

World domestic policy in the election year 2024  
**Ending wars, preventing a shift  
to the right, shaping transfor-  
mation, building alliances**

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Bonn, 22 January 2024. The year 2024 has not inherited an easy legacy. Russia's war of aggression in Ukraine continues. There is a risk of the war between Israel and Hamas in the Gaza Strip spreading across the whole Middle East. Conflicts in Ethiopia, Yemen and the Sahel region are destabilising entire societies. At the same time, debt crises in a number of low- and middle-income countries and the climate and biodiversity crisis are leading to a lack of social security. The ensuing fear is creating a breeding ground for authoritarian parties and systems.

Yet in addition to these crises, 2024 also offers the potential for change and a new direction: elections will

be taking place in more than 70 countries, including over 40 democracies. More than 4.2 billion people – over half of the world’s population – will be called on to vote in the course of the year. Elections are scheduled in some of the world’s most populous countries: India, the United States, Indonesia and South Africa. There are elections in the European Union, too. If we include elections at local or provincial level, for example in Brazil, and elections in autocracies such as Russia, the majority of the populations of the BRICS group of nations, which gained new members on 1 January 2024, and of the “old West” – the United States and the EU – will be going to the polls. The election year began in Bangladesh on 7 January, followed by the elections in Taiwan on 13 January.

Societies around the globe battered by a whole range of crises will be voting – albeit under differing conditions. 2024 will thus show what types of cooperation and competition will be shaping a multipolar world order in future. It will be vital to promote dialogue, common interests and cohesion within and between societies and world regions and to persevere in working to counter the crisis dynamics in the interest of the global common good.

***“Germany, Europe and indeed all of us need to work tirelessly towards these goals – for freedom, stability and a liberal, multilateral order.”***

In 2024, our actions should therefore be guided by two goals in particular: peace and democracy.

***Ending wars, seeking political solutions to conflicts:*** Whether in Ukraine, the Gaza Strip or the Sahel region – the political priority must be to put an end to military conflicts and to prevent the conflicts from spreading further. Europe and Germany should maintain and extend their support for Ukraine – even if they have to do so without the United States – and should push ahead with EU accession negotiations, while Ukraine ensures independent and free elections. In Gaza, the international community should support the groups involved in their efforts to find an end to the violence and initiate dialogue between Israel and Palestine on a two-state solution.

***Preventing a shift to the right, promoting democracies:*** The forthcoming elections in the United States, the EU, India, Indonesia and South Africa as well as in

Turkey, Pakistan, Senegal, Ghana and Mexico will decide whether the rising trend towards autocracy that has been observed for many years now and the corrosion of democratic practices continue to increase or whether an end can be put to these developments. There is an urgent need to promote non-polarising forces and multilateral systems, to recognise human rights and to comply with international law.

Germany, Europe and indeed all of us need to work tirelessly towards these goals – for freedom, stability and a liberal, multilateral order: firstly, via the socially just and climate-stabilising restructuring of our economic systems and, secondly, by standing shoulder to shoulder with strategic partners on all continents who are committed to jointly pursuing the global common good and a sustainable future.

***Socially just and climate-stabilising restructuring of economic systems:*** The agreement reached at COP28 in Dubai in December 2023 to “transition away from fossil fuels” in the fight against the climate crisis and the reaffirmation of the 2030 Agenda in New York in September 2023 now need to be rapidly implemented, backed by reform of the international financial institutions and a substantial mobilisation of private capital. Highly indebted low- and middle-income countries require particular support.

***Alliances:*** Europe and Germany should take targeted steps to deepen and expand alliances and partnerships – independently of the United States and with countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America that are committed to the global common good in line with the United Nations 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement. As in Taiwan already, the elections in the United States, India, South Africa and Indonesia will lead the way.

The year 2024 stands for crises and wars, but also for elections and a possible change in direction. Dialogue, political conflict resolution and the promotion of bilateral, trilateral and multilateral partnerships for a liberal, peaceful world order must be given the highest political priority. We need a world domestic policy, a “Weltinnenpolitik”, for the global common good.