

For a new Policy of Peace and Détente NOW

Joint statement on results of consultations among German initiatives for peace

Representatives of the "*Berlin Appeal*", the "*Willy-Brandt-Kreis*", the "*Committee on Eastern European Economic Relations*" of the Federation of German Industries (BDI) and the "*Initiative for a New East Memorandum*", among them SPD Deputy Chairman Ralf Stegner, Professor Peter Brandt and peace researcher Professor Hans-Joachim Giessmann, held discussions in Berlin about **how to improve cooperation between civil society and politics aimed at supporting the renewal of German and European peace politics.**

The background for the meeting were the current efforts for a peaceful solution to the Ukraine conflict and for ending the war in Syria.

These are the main results:

The Ukraine conflict and the European refugee crisis triggered by wars urgently demand efforts for a new phase of détente including Russia and for discussions with all relevant stakeholders of conflict. .

The détente policy initiated in 1969 by German Chancellor Willy Brandt had significantly contributed to preventing war in Europe, ending the Cold War and making their peaceful unification of Germany and Europe possible. One of the lessons learned from **Egon Bahr is: peace politics and termination of war and conflict always require "common conflict solutions with those who do not share our values"**.

The struggle for a new détente policy requires the commitment of civil society as well, which in the past had contributed to the success of the peace and détente policy.

The groups of civil society represented at the meeting share the hope of the people of the Ukraine for ending the armed conflict. They call for both the parties of conflict as well as their related international supporters to increase efforts to end the crisis peacefully. They support the sustained efforts of Chancellor Angela Merkel and Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier to implement the Minsk II agreement. Nevertheless, it has become clear that a policy that would continue to rely on sanctions and the isolation of Russia, will not solve the existing conflicts.

They consider political and diplomatic cooperation with Russia crucial for eliminating global threats to peace - starting with nuclear arms control up to ending the wars and proxy wars in neighboring regions of Europe.

They are urging the federal German government to use its OSCE-presidency in 2016 to build an OSCE-based pan-European area of security, without dividing lines, where no state or alliance system could improve its own security at the expense of others. This is exactly what the OSCE Summit in 1999 had agreed upon, however this was never implemented.

Despite the changed conditions, the legacy of Willy Brandt and Egon Bahr stays valid: Common Security in Europe can only be achieved with and not against Russia.

Therefore, instead of building arms against each other, Europe, NATO and Russia should *together* contribute to disarmament and arms control.

For the same reason, the USA, EU and Russia should work together in the Middle East, and exert pressure on their respective partners to agree upon ceasefires and negotiations in Syria, Iraq and Libya. Additionally, they should stop the supply of arms and ammunition to them. More diplomatic initiatives are needed to stop current wars as well as prevent wars rather than expanding them through new military missions. This requires first and foremost providing vital humanitarian assistance to the people in war-affected countries, as well as helping them form governments of national unity in order to begin reconstruction work.

The participants of the meeting want to reinforce their co-operation and include other appeals and initiatives in non-partisan events and discussion forums as well as offering support

through internet information campaigns aimed at supporting diplomatic efforts to cooperation, de-escalation and ending of hostilities. They are committed to supporting efforts to stop the looming arms race in Europe, to withdraw nuclear weapons and prevent deployment of missile defense systems. This applies to both armament plans of NATO and Russia.

Their activities are not directed to a particular political party. Nevertheless, they expect from the SPD in particular to continue following the tradition of Willy Brandt and Egon Bahr for peace and international reconciliation. This includes seeking participation and support from the civil society and standing up for taking the lead in the struggle for a Cooperative Security system throughout all of Europe.

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The participants involved in the strategy consultation of Berlin Appeal / Willy Brandt Circle / Initiative for a New East Memorandum ('Ostdenkschrift') of the EKD (German Lutheran Churches) / Eastern European Economic Relations Committee of the German Federation of German Industries (BDI):

- Dr. Wolfgang Biermann, Political scientist, signatory to the Berlin Appeal "*To End the Spiral of Violence – For a New Policy of Peace and Détente*", longtime Foreign and Security Advisor to Prof. Egon Bahr,
- Prof. Dr. Peter Brandt / Historian, signatory to the Declaration "*On the Threat to Peace - for a New European Approach Towards the Ukraine Crisis*", board member of the *Willy Brandt Circle*,
- Daniela Dahn, a writer, signatory to the Declaration "On the Threat to Peace,", board member of the *Willy Brandt Circle*,
- Ulrich Frey / co-initiator of the Berlin Appeal, a spokesperson of the *Platform for Peaceful Conflict Management*, long-standing member of the *Committee for Social Responsibility of the Lutheran Church in Rhineland*,
- Prof. Dr. Hans-Joachim Giessmann / peace researcher, co-author of the Declaration "On the Threat to Peace, ...", Executive Director of the *Berghof Foundation, Berlin*, Member of the *Willy Brandt Circle*,
- Andreas Metz, Head, Press and Communications, *Eastern European Economic Relations Committee of the German Federation of German Industries (BDI)*,
- Wiltrud Rösch-Metzler / political scientist and freelance journalist, signatory to the *Berlin Appeal*, National Chairperson of the Catholic peace movement *Pax Christi*,
- Dr. Hans Misselwitz / biophysicist, signatory to the Declaration "On the Threat to Peace, ...", Treasurer of the *Willy Brandt Circle*, former State Secretary,
- Irina Mohr, signatory to the Declaration "On the Threat to Peace, ...", board member of the *Willy Brandt Circle*,
- Prof. Dr. Konrad Raiser / theologian, representative of the "*Initiative for a New East Memorandum of the EKD*",
- Dr. Christine Schweitzer / peace researcher, signatory to the *Berlin Appeal*, Deputy Managing Director of the Federation for Social Defence,
- Dr. Ralf Stegner / signatory to the *Berlin Appeal*, Chairman of the (regional) SPD Schleswig-Holstein and Deputy Chairman of the SPD,
- Dr. Christian Wipperfurth, publicist, signatory to the *Berlin Appeal*, Associate Fellow German Council on Foreign Relations,
- Burkhard Zimmermann, co-initiator and secretary of the *Berlin Appeal*.

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