

German reactions to the “ceasefire” in the Iran war: Berlin sticks to its war aims

Johannes Stern
9 April 2026

The German government and the ruling class have officially welcomed the so-called “ceasefire” in the Middle East negotiated between the United States, Israel and Iran. But behind the diplomatic phrases lies no departure from previous war policies—on the contrary, their continuation by other means.

In a joint statement with the leading powers of NATO and the European Union, the German government declared its support for the ceasefire while simultaneously emphasizing the need to militarily secure “stability” in the region. Specifically, Berlin signaled its willingness to participate in an international military mission to secure the Strait of Hormuz—one of the most strategically important trade routes for global oil and goods transport.

On Thursday, German Chancellor Friedrich Merz stated in a press briefing: “Above all, what is needed is a viable agreement that ensures the freedom of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz.” Germany is prepared, following a peace agreement, to help secure free navigation—provided there is a mandate and a viable concept.

This announcement makes clear what German foreign policy is really about: not peace, but the defense of imperialist interests in a key region of global capitalism.

This is expressed particularly openly by leading representatives of the Green Party. Bundestag Vice President Omid Nouripour explicitly calls for a stronger European military role in the Middle East, justifying it with Germany’s and the EU’s “geostrategic interests.”

In an interview with Deutschlandfunk, he stated that one should not take part in “further military adventures of the Americans.” However, “it is also true that we have massive interests” and that “the Strait of Hormuz naturally also affects our economy, so we cannot pretend to be indifferent to what happens there.” The Bundeswehr [armed forces], he added, possesses “capabilities that could be needed.”

The demand for a stronger German-European military

presence is thus presented as a “peace initiative”—a cynical euphemism for a further escalation of imperialist interventions. In reality, the stance of the federal government and the nominal opposition in the Bundestag is in direct continuity with their support for Israel’s genocide in Gaza and the US-Israeli war of aggression against Iran.

In a further official statement on April 8, the government extensively quoted a declaration by Chancellor Friedrich Merz (Christian Democratic Union, CDU), in which he holds Iran responsible for the violence in the Middle East and effectively aligns himself with the US-Israeli war offensive.

For years and decades, “the Iranian regime has spread terror across the world and destabilized its neighborhood,” the chancellor declared in his government statement on March 18. “This regime bears responsibility for the current crisis in the region.”

The German government shares “with Israel and the United States the goal that Iran should no longer pose a threat in the future—neither to Israel nor to neighboring states in the region. ‘The times in which the Iranian regime could destabilize and threaten other states must come to an end.’”

This makes it unmistakably clear: Berlin is sticking to the central objectives of the war—the elimination of Iran as a regional power, the subordination of the Middle East to imperialist control, and the strategic weakening of Russia and China.

That this policy continues despite the “ceasefire” is also evident in the reaction to the open threats of annihilation made by US President Donald Trump. He declared, “A whole civilization will die,” a threat of historic proportions, recalling the most barbaric crimes of the Nazis—the extermination of European Jews in the Holocaust and the war of annihilation against the Soviet Union during World War II.

The German government did not condemn Trump's threat. On the contrary, when asked, Merz defended Trump's statements on Thursday with the cynical remark that they had ultimately contributed to the ceasefire. This justification reveals the complete political and moral bankruptcy of the German ruling class. It signals that it, too, is prepared to accept threats of genocide as a legitimate means of policy—and to prepare such crimes itself.

At the same time, it is pushing ahead with the militarization of society. Leading politicians are openly calling for measures to further prepare for war. For example, the chairman of the Defense Committee, Thomas R  wekamp (CDU), advocated making reservists' participation in military exercises mandatory and abolishing the principle of voluntariness for both them and employers. Such proposals, like the reintroduction of conscription, mark another step toward the comprehensive mobilization of society for future military conflicts.

Media reactions also underscore that there is no serious opposition to the war within the political establishment. Critical commentary is not directed against the aggression itself, but primarily criticizes its "inadequate" execution by an "erratic" and NATO-hostile US president. Leading media outlets such as *Der Spiegel* speak of a "strategic defeat" for the US and warn that Iran and its allies Russia and China could emerge strengthened from the conflict.

These assessments are not used as arguments against further military adventures, but on the contrary as justification for accelerating Europe's military buildup even further. Europe's relative military weakness compared to the US is interpreted both as a risk and an opportunity: a risk because Europe cannot yet act independently as a leading military power—and an opportunity to use the US debacle in Iran to develop precisely this capability in the future.

Developments confirm the analysis of the *World Socialist Web Site* that the "ceasefire" does not represent stabilization, but merely a temporary interruption of an escalating global conflict. The underlying contradictions that led to the war persist and are intensifying.

Following his meeting with NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte, Trump reiterated on Wednesday evening in a message in all capital letters on Truth Social his criticism of NATO for its lack of support in the Iran war and again threatened the annexation of Greenland. NATO was not there "when we needed them, and they will not be there when we need them again," he complained, adding threateningly: "Remember Greenland, that big, poorly run

piece of Ice!!!"

The events of recent weeks have laid bare the true nature of imperialism. The US president's open threats of annihilation have shattered the propaganda that military interventions are carried out in the name of "human rights" or "democracy." Instead, it has become clear that a criminal oligarchy is prepared to destroy entire societies in order to enforce its economic and geostrategic interests.

This applies not only to the United States, but equally to the European powers. The German government, which tacitly accepts Trump's threats and actively supports his policy in the Middle East despite all concerns and growing transatlantic tensions, stands fully in this tradition.

The Left Party, like the Greens, has already shown at the beginning of the war that it does not represent an alternative. The party's chairman, Jan van Aken, stated verbatim that he was "personally also glad ... that Khamenei is dead" and "that many henchmen of the regime are dead." He cynically added, "One should never rejoice at a person's death, and yet I think it is good that they are gone, and may they rot in hell."

Support for the targeted killing of the Iranian leadership demonstrates that it sides with imperialist violence on decisive questions.

Workers and young people must draw the necessary conclusions from these developments. The "ceasefire" is not the all-clear, but a warning. The war of aggression against Iran, the Israeli massacres in Lebanon and the genocide in Gaza show that the ruling class is prepared to resort to the most extreme forms of violence—and that preparations for new, even more devastating wars are well advanced.

The only way to prevent a relapse into barbarism lies in the independent political mobilization of the working class—in Germany, Europe and internationally. This mobilization must be directed against the capitalist profit system, which is inseparably bound up with war, dictatorship and social devastation, and must fight for a socialist perspective that places social resources under democratic control and eradicates war at its root.



To contact the WWSW and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact