



How militarization and war broke the German government

This transcript may not be 100% accurate due to audio quality or other factors.

Zain Raza (ZR): Thank you for tuning in today and welcome back to another episode of The Source, I'm your host, Zain Raza. Before I start this interview, I would like to remind all of our viewers to join our alternative channels on Rumble, Telegram and our podcast called Podbean. If you're watching our channel you know from our content that YouTube is owned by Google and Google has a long history of shadow banning and censoring content from independent and critical media such as ours. Therefore, we are asking all of our viewers to join these channels, because if that day ever comes, we won't be able to reach you even with an announcement. You will find the links to all of these platforms in the description of this video. It takes you only a few minutes and costs you nothing, so please join today. Today I'll be talking to longtime peace activist Reiner Braun. From 2013 to 2019, Reiner was one of the presidents of the International Peace Bureau. He's a regular speaker at peace demonstrations in Germany and is one of the founding members of the International Peace Network called No to War – No to NATO. Reiner, welcome back.

Reiner Braun (RB): Thank you so much for the invitation. My camera is not really working, but I had no time to bring it to the shop.

ZR: No worries. We're just glad you're back on the show. I would like to start with German domestic politics. There was a lot of enthusiasm and hype when the German government was formed in 2021, consisting of the Social Democrats (SPD), the Greens and the Free Democratic Party (FDP), which was expected to have a progressive impact on social and economic issues, climate change and foreign policy. However, earlier this month, the coalition fell apart due to ongoing disagreements over economic policy centered around the 2025 federal budget. The German chancellor and leader of the Social Democrats, Olaf Scholz, announced the dismissal of Christian Lindner, the leader of the FDP, who was in charge back then of the finance ministry, from his cabinet, which then precipitated the collapse of the coalition. There is now a minority government of Social Democrats and the Greens in place and new elections are expected in February of 2025. Before we turn to foreign policy and other topics, can you first give your assessment on the collapse of this government and also talk about the legacy this coalition government will leave behind?

RB: The main reason for the end of this government is that the government needs more and more money for war. And how they could get this money for war, there were different opinions in the government. They agreed about giving more money to Ukraine. They agreed about enlarging the military budgets even over 2%. They agreed on the militarization of Europe. But the point is, who should pay for it? And the Social Democrats want to have a little bit more of burden sharing between the rich and the poor. And the Liberals want the poor to be paying everything. They want to cut the money for unemployment. They want to cut the money for social affairs and for ecological changes. And there is always a point where Social Democrats, when they want to survive, would not follow. And this was the point. And it breaks because the Liberals will say we need to cut the money for the people who could not get jobs and are living from social welfare and the Social Democrats said they only have such a small amount of money, you cannot cut it again. And this was the end of the government. And the second point was, we have this stupid rule that the debts are blocked by 1% per year. So it's not possible for the government to take on more debts, but only when there is a situation of crisis. The Social Democrats and the Greens were saying, yes, we have a situation of crisis. We need the money for militarization. This is a huge crisis. And the Liberals were saying, no, that's not a crisis, you have to cut the budget. And these two points were breaking the government. They have more in common, and this includes the actual opposition, they have more in common than everyone has expected. They have in common the approach to war. They have in common the same way for militarization of society, which includes [cutting funding] for hospitals, schools, and universities. They have the same in giving more money for supporting the big industry, reducing the money for the poor people. So it will not be so difficult to develop a new government after the elections. And from my point of view, I expect a government between the two so-called biggest parties, which are not really big, Conservative and Social Democrats. Because this balances a little bit more the social burdens, and on the other side they agree about the militarization. So for me the elections are not met with a lot of hope, but hopefully we will get a stronger opposition from the left side in the new parliament and hopefully this opposition, together with the protests on the streets, have some influence on the new politics after February 23rd.

ZR: Let us dig deeper into the upcoming elections that will take place in Germany in February 2025. The leader of the Christian Democratic Union (CDU), Friedrich Merz, will run as a chancellor candidate. He's projected to be the strongest political force, according to opinion polls, hovering between 30 to 32%. Despite the collapse of the coalition and the continued decline in opinion polls, both the Greens and the Social Democrats have decided to run the same faces again. The Greens nominated Robert Habeck as their chancellor candidate, who is currently the Vice Chancellor of Germany and also heads the Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action, and the Social Democrats will put forward Olaf Scholz again. Other notable names include Alice Weidel from the party called Alternative for Germany or AfD, a party considered to be right wing, conservative, as well as neo liberal. And Sahra Wagenknecht will most likely represent her new party called Sahra Wagenknecht Alliance: Reason and Justice, or in German Bündnis Sahra Wagenknecht: Für Vernunft und Gerechtigkeit (BSW), which has a leftwing socialist agenda and is also quite critical of US

foreign policy and favors a diplomatic solution in Ukraine. In the European election last summer, which were interpreted by many as a test or simulation for the upcoming federal election, the AfD received 15.9% of the vote, while the BSW received 6.2%. Focusing on the bigger parties for a moment, why do you think the Greens and the Social Democrats decided to reelect the same faces, and do you think they can make a strong comeback? And secondly, how come the Christian Democrats have emerged as the strongest political force despite the fact they were voted out of office in 2021, while only receiving 18.9% of the vote, which was considered one of the worst election results in the postwar era?

RB: You know, first of all, it is quite normal that you never change a chancellor when elections are starting. So they are taking the old chancellor as the candidate for the new chancellorship. But you saw in the last weeks how big the opposition in the Social Democratic Party was against him. Because he is quite unpopular. But the Social Democrats believe that the candidate of the opposition, Merz, is so weak and so corrupt – this disillusioned him in the election campaign – that they become the strongest party again. This is their hope. For me it is unrealistic. But that is their hope. The conservatives are not really stronger than last time, but they got the support of the votes from many voters from the Liberals. The Liberals from quite 10% are now under five, between three and four and to whom these voters were going? They are more conservative liberal voters, they are, first of all, going to the Conservatives. So, for the Conservative 30% is quite nothing. You know, Angela Merkel had over 40%, even 44% or 45%, and now they are around 30%. And this is also due to the policy of the government. You know, when many people are looking for alternatives, they are looking for alternatives, not on the left side and partly also on the right wing side. They change in the system. So they are going from the disappointment in the Social-Liberal-Greens to the Conservatives. This is the background that the Conservatives are laying around 30%. And we will see. For the Conservative even 30% is not really a good election vote at the end. Social Democrats and Liberals, you know, when you are in the government, it is very difficult to change the faces for the next campaign.

So, you know, Biden also wanted to run, and Scholz is not so old like Biden is. So the hope is that they can say the Liberals are responsible for all bad things in the government and we are creating a new hope for a second period. Maybe it could be successful. It is the same like Schröder was doing in his second campaign when he was reelected. He was also saying, you know, the alternative is much worse, much more neo liberal, much more un-social. And this will be the campaign of the Social Democrats saying, you know, Merz, who is Merz? BlackRock, who is BlackRock? Profit, Profit. Profit. And for the people, nothing. For social affairs, nothing. He wants to cut all the social budgets. That is not possible any longer. I think this is a little bit like the election campaign [of the Social Democrats]. But in general and again, I would like to underline this, these three parties have not so big differences. They immediately can develop the new coalition. I think the Conservatives would love to form a coalition with the Social Democrats, but if this is not possible by the election votes, the Conservative could also form the Coalition with the Greens without any problems. So please have in mind that I'm always speaking from these three, and when I include the Liberals from the big war coalition parties in Germany. And my hope is that they will not get much more

votes than 50 or 60%, that they cannot change the constitution, which includes that they cannot make a new 100 billion [military] debt program, because such a debt program needs two-third (⅔) support in the parliament. This is my hope. So I'm hoping that both, you mentioned only the party of Sahra Wagenknecht, but I again would like to mention also the small and in a deep crisis being the left party (Die Linke). My personal hope that the Sahra Wagenknecht party with a lot of more than 5% and the left party with three direct mandates, which is a background also for being a group in the parliament, that both will come into the new parliament, which makes the whole left liberal side a little bit stronger.

ZR: Let us continue the discussion on German politics, but with our focus on Ukraine. The Greens and the Christian Democrats have already promised that once they take office they will support Ukraine against Russia for as long as necessary, and even stated that they will supply Ukraine with Taurus cruise missiles, which have a range of 500 km, and can even reach Moscow. The US ATACMS cruise missiles as a comparison, which the US recently authorized Ukraine to use against Russia have a range of 300km. The Social Democratic leader, Olaf Scholz, has so far stated that he would continue to support Ukraine if reelected, but would oppose the delivery of the Taurus cruise system to Ukraine because he wants to prevent a wider escalation between NATO and Russia. However, the emergence of the Wagenknecht Alliance (BSW) at the state level is quite noteworthy. In the state of Thuringia in Germany, the BSW became the third strongest political force, capturing 15.8% of the vote behind the Alternative for Germany (AfD) and the Christian Democrats and just formed a coalition government with the Christian Democrats and Social Democrats. Its precondition for forming a government was a change in policy towards Ukraine, focusing more on diplomacy and peace talks and also halting the deployment of US Tomahawk missiles in Germany by 2026. The coalition agreement reads as follows with regards to Ukraine, and let me quote the passage from the agreement. Quote: "Although we have different views on the need to supply weapons to Ukraine to defend its territorial integrity and sovereignty, we agree on the goal of promoting a diplomatic solution to the war against Ukraine and reducing related tensions within Europe with the aim of a ceasefire and a just, lasting peace in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the Budapest Memorandum", unquote. With regards to the stationing of the long range Tomahawk cruise missiles in Germany by 2026, the agreement states and let me read the passage, quote, "However, we also recognize that many people in Thuringia are critical of or opposed to the planned deployment of medium range and hypersonic missiles. The future government of the Free State of Thuringia will promote a broad debate and publicly express these views in the interest of a lasting commitment to peace", unquote. Firstly, what do you make of this coalition agreement that the BSW was able to draw with the Social Democrats and Christian Democrats in the state of Thuringia? Does it go far enough in terms of addressing peace in Ukraine and the stationing of long range Tomahawk cruise missiles in Germany in 2026? Secondly, do you anticipate a shift in policy in light of Trump's victory, despite establishment parties in Germany still vowing to continue supplying Ukraine with weapons once they come into power?

RB: You know, first of all, I can always hope and say that we need more in the direction of diplomacy, much more. But when I have in mind what's happened over the last years, that in

Germany the governmental parties are only speaking about weapons exports, military support for Ukraine and never using the word diplomacy – never – then this agreement in Thuringia and even a better agreement in Brandenburg, is for me a sign of hope. A sign that the political shift in the direction of diplomacy, negotiations and cease fire is possible. So the wording could be much stronger and much better, definitely. But have in mind that it's the coalition with the Conservative Party, which from the first moment on supported the war and the chancellor candidate [Friedrich Merz] wants to send Taurus to Ukraine. And in this agreement it says diplomacy. Stop the war machine. Go to negotiations. We are critical about the new methods. So politically and for the atmosphere in the society and also for the peace movement, it is for me a great step forward that we have these coalition agreements in Thuringia and in Brandenburg, and hopefully in Saxony, which we know from these coalition agreements we will be quite the same. So I have a positive general feeling knowing that much more is needed. What we need is our own diplomacy initiative from the main countries of Europe, Italy, Spain, Germany and France. An initiative that says: We want all parties sitting around the table and negotiating. We invite the UN General Secretary to lead these negotiations. We invite Brazil and China with their peace plans to play a big role of moderation and mediation in these negotiations. And during the time of negotiations we need a ceasefire and we are stopping the weapons export and weapons delivery to Ukraine. That is from my point of view what is needed. And it is needed because the people of Ukraine, it will be very hard for them to survive the third war winter. There is no warmth, there's no heating, there's no warm water. The infrastructure of the city is destroyed. There is less food. And that's in a situation where the climate is going to be -30/- 35 [Degrees Celsius]. Can you imagine how life would be in such a winter? And for these people, that they have a humanitarian possibility to get humanitarian aid, we need a ceasefire. Not because of the Russians, because of the people of Ukraine, we need a ceasefire. And that is the background for me. I am always calling for a ceasefire.

And secondly, a word about the war: it is obviously that the war is lost for NATO. It is now a question of how quick leading personalities in NATO will accept that they have lost and how we can help to find the way that no one is losing his face by starting negotiations. And for this I think we need again the big support of countries like Brazil, China and the African Union. They can promote a process and hopefully no side will lose their face, so they can sit around the table. That is my general point of view and I hope that these negotiations will get support, to answer your question to Trump, by a more active foreign policy of Trump in the direction of negotiations and ceasefire. You know, personally, I don't believe him a word. But he was saying it so often that it is very difficult to do the opposite of what he has said at this point - especially during the beginning of his second term. So I hope that he will push a little bit in this direction, will overcome internal anti-negotiation positions in the Ukrainian government and will also help a little bit the Europeans to go a step forward [in that direction]. Personally, I don't expect anything or nothing in the direction of peace from Trump. I know his position on Gaza and Israel. He's a bloody, aggressive supporter of Israel, which means the killing of thousands, hundreds of thousands of people. And we know his position on Iran. He was stopping the old agreement between the West and Iran. And he hates these countries. He wants to develop the aggressions and activities against China,

economically, but also militarily. And, when I'm looking at his foreign minister, I think he's the biggest enemy Cuba can ever have. I think his goal is to kill Cuba. So all of this is not peaceful. And all of this is not really helpful for the demilitarization of international politics. So I'm expecting that the militarization will go on. I think we will no longer discuss 2% [military budget] of GDP. We will discuss about 3%, maybe even 4% [military budget] of GDP with all the social consequences. And what does this mean to go this way? I think we saw in Baku in the climate negotiations, nothing; no money, no help, no support for the poorest countries. And, you know, never forget that every evening 1 billion people are going to bed with hunger. And then we know what we have to do. And we are really doing the opposite of this.

ZR: I want to return back to the point that you made earlier that our government fell apart based on economic issues which were driven by their military and war spending. This 100 billion [Euro] military fund that was established by the German government in light of the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022 was primarily established to counter what they call a security threat, an existential security threat that Russia poses to Europe and Germany. This special military fund is never questioned in the political and media discourse, while all other issues, whether it's the social infrastructure, are questioned and put on the chopping block, whenever it comes to economic issues. This special military fund meets the 2% threshold that is demanded by NATO. And according to a Reuters article, half of that fund is likely to go to US defense companies, for example, in purchasing F-35 fighter jets, heavy transport helicopters and other modern equipment. Trump, when he comes to presidency, is expected to demand an increase in NATO contributions from European countries that are part of their alliance. And many expect that perhaps the Ukraine war could be Europeanized, meaning Europe will have to pay more. The war will continue, but with less US funding, which Trump could then sell to his base saying: See, I've made the Europeans pay more for the war. This would not essentially stop the war, as you and I know. Can you provide your assessment of this 100 billion military fund and its impact that it's having on the social fabric of Germany? And then talk about Trump's presidency and the impact it could have on German military spending?

RB: You know, first of all, never forget, this 100 billion [Euro] program, these are debts. They have to be paid back. And who has to pay this back? The taxpayer. What does this mean? The normal people have to pay back. So that is the first point. This is not something which comes from heaven and is for free, Not a word of this. And have in mind that this program will end in 2027 and many agreements we were signing for new tanks, for new ships, for new submarines, for the new F-35, and others, are contracts, which go much longer than 2027. So this means there will be a follow up, either a new debt program or they have to take it from the normal budget, which means they have to increase the budget, the military budget, by 20 to 23 billion [Euro] every year. And what does this mean? It's very easy: deep, deep social cuts. And our country, you know the [situation of the] infrastructure in Germany. You know the bridges on the street. You know the situation of the railways. The German Bundesbahn is never, never on time. We are behind the 19th century. When you are looking at the schools, the parents have been reconstructing the toilets. Looking to the universities,

we definitely need a new modernization program for the universities. Look at our healthcare system. We have more elderly people, and the costs will be higher and the healthcare system is shrinking. We are closing about 100 to 200 hospitals within the next two years, and we can continue discussing every part of the social system. There will be tremendous reductions, when we are following this miserable way. And the same on the European Union level. We now have a [military] budget for 430 billion [Euros] for the next four years for the European Union. Von der Leyen will say that it must be the minimum 500 billion. So from where is this money taken? It was taken from the poorer countries in Europe, which we are supporting in their development. Romania, Bulgaria and and and... And it is again taken from the social part of the budget. So that is a tremendous situation. And the question is how long the people will be quiet and accept this. And I can see changes in this behavior. We will have the same massive rebellions like in France in the next few years in many, many European countries.

So I think these politics of militarization and social cuts will come to a border where the question is; Do we have authoritarian dictatorship to follow this line or do we have internal changes in the politics regarding a way of negotiation, disarmament and social and ecological development? No one is speaking about social ecological transformation any longer because we are only speaking about developing the military industry, which is a high emission industry. We all know it. So Trump will push us in the direction of militarization. That is absolutely clear. This means Europe should pay for the Ukrainian war or at the end of the war for the militarization of Ukraine, for the defending of the borders and for the reconstruction of the country. The country must be rebuilt. And the country had around 48 million people [52 million] in 1991. Now there are between 25 and 28 million [38 million] people living in the country. 5 million of these people are living in Russia. And others in many, many surrounding countries, including more than 1 million in Poland. And Poland is much smaller than Germany. We also have about 1.2 million Ukrainian people living here. They have to go back because they are needed for the reconstruction. Many of them are young, intelligent people which are needed for a rebuild of the society. But who is paying for this? And, you know, my thinking is that the European Union will immediately forget Ukraine when the war is over. There will be no acceptance in the European Union. They will never fulfill the obligation of the European Union. Never. Even when they reduce their corruption, there are so many other points which they will never fulfill. And then there is another point for the Ukrainians: the reconstruction. The owners of the land are no longer the Ukrainians. This beautiful land where everything is growing, technically is in the hands of the international agricultural companies, BlackRock and others. All owned by foreign countries. The Ukrainians can work there for a small amount of wage, but the ownership is the big industrial agriculture corporations in Europe and the world. So that is also a reality. And it's the same with the rest of the industry. What industry can survive in Ukraine? The military industry will survive. But all of them have [international] partners on the minimum of 50%. Germans are engaged, the Italians are engaged, the French are engaged, and for a lot, the US is engaged. So they are not owners of their own industry any longer. So how should they have the power and the financial resources for reconstruction of the country when the profit is going abroad? Big, huge problem. Ukraine will be suffering from my point of view, for many, many years, after the war. Maybe we, and the social movements will organize solidarity funding

campaigns for the people in Ukraine to help them that they can, in the minimum survive, and maybe their houses and the streets could be reconstructed and the schools. So that, to me, is the situation. Trump is going the way of militarization. He will do everything to push the Europeans to spend more for military purposes. For my understanding, he will push clearly for burden sharing. I, Trump: I'm responsible for fighting against China and you stupid Europeans, solve your problems at home. This could even mean that he will reduce the US military forces in Europe, maybe even close one or two of the military bases. Great. But on the other side, he will say the Europeans have to pay. He will not leave Europe because this is against the interests of the big companies, the big industry of the United States. The US will do everything to have control over the main developments in Europe like in the past. But for this, they don't need 200,000 troops in Germany. 50,000 would be enough and they don't need 80 military bases, maybe ten or 15 would be also enough. So there will not be an independent Europe from the United States. I cannot see this.

But there will be a new burden sharing and new relations between the US and Europe. And I think Trump will also try to force the Europeans together with him, solve the problem in West Asia, which will not be peaceful, and maybe he will also force us for a bigger support, not only economically in the fight against China. So the future of the Europeans is in the continuation to be the smaller brother or sister who has nothing to say next to the big United States. So I cannot see more independence and I cannot see European politicians fighting for a more independent Europe as they are too connected with the Atlantic Bridge and the United States. So what we also need and again, you mentioned the name, the hope for me for Sahra Wagenknecht is the discussion about steps for a more independent Europe. What can we do? The US will never be our enemy. This is stupid. But we have different interests and to develop the European interests stronger, I think this will be maybe a discussion in the society in the next four years and I think is absolutely needed. Because Europe, from my point of view, and this will be my last sentence here: Europe has only a chance in the world politics – in these tectonic changes in the world we are seeing – when it will be independent from the United States and will be more accepted from the Global South as an independent, helpful supporting partner. And this always needs more independence from the United States.

ZR: I want to switch to the Middle East and focus on Israel's assault in Gaza and Lebanon. The war between Hezbollah and Israel in southern Lebanon is in full swing with daily crashes and rocket fire. The civilian death toll in Lebanon has risen to 3600, according to the Lebanese Ministry of Health. In Gaza, the death toll has exceeded 44,400, with dozens, sometimes hundreds of civilians being killed by Israel every day in the name of fighting terrorism. This month, Human Rights Watch published a report holding Israel responsible for war crimes and crimes against humanity. The organization added that governments worldwide should adopt targeted sanctions and also halt any arms sales to Israel. Last week, the International Criminal Court, ICC, issued arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, former defense minister Yoav Gallant and Hamas' military commander Mohammed Deif. Regarding the arrest warrants for Netanyahu and Gallant, the ICC stated that they are responsible for the crime of using starvation as a method for warfare and are also guilty of crimes against humanity through murder, persecution and inhumane acts. Israel

condemned these arrest warrants, calling them anti-semitic while the US rejected them, citing procedural errors. I want to focus on the German government. The German government's reaction, however, has been quite contradictory. The German foreign minister Annalena Baerbock, on one hand, told the public broadcaster ARD that Germany recognizes and is bound by the International Criminal Court, while on the other hand, she also stated, and let me quote her here, quote: "We are now, of course, examining exactly what that means for implementation in Germany", unquote. The German government spokesperson, Steffen Hebestreit, also followed along the same lines, while on the one hand stating that Germany was, quote, "one of the biggest supporters of the ICC", unquote. And then also stated, quote, "I find it hard to imagine that we would make arrests on this basis", unquote. EU's foreign policy chief Josep Borrell, on the other hand, has been quite clear from the very beginning. During a visit to Cyprus, he stated, and let me quote him here, quote, "The states that signed the Rome Convention are obliged to implement the decision of the court. It is not optional", unquote. First, can you talk about what Germany's current position or lack thereof towards the ICC arrest warrant reveals? And secondly, what do you think Germany should be doing at this stage in terms of stabilizing the situation in Israel, Gaza and Lebanon?

RB: Germany is doing really the opposite of stabilizing any situation in the region. You know, the main point is we are sending weapons to Israel day to day. This year, I think we have 300 contracts. And we are really next to the United States, the biggest war and weapons deliverer to Israel. This is, from my point, absolutely unacceptable. And it's the opposite of what we need. Now, let me first say, for me, this whole situation in Gaza and now also in Lebanon and generally in Palestine, is one of the biggest tragedies of history after 1945. And we have to do everything to find a way to solve and to overcome the tragedy for the people of the region. And in this case, I mean all people in the region, including the Israeli people. It's not a normal life when you are living in an apartheid state. You can imagine it when you are on the winning side but you're only on the winning side for a short time. An apartheid state will never survive for a long time. And it is never acceptable that the German government is saying nothing to the genocide Israel is doing. It is the German history – and the killing of 6 million Jewish people – which forced us to be in opposition to any kind of genocide! And to say it very clear: genocide is never accepted because of the German history. So we have to deeply criticize Israel. That is my point of view. That has nothing to do with anti-Semitic beliefs or something like that. This is a clear critique on the policy of an apartheid state, which is not acceptable. And I think this must be done from a point of peace and negotiation for the region and said very, very clearly.

You know, what Hamas has done on the 7th of October is never acceptable. But it is not an excuse – not one minute – to what happened afterwards. Never. And for German politics, I think – and it is really unbelievable what Annalena Baerbock and others are doing – the double standards have never been as obvious as they are in their politics for Israel. What Israel is doing day to day is absolutely against international law. Every day – killing of civilians, bombing of schools. The list is very, very long. And what are we doing? We are accusing the Russians of acting illegally. Yeah, but when you only accuse one side in one situation and defend the other situation – no one will believe you. I think that is the

background – the German influence in international politics has been dramatically reduced during the last years because the majority of the countries, above all, the Global South, see these double standards. And then they reflect on their own history and then they again see the double standards. Speaking about human rights and never criticizing the colonialism. And then never paying for their colonizing activities! So this, for me, this war in West Asia again gave a push for a huge change to the world order, because the Western countries and above all, Germany, lost their credibility. And that's the reality. I think it's good for the change of world power. It is bad for the Germans because I really would love to be more supportive of a peace process in this region with this tragedy. But that is the reality. And, you know, I cannot – it's very difficult to see a way out. Very difficult. And I'm a little bit optimistic about Ukraine that we are coming to a peace process in 2025. But I'm very pessimistic when I'm looking at West Asia. And I can only hope that we will get a ceasefire and that we can help the people surviving because winter and rain starts in this region. That is the small hope I have.

When you asked me for a solution, I can only see a long term solution, and this is that all countries, all parties, all interested forces must sit in a big process of negotiations around the table and develop what we developed in the 70s with the process of Helsinki – a common security process which includes everyone in the region finding compromise in the common solution for all the conflicts. I think it's impossible to take one conflict and try to solve it because all of them are deeply connected. We need a common security process of trust building, negotiation, dialog, for cooperative development in the whole region. This is, for me, the only way and this is definitely not the way for tomorrow. But this is the only way I see working. And when you asked me about a one-state or a two-state solution – maybe it's a bit more realistic but I have doubts about the reality to see a two-state solution. But I think at the end we need a cooperative system in the whole region, of negotiation, friendship, economic contacts between all these countries in the region. That is the only point of view, I can imagine, that we come out of this catastrophe which is in that region. And again, to Trump – Trump will not be helpful in this situation. Absolutely not. Because he is very single-minded. And in this situation, to be single minded is definitely not helpful. And I don't really have a lot of hope for the region. It's a tragedy. But yeah, maybe we can enlarge the idea a little bit that we need more humanitarian help for the people as a first step – maybe it will bring a new climate of openness which brings different parties together.

ZR: Reiner Braun, longtime peace activist and political commentator, thank you so much for your time today.

RB: Thank you.

ZR: And thank you for tuning in today. If you're watching our videos regularly, make sure to take into consideration that our independent media organization does not take any money from corporations or governments. We don't even allow advertising, all with the goal of providing you with information that is free from any external influence. Hence, we only depend on you to continue our independent and critical journalism. Also, please take into

account that there's an entire team working behind the scenes, from camera, light, audio, translation, voiceover, correction, that is dedicated to providing you with information that is critical and provides another perspective. So please make sure to donate today and support our independent journalism. I thank you for your support and for tuning in. I'm your host, Zain Raza, see you next time.

END

Thank you for reading this transcript. Please don't forget to donate to support our independent and non-profit journalism:

BANKKONTO: Kontoinhaber: acTVism München e.V. Bank: GLS Bank IBAN: DE89430609678224073600 BIC: GENODEM1GLS	PAYPAL: E-Mail: PayPal@acTVism.org	PATREON: https://www.patreon.com/acTVism	BETTERPLACE: Link: Click here
---	--	--	---

The acTVism Munich e.V. association is a non-profit organization with legal capacity. The association pursues exclusively and directly non-profit and charitable purposes. Donations from Germany are tax-deductible. If you require a donation receipt, please send us an e-mail to: info@acTVism.org