German-European war missions independently of NATO?

“The special feature of the new headquarters in Germany is that it will not be integrated into the existing NATO command structure. This could also make it possible to use the staff and the capacity for national exercises and operations outside the Alliance,” according to the articles by the DPA .



To contact the WSWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact