

Germany Must Reconsider Its Extreme Support for Israeli Aggression

For the Sake of Justice and Peace as Well as for Its Own Sake

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One of the most surprising as well as distressing aspects of the international response to the middle-east crisis relates to the almost unconditional support that Germany has extended to Israel's genocidal actions against the people of Gaza. How can the government of Germany, which in the past has been speaking so much of protecting human rights, possibly justify this? Both its policy and the grounds on which it is supposed to be based should be questioned and challenged.

If in addition if it can be shown more effectively that this policy is harmful for Germany's own interests and its international standing as well, then the case for changing this policy and instead have a more balanced and justifiable policy can be strengthened further.

The basic issues that are involved have been summarized well in a recent paper published at the website of German Institute for Development and Sustainability (IDOS) on May 2, 2024, titled 'Germany's support for Israel's government changes the rules-based order', written by Furness Mark and Max-Otto Baumann.

This paper states,

"Since the Hamas terrorist attack on Israel on 7 October 2023, Germany has used the term 'Staatsrason' to justify its political and military backing for Israel's war on Gaza. The principle is based on Germany's responsibility for the holocaust and its consequent moral obligation to protect the Jewish people and their homeland, and is considered a moral foundation of the German state."

After describing position of the German response, this paper also presents its critique of the same,

"By strictly adhering to Staatsrason in the current Middle-East crisis, the German government has backed itself into a corner...The unconditional support for the Israeli government undermines the moral responsibility to safeguard human life on which Staatsrason is based."

In another review of this issue published earlier on April 2, 2024 in Stimson Center website titled 'Germany's blanket support for Israel has undermined its utility as a Middle-East mediator' the author Sajjad Safaei has written

"Both at the level of discourse and policy, the country's (Germany's) ruling elites have

emerged as among the most hawkish European's supporters of Israel's disproportionate response...At home German authorities stand accused of cracking down on public support for the Palestinian cause, effectively jeopardizing fundamental freedoms such as the right to protest."

A report by BBC dated April 9 2024 titled 'Germany says 'history' drives its support for Israel in ICJ case' states, in the context of arguments at a case at the International Court of Justice against Germany filed by Nicaragua to press for stopping its very heavy weapons supply to Israel, states that according to the stand taken by Germany at the Court, support for Israel is at the core of its foreign policy. In this case Nicaragua accused Germany of breaking the UN genocide convention by supplying military hardware to Germany.

"Nicaragua says Germany's arms sales to Israel which totaled \$326 million last year (in 2023)—a tenfold increase on 2022—make it complicit in Israel's alleged crimes. On the other hand Germany says that our history is the reason why Israel's security has been at the core of Germany's foreign policy."

However this is more likely to be a case of seriously misreading history, or drawing all the wrong lessons from this. The lesson to be learnt is never, never again to destroy human life on a mass scale, particularly by targeting specially identified people.

Instead Germany is supporting genocidal actions of Israel for 10 months by supplying 30% of its weapon exports in 2023 and continuing these at high levels in 2024. In addition Germany has provided diplomatic and other support for these genocidal actions and turned away its eyes from the most terrible tortures. It has refused to be a part of hope-giving efforts aimed at permanent ceasefire. In the process Germany has increased the capacity of Israel to carry on its genocidal actions, and has done much harm to its reputation as a force of peace, justice and human rights. There is a very strong case for Germany to adopt a more balanced policy. European countries like Norway and Spain have adopted much better and credible policies within the constraints of being NATO members. Why can't Germany do so?

Before concluding another question may be raised—how could Germany's exports of arms to Israel increase ten-fold in 2023, compared to 2022? How is such a massive sudden increase of exports possible? The Stimson Center report quoted above tells us that 185 of the 218 arms export licenses generated in 2023 in Germany were after the Israeli offensive started. How can such a big increase in exports take place suddenly? So was there earlier sounding that a big increase of exports will be needed in and after October 2023 and to be prepared for this? If so, how could Israeli authorities know in advance that they will require a big increase in arms exports during and after October 7?

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