

Germany's Taurus cruise missiles to be used in attacks on Russia

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The German government is preparing to provide Taurus medium-range missiles to Kiev. This is a desperate attempt to avert a complete debacle of the Ukrainian “counter-offensive,” which has seen heavy losses for Kiev, to strengthen the NATO war offensive against Russia and in the process, to enforce the interests of German imperialism.

“The counter-offensive is faltering; Ukraine does not have a significant air force to support it. That leaves only guided missiles like Taurus cruise missiles, with which the Ukrainian army could overcome the minefields laid by the Russians and recapture territory,” declared Social Democratic (SPD) budget politician Andreas Schwarz in *Der Spiegel* on the weekend.

The stated goal is to defeat Russia militarily. “We want to enable Ukraine to win the war more quickly. For that, it needs Taurus air-to-surface cruise missiles,” Schwarz stressed. There were also no technical reasons against delivery, he said. “With some modifications, the weapons can also be fired by the non-Western fighter jets used in Ukraine so far.”

The delivery would be a massive intensification of the NATO war against Russia and part of a spiral of escalation that increasingly conjures up the danger of a third nuclear world war. The Taurus missiles developed by Germany and Sweden have a range of over 500 kilometres and thus fly even further than the British-French Storm Shadow/Scalp missiles already being delivered to Kiev. They could attack targets not only in Crimea but deep in the Russian heartland.

That is precisely the plan. The chair of the Bundestag’s (parliamentary) Defence Committee, Marie-Agnes Strack-Zimmermann (Liberal Democrat, FDP), who has been calling for cruise missiles for Ukraine for some time, recently declared: Ukraine “must also be enabled, with our support, to act against military targets—also on

Russian soil—from which hundreds of missiles are fired at Ukraine every day.”

Green Party warmongers express similar views. The weapon’s radius of action should not militate against delivery, Agnieszka Brugger, deputy parliamentary group leader of the Greens in the Bundestag, warned in *Der Spiegel*. Germany and Ukraine could “agree, for example, that certain areas are excluded or that the weapons are used exclusively against militarily relevant targets, as international law allows Ukraine to do in its self-defence,” she explained cynically.

This is mendacious on two counts. Brugger knows full well that Ukraine has long been attacking targets on Russian territory—including the capital Moscow—bombing civilian targets as well. According to media reports, just on Sunday, the University of Donetsk was hit with cluster munitions in a Ukrainian attack.

At the same time, the massive escalation of the war is not about “self-defence.” The NATO powers deliberately provoked Putin’s reactionary invasion of Ukraine. Now they are stoking the war further and further in order to bring Russia to its knees. German imperialism, which has already twice tried to militarily subjugate the resource-rich country, is again aggressively advancing.

During a visit to the Mountain Brigade 23 in Bad Reichenhall last Thursday, Defence Minister Boris Pistorius (SPD) boasted about the German role. He said Germany was a leader in air defence, training and in engineering and armoured vehicles. “This is our first priority, our core competence.”

Referring to the Taurus deliveries also demanded by Kiev, Pistorius said: “The time has not yet come for us to make a decision.” Even “our American allies do not supply these cruise missiles” and the German weapons “have a special range.”

This all follows a familiar pattern. The delivery of battle tanks was also prepared behind the scenes and

coordinated with Washington for a long time before it was announced publicly. Since then, Germany has been one of the leading tank suppliers. According to the official “List of Military Support,” the German government has already delivered 18 Leopard 2 main battle tanks, 10 Leopard 1 main battle tanks, 40 Marder infantry fighting vehicles and 46 Gepard flak tanks to Ukraine. Another 60 Marder, 100 Leopard 1 and six Gepard tanks are “in preparation.” According to press reports, the German arms giant Rheinmetall is preparing an additional export of 50 Leopard main battle tanks.

The tanks will be followed by missiles. “I do not rule out that we will also supply additional other systems such as Taurus in conjunction with the Americans,” said Nils Schmid, foreign policy spokesman for the SPD parliamentary group in the Bundestag. Before that, however, “it must be ensured that the Ukrainians can do the target programming themselves and not that Bundeswehr soldiers do it—that would bring us dangerously close to direct participation in the war.”

In reality, NATO and Germany have long been parties to the war. Just a few weeks after it began, an expert report by the Bundestag’s Scientific Service had found that training Ukrainian soldiers on German soil was tantamount to war participation under international law. “If, in addition to the supply of weapons, the instruction of the conflict party or training in such weapons were at issue, one would be leaving the safe area of non-participation in warfare,” it said.

Meanwhile, Germany is not only one of the leading trainers and arms suppliers to the Ukrainian troops, but they are also blatantly encouraged to carry out attacks on Russian territory. It is “completely normal” in such a military conflict “that the attacked party also moves into the enemy territory, for example, to cut off supply routes,” Pistorius declared back in April. The Taurus missiles would have exactly this function. According to Wikipedia, they are “used against strategic facilities of the enemy such as airfields, command posts, industrial plants and ports.”



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