



**Working group of Attac Germany on Globalization & War**

# **Declaration on May 8**

This year's anniversary of the liberation from fascism and the end of World War II in Europe is overshadowed by the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine. The Russian invasion is a serious breach of international law and a new quality in the use of force in what has been a long-running spiral of conflict. As in all wars, this one too has led to immense suffering and also bears the risk of running out of control with unpredictable consequences.

The world now finds itself just a few short steps away from a world war. For in the war in Ukraine, a regional conflict arising out of the chaotic disintegration of the Soviet Union, is being mingled with the geopolitical confrontation over the world order: on the one side, there are the protagonists of a multipolar world, primarily China and Russia, but also India, South Africa and other countries of the global South - and on the opposite side, the U.S.-led West, which wants to maintain its 500-year hegemony over the "rest of the world."

The geopolitical confrontation began more than 20 years ago with NATO's eastward expansion and the undermining of international law - especially through the wars of aggression against Yugoslavia, Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya, which violated international law. It has since been extended to China by way of economic warfare, sanctions and an arms race. Geopolitical confrontation is also the reason why India, Indonesia, South Africa, Mexico and many other countries of the global South and even Israel refuse to become warring parties now. Humanity is presently in an epoch of imminent danger. The climate crisis, famine and other global problems can only be averted through international cooperation.

For that reason, it is precisely now more than ever necessary to break with the logic of armed violence and the spiral of murder, destruction and hatred!

## **De-escalation and compromise peace instead of escalation and war of attrition**

Each day of war means more hatred, more deaths, more destruction and more war crimes. War is waged with weapons. This is why, arms deliveries prolong war. This, however, is the intention of the U.S., which calculates that a long war of attrition will weaken Russia geopolitically. The victims in Ukraine play no role in this calculation, nor does the risk of further escalation to the point of direct confrontation between NATO and Russia. In the meantime, the EU, the German government and large parts of the political spectrum and the media in Germany have likewise adapted this position. Germany is de facto party to the war.

Ukraine cannot win this war, Russia cannot win this war. For those who are really concerned about humanity and empathy with the war victims, the only sensible and morally acceptable alternative to arms deliveries and a war of attrition can only be a compromise peace. Maximum positions cannot bring peace. Each side must make concessions.

The cornerstones of such a compromise peace could be: A ceasefire and the withdrawal of all Russian troops, the establishment of demilitarized zones in and around Donbass supervised by neutral troops, and after a certain period of time a referendum under international supervision plus the neutrality of Ukraine rather than NATO membership, the end of the economic war,

and acceptance of the principle of undivided security, i.e. that neither side increases its security at the expense of the other.

### **Wars, suffering and famine.**

A direct result of the Ukraine war is a dramatic hunger crisis which has been dramatically exacerbated by global food price increases and the loss of essential food exports from Ukraine, plus the discontinuation of Russian fertilizer exports, and sanctions imposed by the West. Around the world, many people are reliant on these food exports, especially in war zones such as in Afghanistan and Yemen.

It is worth pointing out that about one billion people were already under threat of hunger in 2020. In Yemen, in particular, as put by UN Secretary-General Guterres, " the greatest humanitarian catastrophe" triggered by the war there continues to escalate. In fact, 19 million people are threatened with starvation in Yemen. The warring parties Qatar and Saudi Arabia have the backing of the USA and are supplied with German weapons.

In breach of international law, the NATO member Turkey is stepping up its war of aggression against the Kurdish regions of Iraq and Syria using heavy German weapons and this also includes backing from Germany, the USA and NATO, Russia and other local sponsors.

Where wars lead to is once again evident in Afghanistan. The radicalized Taliban are systematically raiding, amongst others, former local forces. The country's food supply is highly dependent on imports. Due to droughts, but also due to the freezing of Afghan currency reserves by the IMF and the U.S., most people cannot afford the more expensive food.

### **No to the rearmament plans and the 100 billion program.**

100 billion in "emergency aid" for weapons and a attempt to squander 2% of GDP on armaments has now been launched at a rapid tempo. This is mainly to push through arms projects that were already in the pipeline well before the Ukraine war started and are, in any case, promoting the business of murder. Thereby, the arms industry collects record profits and the arms race is further fueled.

More urgently than ever, we need to invest in health and social services, disaster prevention, education, affordable housing, shelter for the homeless and refugees, energy transition and agricultural transition, as well as the fight against world hunger. According to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, an additional 14 billion euros in donations are needed each year to effectively curb global hunger by 2030.

War is not a solution; on the contrary, it creates all these crises or further aggravates them through suffering, death and destruction. There are 100 billion better ideas than increasing armaments and militarization!

We also observe how on the commemoration day of May 8 the war propaganda on all sides entails serious historical distortions: Ukraine stylizes Nazi collaborators and war criminals of World War II as national heroes, while Russia equates its war of aggression with the liberation from Nazism.

**We are living in very dangerous and chaotic times. Should the path of armed force not be abandoned, the world will enter a dramatic situation.**

**Thus, the main task of emancipatory peace politics consists of commencing negotiations, find compromises and tackle the real problems of mankind through détente, peaceful coexistence and disarmament.**