



# **2018 /** Endless wars. More diplomacy – fewer arms exports / **German** **peace report**

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## ↓ RECOMMENDATIONS

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- 1 Re-establishing the European peace order** We need active conflict management in Europe. This requires a pan-European discourse that, in the medium term, re-establishes the European peace order on the basis of its normative foundations such as democracy and human rights.
- 2 United States' exit from Iran agreement requires unanimous reaction** Trust in reliable multilateralism is a foundation of global peace politics. The German government should jointly with its partners devise a strategy to reduce the damage done to the international multilateral order by the US government's decision.
- 3 Finally impose more restrictions on arms exports** The German government should present an arms export control law. Approvals for exports to warring parties in Yemen must be revoked. Supplies to Turkey must be discontinued for as long as Turkey violates international law.
- 4 Evaluate the intervention in Afghanistan** The German mission in Afghanistan must be evaluated in terms of development, peace and security policy. The appropriateness and effects of military and civil measures should be subject to review, as should their coherence across the involved ministries.
- 5 Conduct a review of military interventions and stabilization measures** Stabilization measures in Iraq should be suspended. The safety of the local population has to be the primary focus in Mali, instead of fighting against terror and securing borders.
- 6 A more proactive diplomatic role in the Middle East** Germany should make more use of its networks in the region to open up channels of communication between rival groups and assume a more active role of an intermediary.
- 7 Prepare for participation in potential UN peace operations** If a reliable cease-fire or even peace agreement succeeds in one of the wars in the Middle East, Germany should participate in multilateral stabilization missions with a UN mandate.
- 8 No combating of the causes of flight at the cost of human rights** The EU and Germany must no longer operate "migration partnerships" with authoritarian countries such as Egypt, Ethiopia, Libya or Chad without systematically taking the consequences for the protection of human rights into account.
- 9 No wavering in dealing with Turkey** The German criticism of human rights violations in Turkey must not cease with the release of its own citizens. Berlin must condemn not only the violation of international humanitarian law, but also the violation of international law in Afrin.
- 10 Establish a refugee and migration policy** The German government should pass an immigration law which regulates migration fairly and does not interfere with the protection of refugees and asylum seekers. Integration and family reunification are humanitarian requirements. They are in Germany's interest.

# STATEMENT / Endless wars. More diplomacy – fewer arms exports /

The world is currently far removed from a stable and just peace order. The wars in the Middle East, Africa and elsewhere have claimed thousands of victims and are forcing people to flee. The common concern for peace through international co-operation – for example in the United Nations (UN) – is overshadowed by conflicts. Germany and the European Union thus need to intensify their efforts to establish and maintain peace in the world.

2017 was a year of crises and escalating conflicts: The war in Syria is becoming increasingly harsh. It is drawing neighboring countries into the suffering, and other states and non-governmental groups are becoming involved across borders. The intervention of Turkey in Afrin in violation of international law is the most recent example of this. Civil wars are continuing unabated in countries such as Yemen, Afghanistan, Mali, Somalia, South Sudan or the Congo. Despite some signs of rapprochement, the conflict between the US and North Korea continues to smolder. At the same time, the agreement on the peaceful use of nuclear energy, which the five permanent members of the Security Council and Germany successfully concluded with Iran, is threatening to collapse under the pressure of the new US administration. In the currently most dangerous conflict region of the Middle East, but not only there, the UN Security Council is at an impasse due to the confrontation between the West and Russia. Against this background, it is necessary for Germany to readjust and resolutely implement its peace policy.

## ↘ EUROPEAN PEACE ORDER IN A BLIND ALLEY

The security situation in Europe continues to be tense: Russia is making little effort to reverse its illegal annexation of the Crimea or its support of the separatists in the East of Ukraine. Russia has moved further and further away from the basic principles of the Paris Charter of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) (1990). In Turkey, President Erdogan is undermining the separation of powers and is massively interfering with the freedoms of the country's citizens. Also in Hungary or Poland, albeit to a lesser extent, liberal democracy is coming under pressure. These states are violating the European Charter of Human Rights and existing EU treaties.

Difficult co-existence has turned into conflict. This is reflected in the weakening of common institutions: The OSCE and the Council of Europe are becoming less and less capable of acting in the field of human rights and democracy promotion. Although the OSCE is becoming more effective in providing security, in particular through its role in Eastern Ukraine, it has little capacity to counter the growing tensions between the EU and NATO, on the one hand, and the EU and Russia, on the other. The build-up of defense capabilities in the EU and NATO is taking place without consideration of the implications for the pan-European peace order. This requires a strong dialogue initiative within the OSCE. The differences are too fundamental for the 2010 Astana vision of a “Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security community” to be achievable in the near future. First of all, the level of escalation and conflict must be lowered, and pragmatic cooperation must begin at the point where there are common interests, in order to be able to address fundamental questions of European security and order in the long term. We call for an ongoing negotiation process that will help to de-escalate crises while strengthening democracy, the rule of law and human rights as elements of a peaceful order. The policy of détente in times of East-West conflict was to emphasize common security interests. Progress on human rights and fundamental freedoms, democracy and the rule of law has been achieved through the incentive of economic cooperation. Similarly today, with regard to countries outside the EU, concrete easing of visa and trade requirements, as well as firm prospects for association could be opened up, which would receive substantial financial support in order to compensate for social imbalances.

### ✎ **STRENGTHENING THE UNITED NATIONS AND REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

The complex challenges to peace and security, which often extend across borders, cannot be solved in a national framework. At the same time, multilateral peacekeeping institutions are currently often under pressure and are being actively weakened. A blatant example of this is the United Nations. The new UN Secretary-General António Guterres has launched a comprehensive agenda for strengthening crisis prevention. But because of the veto powers the UN Security Council continues to be powerless in crisis situations of essential importance – such as the Syrian conflict, the escalation in Israel/Palestine or the mass expulsion of the Muslim Rohingya in Myanmar.

UN peacekeeping operations are increasingly operating in conflict areas “where there is little or no peace to keep,” as a high-level UN Commission noted in 2015. At the same time, the US government is aiming at reducing its financial contributions toward peacekeeping. Germany should engage even more actively and with its own personnel in UN peacekeeping operations, and at the same time strengthen regional peacekeeping in the sense of Chapter VIII of the UN Charter. Together with other states the federal government should close the financial and organizational gaps of the UN. The German membership of the UN Security Council, which is being sought for 2019/2020, is the opportunity to use appropriate structural options.

## ✚ **US ATTACK ON MULTILATERALISM – AND ON MUCH MORE**

On 8 May 2018, Donald Trump announced that the US would withdraw from the Iran nuclear agreement. This is the US President's most far-reaching decision in foreign policy so far. The exit from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) amounts to a frontal attack on the multilateral order of peace and security, and in particular on the UN Security Council which unanimously approved the agreement in July 2015. Moreover, the United States' withdrawal from the JCPOA is an attack on the principle "pacta sunt servanda": agreements must be kept. This principle is a key prerequisite for civilized interactions between states – regardless of whether a state is democratic or not or whether a government supports or undermines multilateralism. So far, the German government has not positioned itself publicly with regard to the severe breach of the "pacta sunt servanda" principle and its consequences for international relations. Finally, the sanctions policy associated with the US's exit from the agreement must be seen as an attempt to weaken the EU in the long run, both economically and politically. The US government has in fact revoked the normative foundations of the transatlantic relationship, and Germany and France seem to have realized this. Both the German chancellor and French top-ranking politicians have simultaneously made statements in early May which indicate that their steps are well coordinated, with the Federal Government speaking out more sharply. This division of labor between Merkel and Macron is a smart diplomatic move and should receive broad political and public support.

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## ✚ **SUPPORT THE BAN ON NUCLEAR WEAPONS**

The decision of 122 UN members on 7 July 2017 to ban nuclear weapons completely is a clear vote for substantial nuclear disarmament. Awarding the Nobel Peace Prize to the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) underlines the worldwide desire to prevent the use of nuclear weapons and to outlaw this category of weapons. For the first time, an international agreement exists that prohibits the possession, deployment and use of nuclear weapons. The ban treaty provides for the complete elimination of existing nuclear arsenals, including military-related production facilities. It has now been signed by 58 states, and has already been ratified by nine states (as of May 2018), and will enter into force 90 days after ratification by 50 states.

The federal government rejects the treaty because nuclear deterrence of Russia requires the deployment of US nuclear weapons in Germany. This is an attempt to preserve the irreplaceable INF Agreement of 1987, which covered the abolition of all US and Russian land-based, medium-range nuclear weapons. With the development of smaller, "flexibly" deployable warheads, the US is moving away from the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world, for the announcement of which then US President Barack Obama was awarded the 2008 Nobel Peace Prize. In his speech on March 1, 2018 President Putin in the same vein presented new nuclear delivery systems that could also undermine nuclear arms control. In the long term, Germany's participation in US nuclear weapons programs cannot be reconciled with the spirit of its obligation to renounce nuclear weapons. This applies even more strongly to the modernization of US nuclear weapons or even further deploy-

ment on German soil. Germany should conduct negotiations with the US to obtain the withdrawal of these weapons.

### ✎ **FINALLY RESTRICT ARMS EXPORTS**

Germany's arms export policy is neither restrictive nor sensible in terms of peace policy. Arms exports to countries such as Saudi Arabia and Egypt, which are massively violating international humanitarian law in Yemen, are in conflict with the Arms Trade Treaty and the EU's Common Position on Arms Exports. Like other EU members, Germany is undermining its own standards through its arms exports to these states.

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In 2017 the federal government approved €6.2 billion worth of arms exports, 61% of which went to third countries outside NATO and the EU. Among them are many problematic recipient countries. Particularly worrying are the large number of approved arms exports bound for Saudi Arabia. Its air raids in the Yemen War are hitting many civilian facilities. The illegal international maritime blockade organized by Riyadh is contributing significantly to the humanitarian catastrophe. The statement made in March 2018 in the coalition agreement that the federal government would not approve arms exports to countries directly involved in the Yemen war reduced to absurdity the export permits granted for eight patrol boats bound for Saudi Arabia shortly before the new Grand Coalition took office.

Germany is also among the world leaders in the export of small arms and light weapons ("small arms"). Whether such small arms remain with the recipient state is particularly difficult to control; and they help warring parties in particular to torpedo ceasefire agreements. According to the coalition agreement, small arms should basically no longer be delivered to third countries. We welcome such a development. However, the German government provides for exceptions. To raise the political hurdles as high as possible, we demand that the German government explicitly justify such exceptions and debate them in the Bundestag. Even after the entry of the Turkish army into Afrin, among other things with Leopard tanks produced in Germany, the German government approved military equipment for Turkey worth just under €4.4 million. This is unacceptable in view of the intervention in violation of international law. The German government should introduce a restrictive control law that makes arms exports subject to proof that such exports do not raise concern about human rights and international humanitarian law violations. It must now immediately revoke all licenses granted for arms exports to the countries that are at war in Yemen. In addition, the NATO partner Turkey should not receive any military equipment as long as the army is at war against the Kurdish population in the neighborhood or in their own country.

## ✚ **ARMED CONFLICTS AND STABILIZATION**

Between 2012 and 2015 the number of civil wars rose rapidly from 32 to 51, the highest level since 1945 according to the Uppsala Conflict Data Programme. In 2016 and 2017 that figure decreased only slightly. War crimes such as the targeted annihilation of the civilian population and crimes against humanity are characteristic of many wars: The Islamic State (IS) committed genocide against the Yazidis in Northern Iraq; in the war in Syria poison gas is being used; the government in Myanmar is brutally expelling the Muslim Rohingya. The German government provides significant humanitarian aid in many crisis regions. However, diplomatic initiatives aimed at resolving violent conflicts are less frequent. Because of its growing involvement in arms exports and the “upgrading” of military forces in conflict areas, the government itself is curtailing its own ability to communicate credibly and between hostile groups. Participation in multilateral military operations did not produce the hoped-for effects in Afghanistan and Mali. These missions should be subjected to scrutiny. Equipment and training support for police and military services in Iraq and Mali has not proven successful. Political processes aimed at the rule of law, an inclusive order and stability were not initiated; instead, Iraq cooperates with military organizations that operate according to ethno-regional or denominational lines of conflict and are not under parliamentary control. Consequently, stabilization measures in Iraq should be discontinued.

Short-term train and equip-projects have not yet been embedded in long-term political strategies; there is also a lack of support for good governance to promote reform and democratic control of the security sector. It is important to close the gap between the strengthening of individual security forces and wider security sector reforms (SSR). In order to be successful in the long term, training and equipment projects, even in difficult situations, must be geared towards clear political goals and a longer-term governance agenda. Specifically, in Mali, this means combining capacity building in the security sector with the promotion of democratic control and good governance, as well as effectively fighting against poverty. Not the fight against terrorism and border security but the safety of the population should be the primary goal. At the interface between crisis management, crisis prevention and development policy, the specific responsibilities of the federal ministries must be clarified and the coordination of common strategies improved. Last but not least, SSR measures must be flanked by systematic process monitoring and monitoring of political success, in order to avoid effects which worsen conflicts.

## ✚ **WARLIKE DISINTEGRATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST**

The wars in Libya, Syria, Yemen and, until recently, Iraq have claimed hundreds of thousands of victims. Before the Syrian war alone, more than 11 million people had fled the country or became displaced. The employments of poison gas in Syria and the conquests of Aleppo, Deir ez-Zor, Raqqa, Mosul, East Ghouta and Afrin represent a massive violation of international humanitarian law in the region. Yemen experienced the biggest worldwide humanitarian disaster in 2017. Iraq remains divided, even if Islamic State (IS) has largely

been defeated. State collapse, contract killings, the slave trade and terrorist attacks shape the situation in Libya.

The prospects of peace are bleak: Iran and Saudi Arabia are hostile to each other; the United States and Russia are on a confrontational course; the role of Turkey is destructive; local and external parties to the conflict are almost inexplicably intertwined. Nevertheless, a target corridor would have to be defined to stop the spiral of violence: less external interference; equal access of the various population groups to economic resources and political institutions; reliable regional autonomy arrangements for the Kurdish populations; legitimate and functioning systems of government. The blocked communication channels must be activated, and the German government can contribute by using its many different contacts. It should continue to provide high levels of humanitarian aid and at last seriously implement a restrictive arms export policy.

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### ✚ **LIBERAL PEACE CONCEPTS UNDER PRESSURE**

There is a negative trend not only in civil wars, but also in human and social security. Global democratization has stagnated since 2012, with many countries experiencing severe setbacks. Bangladesh, Lebanon, Nicaragua and Uganda are cases in point. Above all, freedom of speech, the press and assembly are at risk, governments are increasingly restricting the scope for action of civil society actors (“shrinking spaces”), initially in authoritarian regimes (e.g., Egypt, Ethiopia, Venezuela and Russia), but now also in democratically constituted states such as Ecuador, India or Turkey. According to the relevant political terror scale, the number of countries with a particularly poor level of human rights has risen from eight in 2007 to 13 in 2016.

The EU and Germany are not consistent enough in dealing with repressive regimes when it comes to shortsighted economic or security interests. On the long run, it will harm Germany’s economic success and security stability if parts of its economy, arms industry, or the political elites court regimes which benefit from corruption in international trade and aim to stifle democratic control in civil society, parliament, and the media. In addition, “migration partnerships” include countries with a devastating human rights situation. “Strategies for fighting the causes of flight” are not assessed in terms of consequences for human rights. Egypt, Ethiopia, Libya and Chad are obvious examples; Turkey is an example of a vacillating course that ranges from indignation (Bundestag election campaign 2017) to silence (refugee deal of 2016, release of German nationals 2017/18). Human rights coherence, however, is a key prerequisite for sustainable peace: this entails respect for the rule of law, the protection of fundamental human rights and the possibility of democratic participation.

### ✚ **PEACE POLICY CHALLENGES: FLIGHT AND MIGRATION**

Although the number of asylum seekers in Germany has declined significantly, flight and migration remain key challenges. Because conflicts over refugee policy threaten social peace: Xenophobic violence has dramatically increased in the course of the dramatic

flight events. Disparaging and hostile attitudes towards minorities are on the increase. Islamophobia has become acceptable even in the so-called non-partisan sectors of society and is making the integration of refugees and migrants difficult. One argument which we see as particularly critical plays an important role in this regard: saying that refugees and migrants increase the risk of terrorism. Apart from the fact that this places an entire social group under general suspicion and stokes resentment against foreigners, the thesis is untenable. Although it cannot be ruled out that fighters ready for violence are being disguised as refugees in Europe, compared with other factors, flight plays a minor role in the emergence of terrorism. The vast majority of those who have participated in terrorist attacks in Europe are second- or third-generation citizens of European countries. Explanations for their radicalization must be sought in their living conditions, prospects for the future and opportunities for participation in the European societies themselves. In order to prevent the radicalization of refugees, integration efforts must be strengthened, an immigration law passed, and family reunification facilitated. Discrimination, exclusion and humiliation are factors that promote radicalization. Recognition and appreciation can counteract this. Family, community and social structures can prevent the drift of young men into extremism. Facilitating family reunification, even for refugees with subsidiary protection, is necessary not only for humanitarian reasons but also for security policy.

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## CONCLUSIONS

The foreign and peace policy of the German government covers a wide range of tasks, but it remains diffuse. In many areas of German policy-making, the necessary strategic orientation of its policy instruments is missing; goals are not coordinated. There is a lack of support for reflection and learning processes that could help prevent mismanagement. Political decision makers look at complex conflict constellations in very fragmented ways, while comprehensive policy evaluations remain scarce. The German government also lacks a medium- to long-term response towards current upheavals in the European peace and security order. What is needed is a fundamental commitment to transparent decision-making and review procedures. Such procedures are necessarily based on coordination and, even more importantly, on cooperation between ministries – measures that should have long been established. Despite important structural reforms in the Foreign Office, the German government is not adequately positioned for the current crisis situations.

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