

# “All Eyes On Gaza”: Biggest ever demonstration in Germany against Israeli genocide

Our reporters  
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Germany’s biggest ever demonstration against the genocide of the Palestinian people took place in Berlin on Saturday. It began in the afternoon in front of the city’s Rotes Rathaus (Red Town Hall) with an initial rally attended by around 20,000 people. It then proceeded along the Strasse des 17. Juni and ended with its main and closing rally at Berlin’s central Grosser Stern in the evening, where the crowd swelled to up to 100,000.

Demonstrators had responded to the call from an alliance of around 50 organisations and individuals under the slogan “All Eyes On Gaza.” The mass mobilisation shows the enormous opposition among the population to Israel’s war crimes and Germany’s participation in them.

Many participants held placards reading “Never again is now,” “Free Gaza,” “Stop the genocide now” and “Bombing children is not self-defence.” Many carried Palestinian flags and wore kufiya scarves to express their horror at the ongoing genocide and express their solidarity with the Palestinians.

Others condemned the German government for its support of the genocide, carrying homemade placards that read “No war in my name,” “Scholz + Merz (leaders of the German coalition government) to The Hague,” or drew a direct connection between the crimes of the Holocaust and the genocide of the Palestinians.

Kilian, a student who came to the city’s Neptune Fountain, explained that “it is no longer acceptable that everything is still presented as self-defence on Israel’s part.” Although the German government has “a special responsibility” towards Jewish people due to Germany’s historical past, he said, “a distinction must be made between the Israeli population and their government.”

Another participant in the rally expressed her opinion about Germany’s support for Israel in particularly drastic terms: “It makes me just want to vomit!” For her, it was

perfectly clear: “In the end, it’s all about money. So that they can take the Gaza Strip, and not just since October 2023, they have had the plan to take it for much longer.”

The main organisers and initiators of the demonstration included the Palestinian community in Germany, eye4palestine, Amnesty International Germany and Medico International. The demonstration from the Red Town Hall was organised by the Left Party.

On the podium at the Grosser Stern, speeches by Palestinian victims and activists took centre stage, giving voice to the victims of genocide and denouncing the intolerable conditions in Gaza.

Iman Abu El Qomsan, who was born in exile in Berlin, described in moving terms the atrocities her family had endured since 1948 and explained: “My story does not begin with me, it begins long before my birth,” namely with her grandparents, who were “driven out of their homeland by Israeli militias” in 1948. “Their homeland was wiped out, and with it the life they knew.” Today, what her grandparents experienced is being repeated.

The renowned musician Michael Barenboim also took the stage and declared: “Hunger is being used as a weapon of war in a cruel way, by luring people into military camps and then shooting at them and forcing them to flee to southern Gaza.” He emphasised that “the Nakba, the mass killing and expulsion of Palestinians from 1947 to 1949, as well as the destruction of countless towns and villages ... is not just a historical event, but an ongoing process of expulsion, killing, annexation and fragmentation.”

“The genocide in Gaza,” he said, is the “provisional culmination of this ongoing Nakba.” In 2023, then Defence Minister Yoav Gallant spoke of Palestinians as “human animals.” The Brandenburg Gate was illuminated in the colours of the Israeli national flag with the full

approval of the former social democratic-led coalition government headed by Olaf Scholz.

Bands and musicians such as K.I.Z., Pashanim and Ebow also made artistic statements.

There was, however, no mention of the geopolitical background to the genocide and the reasons for the unconditional government support for Netanyahu, especially from Chancellor Frederick Merz and the Trump administration, which includes the involvement of the Left Party in enforcing the “German *raison d’état*.” The complicity of the German media was also not addressed from the podium.

At the opening rally in front of the Red Town Hall, Left Party chairwoman Ines Schwerdtner dared to declare that her party stood “side by side with all those people who are suffering,” namely, “in Gaza and Israel.” As if the events of October 7, 2023 could be compared to the two-year-long, state-organised genocide of the Palestinians!

When confronted with boos, Schwerdtner defended herself: “I understand your pain, because what is happening in Palestine is genocide.” In a pose of self-criticism, she went on to say, “I have been silent for too long, it is genocide,” whereupon a demonstrator loudly shouted, “We know all that, tell us why you haven’t said anything for so long!”

In fact, the Left Party faction in the Bundestag had declared Israel’s security to be a matter of German national state interest, demanded arms deliveries to Israel and, until recently, refused to call the genocide by its name. Only when representatives of the German government struck a more critical tone did the Left Party change its stance.

The party leadership is primarily concerned with controlling the growing opposition to the genocide and channelling it into harmless dead ends. It can only play this role because the other organisers of the demonstration, even if driven by genuine outrage, fail to address the central political issues and refuse to discuss the background to the genocide. The call for the demonstration consisted essentially of friendly appeals to the German government, which is a leading force behind the genocide.

Representatives of the Socialist Equality Party attacked this position and distributed en masse the leaflet “A Socialist Perspective in the Struggle Against Genocide and World War.” In it, the SGP declared that, “after two years of ongoing mass protests around the world” against the horrific genocide in Gaza, it was time to “take political stock: What is the political, historical and

economic background to the genocide? And what strategy and perspective can stop it?”

The German government had not simply taken the wrong side but was a driving force behind the genocide. “The imperialist powers see the genocide currently taking place and the suppression of any Palestinian resistance as the basic prerequisite for the reorganisation of the entire Middle East, which is of utmost importance with its raw materials and strategically central location. The genocide in Gaza is another front in the global conflict over the redivision of the world. The German government’s support cannot therefore be separated from its war plans against Russia and the horrendous arms build-up it is implementing.”

The Left Party is trying to stifle the movement with its appeals to the government because it essentially supports the government’s policies and defends capitalism. “But the genocide in Gaza shows that capitalism is incompatible with the needs of the people,” the leaflet states. “A serious anti-war movement must link the struggle against genocide with the struggle against rearmament and the escalation of war against Russia and target the root of this barbarism: capitalism.”

Many demonstrators stopped at the SGP bookstall to discuss the way forward in the struggle against genocide and war. They were drawn by the SGP’s analysis and programme and also bought the literature on display. David North’s book *The Logic of Zionism* was of particular interest. With precision and clarity, and based on historical facts, the book delivers a damning verdict on the perspective of Zionism and the root causes of the genocide in Gaza, and on this basis develops an international socialist perspective for the struggle against it.



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