
<https://internationalviewpoint.org/spip.php?article8992>



Rearming Europe

- Features - Rearming Europe -

Publication date: Sunday 20 April 2025

Copyright © International Viewpoint - online socialist magazine - All rights reserved

ACR stands in solidarity with the people of Ukraine fighting to defend their country against occupation and annexation. We have done so since Putin's first aggression in 2014. We therefore support the right of Ukraine to obtain the weapons and aid necessary for its fight against Russian imperialism.

The support for Ukraine by NATO and Western imperialism has been for geostrategic and political self-interest. This war has given the West legitimacy after 20 years of the failed "war against terrorism" in the "clash of civilisation" with its wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Imperialism is a global system where powerful nations with developed financial and industrial capital seek to dominate the rest of the world by extracting resources and wealth. In order to do this they use military means to back their project – and sometimes to get one up on their competitors

Economic stagnation has made global competition increasingly violent, as each state tries to maintain its position in the world market at the expense of others. This translates into new trade wars and new territorial divisions.

But the obvious violation of the post WW1 order of national sovereignty where the right to invade is simple down to 'might makes right' because it makes economic sense opens the door for a more violent world with even less checks and balances against the actions of the great power

Trump's presidency has shifted global politics onto dangerous new terrain. His bellicose claims against Greenland, Panama and even Canada – coupled with his tariff war – shows we are at an end to the era of Pax Americana and Washington Consensus neoliberalism. Instead Trump's argument that 'might makes right' because it makes economic sense opens the door for a more violent world with even less checks and balances against the actions of great powers

Imperialism never went away, but now it is even more aggressive. The United States prepares for war against China and negotiates with Russia to divide up Ukraine. Trump and Putin have a similar vision of powerful nations carving up the world into their own spheres of influence. Smaller nations are simply bargaining chips or prey for imperialist expansionist endeavours. This has always been the case to some extent but, Trump is being more honest about it.

Peace deals being discussed in oil rich Gulf Nations without any Ukrainians present are a return to the old colonial order where people's fates were decided by imperialist leaders in rooms far away. The Ukrainians are left with no agency, no national sovereignty, no ability to determine their own national future.

The Trump regime is tearing up established obligations and alliances in favour of a new way of 'doing business' that is almost entirely transactional – reflecting Trump's background as neither a military man nor a politician but a simple capitalist. If anyone wants military support they have to pay for it – no more 'freebies'.

The proposed mineral deal proposal is an example of this, Ukraine is not a nation to be supported against Russia's imperialist invasion, but a business partner that must pay for military assistance through decades long extractive deals that benefit the US..

Imperialist countries intervene in the struggles of people fighting for independence and democracy to deflect the outcomes to suit their interests. This is the case in Ukraine, where countries providing arms are doing it slowly and in quantities that are insufficient. They are shackling Ukraine with further debt, blocking a socially just reconstruction to impose a deeper neoliberal order. Imperialist countries backing Ukraine are divided in wanting to end the war as soon as possible to resume normal business with Russia, or dragging it out to weaken an imperialist rival.

The idea that Russia is a military threat to “democratic” Western Europe is not credible. It has been unable after three years of war to achieve its objectives: demilitarisation and denazification of Ukraine: subordinating it to Russia. In rejecting Trump’s peace plan, Putin has demanded new elections in Ukraine claiming Zelensky has no mandate. His real goal is to colonise Ukraine again.

In this global reordering European leaders are increasingly taking measures to remilitarise the continent. Governments who claimed there was ‘no money’ for social spending or the public sector suddenly have billions for the rearming and expansion of their military forces.

This is posed as a ‘common sense’ view that European nations should rearm against expansionist Russian imperialism. But supporting this ‘multipolar world’ is not an alternative to a third world war but likely a prelude to it.

Rearmament or Putin’s victory will fuel the further rise of the extreme right. It is their vision of the world that is being fostered, powerful militarised nations, facing off against each other in a world where there is not even the flimsy liberal pretension of human rights or an ‘international order’. Patriotism, militarism and nationalism are their guiding ethos, a world defined by men like Trump and Putin.

Keir Starmer’s Labour – ruling over a declining imperial power like Britain – has no alternative but to follow in line and accept this new world order, trying to play nicely with Trump to hope he throws some scraps from his table. It hopes to use the debate amongst the ruling classes over the war in Ukraine along with the debate about Trump’s tariffs to reassert Britain’s position as a major imperialist power – balancing between support for the US and Atlanticism while at the same time trying to build stronger links with the EU, particularly with France and Germany. It also uses the cover of jingoism and militarism to justify austerity measures such as the attacks on disabled people that it wished to carry out anyway in order to present itself as a safe pair of hands for capital

Ecosocialists oppose increased spending on European imperialist war machines. It would be a waste of the limited resources we have as a species with the climate crisis bearing down on us. Their geopolitical calculations that ignore the horrors of what a war inflicts on us and our planet.

We don’t trust European states claiming to defend democracy when they back the genocide of Palestinians, support the Gulf States monarchies, have a legacy of colonialism, and have worked tirelessly since WW2 to crush national liberation movements, mass socialist parties and any alternatives to their capitalist world order.

The support for Ukraine by NATO and Western imperialism has been for geostrategic and political self-interest. This war has given the West legitimacy after 20 years of the failed “war against terrorism” in the “clash of civilisation” with its wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Ecosocialists oppose increased spending on European imperialist war machines. It would be a waste of the limited resources we have as a species with the climate crisis bearing down on us. Their geopolitical calculations that ignore the horrors of what a war inflicts on us and our planet.

ACR rejects imperialist rearmament, and instead argues for a new internationalism of the people. Therefore:

- We support the right of countries to self-determination and to resist occupation and annexation, including by military means. This applies to Ukraine, Palestine, Kurdistan, Kashmir, etc. Ukraine should get the arms necessary and without delay and without strings from wherever possible. We also argue that there should be no illusions in the intentions of the countries supplying arms in exchange for deep neoliberal reforms and increasing debt.
- Arms shipments to Israel and Saudi Arabia, other Gulf monarchies, India, etc. should be halted immediately. The supply of arms necessary to Ukraine can be done without increasing Britain's military budget. Britain's military budget is not for defence. Nuclear weapons are offensive and retaliatory (they should never be used and therefore be abolished) and aircraft carriers are designed for imperialist adventures far away from Britain.
- Anti-militarism is not the same as pacifism. We counterpose the military institution, its chain of command, the barracks without democracy, and its nationalistic fervour around the flag and "King and Country". to a civic and popular armed territorial defence. The arms industry should be nationalised to remove the profit motive, ensure that it supplies arms to those fighting for the liberation of their country. We demand an end to the production of weapons of mass destruction such as nuclear bombs and those that are indiscriminate and disproportionately affect civilians such as cluster bombs, land mines, phosphorus).
- Britain and others should rigorously respect UN treaties for example The Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, and the decision of the International Criminal Court and International Court of Justice.
- Britain should halt F35 purchases and scrap its Trident missiles, and remove the 18 US military bases in Britain.

17 April 2025

Source: [Anti*Capitalist Resistance](#).

PS:

If you like this article or have found it useful, please consider donating towards the work of International Viewpoint. Simply follow this link: [Donate](#) then enter an amount of your choice. One-off donations are very welcome. But regular donations by standing order are also vital to our continuing functioning. See the last paragraph of [this article](#) for our bank account details and take out a standing order. Thanks.