

Statement for Peace
from the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier on Red Square in Moscow

Today, on 9 May 2025, we and a small group of Parliamentarians from the European Parliament pay our respects at the grave of the unknown soldier on Red Square in Moscow. For Germans this visit should have a special significance, as the Russian soldier who is buried here fell in the Second World War against Nazi Germany. He is a reminder for Germans to uphold peace among our two countries. This unknown soldier is a silent witness to the enormous blood toll that Russia paid in the war against a criminal Nazi Germany. Almost half of the 60 million people who died in that war were Soviet citizens, the vast majority of them Russians.

And so we are filled with shame that, in Germany, of all places, in the country responsible for so many atrocities in the Second World War, Russians have been excluded from commemorations for those who died in that war. On this day, which is so memorable for German-Russian relations, we should have been reflecting together on why, despite the bitter experiences of the past, Germany and Russia are once again facing each other in a war.

Because this war could have been prevented if we had been willing to negotiate with Russia about NATO expansion. Where was Germany in all of this? And why did Germany not support the Ukrainian-Russian peace negotiations in March 2022? The Istanbul Communiqué was a brilliant achievement of Ukrainian diplomacy, and Russia had accepted these Ukrainian peace proposals. The war could therefore have ended just one month after it started. How many victims, how much human suffering, how much destruction could have been spared - above all that of the Ukrainian people.

Today, the new German government is actively undermining the American president's peace efforts. When the now designated German foreign minister declares that 'Russia will always be our enemy,' and regrets that Taurus cruise missiles cannot be deployed before May to attack Moscow, one feels transported back to the Second World War. This German attitude will certainly not bring us any closer to peace.

Those politicians who promote the continuation of war must never forget that it is not their blood or the blood of their children that is spilled here, but the blood of Ukrainians and Russians.

Hatred is a poor advisor, arrogance wins no wars, and weapons no peace. If Germany wants to contribute to peace, it must completely overhaul its foreign and security policy. Respect, listening and understanding, even of one's opponents, are the magic words here, not Taurus missiles!

Further bloodshed, the increasing destruction of Ukraine, the maintenance of sanctions and an alleged hereditary enmity with Russia cannot be in Germany's interest. We need diplomacy now; we must find our way back to a pan-European peace project in which all belligerent European countries could be integrated.

With all their decisions, German politicians should never forget that it is not their blood or that of their children that is spilled in this war, but that of Ukrainians and Russians.

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