

Evaluation of the foreign policy part of the coalition agreement

Jürgen Kurz, November 2021

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Why I will vote with „NO“ to the coalition agreement

On November 24th, 2021, the traffic light negotiators presented the result of their weeks-long “conclave” to the public under the heading “MORE PROGRESS - ALLIANCE FOR FREEDOM, JUSTICE AND SUSTAINABILITY” („MEHR FORTSCHRITT WAGEN - BÜNDNIS FÜR FREIHEIT, GERECHTIGKEIT UND NACHHALTIGKEIT“) with many pathetic words.

As a founding member of Bündnis 90 / DIE GRÜNEN with voting rights, I would like to deal in this article with the foreign policy part of this full-bodied announced and submitted document, which, according to Robert Habeck, is the "best of all three parties" (ZDF: What nun Herr Habeck und Herr Lindner ? on November 25th, 2021).

Bündnis 90 / DIE GRÜNEN will again provide the Foreign Minister in this new government coalition. In my opinion, this is a fantastic opportunity to really make a difference globally with our core issue of climate protection.

Am I optimistic that we can exert a lasting influence on the global climate here? No, at least not to the extent necessary.

So I have my doubts.

The foreign policy part breathes the colonial smugness of western arrogance, which shows how little the traffic light parties has so far noticed the changed world and taken it seriously.

“We will make our foreign, security and development policy **more value-based and more European**. German foreign policy should act from a single source and develop joint strategies across departments in order to increase the coherence of our international action.

Together with our partners, including from civil society, we will work to preserve our free way of life in Europe and **to protect peace and human rights worldwide**. We are guided by our values and interests. "

As nice as that sounds, what is hidden behind this key message of the three parties foreign policy and then comes to light in the following text is just as dangerous in the sense of an active peace policy: Translated into real world policy, it means nothing else than that as a European nation, with post-colonialism habits want to make the force the non partner world (= countries that do not follow the model of western democracies) to happiness with its freedom and value system!

Is that really a modern foreign policy that should ultimately help other countries to set guidelines on how they should organize themselves in the years to come?

I think no ! So you only slide into new conflicts and intensify existing differences!

Those who want to pursue value-based foreign policy must consequently, in order to remain credible, name their indispensable values on the one hand, and then also be

prepared to represent the feedback in the implementation of these values in their own country, if this makes cooperation impossible.

As a consequence, value-based foreign policy is always based on sanctions (= punishment). She says to the other, "If you don't behave the way I think it's right, then I won't play with you any more or I'll withdraw my sympathy from you.

And thought even more consistently: whoever defines his own values as a yardstick for evaluating the politics of another country definitely puts his own value system above the value system of others! A fatally arrogant point of view.

A value-based foreign policy, instead of an interest-driven foreign policy, always looks from above at others, since one has to be convinced of one's own superiority if one brings one's values into the consultations!

For me as a GREEN party member from the very beginning, who comes from the non-violent conflict resolving movement and has never viewed war and violence as a means of politics, such an approach - my values are superior to your values - is not acceptable. I ask myself, is our party now developing from a peace party to a warmonger party?

In addition, there is another fact:

The world has changed and continues to change every day! We should also recognize this in Germany and take note of it with all the consequences.

In my more than 18 years of experience with China, I have noticed this very clearly.

I am therefore disappointed that the coalition agreement does not make any contribution to making the world more peaceful and cooperative:

"We want to increase Europe's strategic sovereignty. The aim is multilateral cooperation in the world, **especially in close connection with those states that share our democratic values**. It is also about systemic competition with authoritarian states and strategic solidarity with our democratic partners. "(Page 143)

The three parties are apparently ready to participate in the division of the world, driven forward by the USA over the past 20 years. Here the good ones, the democracies of a western model, there undifferentiated and polemically emphasized the bad authoritarian governed states which are also named according to the current political mood: Russia, China, Belarus, Iran, Turkey and whatever else is added every day. The coalition agreement clearly defines "We and the others".

For me, as a founding member of the Greens, this approach is an expression of a backward-looking, claims-oriented way of thinking and the opposite of a positive orientation towards the future.

Instead of addressing the global conflict between the two superpowers forced by the USA and formulating the avoidance of a new cold war as a goal, they uncritically take the side of the USA and describe China as the global troublemaker that they want to change:

"Our expectation of Chinese foreign policy is that China will play a responsible role for peace and stability in its neighborhood. We are committed to ensuring that territorial disputes in the South and East China Seas are settled on the basis of international law of the sea. A change in the status quo in the Strait of Taiwan can only take place peacefully and by mutual agreement. As part of the EU's one-China policy, we support the relevant participation of democratic Taiwan in international organizations. We address clearly

China's human rights violations, especially in Xinjiang. The principle of "one country - two systems" in Hong Kong must be reasserted. "(P. 157)

It seems quite normal for the government of an 80 million people to tell the government of a 1.4 billion people where to go. (That's real?) The allegations made against China as part of the government program are based on an arrogant description, sometimes negating facts, and the paternalism of a huge country that has been through hard work and clever government work that serves people in the past 70 years since it was re-established as The People's Republic of China, out of dire poverty (in 1949 GDP per capita in China was 27 USD / a and thus significantly below the value for the whole of Asia: 44 USD / a) has developed into the second largest economy in the world.

The whole thing only because the narrative about the alleged violations of human rights in our media is repeated almost daily - the fact is that the vast majority of media professionals who constantly cite this narrative as a "fact" and thus write it up to the "truth" do not have any of fact based knowledge of the real situation and development in China! This is not a responsible foreign policy, this is clumsy populism!

As a person, who has worked now in China for more than 18 years, I can say that to this day there is no substance for claiming China has committed systematic government-intentional human rights violations.

We have no moral right to soar to such a condemnation against China! Why do we actually imagine in Germany, where we ourselves are not able to implement the right to asylum in Europe enshrined in the UN declaration, to have the right to accuse other countries of not complying with UN declarations?

Nobody in Germany and Europe is responsible for the fiefs of a population of 1.4 billion! Nobody here knows the challenges of keeping a country like China together peacefully!

It cannot be the original idea of a peacemaking foreign policy to postulate unproven claims as part of a coalition agreement in order to transfer them into official government policy and, as a consequence, if this policy is applied, to promote a global division. This does not serve our country, but causes unmistakable, foreign policy damage.

We as the GREENS have always declared we want to contribute to a peaceful global development. The proposed coalition agreement leads us in the other direction!

German foreign policy must be geared towards breaking down prejudices and making dealings with other countries in Germany more open and tolerant. We are not world policemen and, in view of our history, we have no right to stand with a forefinger to any other country.

This in no way means that one cannot and should not stand up for human rights and women's equality. But history has shown that whoever wants to make a difference in these areas does it more less publicly and systematically and also preserves the face of other cultures. We have to learn to accept that not only our own ideas about social organization contribute to making people happy and we have to accept that the formerly poor countries are now also competitors in the global race for prosperity.

Unfortunately, the submitted contract does not have an integrative and cooperative foreign policy focus, it essentially aims to export own values and protect the interests of one's own culture.

Nobody in the world needs the happiness of rich Europeans today! There is still a lot to be done to help people in other countries and to enable them to live a decent life. Fighting poverty, ending wars and the causes of displacement, and enabling economic development in countries that are still characterized by conflict and scarcity.

For me, all of this should be part of the foreign policy of an economically strong and liberal Germany.

In order to be able to achieve that, however, it is not enough you want to do it, you must also be able to do it and for that you need first of all a foreign policy without an educational approach!

The “preservation of our free way of life in Europe” is an important European concern, but the export of this way of life to other regions of the world is doomed to failure and only leads to conflicts.

From my point of view, the coalition agreement on foreign policy is definitely not the best of all parties, as Robert Habeck claims! In contrast, it leads Germany, Europe and the world into even more conflicts! Therefore, as a founding member of the green party, I cannot deliver my consent to this contract.