

Germany supplies self-propelled howitzers to Ukraine for war against Russia

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Just days after the official decision by the German government to supply “heavy weaponry” to Ukraine, Germany is massively expanding its support for the war.

On Friday, the Ministry of Defense announced via Twitter that Germany will supply seven self-propelled 2000-model howitzers to Kiev. This was “determined” by Defence Minister Christine Lambrecht (Social Democrats). With the addition of five Dutch self-propelled howitzers, the total delivery will amount to a dozen. Training for the use of the howitzers in Germany is also “ready” and will begin “next week,” the Ministry confirmed.

The self-propelled howitzer is an extremely destructive weapon. “Nobody survives within 50 metres” of the impact point of its shells, writes the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* in an article with the militarist headline “The Fist That Strikes.”

Several thousand fragments “would destroy everything,” and the soldiers can “set the projectiles to explode over the heads of the enemy.”

“The crews can use special ammunition against” enemy tanks, “which automatically detects the vehicles with its sensors and is able to break through their steel.”

With the delivery of howitzers and the training of Ukrainian soldiers in Germany, Berlin is now clearly an aggressive party to the US-NATO war against Russia.

According to an opinion released by the Scientific Service of the German parliament on March 16, the training of Ukrainian soldiers on German soil constitutes participation in the war under international law. “Only if, in addition to the supply of weapons, the briefing of the conflicting party or training in such weapons were also in question, would one leave the certain ground of non-warfare,” it stated.

In other words, 81 years after the German war of extermination against the Soviet Union, in which nearly 30 million people died, the ruling class is once again waging war against Russia. Putin’s reactionary invasion of Ukraine and the official propaganda do not change the fact that German foreign policy is again developing along similar lines as in 1941.

Significantly, the ruling class did not use the anniversary of the surrender of the Wehrmacht on May 8-9, 1945 to commemorate its terrible crimes but to dispatch tanks and other heavy weaponry to the East again. In doing so, it is pursuing the declared goal of defeating the Russian army militarily.

On Wednesday, Chancellor Olaf Scholz (SPD) announced after a government conference at Schloss Meseberg that the issue now had to be to repel the Russian offensive in the Donbas and equip the Ukrainian army accordingly. “That’s why it was said that we will supply up to 50 suitable Cheetah tanks. We have also said that together with our allies we want to provide support for the use of artillery.”

Since then, one announcement has followed another. On Thursday, at a joint press conference with Czech Prime Minister Petr Fiala, Scholz announced a so-called “ring exchange” of heavy weapons. Specifically, this means that the Czech Republic is supplying weapons of Soviet design, including tanks, to Ukraine. In return, Germany undertakes to replace the weapon systems of the Czech army with corresponding modern Western weapon systems.

Scholz said that as far as support with weapons is concerned, “we will work closely together and cooperate.” He added, “The Czech Republic can provide weapons that originate in Russian production and are directly useful for Ukraine. We can help ensure that the Czech army retains the necessary strength that

it requires.”

A similar “ring exchange” is being prepared between Germany and Slovakia. This was confirmed by Minister of Defence Christine Lambrecht during a visit to the Slovakian airbase Sliac on Friday. The base is less than 300 kilometres from the Ukrainian border and is currently undergoing major upgrades by the German army.

According to a report on the official website of the Ministry of Defence, Germany has moved Patriot anti-aircraft systems to the base with FlaRak Group 1 from Husum “within a very short time.”

“Together with the US and the Netherlands,” the report said, “Germany is now taking over the protection of Slovak airspace at the invitation of Slovakia within the framework of NATO’s Integrated Air Defence.” Germany is “the lead nation” in this operation.

Currently 240 German soldiers are stationed in Slovakia. But that is just the beginning. “On 4 May, the Slovak Parliament approved an interim increase in NATO troops from 2,100 to 3,000,” the Ministry of Defence’s report states. “A total of up to 1,200 German forces can now be transferred to Slovakia. This makes Germany the largest troop deployer in the country.”

Germany has been leading the NATO Battlegroup in Lithuania since 2017, which originally comprised 1,000 soldiers. In March, 350 additional German soldiers were sent to Lithuania with heavy military equipment. With the transfer of more soldiers and the formation of a new NATO battlegroup in Slovakia, Germany will become one of the largest NATO troop deployers in Eastern Europe after the US.

The federal government is well aware that with the massing of German troops in Eastern Europe and the delivery of heavy weapons and the training of Ukrainian soldiers in Germany, it is increasing the risk of a nuclear Third World War. As late as April 22, Scholz stated in a *Der Spiegel* interview that everything had to be done “to avoid a direct military confrontation between NATO and a highly armed superpower such as Russia, a nuclear-armed power.” The issue is “preventing an escalation that leads to a third world war.”

These warnings are now being ignored by the government. In a recent interview with *Die Zeit*, the Green Minister for Economic Affairs, Robert Habeck, replied dismissively to the question of whether he was

“actually not afraid of a third world war.

“No, I’m not,” he said. “We are at a time when you can have a lot of worries. But the fear of the Third World War, which is haunting some, is also fueled by the fear that Germany will become a war party.”

In fact, Germany is a war party and Habeck and the Greens are among the leading warmongers. He defended the delivery of deadly weapons by the German government with the comment: “With the weapons that I, Robert Habeck, have sent to Ukraine ... people will most likely be killed.” The decision was “nevertheless necessary compared to the alternatives.”

The next arms deliveries are already being prepared behind the backs of the population. The chairman of the parliamentary Committee on European Union Affairs, Anton Hofreiter (Greens), demanded on the TV station *Welt* that after the howitzers Germany must “also supply Leopard 1 and Marder tanks.” Industry applications for this need to be “approved quickly.”



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