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# Arrogance and downfall: Germany gets a well-deserved UN put-down

Berlin's defeat exposed a state that lectures the world, backs war, excuses hypocrisy, and still expects prestige on demand

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By **Tarik Cyril Amar**, a historian from Germany working at Koç University, Istanbul, on Russia, Ukraine, and Eastern Europe, the history of World War II, the cultural Cold War, and the politics of memory

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*"Hochmut kommt vor dem Fall"* (arrogance precedes a fall) says a proverb every German knows. That, you may say, is little wonder, considering how the last two world wars started and ended.

But the saying is much older. It is rooted in Martin Luther's punchy translation of the Old Testament (in the English King James Bible, the relevant passage reads *"Pride goeth*

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*before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall*”). Clearly, the

admonition not to preen and strut lest you stumble and fall flat on your silly, overbearing face is addressed to all of us, including, for instance, Americans and Israelis.

Yet recent events at the United Nations have highlighted the pertinence of – to use a term less harsh than arrogance – an over-optimistically biased lack of self-awareness to the case of contemporary Germany. Or to be precise, its political elites. Berlin, in essence, has been humiliated in public, before literally the whole world: Applying for a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council, [it lost the vote in the UN General Assembly](#).

The rotating non-permanent seats on the UN Security Council are, to put it mildly, not terribly powerful resources. Their value is at least as much a matter of political symbolism and prestige as of practical benefits. But it would be foolish to conclude that Germany’s defeat does not matter. On the contrary, it is precisely the fact that such a seat does *not* pack a mighty punch that makes the failure to obtain one even worse: How hard can it be? Obviously too hard for the current Berlin team.

Hence, ironically, although objectively the stakes were not that high, this is a massive setback and great embarrassment for official Germany. One reason is that a de facto routine has been broken. You might even say a tradition going all the way back to the last century’s Cold War. Since the 1973 admission as full UN members of both Cold War Germanies, East and West, first West then united Germany (in effect, West Germany after gobbling up its former rival), has held a non-permanent seat six times and, often forgotten now, [the former East Germany once](#). This is Germany’s first ever failure to achieve what had come to look like the default: getting what it wants.

Instead, Austria and Portugal did. Voting for non-permanent security council seats is complicated and split by regions. That’s why only Lisbon and Vienna were Germany’s direct competitors in the same regional box, as it were. Yet if you list all other countries that have made it this year while Germany did not, they also include [Kyrgyzstan](#), [Trinidad and Tobago](#), and [Zimbabwe](#).

No wonder the Germans have been even glummer than when they lose a football match. Foreign Minister



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Johann Wadephul, who had traveled to New York to lecture the world and score what looked like an easy win, deplored a *“bitter defeat”* (but is unwilling to do the right thing and resign).

The staid Deutsche Presse-Agentur (dpa) noted a *“resounding”* debacle. Influential business newspaper Wirtschaftswoche registered a *“harsh setback”* for not only Wadephul but also his boss, Chancellor Friedrich Merz. Both – proud of their dull unanimity – have long sought to claim a larger international role for Berlin in Europe, as well as globally. Yet they find their iteration of Germany rejected by the closest thing to a world parliament as no German government has before.

Even worse, while international ‘leadership’ is clearly out of reach, as no one wants German leaders – who would have thought – even more modest ambitions seem unrealistic. An editorial in [Spiegel](#), [Germany’s Pravda of radical Centrism](#), despairs that Berlin might as well say goodbye to its dreams of playing *“Mittelmacht”* (a middle power) and has now arrived at the glorious status of *“Kleinstaat,”* literally meaning simply a small state, but in reality, if you know German mentality, a thing comical at best (when it happens to, say, Liechtenstein) and a tragic disgrace when it happens to Germany.

And to be fair, there is something odd about Germany not even maintaining its very moderate clout and prestige at the UN. You don’t have to be a German nationalist to notice a discrepancy between Germany’s economic and demographic weight – both declining badly but still comparatively substantial – and its traditional role as a major player in at least the US vassal version of Europe on one side and its crass humiliation at the UN on the other.



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So what happened? It’s no mystery. Indeed, the reasons for Berlin’s fiasco are embarrassingly obvious. First of all, Germany has sided with Israel with abject and revolting obstinacy. The question why the country that absurdly claims to have learned from having committed the Holocaust has chosen to pro-actively support the mass murder of the Palestinians (and the Lebanese as well) and to suppress, often brutally, any solidarity with these victims will keep historians busy for a long time. But it is obvious already that, once again, Germany’s horrific failure is seen by the whole world and won’t be forgotten. That vote at the UN is just a foretaste of punishment to come.



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In Europe, an economically stagnant but massively re-militarizing Germany has acquired a new profile as the single Western state most responsible for prolonging the Ukraine war – that is the massive abuse of Ukrainians as cannon fodder in a failed attempt to degrade Russia geopolitically after even the US has shed that role. But much of the world wants this war to end and has no misguided sympathy for the ultra-corrupt Zelensky regime.

Such international observers also note that Berlin is willing to humbly, perversely [accept a massive attack on its vital infrastructure](#) by precisely that Zelensky regime and, most likely, several of its NATO ‘allies’ as well. This repulsive mix of aggressiveness and a cowardly failure to protect elementary national interests cannot produce respect or sympathy. It certainly doesn’t say *“vote for me, I am reliable.”*

Then there is the pronounced German habit of lecturing the world but especially anyone not European or North American on, well, everything you can think of. China, for instance, when it doesn’t simply [disinvite](#) Germans as it very understandably now does, gets to hear daft, stale, and holier-than-thou sermons about ‘democratic values’ – from a country where a whole left-wing opposition party (the BSW) hasn’t made it into parliament due to extremely suspicious, systemic-looking miscounts.

Human rights and rule of law are also great things to preach about stupidly, while you stomp out freedom of opinion and the media by misusing sanctions meant for international politics to harass and destroy individual dissidents, such as, for instance, the Berlin journalist Hüseyin Dođru and his whole family. *“Sippenhaft”* is one of the ugliest words in German, meaning to punish and terrorize whole families. Observers of Dođru’s vicious, fundamentally arbitrary and lawless persecution [have started using it](#). And rightly so.

And then, there is the icky submissiveness to the US, of course. Even while Berlin has managed to personally antagonize US President Donald Trump – not hard to do, admittedly – it also cannot find clear words about either the Iran war, where it loves to perversely blame and hector the victims in Tehran, or for instance, the harrowing of Venezuela and Cuba. Why would anyone entrust additional power to spineless weaklings?



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There are specific solo performances as well: Wadephul's predecessor Annalena Baerbock is infamous for her inanities, covering areas from elementary geometry ([360 degrees](#) and all that) to accidental declarations of war. Indeed, some Germans have long called her "*cringe personified*." But is Wadephul really any better? He has just used his pre-voting speech at the UN – the job interview, in essence – to once again unfold his embarrassingly deranged pet theory that states which he deems rogue, for instance Iran, have no right to the protections of international law. Obviously intellectually absurd and shabbily motivated, such plain nonsense, which would make international law superfluous, from a trained lawyer who also happens to be a foreign minister makes Germany look stupid as well as dishonest.

Germany to the world: We are *not* sending our best to work with you. That's not a great message when you would like the world to like and trust you because it reeks of haughtiness and disrespect. But there is a worse possibility. What if more and more of our fellow nations on this globe conclude that Baerbock and Wadephul actually *are* our best?

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# OPINION

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**B** **Buddha On English Hill** 6/10/2026 at 8:02 PM

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Devilizations rely on any crookery to sell devil as god, devil communications, devil entertainment, devil wars, devil goods, devil services, devil money, devil bodies, devil bombs, devil bimbos; Civilizations don't.

Civilizations must expedite devilizations fall into devilland on their own inherent tendencies..

Such disgrace to humanity ruled the humanity.

Drill holes for their rapid descent or ascent to their devil divinity demanding obedience to commandments but selling freedom, democracy, liberte globally.

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 **Jeanne Pierre Von Nellenburg** 6/10/2026 at 7:59 PM

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Careful Italian...

you should not mock GOD,  
Nor HIS First Born.

In Jesus Name.  
boetie johannes

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 **Jeanne Pierre Von Nellenburg** 6/10/2026 at 7:34 PM

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«Berlin, in essence, has been humiliated in public, before literally the whole world: Applying for a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council, it lost the vote in the UN General Assembly.»

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