



War cannot be waged in a more inhumane way

Klaus Slapnicar / 04.05.2022

After 77 years of peace in Europe, Russia has started a war without any reason by invading Ukraine. The related violations of international law can be easily and unambiguously identified.

There may be different opinions about Russia's chances of success against Ukraine, but the duration of the conflict so far shows the poor armament of the Russian troops, their small numbers as well as the lack of motivation of the soldiers sent into the field and consequently that Putin's intention to "overrun" his neighboring country within a short time has already failed. For this, everything is sufficiently clear and already unequivocally articulated.

Alongside all these terrible and condemnable misdeeds of Putin's, it is necessary to bring to the fore an aspect that until now has received little attention. The actions of the Russian military in not conducting a targeted warlike "campaign", but instead destroying civilian objects and ruthlessly killing civilians of all ages, is a blatant violation of the dignity of every single human being, which every individual of the Ukrainian population can invoke.

In the German Basic Law, the constitutional legislator deliberately placed a new conception of man with fundamental rights at the top of the constitution as a leitmotiv from the experience of a dictatorship that despised human dignity between 1933 and 1945. Article 1 of the Basic Law asserts the dignity of every human being. Thus, in 1949, a new system of values was created which must be observed by state authority. The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union also unanimously endorsed this view in 2000. Its Article 1 reads: "Human dignity is inviolable. It shall be respected and protected." A comparable provision is also found in Article 21 of the Russian Constitution: "The dignity of the person shall be protected by the State. Nothing can justify its diminution."

This not only defines an important life-sustaining defensive task of the state, but also proclaims the protection of individuals and the preservation of their dignity as obligatory.

The state has a duty to protect human dignity.

The arbitrariness of Putin's aggressive war against the population, their homes and civilian objects violates these principles to an extent not seen in Europe since 1945 and is thus absolutely without dignity.

In addition to the aggressive violations of international law, the many civilian deaths in the war in Ukraine prove the inhumanity of this warfare in such a way that, from this point of view, the exclusion of Russia from all bodies of Europe and of the world is justified. Warfare cannot be more inhumane.

Russia can only become part of the European community of values again if it respects the dignity of every individual.

This treatment of people in Ukraine, which violates fundamental principles of civilization, justifies the defense of human dignity, which has been fundamentally and substantially attacked, with all available means. This includes centrally the defeat of the criminal system with all possible and conceivable export and import bans, in order to limit the solvency of Russia in the most critical

way. Only if Putin's system is overcome and democratic governmental behavior and legitimation

through democratic participation and decision-making of the Russian people is realized, there will be a chance to accept Russia again in the value-based community of Europe with respect for the human dignity of each individual.

Prof. em. Dr. iur. Klaus Slapnicar co-founded business law as a field of study and taught it for many years, most recently at Schmalkalden University. He was spokesman of the Association of University Teachers of Business Law for over 20 years and a personal member of the Business Law University Association (Wirtschaftsjuristische Hochschulvereinigung, WHV).