

European Left supports escalation of NATO war against Russia

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The class character of political tendencies is particularly revealed in their attitude to imperialist foreign and war policy. From this standpoint, last week's vote on a "European Parliament resolution on the continued financial and military support for Ukraine by EU member states" was more than revealing.

The motion, which was jointly tabled by the conservative, social democratic, Green and liberal groups, calls for a massive escalation of the NATO war in Ukraine, including direct missile strikes against Russia. Nevertheless, it was supported by eight representatives of the GUE/NGL faction (The Left in the European Parliament). Among them was Carola Rackete, the lead candidate of Germany's Left Party in the last European elections.

The other representatives of the "European Left" who voted in favour of the motion were Li Andersson, Merja Kyllönen and Jussi Antero Saramo from the Finnish Left Alliance (Vasemmistoliitto), Per Claussen from the Danish Red-Green Unity List (Enhedslisten—De rød-grønne), Hanna Gedin and Tor Jonas Sjöstedt from the Swedish Left Party (Vänsterpartiet), Anja Hazekamp from the Dutch Party for the Animals (Partij voor de Dieren) and Younous Omarjee from the France Unbowed alliance (La France Insoumise).

Twelve other representatives of the left faction abstained, including the two co-chairs, Manon Aubry of La France Insoumise and Martin Schirdewan of the German Left Party.

The vote exposes the members and parties of the left faction as rabid warmongers. They do not speak for the European and international working class, but for prosperous upper-middle-class layers whose interests are directly tied to the defence of capitalism and imperialism. Although their votes were not needed to

pass the resolution, half of the European Left deputies present voted in favour or abstained. And this despite the fact that it aims for a catastrophic escalation of the war that goes far beyond the previous war effort of the European powers.

Among other things, the resolution calls on "member states to immediately lift restrictions on the use of Western weapons against legitimate military targets in the territory of Russia, as these restrict Ukraine's right to fully exercise its right to self-defence under international law and thereby expose Ukraine to attacks on its population and infrastructure."

The resolution does not say a word about the catastrophic consequences of such plans. There is no question that the Kremlin would respond to attacks by NATO missiles with massive retaliatory strikes—including the use of nuclear weapons. Just last week before a meeting of the Russian Security Council, President Vladimir Putin warned that Russia reserved the right to "use nuclear weapons in the event of aggression against Russia and Belarus."

The resolution, however, criticises European NATO governments from the right. It warns that "insufficient supplies of ammunition and weapons and restrictions on their use could undermine the efforts made to date" and deeply regrets "that the volume of bilateral military assistance provided by member states to Ukraine is declining, despite significant statements made earlier this year."

In this context, the resolution calls on member states to "follow up on their March 2023 commitment to supply Ukraine with 1 million rounds of ammunition, and to expedite arms deliveries in response to clearly identified needs, in particular supplies of modern air defence systems and other weapons and ammunition, including the Taurus cruise missile."

The resolution explicitly formulates the goal of military victory over the nuclear power Russia and the reconquest of the territories controlled by Moscow. The European Parliament “reiterates its support for the commitments of the EU and its member states to provide humanitarian, military, economic, financial and political support in every possible way until Ukraine is victorious,” the text says. Among other things, it concerns “enabling Ukraine to liberate all its people and to regain full control over its entire territory within its internationally recognised borders.”

The resolution also makes clear what the European elites are really after: control of resource-rich Ukraine and the subjugation of Russia itself. And they are using the war to militarise the continent and to orient the whole of society towards war. The resolution calls on the European Commission to initiate strategic communication in the member states to explain the importance of defending Ukraine for overall stability in Europe and to ensure that EU citizens are well informed about the importance of this support for both the sovereignty of Ukraine and peace and security in the EU as a whole.

In addition, the European Parliament welcomes “public efforts and crowdfunding initiatives by citizens in some member states to ensure a continuous supply of weapons to Ukraine.” And it “also advocates similar initiatives across the EU to promote public solidarity and interest in this key issue.”

What the European Parliament is promoting with the support of the European Left is not aimed at the “sovereignty of Ukraine” and is the exact opposite of “peace and security.” It is about the establishment of a European war economy, in which Ukraine itself plays a central role.

Point 12 of the resolution calls on “the EU and its Member States to fulfil the commitments of the 2022 Versailles Declaration and to accelerate the full implementation of the Strategic Compass by improving European military cooperation at the level of industry and the armed forces, thereby making the EU a stronger and more effective security guarantor, interoperable with NATO and complementary to it.”

It also emphasises that “concrete steps should be taken during the EU accession process to integrate Ukraine into EU defence and cyber security policy and programmes.” The EU institutions should “move ahead

more quickly to adopt the European Defence Industrial Strategy to ensure the timely availability and delivery of defence equipment, which in turn would enable the timely provision of military support to Ukraine.”

This includes the member states “fulfilling their commitment to establish military production facilities on Ukrainian territory.” It is “crucial to engage with and integrate the Ukrainian defence industry into the EU’s technological and industrial defence base in the long term.”

The 20 European Left MEPs who voted against the resolution did not do so out of opposition to these insane militarisation and war plans, which go hand in hand with massive attacks on social and democratic rights. They come from all the parties that have played a key role in recent years in implementing the policy of social austerity, militarism and war—often in alliance with extreme right-wing forces. Representatives of Sumar/Podemos (Spain), Syriza (Greece) and the Five Star Movement (Italy), among others, voted against the resolution. Özlem Demirel voted against it for the German Left Party.

There is one main reason behind these “no” votes. Under conditions in which opposition to militarism and war is taking on explosive forms, sections of the “left” are desperately trying to conceal their real role. They want to prevent by all means workers and young people turning to an independent socialist perspective and the building on this basis of a powerful movement against war and its root cause, capitalism. The Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei (Socialist Equality Party) and the International Committee of the Fourth International are fighting for precisely this urgent goal.



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