

NATO powers intensify offensive against Russia after Munich Security Conference

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One year after the reactionary invasion of Ukraine by the Putin regime, the imperialist powers are organizing a massive escalation of the war, which increasingly raises the threat of a nuclear world war.

On Monday, US President Joe Biden paid a “surprise visit” to Kiev and announced further arms deliveries, including missiles designed to enable Ukraine to attack targets in Crimea and the Russian heartland. The other far-reaching decisions taken behind the scenes are not known, but demands in the US media range from the delivery of F-16 fighter jets to NATO ground troops.

The visit showed how far the escalation spiral has progressed. According to US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan, the White House informed the Kremlin of the planned visit a few hours before Biden’s departure. “A situation in which there could have been a conflict between the two nuclear powers ought to be avoided,” wrote *Der Spiegel*.

On Tuesday, Russian President Vladimir Putin said in his state of the nation address that Russia was restricting its participation in the “New Start” agreement. The treaty limits the nuclear arsenals of Russia and the United States to 800 delivery systems and 1,550 operational nuclear warheads. “We are not withdrawing from it, but we are suspending our participation,” Putin said.

On Tuesday evening, Biden gave another speech at the historic Royal Palace in Warsaw. There will continue to be “hard and very bitter days, victories and tragedies” in a long war with heavy losses, he informed his hand-picked audience. Then he declared threateningly: “Ukraine will never be a victory for Russia – never. We will work together to ensure that Ukraine can continue to defend itself.”

Already at the Munich Security Conference over the weekend, the far-reaching war goals of the imperialist powers were formulated openly: the complete military defeat of Russia in Ukraine and the weakening and ultimate subjugation of the geostrategically important and resource-rich country.

“We must defeat Goliath, who wants to destroy us,”

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said. He continued by stating that being David means having to win. And in order to win, it would take a “slingshot” – to defeat the “aggressor Russia,” just as David defeated Goliath. And Ukraine has not yet received this sling, Zelensky added.

Zelensky’s speech via video on the first day of the conference set the tone. In their official speeches and statements, the heads of government from the European Union (EU) and NATO powers then outbid each other with calls for more and faster arms deliveries to Kiev and a constant military escalation.

French President Emmanuel Macron called for more military aid to force Russia to the negotiating table, that is, to impose a peace of victory on the country. “It is imperative that we intensify our support and efforts” to enable Ukrainians to engage in a “counteroffensive,” he said. “The coming weeks and months are crucial. France is ready for an even longer conflict. Now is not the time for dialogue.”

Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki said that Poland was ready to deliver fighter jets to Ukraine together with other countries. A prerequisite for such a move is a “NATO decision,” he added.

The German government in particular, which has long been officially portrayed as restrained, is now at the forefront of the war offensive against Russia. In their speeches, Defence Minister Boris Pistorius and Chancellor Olaf Scholz boasted of German military support for Ukraine and demanded more support from the “partners” for the formation of a tank army against Russia.

“Germany’s aid to Ukraine amounted to more than €12 billion last year,” Scholz said. “We deliver state-of-the-art weapons, ammunition and other military goods, more than any other country in continental Europe.” This is not only in line with the “legitimate expectations of our partners and allies,” but also shows that “we are taking on the responsibility that a country of the size, location and economic strength of Germany has to shoulder in times like these.”

Scholz also made it clear that the arms deliveries are aimed

at a long and intensive war. “And it is important to put our support in place from the beginning so that we can maintain it for a long time,” he said. “This has been our benchmark in the delivery of new weapon systems: self-propelled howitzers and multiple rocket launchers, anti-aircraft weapons, armored vehicles, Patriot missile batteries and, most recently, Western battle tanks.” This is how it will remain “in the future”.

This means “that all those who can deliver such battle tanks actually do so now,” Scholz continued. Together with Defence Minister Pistorius and Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock, Scholz promoted this point energetically in Munich. “Germany will help to facilitate this decision for our partners, for example by training Ukrainian soldiers here in Germany or by supporting them with supplies and logistics,” he commented.

In the same breath, Scholz asserted that he would “ensure that there is no war between NATO and Russia.” This claim is preposterous on its face. In fact, the military alliance has long been at war with Russia and is escalating the conflict. Baerbock said this quite openly recently. “We are fighting a war against Russia and not against each other,” she told the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in late January.

Germany’s ruling class is pursuing even more comprehensive war goals. It is using the NATO war against Russia to implement its great power ambitions announced nine years ago at the Munich Security Conference in 2014, and to make Germany the leading military and war power again after two lost world wars in the 20th century.

“From this podium, there has often been talk in recent years of Germany having to live up to its security policy responsibility,” Scholz said. He stated, “Not only do we share this claim, we are fulfilling it.” The Chancellor boasted that Germany, among other things, sent an “additional brigade” to Lithuania under his leadership, supported Poland and Slovakia with air defense, and currently leads the NATO spearhead rapid deployment force “for which we keep 17,000 soldiers at the ready”.

“In order to be able to achieve this and even more in the future, we are putting an end to the neglect of the Bundeswehr (armed forces),” Scholz continued. The €100 billion Bundeswehr special fund “laid the foundation” for this and made possible “a permanent lane change in the development of the capabilities” of the Bundeswehr. But military spending should continue to grow, he added.

“Of course, with new fighter jets, helicopters, ships and tanks, the costs for ammunition and equipment, maintenance, exercises, training and personnel are also rising,” he said. He therefore reaffirmed that Germany will permanently increase its defense spending to two percent of

gross domestic product. Pistorius warned that the defense budget would be increased by another €10 billion next year.

The ruling class not only envisages the comprehensive militarization of Germany, but of the whole of Europe. “In order to invest these funds sensibly and sustainably, we need a high-performance and competitive arms industry in Germany and throughout Europe,” Scholz said. Gigantic armaments projects such as the Future Combat Air System, the Main Ground Combat System and the “European Sky Shield, initiated by Germany, are “steps towards a Europe of defence and armaments” and “towards a more geopolitically capable Europe.”

All the phrases about freedom, democracy and human rights repeated by Scholz, Biden and Co. cannot hide the fact that the leading NATO powers and their proxies are waging a dirty imperialist war in Ukraine. In Munich, Ukrainian deputy head of government Olexandr Kubrakov called for the delivery of cluster munitions and phosphorus bombs to Kiev. “Why can’t we use them?” he asked provocatively. “It is our territory” and the weapons could help to withstand the Russian army.

The use of cluster munitions and phosphorus bombs is illegal under international law. The effects of these weapons are devastating. Cluster munitions are rockets and bombs that break apart in the air and release countless small explosive devices. Phosphorus is an extremely flammable chemical that is difficult to extinguish. It burns flesh to the bone and its toxic fumes lead to severe burns of the respiratory tract. Both weapons are used extensively and are designed to kill and mutilate people indiscriminately.

Even though the NATO leaders publicly rejected Kubrakov’s request, he knew whom he was addressing. The imperialist powers are “experts” when it comes to the use of these devastating weapons. According to a report by Human Rights Watch, nearly 13,000 cluster bombs with an estimated 1.8 to 2 million submunitions were dropped by the United States and the United Kingdom in the course of the invasion of Iraq in violation of international law. Missiles and shells containing white phosphorus were also used against the civilian population during the destruction of Fallujah.



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