

German Chancellor Scholz's government statement: Rearming for war against Russia

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Germany is playing a prominent role in the NATO proxy war with Russia and thus accepts the risk of a third world war. The government statement made by Federal Chancellor Olaf Scholz to the federal parliament on Thursday morning and the ensuing debate made clear how aggressively German imperialism is behaving once again, 77 years after the end of the Second World War.

In his speech, Scholz bluntly explained the war aims of Germany and NATO: A military victory over nuclear-armed Russia. "We all have one goal: Russia must not win this war. Ukraine must survive," said the chancellor. This is the aim with "everything we do. With our sanctions against Russia, the reception of millions of refugees in the European Union, the humanitarian, development and economic assistance to Ukraine and, indeed, the supply of weapons, including heavy weaponry."

After initial hesitation, Germany is delivering weapons to Ukraine en masse. *Der Spiegel* reported on Wednesday, "in the past two weeks alone, 2,450 RGW 90 anti-tank weapons, 1,600 DM22 anti-tank missiles and 3,000 DM31 anti-tank mines have arrived in Ukraine" and "been distributed to units of the local army." This was confirmed by Ukrainian government sources.

The list of German arms deliveries gets "ever longer with the latest tranche," commented the news magazine. Previously, Berlin had already "delivered anti-tank weapons, armored vehicles, millions of ammunition rounds of various calibres and explosives to Ukraine." On the lists, in addition, "there are also 15 bunker-breaking weapons, so-called bunker fists, or remote detonators for explosive devices."

At the end of April, Germany's parliament officially decided to deliver heavy weaponry to Ukraine. Since then, this has moved ahead at full speed. On Wednesday, the Social Democrat-led Ministry of Defense announced another "circular exchange" with the Czech Republic. The German army provided Prague with "15 Leopard 2 A4 tanks" and "also took over the training of Czech soldiers," the ministry announced on Twitter. In return, the Czech Republic supplied tanks of Soviet design to Ukraine.

A similar circular exchange has already been agreed with Poland and Slovakia. At the same time, Germany is also pushing ahead with the delivery of tanks and other heavy equipment from its own stockpiles. Among other things, 50 anti-aircraft Cheetah tanks and seven self-propelled howitzer 2000s will be delivered to Ukraine. The delivery of 88 Leopard 1 combat tanks and 100 Marder artillery tanks is also being prepared by the German arms giant Rheinmetall.

In line with the official propaganda, Scholz tried to portray the massive arms deliveries as de-escalating peace measures. "Helping a brutally attacked country to defend itself is not an escalation, but a contribution to warding off the attack and thus ending the violence as quickly as possible," he claimed. Nor is anything being done "that will turn NATO into a war party."

This is a lie and an absurdity in several respects. On the one hand, Scholz is well aware that the growing military support for Ukraine poses the risk of a nuclear third world war. On April 22, he told *Der Spiegel* that "every effort must be made to avoid a direct military confrontation between NATO and a highly armed superpower such as Russia, a nuclear power." The issue is "preventing an escalation that leads to a third world war."

On the other hand, "NATO has in fact long been a war party," and not only since the Putin regime invaded Ukraine. The imperialist powers have been waging war for decades in order to assert their economic and strategic interests. The wars of aggression and regime-change operations in Serbia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and Syria, which all violated international law, have in the last 30 years destroyed entire countries and killed millions of people.

Since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the NATO powers have systematically encircled Russia with the aim of turning the resource-rich country into a semi-colony that they can dominate and exploit. In 2014, Washington and Berlin orchestrated a right-wing coup in Ukraine to install an anti-Russian regime in the former Soviet republic. Subsequently, the Ukrainian military and far-right militias in the country were systematically upgraded. Moscow's

invasion on February 24, 2022 was the desperate response of a reactionary capitalist regime to NATO's offensive.

Today, Germany is no more a "peace power" than it was on the eve of the First and Second World Wars. Together with the United States, it is the most aggressive imperialist actor. The ruling class is using the war in Ukraine provoked by NATO to implement long-cherished plans for armament and emergence as a great power.

The focus is on the massive rearmament of the German army. "We will secure and strengthen our own defence capability," Scholz announced in parliament. For this, "the military needs the special fund of €100 billion." He added that "good talks" are also ongoing with the opposition parties to obtain the necessary majority "to anchor the special fund in the Basic Law."

A key goal is the strengthening of Germany within NATO and militarising Europe under German leadership. "With the special fund, we are sending a clear message to friends and allies," Scholz explained. As Europe's "most populous and economically strongest nation," Germany is "serious when we talk about the duty of assistance and collective defence."

In the future, "our defence systems and our investments must also be coordinated more closely and agreed upon at the European level." The key is "more efficiency and more complementarity ... to integrate the European defence industry more closely," and thus "take a big step towards the future in the direction of a common European defence." He added that "the necessary steps" will be discussed at the EU special summit at the end of the month.

Berlin's war and great power plans, which also aim to strengthen Germany against the US and China, are supported by all parties in parliament. In the debate, spokespersons from all political groups sought to outdo each other with calls for more arms supplies for Ukraine, tougher economic warfare against Russia and a more aggressive German rearmament programme.

The leader of the parliamentary group of the Greens, Katharina Dröge, underlined that the former pacifists are today the leading militarists. "Our message to Putin is: we will never stop supporting Ukraine," she insisted. "Our support applies as long as it is necessary. Yes, that means the supply of heavy weaponry, because Ukraine must be able to defend itself. And that means adopting further economic sanctions packages."

Christian Dürr, the chairman of the Free Democrats' parliamentary group, also praised the Federal Government's war policy, which has an increasingly dramatic impact on the lives of millions of people: "As part of the traffic light coalition, we have indeed started a new era here. We deliver weapons to war zones. We are breaking off economic relations with a former trading partner. We are investing

heavily in our army. That has never happened before."

The "opposition leader" and leader of the Christian Democrat/Christian Social Union parliamentary group, Friedrich Merz, called for a faster implementation of the promised arms deliveries. At the same time, he assured Scholz that his parliamentary group "is with you on what you said in your government statement on 27 February, namely €100 billion for the military and, in the long term, more than 2 percent of our GDP each year for defence."

Alice Weidel, the leader of the far-right Alternative for Germany, described "Russia's war of aggression" as "a catalyst that has exacerbated the crisis and exposed the shortcomings of our military and security policy." She called on the Federal Government to "actually invest the €100 billion earmarked for the German army in our own army."

The Left Party is also part of the war conspiracy. Putin "should not win the war," demanded the leader of the Left Party's parliamentary group, Amira Mohamed Ali. At the same time, she warned against never-ending arms deliveries. From the Left Party's point of view, Russia is to be brought to its knees primarily by economic warfare. "Sanctions must be directed against the economic power base of the Putin system," demands a motion from the party executive for the upcoming party congress.

The Socialist Equality Party (SGP) is the only party that opposes the militarist madness and gives a voice to the growing opposition among workers and young people. Under the title "No Third World War! Billions for health and workers instead of armament and war!" the SGP will hold an online event on Tuesday, May 24 at 7 p.m.

The statement promoting the meeting declares, "This madness cannot be ended by appeals to the warmongers, but only by an international anti-war movement. The Russian and Ukrainian workers must unite with the workers of all countries to fight against war and its root cause, capitalism."

Register here to join the event and discuss this socialist perspective with the SGP.



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