

# Germany and European powers back Trump's regime change plan in Iran

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Despite growing tensions between the US and Europe, the European powers have backed Washington and Tel Aviv's threats of war against Iran and the associated plans for regime change. Donald Trump is using the anti-government protests in Iran as a pretext to threaten military intervention. The German government under Chancellor Friedrich Merz has decisively endorsed this strategy.

During a visit to India, Merz stated that it was necessary to work toward a "transition" in Iran, using the classic justifications for imperialist regime change operations. "I am currently concerned about reports of increasing violence by the police, the so-called Revolutionary Guards in Iran, against their own population," Merz said. The Iranian regime has "no legitimacy through elections anyway," and the population is "now rising up against this regime." He added threateningly:

"We are in close contact with the American government, with the European governments ... to ensure that there can now be a peaceful transition to a democratically legitimate government in Iran." He continued: "If a regime can only hold onto power through violence, then it is effectively finished. I assume that we are now seeing the last days and weeks of this regime."

These statements are clear. Merz is openly supporting a regime change prepared by the US. At the beginning of the year, he already defended the US attack on Venezuela, which violated international law, and the kidnapping of the elected president, Nicolás Maduro. If he now emphasises that Germany is in "close contact" with Washington and openly speculates about the imminent overthrow of the Iranian leadership, this suggests that the German government is directly involved in the imperialist plans of attack.

The claim that this is about "peace" or "democracy" is cynical. The US, Germany and their European allies are pursuing the goal of installing a neocolonial regime in Iran that is subservient to them. In doing so, they are deliberately relying on the most reactionary forces, including the son of the Shah who was overthrown in 1979. Such a regime would hand over control of the country's enormous oil and gas reserves to Western corporations and fully integrate Iran into Washington's military-strategic offensive against Russia and China.

For the Iranian working class, such a "transition" would have catastrophic consequences. As experience in Iraq, Libya and Afghanistan shows, a regime change imposed by imperialism does not mean freedom but social devastation, intensified exploitation and brutal repression. A pro-Western regime in Iran would oppress workers just as ruthlessly in the interests of international finance capital as the existing one.

The moral outrage over the violence of the Iranian state is particularly hypocritical. The same powers have actively supported the genocide of the Palestinians over the past two years. The Gaza Strip has been systematically turned into a field of rubble and, according to official figures, some 70,000 people have been killed, mostly women and children. Independent calculations by a team of researchers at the Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research estimate the death toll was at least 100,000.

From the outset, the *World Socialist Web Site* has noted that the Gaza genocide is part of a comprehensive imperialist war strategy. The goal is the complete subjugation of the resource-rich and geostrategically critical Middle East in order to create the conditions for a direct military confrontation with Russia and China. Since the European powers share these strategic goals, they already supported the US-Israeli attacks on Iran

last year, which killed numerous members of the Iranian military leadership, struck nuclear facilities and slaughtered hundreds of civilians.

Merz himself hailed these attacks on the sidelines of the G7 summit in Canada last June, saying: “Israel is doing the dirty work for all of us. I can only say that I have the utmost respect for the Israeli army and the Israeli leadership for having the courage to do this.” This statement bluntly expressed that the German government viewed Israel’s bombing as a proxy operation in the joint interests of imperialism.

Since then, Germany and its European allies have systematically escalated their confrontation with Iran. At the end of September 2025, Germany, France and the UK triggered the snapback mechanism of the nuclear agreement to reinstate previous UN sanctions, including an arms embargo, missile restrictions and far-reaching financial sanctions. Now, new European Union (EU) sanctions are being prepared that are intended to target regime officials, including account freezes and travel bans.

EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen announced that she would “quickly” propose new measures against “those responsible for the repression.” In several European capitals, including Berlin, the Iranian ambassador was summoned. In addition, Germany, France and the Netherlands are pushing to list the Iranian Revolutionary Guards as a terrorist organisation—a step that further lowers the threshold for direct military escalation.

In Germany, this aggressive line is supported not only by the governing parties but also by the Left Party. The party supports in all essentials the imperialist policy of regime change and cloaks it in democratic rhetoric. In a motion to be debated in the Bundestag on Friday, its MPs are demanding that the federal government must “condemn in the strongest terms the violence of the Islamist regime in Iran,” strengthen the “democratic aspirations of civil society” and at the same time push ahead with consistent sanctions against the Revolutionary Guards. The Left Party already underscored that it was preparing the ground politically and ideologically for Western military intervention with its open support for the US-Israeli military strikes against Iran last year.

European support for Trump’s war offensive against Iran will not lead to a thawing of transatlantic relations.

Trump’s threats against Greenland and the new US National Security Strategy, which openly names the European Union as a rival, are exacerbating tensions. But as long as the European powers are not yet militarily capable of waging global wars independently of Washington, they will support US operations.

In doing so, they are pursuing several interrelated interests. They hope to secure a share of the imperialist spoils by supporting US wars. They want to continue NATO’s war offensive against Russia in Ukraine and are dependent on Washington’s military and political backing to do so. And they are using the escalation of US imperialism to massively advance their own rearmament. The logic is that in a world of power, those who are not prepared to use military force will go under.

Workers and young people must resolutely reject these preparations for war—as well as the propaganda with which the European imperialists sell their rearmament drive and war policies as “peace policies.” As in the past, the enforcement of predatory imperialist interests is inseparably linked to the dismantling of social and democratic rights and the establishment of dictatorship at home. The only progressive way out lies in building an international, socialist anti-war movement in the working class that opposes all of the imperialist powers and links the fight against war with the fight against its root cause—the capitalist profit system.



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