

Warsaw, 22nd March 2022

Saskia Esken

Lars Klingbeil

Co-Chairs

Social Democratic Party of Germany

Dear Fellow Chairpersons,

February 24, 2022 is a crucial date in European history. Russian aggression against Ukraine marks the collapse of Europe's security system, decades of trust-building, and disarmament efforts. Vladimir Putin has launched a war of aggression in Europe unprecedented since the World War II. Russia must bear the consequences of this decision.

The war in Ukraine marks the outbreak of a new humanitarian crisis in Europe; this country has already left more than 3.5 million war refugees. The current situation is undoubtedly a test of European unity and solidarity.

We call on the SPD to support at the EU forum the Polish Left's proposal to create a fund under which the EU would finance the stay of refugees in host countries to the tune of EUR 500 per person per month. We also propose operationalizing a European system of voluntary relocation of refugees, so Poland and other Central and Eastern European countries receive concrete relocation offers from other EU countries.

In the face of military setbacks, Russia appears to be launching a war of attrition against Ukraine. Civilian and industrial infrastructure is increasingly under massive attack. Cities are being bombed, and the losses and suffering of the residents of Kyiv, Kharkiv, Mariupol, and Mykolaiv are mounting. All the inhabitants of the European Union are watching this with increasing horror.

We must oppose this escalation and present Russia's leaders with a choice - de-escalation and goodwill dialogue with Ukraine or continuation of the aggressive war and further economic sanctions from the EU.

We, therefore, urge the SPD to support proposals aimed at temporarily halting oil and gas imports by European Union countries if Russia rejects appeals from the international community to stop the bloodshed.

The consequences of an embargo will be painful for our economies. Still, we have adequate strategic stocks and procedures in place at the European Union and the International Energy Agency (IEA) to minimize this negative impact.

The EU's potential economic retaliation should also include the introduction of a temporary blockade of trade in goods with Russia and Belarus, i.e., the blockade of road transport to these countries.

Using our strengths, including the economic interdependence with Russia that Germany built so assiduously after 1989, we can deter Russian aggression.

De-escalation and Moscow's retreat from its will to destroy an independent Ukraine may give the world hope that negotiations will return and the hostilities and suffering of the Ukrainian people will end.

With decades of experience of cooperation in a joint social democratic family and the uniqueness of relations between Poland and Germany, we believe that the SPD will understand its historical responsibility for the future of Ukraine and peace in Europe.

Robert Biedroń

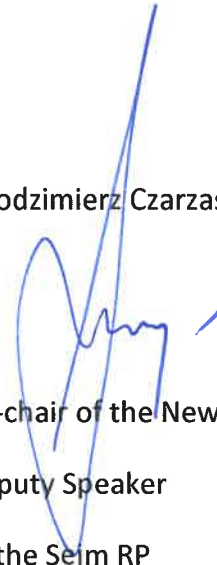


Co-chair of the New Left

Chairperson of Polish S&D Delegation

in the European Parliament

Włodzimierz Czarzasty



Co-chair of the New Left

Deputy Speaker

of the Sejm RP