

The war policy of Germany's Greens: Foreign Minister Baerbock in Washington and Kiev

Johannes Stern
13 September 2023

German imperialism is reacting to the failed attempt at the G-20 summit to involve emerging countries more strongly in the NATO war offensive against Russia by expanding its war support for Ukraine. Formerly pacifists, the Greens are playing a key role in this.

Green Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock is currently in the US. A central goal of her trip is to coordinate the NATO war offensive. At her meeting with Texas Governor Greg Abbott on Tuesday, Baerbock explained that further support for Ukraine was an important topic that was discussed 'long and intensively.'

The fact that Baerbock met Abbott at the beginning of her multi-day trip underlines that the Greens are working with the most reactionary forces to escalate the war and promote the interests of German imperialism. Abbott is politically aligned with former US President Donald Trump. He is considered a supporter of the fascist coup attempt on January 6, 2021, is a vehement opponent of abortion and brutalizes migrants. All this is apparently compatible with Baerbock's so-called "feminist foreign policy." The conversation "could have gone on for hours," she explained after meeting with Abbott.

On Wednesday, Baerbock continued her war journey and paid a visit to Sheppard Air Force Base in Wichita Falls. German fighter pilots have been trained at the airbase in northern Texas since the early 1960s. Since 1 April 2019, the Tactical Training Command of the Air Force has also been stationed there. Today, Thursday, Baerbock will travel to Washington, where she will meet, among others, with US Secretary of State Antony Blinken.

It is clear that the talks with Blinken will focus on a massive escalation of the war in Ukraine. The leading NATO powers—above all Germany and the USA—are desperately trying to avert a complete debacle of the extremely loss-making Ukrainian "counteroffensive" and to impose a "strategic defeat" on Russia. Last week Blinken was in Kiev and he promised to continue the war "as long as necessary."

At the beginning of this week, Baerbock followed him to the same location and repeated Blinken's promise almost verbatim. "You can count on Germany's support—as long as it takes," she

wrote in a Twitter message to Dmytro Kuleba. And at a joint press conference with her Ukrainian counterpart, she stated: "No matter what time of year, we will not let up in supporting Ukraine in its defense against Russia's aggression: economic, military, humanitarian."

Kuleba, for his part, praised the German government for its support. Germany is playing an important role in the creation of an anti-aircraft shield" and also "for tank production and the use of tanks." Above all, the German "Cheetah" anti-aircraft gun has "performed extraordinarily well." The issue now is "providing further support in these areas" and also the delivery of Taurus cruise missiles.

Baerbock left no doubt that Germany would expand the supply of weapons and employ the well-known propaganda. "Help us so that Putin does not win this war," Ukrainian children who had previously allegedly been in Russian captivity implored her. And her answer was: "Yes, we support Ukraine in defending itself against Russia's aggression." With €22 billion, Germany is "now the second largest supporter of Ukraine worldwide" and they will "not let up," but are "already looking to the future."

The implications of this are clear. The same ruling class that already waged two murderous wars against Russia in the 20th century, and also tried to annex Ukraine, is once again aggressively advancing to militarily enforce the interests of German imperialism.

While Baerbock was in Kiev, Rheinmetall announced additional tank deliveries for Kiev. "The German Federal Government has commissioned Rheinmetall to supply 40 Marder infantry fighting vehicles to Ukraine," the German armaments giant, which was involved in rearming the Nazi Wehrmacht, said in a statement. So far, the company has already sent 40 Marders to Ukraine; in addition, another 20 armored personnel carriers were included from the Bundeswehr.

The delivery of Taurus cruise missiles is also being prepared behind the scenes. In Kiev, Baerbock made no concrete commitment, but stressed that she was "more than aware of the situation." However, it is "not enough to just promise things,"

she added. As before the delivery of other weapon systems, “all questions must be clarified.”

The procedure follows a familiar pattern. The supply of battle tanks was also prepared long behind the scenes and coordinated with Washington before it was publicly announced.

“This is not something you can just do so quickly—as with the Leopard tanks and the Iris-T air defense system, every detail must be clarified beforehand,” Baerbock explained in an interview with the Funke media group over the weekend. In the same breath, she called “the Ukrainian request for a device with a longer range more than understandable.” In order to liberate the people “in the east of Ukraine, to hit Russian supply lines behind the defensive line, the mine belt must be overcome.”

The shipment would be a massive escalation of NATO’s war against Russia and part of an escalation spiral that increasingly directly raises the danger of a third nuclear world war. The Taurus cruise missiles have a range of over 500 kilometers, flying even further than the British-French Storm Shadow/Scalp missiles that are already being delivered to Kiev. They could attack targets not only in Crimea, but deep in the Russian heartland.

This is exactly what the plan is, and it is already taking place. On Wednesday, the Ukrainian army attacked a shipyard in Sevastopol, the largest city in Crimea and the main base of the Russian Black Sea Fleet. According to Russian data, 24 people were injured, four of them seriously. In addition, two warships that were in the shipyard for repair were damaged.

Baerbock justified such attacks and strikes deep into Russia to the Funke media group. When asked whether she also approved of “counterattacks” on the “Russian heartland,” she replied: “It is not Ukraine that is attacking Russia, but Russia has invaded Ukraine with tanks, soldiers, missiles. If Ukraine defends itself against this in order to protect its people, it does so in accordance with international law. Specifically, the right to self-defense, enshrined in the UN Charter.”

This is nothing more than propaganda. In fact, the massive escalation of the war is not about “self-defense.” The NATO powers deliberately provoked Putin’s reactionary invasion of Ukraine with the constant expansion of the military alliance to the east, the pro-Western coup in Kiev in 2014 and the systematic arming of right-wing extremist forces in Ukraine. They are continuing to fuel the war to bring Russia to its knees. As in the past, the German elites are not concerned with “human rights” and “democracy,” but with concrete imperialist interests.

“The war in Ukraine is also a struggle for raw materials,” the foreign trade agency Germany Trade and Invest (GTAI) noted in a strategy paper earlier this year. The country has “large deposits of iron, titanium and lithium, which are now partly controlled by Russia.” The GTAI is fully controlled by the federal government and the Ministry of Economic Affairs under Robert Habeck, another leading member of the Greens. The organisation’s Supervisory Board is headed by the Green

Member of the Bundestag and Parliamentary State Secretary in the Ministry of Economic Affairs Franziska Brantner.

Under the slogan “Reconstruction,” the German economy is making a grab for Ukraine. During her visit to Kiev, Baerbock announced that she would “jointly host the reconstruction conference for Ukraine in Berlin next year.” Last August, the Eastern Committee of the German Economy already set up the “Recovery Ukraine” working group, which published the “Rebuild Ukraine” dossier in September 2022. It includes “proposals of German business for the reconstruction and modernization of the Ukrainian economy.”

In addition, there are geostrategic interests at stake, which are particularly openly formulated by the Greens. In Kiev, Baerbock again spoke out in favour of Ukraine’s admission to the European Union. “The enlargement of the EU must be seen as a necessary geopolitical consequence of Russia’s war,” she said. The ruling class is systematically using the war in Ukraine to establish itself as the leading military power in Europe and to assert its own interests worldwide.

This goal is also served by the close foreign policy and military coordination, for the time being at least, with the US. It follows “the principle: cooperation where possible and the ability to act alone where necessary,” Baerbock explained in the interview already cited. The “Russian war of aggression” has “shown that we Europeans must be more able to protect ourselves. We must be defensive and invest accordingly in our common European defence.” This includes “the development of a European defence industry” and the offensive for a “common European missile defence system.” From their point of view, they do not tolerate “any postponement.”

The aggressiveness with which the Greens advocate war and a German-dominated European military and great power policy shows the extent to which the wealthy middle classes, for which the Greens speak, form the new social basis for war and militarism. Among workers and young people, they are increasingly hated for it—like the government as a whole and all capitalist parties.



To contact the WSWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact