

“Lay Down the Arms!”

Every single day, we are further brought to see that this demand is now over-ripe. The wars and conflicts in the Ukraine and around the Ukraine cause enormous pains and suffering. We are even unable to make this suffering and these pains audible within our societies. And still, we are unable to translate them into an unequivocal, unmistakable appeal: “Lay down the arms!” It means, we cannot translate our own pains into such sustainable demands as providing humanitarian aid, and de-escalating the conflict – not to mention indicating starting points for ways of resolution and for political alternatives, or for realising helpful actions and political strategies.

Why is this now, as it is? Maybe, because we cover up our pains by the questions about “who is right?”, about “showing solidarity with whom?” – instead of simply saying: “We show our solidarity with the victims of violence, especially with the children and with the people willing to live a self-determined and decent life, who accept this as a right for everybody”? This would be humane – and this would be, at the same time, politically productive, because it would liberate us from those blockades imposed upon us by our own doing.

The ruling forces in the US (and in the NATO countries) with their geo-political strategies, have provoked Russia and the ruling forces within the EU have participated in these strategies. But the ruling forces in Russia do share the same logic of power, the only difference is that they are weaker. The ruling forces in the Ukraine have allowed that their country has been made into a field of battles of interests that is increasingly becoming explosive. In this way they have moved to be ever closer to the ruling forces in the US, in the NATO countries and within the EU – and they have disregarded the security interests of Russia. But Russia has reacted and it has acted in a highly aggressive way: It has violated the territorial integrity of the Ukraine and de-stabilised its neighbour country in a military and political dimension. The ruling forces in the US, in the EU, in Russia and in the Ukraine are not very different. The main profiteers from the armaments race and from actual military “operations” are to be found among these very ruling forces. And these profiteers dispose of partners and agents which obey them in their own interests. These partnerships involve violent nationalists and racists and those groups prepare to use violence. Regardless of their nationality, they are very similar with regard to their brutality and unscrupulousness. All those who have allowed to be used by them, can now refuse to follow them any further. We respect everybody who does so. We encourage everybody to name the causers, helpers and profiteers from the “Ukraine conflict” resp. the “Ukraine wars” and to “ask them to pay up”. Peaceful reconstruction demands resources!

What to do? As a first step we ask *to realise the agreement from Minsk*¹! The US should withdraw from the conflict region.

¹ See the attachment

We do demand:

- To enable and to protect humanitarian aid convoys, the deployment of medical personnel and helpers;
- to provide immediate aid to refugees, providing them with board and lodging;
- to end all violent conflicts well as all transport of Russian and Ukrainian weapons and armed fighters into the conflict zone and to ensure the withdrawal of troops;
- to remove all ultra-nationalist, extremist and terrorist elements from the ranks of the army, the police and other security forces, and to disarm and to dissolve all paramilitary groups;
- to disarm all other ultra-nationalist, extremist and terrorist elements; to legally persecute and politically to confront all persons and organisations proven to have committed crimes;²
- to rebuild the destroyed areas in Ukraine; to ensure a generous aid to alleviate and heal wounds
- to raise Ukraine's military neutrality to a principle and to ensure it; to withdraw all "foreign security forces"; to abandon the idea of a Ukraine NATO membership and to stop the implementation of Article 7 of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement
- to lift visa requirements for Ukrainian, Belorussian, Kazakh, Russian, Georgian and Armenian citizens for all EU countries; to widely expand university scholarship programmes
- to create a shared infrastructure and to implement economic development projects with all the aforementioned countries to further the establishment of a single European economic area³.

Let us come together to discuss – at the local level, in the region, in our countries, in the EU, in Europe and on a world wide scale. The remembrance dates of the liberation from German fascism offer a good opportunity to do this. Under that terror regime especially people of Russian and Ukrainian nationalities have extremely suffered. Against this regime, especially people of Russian and of Ukrainian nationalities have heroically fought.

When we remind all this we do not forget that Europe is only one single global continent, but people in all over the world, especially in the Middle and Near East suffer already for many long years from wars. For that the Europeans are very responsible and have to discuss about their contributions to end these war and to make real a just peace.

² Except for those who can be proven to have personally committed murder, torture or rape, all those involved should be granted an amnesty.

³ See: <http://ifg-en.blog.rosalux.de/files/2015/02/Memorandum-ENG.pdf>

Let us use all our possibilities and tools to communicate our pains and our willingness for peace, to exchange information about our peace actions and thoughts. Until May 10th a website should inform on how we could use the memory dates of the liberation from the German fascism, what we could achieve, what we could accomplish together on the World Peace Day, September 1st.

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Attachment

“Package of Measures for the Implementation of the Minsk Agreements

Minsk, 12 February 2015

“1. Immediate and comprehensive ceasefire in certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine and its strict implementation as of 15 February 2015, 12am local time.

“2. Withdrawal of all heavy weapons by both sides by equal distances in order to create a security zone of at least 50 km wide from each other for the artillery systems of caliber of 100 and more, a security zone of 70 km wide for MLR S and 140 km wide for MLR S “Tornado-S”, Uragan, Smerch and Tactical Missile Systems (Tochka, Tochka U):
o for the Ukrainian troops: from the de facto line of contact;
o for the armed formations from certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine: from the line of contact according to the Minsk Memorandum of Sept. 19th, 2014;

“The withdrawal of the heavy weapons as specified above is to start on day 2 of the ceasefire at the latest and be completed within 14 days.

“The process shall be facilitated by the OSCE and supported by the Trilateral Contact Group.

“3. Ensure effective monitoring and verification of the ceasefire regime and the withdrawal of heavy weapons by the OSCE from day 1 of the withdrawal, using all technical equipment necessary, including satellites, drones, radar equipment, etc.

“4. Launch a dialogue, on day 1 of the withdrawal, on modalities of local elections in accordance with Ukrainian legislation and the Law of Ukraine “On interim local self-government order in certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions” as well as on the future regime of these areas based on this law.

“Adopt promptly, by no later than 30 days after the date of signing of this document a Resolution of the Parliament of Ukraine specifying the area enjoying a special regime, under the Law of Ukraine “On interim self-government order in certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions”, based on the line of the Minsk Memorandum of September 19, 2014.

“5. Ensure pardon and amnesty by enacting the law prohibiting the prosecution and punishment of persons in connection with the events that took place in certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine.

“6. Ensure release and exchange of all hostages and unlawfully detained persons, based on the principle “all for all”. This process is to be finished on the day 5 after the withdrawal at the latest.

“7. Ensure safe access, delivery, storage, and distribution of humanitarian assistance to those in need, on the basis of an international mechanism.

“8. Definition of modalities of full resumption of socioeconomic ties, including social transfers such as pension payments and other payments (incomes and revenues, timely payments of all utility bills, reinstating taxation within the legal framework of Ukraine).

“To this end, Ukraine shall reinstate control of the segment of its banking system in the conflict-affected areas and possibly an international mechanism to facilitate such transfers shall be established.

“9. Reinstatement of full control of the state border by the government of Ukraine throughout the conflict area, starting on day 1 after the local elections and ending after the comprehensive political settlement (local elections in certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions on the basis of the Law of Ukraine and constitutional reform) to be finalized by the end of 2015, provided that paragraph 11 has been implemented in consultation with and upon agreement by representatives of certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions in the framework of the Trilateral Contact Group.

“10. Withdrawal of all foreign armed formations, military equipment, as well as mercenaries from the territory of Ukraine under monitoring of the OSCE. Disarmament of all illegal groups.

“11. Carrying out constitutional reform in Ukraine with a new constitution entering into force by the end of 2015 providing for decentralization as a key element (including a reference to the specificities of certain areas in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, agreed with the representatives of these areas), as well as adopting permanent legislation on the special status of certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions in line with measures as set out in the footnote until the end of 2015. [Note]

“12. Based on the Law of Ukraine “On interim local self-government order in certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions”, questions related to local elections will be discussed and agreed upon with representatives of certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions in the framework of the Trilateral Contact Group. Elections will be held in accordance with relevant OSCE standards and monitored by OSCE/ODIHR.

“13. Intensify the work of the Trilateral Contact Group including through the establishment of working groups on the implementation of relevant aspects of the Minsk agreements. They will reflect the composition of the Trilateral Contact Group.

“Note

“Such measures are, according to the Law on the special order for local self-government in certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions:

- o Exemption from punishment, prosecution and discrimination for persons involved in the events that have taken place in certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions;
- o Right to linguistic self-determination;
- o Participation of organs of local self-government in the appointment of heads of public prosecution offices and courts in certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions;
- o Possibility for central governmental authorities to initiate agreements with organs of local self-government regarding the economic, social and cultural development of certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions;
- o “State supports the social and economic development of certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions;
- o Support by central government authorities of cross-border cooperation in certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions with districts of the Russian Federation;
- o Creation of the people’s police units by decision of local councils for the maintenance of public order in certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions;
- o The powers of deputies of local councils and officials, elected at early elections, appointed by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine by this law, cannot be early terminated.

“Participants of the Trilateral Contact Group: Ambassador Heidi Tagliavini, Second President of Ukraine, L. D. Kuchma, Ambassador of the Russian Federation to Ukraine, M. Yu. Zurabov, A.W. Zakharchenko I.W. Plotnitski *Quelle: Annex I to the Resolution 2202 (2015)*, <<http://www.un.org/press/en/2015/sc11785.doc.htm>>