

EU summit in Granada, Spain plans continued military escalation against Russia

Johannes Stern, Alex Lantier
6 October 2023

European officials held two days of summits Thursday and Friday in Granada, Spain to discuss strategy as NATO's war with Russia in Ukraine threatens to erupt across Europe. After a summit Thursday of the European Political Community (EPC), a gathering of European states and countries bordering Russia launched by French President Emmanuel Macron last year, the EU met for a further summit.

The focus of the summits, called on the strategic issues posed by transitioning to renewable energy and the Ukraine war, was war with Russia. EU officials invited Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, the head of NATO's Ukrainian puppet regime, to Grenada. Amid growing divisions and crisis over the conduct of the Ukraine war in Washington, as the Biden administration struggles to secure funding for it, EU officials signaled their firm support for further escalation.

Zelensky laid out most directly the Orwellian argument for war made by the EU pyromaniacs: the claim that only waging all-out war with Russia can preserve peace.

Fighting Russia in Ukraine, Zelensky claimed, ensures that a "drone, tank or any other Russian weapon will not strike anyone else in Europe." He continued, "We must not allow Putin to destabilize any other parts of the world and our partners in order to ruin Europe's power ... The presence of Russia, its military or proxies in the territory of any other country is a threat to all of us. We must work together to push Russia out of the territory of other countries."

In fact, as the NATO countries pump hundreds of billions of euros into Ukraine to fight Russia, the war threatens to rapidly explode across Europe and the world. After UK Defense Secretary Grant Shapps proposed deploying British troops to Ukraine, and Russian officials said that this would make British troops targets of Russian forces, it is clear that the world is only a few decisions away from an all-out conflagration.

Yet EU officials kept advocating escalation. EU Commission leader Ursula von der Leyen said the EU is preparing a further €70 billion aid package, atop the over

€85 billion it has already spent on the war. Macron met Zelensky and stressed the EU's commitment to war with Russia: "There is a very deep, very strong commitment because we all know that we are talking about Europe and about the very possibility of lasting peace on our continent."

European officials also signaled their concern and unhappiness at the crisis in Washington over the delay in further US escalation in Ukraine. "The situation with the United States is dangerous, it's a tough period," Zelensky said. However, he said he expected NATO escalation ultimately to continue: "I think that the United States and Europe will be together with Ukraine and we will together get out of this crisis."

"Ukraine needs the support of the European Union—which is sure, they will have it and we will increase it—but also the support of the US," EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said. "Certainly Europe cannot replace the US."

Washington and the major European powers are desperate to escalate the war. During an emergency visit by German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier to the White House on Friday, the German head of state and US president Joe Biden mutually pledged to maintain and even expand military support to Kiev. "Our alliance is central to our ongoing commitment to support Ukrainians," a statement from the Office of the Federal President read.

In the run-up to the meeting, which was held in seclusion from the public, the White House said that the key point was the "close coordination as NATO allies on a number of important issues". Germany and the US would continue to "stand together with the brave people of Ukraine as they defend themselves against Russia's brutal onslaught."

A sharp warning has to be made. Confronted with multiple crises at home and abroad, the imperialist powers are lashing out and plotting for all-out war.

A key aspect of the Grenada summit was the move to absorb countries near Russia, as preparation to surround and ultimately break up the Russian Federation itself.

In his opening statement to the EU summit Friday, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz said that 20 years after making the

commitment, the EU must finally be “able to welcome the Western Balkan states into the European Union”. The same is planned, he added, with “Moldova and Ukraine and, in the long term, also with Georgia.”

Scholz’s comments were echoed by German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock in Albania’s capital, Tirana, on Friday. “Russia’s attack on Ukraine makes EU enlargement into the Western Balkans a geopolitical necessity,” she said, speaking to her counterparts from Serbia, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Bosnia-Hezrzegovina, and Albania.

After he raised EU enlargement, Scholz advocated abolishing the principle of requiring unanimous decisions inside the EU. He said “it would then not be possible for unanimity to be maintained in matters of foreign policy or tax policy ... We must then also be able to take decisions with qualified majorities so that the sovereignty and ability to act of the European Union is guaranteed.”

The imposition of majority rule would clearly enable Berlin, Paris and Brussels to push ahead even more decisively with war, rearmament and the massive social attacks needed to fund them.

In Grenada, Scholz announced the delivery of another Patriot missile system to Kiev and vowed further military aid for the winter. He did not rule out the delivery of Taurus cruise missiles that could reach deep into Russia.

Earlier, German Defence Minister Boris Pistorius had announced another €400 million military package for Ukraine: “We are supplying additional ammunition: explosive ammunition, mortar ammunition, mine rockets. Because ammunition is what Ukraine needs most in its defensive struggle against the brutal war of aggression.’ He added, “we will help with protected vehicles and mine-clearing systems.”

According to the Kiel Institute for the World Economy, Germany has so far supplied Kiev with weapons worth 17 billion euros, making it by far the leader within the EU.

Germany is also massing NATO troops in Eastern Europe. Traveling in the Baltic states last week, Pistorius boasted of Germany’s central role in “deterring” Russia. “Germany is taking responsibility. And Germany is taking a leading role,’ the social-democrat said at a security conference in the Estonian capital, Tallinn. By the end of 2023, he added, Berlin will station a combat-ready brigade of 4,000 soldiers in Lithuania.

The fact that German imperialism, which has already tried to subjugate Russia twice in the 20th century, is spearheading the NATO offensive shows the real character of EU war policy. It is not about “European values” like “freedom” and “democracy”, but geopolitical and economic interests. German government strategy papers openly declare

that the war in Ukraine is a “struggle for raw materials” like “iron, titanium and lithium, some of which are now controlled by Russia.”

The Grenada summits exposed the reactionary nature of the European ruling class. To the crisis of world capitalism and the growing movement of the working class in Europe and internationally, all its factions respond with an increasingly open turn towards war and fascism.

Another central question at the summit was tightening refugee policy. With the ‘emergency crisis decree’ drafted by the Spanish government of the social-democratic PSOE and the pseudo-left Podemos party, the EU is de facto implementing the programme of the far-right. Its measures provide for the detention of refugees in concentration camp-like facilities after they have crossed the border. In these camps, officials will decide in three months if someone has a chance of being granted asylum. If not, they will be deported immediately.

The attacks on refugees target the entire working class. The more the ruling class pushes militarism and social austerity, the more aggressively it seeks to suppress social and political opposition at home. To beat back the reactionary offensive, workers need their own independent organisations of struggle and a socialist leadership and perspective.

“Workers must counterpose the perspective of the United Socialist States of Europe to the EU of the banks and corporations, mass death and war,” writes the Socialist Equality Party (SGP) of Germany in its statement for next year’s European elections, which it is contesting in close cooperation with its sister parties in Britain, France and Turkey, and sympathizing groups in Ukraine and Russia.

“The war cannot be ended, lives cannot be saved and wages cannot be defended without breaking the power of the banks and corporations and putting them under democratic control. Instead of shooting at each other, Russian and Ukrainian workers, as well as workers across Europe, must fight the warmongers in their own country with this perspective.”



To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact