

Why the German government supports the genocide in Gaza

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Germany is aiding and abetting genocide in Gaza. There is no other way to interpret the demonstrative friendship afforded by German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier and the German government to the Israeli government in the face of the genocide taking place in Gaza.

It is almost 16 months since the International Court of Justice (ICJ) deemed as “plausible” the allegation that Israel is committing genocide in Gaza and accepted a corresponding complaint from South Africa. Exactly one year ago, the chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC), Karim Khan, requested arrest warrants against Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his, at that time, Defence Minister Yoav Gallant for war crimes and crimes against humanity. In November, the court granted the request.

Since then, Israel itself has dispelled any remaining doubts that it is committing war crimes and pursuing objectives that violate international law. Last week, the Israeli war cabinet ordered a new offensive with the aim of permanently occupying the Gaza Strip and expelling its approximately two million inhabitants. Both actions violate fundamental principles of international law.

The cruelty with which the Israeli army is treating the civilian population goes almost beyond words. Since the beginning of March, it has blocked the transport of medicines, food and fuel in order to starve two million people. It is bombing the last remaining hospitals and shelters along with tents and groups of fleeing people in the almost completely destroyed region. More than a hundred people are being killed daily, in addition to the 53,000 already registered fatalities, the majority of them women and children. Eyewitnesses report the screams of the wounded who are left to their fate due to the lack of paramedics, hospitals and medicines.

But even though the extent of the war crimes can no longer be concealed, the German government continues to celebrate its unshakeable friendship with Israel.

Chancellor Friedrich Merz had already invited Netanyahu to visit Germany during the country’s recent election campaign and assured him that he would not execute the ICC arrest warrant, even though Germany is legally obliged to do so. Foreign Minister Waidephuls’ first trip outside Europe took him to Jerusalem, where he met Netanyahu and asserted that he did not accuse Israel of behaviour contrary to international law.

Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier invited his Israeli counterpart Yitzhak Herzog to Berlin to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations and then flew with him to Israel. There, he also spoke with Netanyahu, just hours after the latter had announced that he would advance “with full force” in the Gaza Strip in the coming days.

While during his visit the German president cautiously noted the suffering of the civilian population in the Gaza Strip and called for a peaceful solution, this has no practical consequences. Germany is neither suspending arms deliveries to the Israeli army nor withdrawing its support for Netanyahu.

Instead, Steinmeier and Herzog raved about the “miracle of reconciliation.” They said that the deep friendship between Israel and Germany today is “a gift” that no German could have expected and that would have been completely unimaginable after the rupture of civilisation caused by the Shoah. “Germany is at your side, always,” Steinmeier assured Israel.

This defence of Israeli war crimes by invoking the Shoah—the industrial extermination of six million Jews by the Nazis—fills millions of people with revulsion and disgust. At the same time, it creates a great deal of

confusion. Anyone who opposes the genocide of the Palestinians is immediately denounced as an “anti-Semite” and persecuted.

In reality, neither today’s nor past relations between Germany and Israel have anything to do with reconciliation. The establishment of diplomatic relations on 12 May 1965 was preceded by years of military support and cooperation.

The Zionist state, founded in 1948, was relatively isolated due to the terrorist methods of its founders and the brutal expulsion of the Palestinians, and was in urgent need of weapons and financial support. Even the United States, which was the first country to recognise Israel, imposed an arms embargo and did not officially supply weapons until 1962. Germany agreed to reparations payments in 1952 and, in 1957, under then Defence Minister Franz-Josef Strauß (CSU), commenced intensive armaments cooperation with Israel, which continues to this day.

In return, the “reconciliation” with Israel enhanced Germany’s international standing, the German economy gained access to the Middle East, which had been divided between the colonial powers Britain and France after the First World War and was now dominated by the United States, and the Israeli government helped cover up the Nazi past of high-ranking German state officials.

The latter became particularly important when Adolf Eichmann, the key organiser of the Shoah, was put on trial in Israel in 1961. Panic broke out in the German government. It was feared that Eichmann would reveal the Nazi crimes of high-ranking ministry officials. Hans Globke, Chancellor Konrad Adenauer’s right-hand man, was particularly at risk.

Several working groups were formed within the government, the most important of which was headed by Globke himself, to monitor the trial and intervene. Several observers from the Federal Intelligence Service and the Foreign Ministry flew to Israel to follow and influence the trial and monitor independent German journalists.

Globke blocked loans and arms deliveries, promised shortly before Eichmann’s arrest, putting pressure on the Israeli government and only releasing them after Eichmann—who had kept quiet—had been executed.

Like Germany’s support for Israel in the past, today’s support for the genocide in Gaza is not

motivated by responsibility for the Shoah, but by Germany’s imperialist interests. Israel serves Germany, as it does the United States, as a military bridgehead in a region that has huge reserves of raw materials and is of central geo-strategic importance. The resistance of the Palestinians, which enjoys broad support among the Arab masses, stands in the way of imperialist control over the region. That is why it must be eliminated.

For the Palestinians, this means disaster; for Israeli workers, it is a tragedy. The Zionist state, with its right-wing extremist government, increasingly resembles the Nazi regime it was supposed to be the answer to.

Zionism has led to a dead end! The Israeli state, which is based on the persecution and expulsion of the Palestinians and serves as a base for the imperialist powers in the Middle East, is no solution to the historical oppression and persecution of the Jews. This can only be overcome through a socialist society based on social and democratic equality.

Hundreds of thousands of people around the world—including many Jews—are taking to the streets in defence of the Palestinians. At the same time, resistance to social cuts and war is growing. This creates the objective conditions for the unification of the international working class across all national, ethnic and religious boundaries in the struggle for socialism.



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