

A Humanitarian Umbrella



ENGLISH PRACTICE – The Russian war in the Ukraine is not war, says Reinhold M. Karner – it borders on genocide. **But there is one thing that could end it.**

Could an unprecedented humanitarian operation end the war in Ukraine?

Oberau – Everyone wonders where Vladimir Putin's illegal military **incursion** in Ukraine is headed. In the free world, this is termed as war, but it is an unusual war: there was no dispute, no threatening conflict between the two states. This is an incursion by Russia in violation of international law and by its leader, Putin, into a neighbouring country.

It is different because of its different system, its different understanding of the world, its different view of humanity and its distinct vision of the future for the Ukrainian people. A people that cautiously but resolutely opened up to forward-looking ideas, namely modernization, free access to education, further development and free access to those alliances that the country envisions. And the people of Ukraine aimed to achieve this peacefully, without nuclear weapons, without high armament and also because this enables a democratic existence in freedom, which already became a reality for other former Eastern Bloc countries.

Putin's backwards-looking empire

Putin's basic idea is that the world order should return to where it was 100, 200, 300, and 400 years ago. Times when imperialist systems and autocrats implemented their ideas without ifs and buts. A backwards-looking empire is Putin's long-cherished wish. He dreams of Russia as the dominant world power – regardless of how times, people and the geopolitical situation have developed after the Tsarist Empire.

Ukraine is a country that has been involved in many wars and conflicts. This country has belonged once here and once there, and briefly to itself in between. The periods of peace in Ukraine were always short and characterized by the fact that a stronger power would come along and claim this country with its **granaries** for itself. However, Putin's eye on Ukraine as an "adversary" is because it was moving towards a Western future.

But Ukraine is not a threat to Russia. Nor is the West a real threat to Russia. The only constructed threat is that the understanding of the system is fundamentally different from Putin's Russia. Namely, one of economic cohesion, cooperation, and a basic democratic attitude toward the people's freedom. One of separation of powers, an electorally limited time for those in power, a law that applies equally to everyone, and a real opposition.

Ukraine is not the victim of war; Ukraine is the victim of a brutal attack. It remains an illusion to hope that Putin's war machine will **abide** by international, civilized rules and laws, that he would

ever give in and leave. That is not how Putin and his accomplices operate, not how his Russia works. That is not how he thinks. There are always alternative options to war. There has never been a war in history that ended up being good.

A large-scale humanitarian operation would checkmate Putin

Therefore, it would be helpful to reflect on whether our aid to Ukraine in terms of material war support is sufficient or, more precisely, purposeful. Is it enough just to provide weapons, ammunition, and money?

Perhaps it is time to organize an unprecedented humanitarian operation. Whoever has humanitarian forces can now contribute to a humanitarian umbrella. Each nation could send aid workers to Ukraine – nurses, caregivers, doctors, technicians, teachers, psychologists and logisticians. If thousands or even hundreds of thousands of aid workers from abroad were to set up tent, container cities and aid centres everywhere, this would checkmate Putin. Because with just one more bomb, he would hit the whole world. Whatever Putin and his war machine attack, it would no longer "only" affect the Ukrainian population, but the entire world.

Any further aggressiveness would plunge the Russian government into explanatory trouble. This would isolate Putin and his regime to such an extent that even most of those countries and governments still standing by him would then consequently point at Russia and say that this war is an attack on the entire world.

With this initiative of a large-scale humanitarian intervention by the world, the destructive invasion of Ukraine would most likely come to a rather quick end. Mahatma Gandhi had already proven that a large-scale humanitarian action leads to success.

A despot's attempt to overthrow the world order

This war is a despot's attempt to overturn the world order and establish the right of the strongest, who simply **annihilates** the weaker. Putin wants only Ukrainians who profess their allegiance to Russia to live in Ukraine. He intends to depopulate Ukraine so that a human vacuum is created and can be filled by resettlement. At least in this way, Ukraine will ultimately become part of the overall Russian imperialist architecture.

If this were to succeed however, the world order would be so shaken to its foundations that no country in the world would be safe anymore. Especially not if it's a smaller country on which the larger or stronger neighbour is keeping an eye. How we behave now concerning Ukraine directly impacts the numerous trouble spots elsewhere. Just think of Taiwan and Korea: China and North Korea closely watch the West's behaviour in Ukraine. Will the West protect the freedom, democracy, and dignity of man or not? A movement is needed that recognizes that weapons and money will not be enough to end the war in the necessary sense. It is about the people, and the West wants to protect them, for example, through its human rights.

Pulling the rug out from under Putin's regime

Such a worldwide humanitarian action would also be highly dangerous for Putin in another way. Large parts of the Russian population would ask why these aid organizations do not come to them. As, after all, they are also freezing, most of them lead a **meagre** life and have no humanitarian aid where they require it.

In Russia, you see large, silent masses living impoverished lives and not opening their mouths out of sheer fear. But it will become even more difficult for them to swallow in the future, because this so-called Ukraine conflict is not Putin's only goal. According to Alexander Cherkasov, the chairman of the Memorial Human Rights Centre, who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2022, things are already as bad as they were under Stalin and Brezhnev, the propaganda is even worse and is steadily declining further.

In the end, such a large-scale humanitarian operation would ultimately pull the rug out of Putin's regime so thoroughly that he would have little chance of countering it.

The only thing missing is the ignition spark of this idea, the spark of this movement. So let's not ask ourselves whether we are for or against Russia, for or against Ukraine, for this or that system. But let us ask ourselves: Are we for or against human dignity? What is a human life worth? From a high ethical standpoint, the human life of every single Russian soldier that Putin is burning up in this war also counts.

The only answer that can be given to Putin's crimes is respect for human dignity and love for people. If Ukraine "falls" or backs down, it will have a domino effect because it is about crimes against humanity and the fundamental question of how humane the future order of the world is.

In this respect, no one is too small to make a difference. Everyone can bring

this idea into play and carry it forward until it reaches those who have the levers in their hands to organize the great peace march to Ukraine and thus help to end this war and its severe global energy and economic crisis. After all, we all want peace, democracy, law and order and prosperity for ourselves, our world, the future of all of us and of humanity.

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THE AUTHOR is an entrepreneur, start-up evangelist, business adviser, science author, university lecturer and chairman of companies.

INFO

Glossary

incursion: Einfall
granary: Getreidespeicher, Kornspeicher
to abide by sth.: etw. befolgen, einhalten
to annihilate so./sth.: etw./jmd. auslöschen, vernichten
meagre: mager, dürftig, ärmlich

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