

Germany fails to gain seat in UN Security Council election

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Germany's drive for world power suffered a setback in the UN General Assembly on Wednesday. In the vote for the two non-permanent seats on the UN Security Council, which are reserved for European states, it lost significantly to Portugal and Austria.

Despite intensive lobbying by Foreign Minister Johann Wadephul, who travelled around the world for this purpose, Germany received the votes of only 104 countries in the secret ballot, significantly fewer than the necessary two-thirds majority of 127. Portugal received 134 votes and Austria 131 votes and will thus be members of the 15-member Security Council in 2027 and 2028. It is the first time that Germany has lost such an election. Since reunification in 1990, it has applied for a seat every eight years and had always been successful until now.

Media outlets described the German defeat as a “disaster” and a “heavy blow.” Not only was Germany's reputation now tarnished, but also Chancellor Merz's declared goal of gaining more foreign policy influence for Germany. Foreign Minister Wadephul spoke of a “bitter defeat.”

The political influence of a non-permanent member of the Security Council is admittedly small; any resolution can be blocked by the veto of a permanent member—the US, China, Russia, Britain or France. The major powers, including Germany itself, regularly defy the authority of the Security Council. For example, the wars against Yugoslavia, Iraq, Libya and now Iran have taken place without its mandatory approval under international law.

But Germany's defeat in the General Assembly demonstrates the mistrust and rejection that German imperialism now faces worldwide. This is a direct consequence of the fact that Berlin's foreign policy once again relies massively on militarism and great

power politics. The time when Germany pursued its global economic interests by peaceful means is long gone. It increasingly confronts its rivals openly as a threat and adversary.

In the Middle East, it has declared support for the genocide in Gaza and other Israeli war crimes to be in “Germany's national interest.” Chancellor Merz has publicly backed Trump's war against Iran. In doing so, he is alienating governments in Asia and Africa, who fear becoming the next targets in the crosshairs of imperialist war, whose energy supplies will be choked off by the blockade of the Strait of Hormuz, and who therefore confront massive social resistance.

In Ukraine, Germany has taken over the financial and partly also the military leadership in the war against Russia. Berlin is doing everything to prevent an end to the war. It is working closely with Kiev on the development of new, long-range weapons. During the vote in the UN, Ukrainian drones attacked targets in St. Petersburg, where 20,000 participants from 130 countries were gathering for the 29th International Economic Forum—a deliberate provocation that further escalates the conflict with the nuclear power Russia.

In Europe, Germany's loudly declared claim to be a European “leading power” and to be building up the strongest land army, confronts growing irritation. All of this contributed to numerous governments voting against Germany in the UN General Assembly. In response, Berlin is intensifying its aggressive imperialist course.

A commentary in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* sums this up most clearly. A seat on the Security Council would “not have achieved much,” its foreign affairs editor Nikolas Busse writes. “The energy that the foreign minister and the Foreign Ministry have put into the application for this

ultimately insignificant seat” only showed “how much Berlin still tends towards ideal politics.” “The security that Germany needs in the unrelenting multipolar age,” Busse states, cannot be attained in the UN Security Council, “but only through rearmament and growth at home.”

This path is being pursued not only by the government, but also by the so-called opposition. The Greens, Left Party and far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) all accuse the Merz government of having damaged German interests and undermined Germany’s reputation in the world; put plainly, having weakened German imperialism.

The Greens foreign policy spokeswoman Deborah Düring accused Merz and Wadehul of having manoeuvred Germany into “foreign policy insignificance.” The Greens’ deputy parliamentary group leader, Agnieszka Brugger, reprimanded Merz and Wadehul for having “done far too little to back up this candidacy with modern ideas” and had thus “squandered Germany’s reputation and responsibility in the world.”

Left Party leader Ines Schwerdtner spoke of a “defeat for the so-called foreign policy Chancellor Friedrich Merz.” It had never happened before that Germany applied for a seat and was not elected, she said.

AfD leader Alice Weidel expressed herself similarly, writing on X: “One embarrassment follows the next. While Merz wanted to bring our country ‘back onto the international stage’ at the beginning of his chancellorship, Germany now remains without a seat on the UN Security Council.”

This unanimous support for German imperialism shows that the turn towards militarism, war, social cuts and dictatorship does not simply stem from the arbitrary subjective intentions of politicians like Trump or Merz but has deep objective causes. The contradictions of capitalist society—between global economy and the nation-state system, the incompatibility of social production and capitalist private property, the gap between rich and poor—have reached an extent to which the rulers know only one answer: war and dictatorship.

This can only be stopped by a movement of the international working class fighting for a socialist programme.



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