

Despite Russian nuclear threats, Germany announces new arms deliveries to Kiev

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The German government has reacted to the Russian annexation of Ukrainian territories and Putin's threat to use nuclear weapons by intensifying its own war offensive, which is ever more directly leading to a third world war. Defence Minister Christine Lambrecht (SPD) travelled to Ukraine at the weekend for the first time, inspected German tanks on site and announced further massive arms deliveries for the anti-Russian war regime in Kiev.

Ukrainian Defence Minister Oleksii Reznikov celebrated Lambrecht's visit on Twitter, stating: "Hosted my German colleague Christine Lambrecht in the southern Ukraine. Frau Minister brought good news & more tools to strengthen the Ukrainian army. We had a discussion about current geopolitical and security situation. [Frau] Minister was glad to talk with our soldiers and see Gepard [Cheetah] system on combat duty."

Lambrecht announced in Odessa the delivery of further Cheetah anti-aircraft guns and the accelerated delivery of the IRIS-T air defense system. The system manufactured by the German defence company Diehl Defence is one of the most modern of its kind and, according to the manufacturer, is suitable for 360-degree all-round defence against aircraft, helicopters, drones, cruise missiles and short-range ballistic missiles. Even the German army (Bundeswehr) does not yet have such a system in its arsenal.

Immediately after her return from Odessa on Sunday, Lambrecht went one step further. On public broadcaster ARD's *Bericht aus Berlin*, she announced a further round of weapons deliveries. "We will continue to engage in a variety of ways, as we have done with partners so far," she said. "That is why we will be able to deliver 16 'Zuzana' self-propelled guns to Ukraine next year, financed by Germany together with Denmark

and Norway and produced in Slovakia."

According to media reports, the cost of the announced delivery amounts to €93 million. According to the Ukrainian Ambassador to Germany, the Iris T system—consisting of high-performance radar, launching device and control car as well as missiles—will cost €140 million. In other words, Lambrecht promised Ukraine military aid worth well over €200 million during a single weekend.

Overall, German military aid now amounts to several billion euros, making Germany one of Kiev's leading supporters. "Contrary to popular perception, Germany has delivered significant amounts of arms and equipment to Ukraine to aid the country in its fight against the Russian military," wrote the Dutch military news website Oryx in early September. "In fact, the volume of arms deliveries by Berlin exceeds that of every other country save for the United States and the United Kingdom."

According to Oryx, the support already provided to Ukraine includes 30 Gepard anti-aircraft guns, three M270 multiple launch rocket systems, ten PzH 2000 self-propelled guns (SPGs) along with guided artillery rounds, 3,200 man-portable air-defence systems (MANPADS), close to 10,000 Panzerfaust 3 and RWG 90 MATADOR anti-tank weapons, hundreds of vehicles, nearly 22 million rounds of ammunition, and a plethora of other equipment including 28,000 helmets and MiG-29 spare parts.

These weapons "are soon to be followed" by a further four PzH 2000s and two M270s, four IRIS-T SLM SAM batteries, 20 laser-guided rocket systems, 43 reconnaissance UAVs and up to 20 unmanned ships. The German government also "contributed at least €2 billion to Ukraine's security capacity building fund with which the Ukrainian government can purchase

armaments from other countries, including a further 100 PzH 2000s and 18 RCH-155 SPGs from German arms manufacturer Krauss-Maffei Wegmann.”

Despite this vast military support, Lambrecht insisted to ARD that it is clear that Germany and its allies are not parties to the war. “This has guided us from the very beginning. And that hasn’t changed,” she claimed.

This is utterly preposterous. As early as March, a report by the Parliamentary Research Service stated that the training of Ukrainian soldiers on German soil amounted to participation in the war under international law. “If, in addition to the supply of weapons, the instruction of a conflict party or training in such weapons were also up for discussion, one would leave the secure area of a noncombatant,” it says.

This is exactly what has happened, and the training of the Ukrainian armed forces is being massively expanded. On Monday, *Der Spiegel* reported that “the EU Member States have agreed in recent weeks at working group level to train as many as 15,000 Ukrainian soldiers outside the country as quickly as possible.” Of these, “3,000 Ukrainian soldiers should receive special training.” Examples include ‘tactical combat training for commanders or training courses for privates.”

Germany’s support for the war goes far beyond arms deliveries and the training of the Ukrainian army. Last week, the ARD magazine *Kontraste* reported that the German foreign intelligence service BND is supplying Ukraine with “militarily useful data.” In other words, Berlin is directly involved in the war and played a central role in Kiev’s recent offensive, which led to severe defeats for the Russian army.

The ARD writes: “The information that the BND transmits to the Ukrainian secret service with the approval of the Federal Government includes not only analyses, for example on the fighting power and morale of Russian units in Ukraine, but also bugged radio messages and mobile phone calls as well as satellite images. These BND reports can help Ukraine prepare for military operations.”

The fact that Germany and NATO are in reality at war with Russia and pursue the goal of defeating a nuclear-armed power militarily is openly stated by representatives of the German government. On October 1, Health Minister Karl Lauterbach (SPD) wrote on Twitter: “Let’s face it: What is grovelling before Putin

supposed to achieve? We’re at war with Putin, not his psychotherapists. Victory in the form of the liberation of Ukraine must continue to be decisively pursued. It doesn’t matter whether Putin’s psyche can handle it.”

Comments like this give a shocking insight into the mindset of the ruling class. Eighty years after the Wehrmacht’s invasion of the Soviet Union and the war of annihilation in the east, the capitalist governments are once again prepared to sacrifice millions for their predatory interests. After 150,000 deaths in the pandemic alone in Germany, Lauterbach should explain how many lives he is willing to sacrifice in the “war with Putin.” Although the latter threatens the use of nuclear weapons, the leading representatives of the NATO powers insist on defeating Russia “decisively” in Ukraine.

The only way to prevent a nuclear disaster and a third world war is to mobilize the working class independently on the basis of a socialist program. This is what the Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei (SGP, Socialist Equality Party) and its sister parties in the International Committee of the Fourth International fight for. Read and distribute the WSWS statement “Stop the war in Ukraine!” and participate in the building of a new anti-capitalist, anti-war movement.



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