

Ukraine's cause is our cause, too

Another Open Letter to Chancellor Olaf Scholz

Dear Mr Chancellor,

at the May Day rally in Düsseldorf, against whistles and shouts of protest, you reaffirmed your will to support Ukraine, including with arms supplies, so that it can successfully defend itself. We welcome your clear words and encourage you to quickly implement the Bundestag resolution for arms deliveries to Ukraine.

Because of the concentration of Russian troops in the east and south of Ukraine, the continued bombing of civilians, the systematic destruction of infrastructure, the humanitarian emergency with more than ten million refugees and the economic destruction of Ukraine as a result of the war, every day counts. It does not take any special military expertise to realise that the difference between "defensive" and "offensive" weapons is a moot point: In the hands of the attacked, tanks and howitzers are also defensive weapons because they serve self-defence.

Anyone who wants a negotiated peace that does not amount to Ukraine's submission to Russian demands must strengthen the country's defensive potential and weaken Russia's offensive potential to the maximum. This requires continued supply of weapons and ammunition to turn the military balance in Ukraine's favour. And it requires the extension of economic sanctions to the Russian energy sector, which is the Putin regime's financial lifeline.

It is in Germany's interest to prevent the Russian war of aggression from succeeding. Those who attack the European order, trample on international law and commit massive war crimes must not leave the battlefield as victors. Putin's declared goal was and is the destruction of Ukraine's national independence. At the first attempt, this attempt failed due to the determined resistance and the willingness of Ukrainian society to make sacrifices. The now proclaimed goal of an expanded Russian sphere of power from Kharkiv to Odesa is also unacceptable.

To forcibly redraw borders means to destroy the European order, in whose foundation your party played a major role. It is based on the renunciation of violence, the sovereign equality of all states and the recognition of human rights as the basis for peaceful coexistence and cooperation in Europe. It is therefore not contrary to Willy Brandt's Ostpolitik to support Ukraine today, even with weapons, in order to defend these principles.

Russia's attack on Ukraine is at the same time an attack on European security. The Kremlin's demands for a reorganisation of Europe, formulated in the run-up to the invasion, speak a clear language. If Putin's armed revisionism in Ukraine succeeds, the danger grows that the next war will take place on NATO territory. And if a nuclear power gets away with attacking a country that has surrendered its nuclear weapons in exchange for international security guarantees, that constitutes a serious blow to nuclear non-proliferation.

What the Russian leadership fears is not the imaginary threat from NATO. It is much more afraid of the democratic awakening in its neighbourhood. Hence the teaming up with Belarusian dictator Lukashenko, hence the furious attempt to forcefully stop Ukraine's path towards democracy and Europe. No other country had to pay a higher price to become part of a democratic Europe. Because of this, Ukraine deserves a binding prospect of accession to the European Union.

The threat of nuclear war is part of Russia's psychological warfare. Nevertheless, we do not take it lightly. Every war carries the risk of escalation to the extreme. But the danger of nuclear war cannot be removed by making concessions to the Kremlin that will only encourage more military adventures. If the West were to shy away from supplying conventional weapons to Ukraine and thus bow to Russian threats, this would encourage further aggression from the Kremlin. The danger of nuclear escalation must be countered by credible deterrence. This requires determination and unity of Europe and the West instead of Germany choosing a path of its own.

There are good reasons to avoid a direct military confrontation with Russia. But this cannot and must not mean that the defence of Ukraine's independence and freedom is not our business. It is also an indicator of how serious we are about the German "never again". German history demands every effort to prevent renewed wars of expulsion and extermination. This is all the more true for Ukraine, a country where the Wehrmacht and the SS raged with all their brutality.

Today, Ukraine is also fighting for our security and the fundamental values of a free Europe. That is why we, Europe, must not let down Ukraine.

Anyone who would like to sign this Open Letter can do so via [change.org](http://www.change.org/KanzlerfuerUkraine):
<http://www.change.org/KanzlerfuerUkraine>

First signatories:

Stephan Anpalagan, Gerhart Baum, Marieluise Beck, Marie von den Benken, Maxim Biller, Helene von Bismarck, Marianne Birthler, Prof. Tanja Börzel, Wigald Boning, Hans Christoph Buch, Mathias Döpfner, Prof. Sabine Döring, Thomas Enders, Fritz Felgentreu, Michel Friedman, Ralf Fücks, Marjana Gaponenko, Eren Güvercin, Rebecca Harms, Wolfgang Ischinger, Olga Kaminer, Wladimir Kaminer, Dimitrij Kapitelmann, Daniel Kehlmann, Thomas Kleine-Brockhoff, Gerald Knaus, Gerd Koenen, Ilko-Sascha Kowalczyk, Remko Leemhuis, Sabine Leutheusser-Schnarrenberger, Igor Levit, Sascha Lobo, Wolf Lotter, Ahmad Mansour, Marko Martin, Jagoda Marinić, Prof. Carlo Masala, Markus Meckel, Eva Menasse, Herta Müller, Prof. Armin Nassehi, Ronya Othmann, Ruprecht Polenz, Gerd Poppe, Antje Ravik Strubel, Prof. Hedwig Richter, Prof. Thomas Risse, Prof. Gwendolyn Sasse, Prof. Karl Schlögel, Peter Schneider, Linn Selle, Constanze Stelzenmüller, Funda Tekin, Sebastian Turner, Marina Weisband, Deniz Yücel, Prof. Michael Zürn

ViSdP: Ralf Fücks, Zentrum Liberale Moderne, Reinhardtstr. 15, 10117 Berlin
www.libmod.de