

Germany

## Stay courageous!

### Many against the expansion of war and for negotiated solutions

(Edit.) If you consume the usual media – Anne Will to Günther Jauch, FAZ to NZZ, TAZ to Spiegel – you could get the impression that “the whole world” is in favour of supplying heavy weapons to Ukraine.

But you must not be deceived. Only the opinions with which we are to be manipulated are presented there. Of course, these manipulations are not without any effect, but the propaganda does not work for everyone, and not for all times. There are signs that a growing majority of citizens in Germany are opposing the delivery of heavy weapons to Ukraine.

57% of German citizens fear an expansion of the war to other European countries as a result of the arms deliveries. According to the survey, only 46% are still in favour of the delivery of the war material. At the beginning of April it was still 55%. So, there may be some development.<sup>1</sup>

More and more voices are speaking out calling for negotiations instead of further fuelling war.

- One of the best known is the **Open Letter to Chancellor Scholz**, signed by well-known German intellectuals and published in the magazine Emma.<sup>2</sup> In the meantime – as of 29 May 2022 – over 287,000 citizens have signed the letter. It has had such an impact that several male and female talk show hosts are struggling to render it harmless.
- The **Ramstein Appeal**, which has been campaigning for years that there should be no US military bases on German ground, once again demands that no war should start from German territory. It also opposes the “extremely aggressively celebrated Russophobia of Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock and other German politicians.”<sup>3</sup>
- **IALANA** Germany, the well-known *International Association of Lawyers against Nuclear Arms*, complains that the German government has not insisted on a negotiated solution and has stood idly by as the conflict escalated. It demands of Chancellor Scholz: “Stop the arms deliveries to Ukraine! Prevent Russia’s war



This year's Easter march in Büchel, US nuclear weapons base in the Eifel. (Photo KEYSTONE/DPA/Thomas Frey)

- against Ukraine from becoming an uncontrollable conflagration and, in the end, a Third World War.” And: “A solution to the conflict and a balance of interests can only be found at the negotiating table.” They also demand: “Counter rampant Russophobia.”<sup>4</sup>
- **ipnw**, *International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War*, calls on the German government to refrain from escalating measures and to seek the path of negotiation. “We must take peace into our own hands. In the end, only diplomacy, controlled disarmament and common security will be an effective way.”<sup>5</sup> They warn of the “rising dangers of nuclear war.”<sup>6</sup>
- **Pope Francis** also urges an end to warfare and calls for a return to the negotiating table. “We must look for ways of peace and stop the weapons”, he said in the interview. He doubted whether “the present supply of Ukraine with weapons” would achieve its goals.
- “Negotiate now!” demands **pax christi**, the international Catholic peace association, and expresses its “deep concern about the fact that in our country the conviction is once again gaining ground that more military support could contribute to a solution. We note with horror that war rhetoric and war logic have become commonplace in politics and in the press. The danger of an uncontrollable escalation is steadily increasing, which in the final analysis also raises fears of the use of nuclear weapons. Against this background, the pax

christi Federal Executive Committee calls on the Federal Government to take the lead in an effort to achieve an immediate ceasefire in Ukraine with the involvement of the EU member states.”<sup>7</sup>

- The **Netzwerk Friedenskooperative** (Peace Co-operation Network) demands: “No arms deliveries to Ukraine!”<sup>8</sup>
- At the **Easter marches**, there were explicit demonstrations against the delivery of weapons to Ukraine.
- German politicians like Baerbock, Habeck and Scholz had a hard time during their appearances at election campaign events in NRW (North Rhine-Westphalia). The protests from citizens appalled by their war policies were so loud that the speakers could hardly make themselves heard. Baerbock was called a “warmonger”. Chancellor Scholz and Minister Habeck were also met with whistles and boos.
- “No to Nato and war – Yes to peace”. A clear No to the warmongers, especially NATO was the peace conference on 21 May at the Humboldt University in Berlin. About 1000 people participated on site or online. “We must not get tired of contradicting the prevailing zeitgeist”, *Oskar Lafontaine* admonished and found broad support for this. “We must not get tired of pointing out that Ostpolitik was one of the best phases of German foreign policy.” Its principles had been correct, said the ex-Prime Minister of Saarland.

He thus contradicted those who currently want to erase all memories of the 20<sup>th</sup> century policy of détente, to which SPD politicians like *Willy Brandt* and *Egon Bahr* contributed. “We don’t need rearmament, we need disarmament”, he clarified. “We need common security. That was the best formula that was found. You can only have security together. And we need change through rapprochement, again with Russia.” This also includes cultural exchange, which brings people together, but which is currently being destroyed by the West, as the ex-SPD politician lamented.

Other speakers included *Gabriele Krone-Schmalz*, *Norman Paech*, *Anu Chenoy*, *Alexej Gromyko*, *Andrej Hunko*, *Daniela Dahn*, *Sevim Dagdelen*, *Eugen Drewermann* and others.

In addition, there is an ever-growing number of personalities and organisations who are committed to opposing this war and its munitionisation with more and more weapons. We cannot list them all here. However, one appeal should be mentioned: that of SPD veteran *Albrecht Müller*.

On his site “Nachdenkseiten” (pages of reflection) he addresses an appeal to all of us: “If you don’t want war, you have to seek dialogue with other people. Urgently. Incessantly.” We are convinced that we can contribute something. Many people, though not all, are approachable. We can make a big difference in face-to-face encounters, even if we don’t rely on mainstream media. Let’s seek dialogue, without any appeals and know-it-alls, without moralising and also with understanding of the perhaps different opinion of the person vis-à-vis. Let’s not break off, but rather continue the discussion. This is something that we as citizens have in our hands. Each one of us.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.rnd.de/politik/umfrage-zu-krieg-in-ukraine-das-denken-die-deutschen-ueber-waffenlieferungen/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.emma.de/artikel/offener-brief-bundeskanzler-scholz-339463>

<sup>3</sup> [www.ramstein-kampagne.eu](http://www.ramstein-kampagne.eu): <https://www.stoppramstein.de/>

<sup>4</sup> IALANA – Lawyers Against Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Weapons - Open Letter to Chancellor Scholz on the War in Ukraine: <https://www.ialana.de/arbeitsfelder/konflikte-kriege-und-loesungstrategien/aktuelle-brennpunkte/ukraine/2858-offener-brief-an-bundeskanzler-scholz-zum-krieg-in-der-ukraine>

<sup>5</sup> Appeal Lay Down Your Arms - IPPNW.DE: <https://www.ippnw.de/index.php?id=1115>

<sup>6</sup> Ukraine – IPPNW.DE: <https://www.ippnw.de/frieden/konflikte-kriege/ukraine/artikel/de/ippnw-warnt-vor-steigender-gefahr-ei-1.html>

<sup>7</sup> Weltwoche No. 19, 12 May 2022, page 52

<sup>8</sup> No arms deliveries to Ukraine! – Peace Cooperation Network: <https://www.friedenskooperative.de/aktuelles/keine-waffenlieferungen-in-die-ukraine>