

## No to War — Solidarity with the People of Ukraine!

Feb 25th, 2022 / Johanna Bussemer, Fabian Wisotzky, Boris Kanzleiter

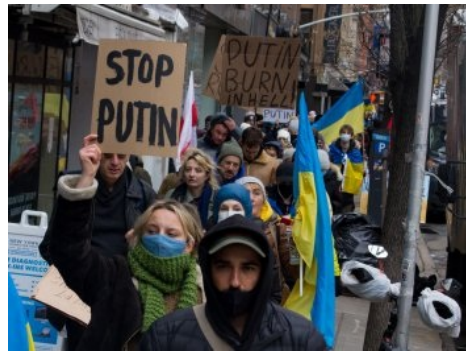


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Russia's invasion of large parts of Ukraine not only marks the sad culmination of the end of all peace policy efforts in Eastern Europe since 1990, but also confronts left-wing forces around the world with a challenging test. As important as it is to adhere to the basic values of left-wing politics by calling for diplomacy over war and including Russia in a new European security architecture, we must acknowledge that the current Russian government has nothing to do with these basic values. The war against Ukraine with all its consequences can only be condemned and rejected.

The images reaching us are shocking. There are reports of dead and injured. Hoarding of goods has begun, while many try to flee from the metropolises to the countryside — if not directly to neighbouring countries. The ones suffering from this aggression are the people in Ukraine, and we extend our solidarity to them. These are precisely the images we hoped

never to see again.

Ukraine is one of the poorest countries in Europe, and social conditions have been tense for years. It is no wonder that nationalism, hatred, and resentment have been able to establish such a strong foothold here. The war will further weaken the Ukrainian economy, as foreign investment collapses. It is already foreseeable that yesterday's attack has destroyed so much infrastructure that a reconstruction plan will be needed.

The war and the refugee flows within Ukraine and towards its western borders will change the country for a long time to come. It is up to the EU and its member states to ensure that the borders remain open and the humanitarian situation is alleviated by all means. Visa-free travel for Ukrainians is a good way to help people find refuge in the EU. Bureaucratic obstacles such as proof of EU-recognized vaccination should be waived, as many Ukrainians have been vaccinated with Chinese vaccines. The EU should establish a fund to support Ukraine's neighbouring states taking in refugees.

Russia's actions must be wholeheartedly condemned. Nevertheless, the situation is complex and finding simple solutions to induce Russia to cease hostilities will be difficult. In any case, violence cannot be answered with violence — it is too dangerous to take this spiral even further. Diplomatic solutions must be resolutely pushed forward. Sanctions may help to turn off some money taps, but there is always the danger that it will hit the wrong people — Russia's poorest — and thus unintentionally fuel nationalism.

The path to peace can only be through seeking solutions within the framework of the United Nations on the basis of the UN Charter. Russia must be shown very clearly that the international community condemns the invasion and breaching of international law. Nevertheless, a solution to the conflict must also continue to be sought with Russia. To this end, the West must develop a new multilateral security architecture beyond NATO and a new policy of détente in Europe with Ukraine and all other countries in the region.

Even if the road is long: militarization always leads to civilian victims. This must be prevented. A broad, international alliance is needed, together with civil society and the Left from Russia and Ukraine, that sends a clear message: Lay down your arms! No to war!

Translation by Loren Balhorn, Lead Editor Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung Berlin

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