

# Russia-Ukraine: Chinese “Peace plan” and “need for negotiations”?

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**For several weeks now, the media - and important currents on the global left - have been relaying statements by the authorities of major powers, first and foremost China, but also Brazil and others, concerning the possibility of a ceasefire in Ukraine and a rapid relaunch of negotiations.**

Contents

- [What Chinese “peace plan”?](#)
- [Without justice there can be](#)

Xi Jinping visited Moscow at the end of March for a warm meeting with Putin. Macron and Ursula von der Leyen (President of the European Commission) visited China in early April. At each of these meetings, the powerful earnestly assert that they want to do everything possible to bring about a “de-escalation” in Ukraine. But it is clear that all this remains in the purely symbolic domain... whereas the serious and concrete discussions between the “big players” concern the agreements and economic power relations between them!

## What Chinese “peace plan”?

The twelve-point “Chinese peace plan” was launched just after China abstained on a UN resolution demanding the withdrawal of Russian troops from Ukraine, and as the terrible war entered its second year. On studying it, one is forced to note that it is a superb balancing act: Xi Jinping’s teams generally assert that the sovereignty of states must be respected within their borders, without ever having condemned the Russian invasion of Ukraine or raised the question of troop withdrawal. The two sides are put on an equal footing on the need to resume dialogue and a ceasefire as soon as possible, but the responsibility of the United States and its allies is heavily emphasized. The main axis of pressure on Moscow is a dry denunciation of any nuclear drift that only the Russian authorities have brandished.

Beyond that, the points addressed by the Chinese plan consist of declarations of principle on the necessary protection of civilians, the need to reduce the logic of the Cold War, the manoeuvres of the military blocs and the fight against remilitarization... but fail completely in terms of concrete proposals. All in all, one is led to believe that China is trying to adopt the posture of a “reasonable” power in the eyes of world public opinion, refusing, unlike the others, to throw oil on the fire - but placing itself in a power relationship where the interests of the people are the last concern.

## **Without justice there can be no peace**

The Putin regime continues to press for the weapons that China seems cautiously to deny it, and Sergei Lavrov, the Russian Foreign Minister, has curtly rejected any option for a rapid ceasefire in Ukraine in the name of Russia's fundamental interests.

And it is this issue that remains an unthinkable one for those who see themselves as "the peace camp". Indeed, even if the rejection of Nato is understandable in the long term, in the short term what is inescapable for the peoples of the whole region, starting with the Ukrainian and Russian peoples, is the affirmation of a fascist, imperialist and colonialist Putinian power.

No Ukrainian, Kazakh, citizen of the Baltic States, Russian or Belarusian opponent, etc., can believe that the war in Ukraine could be eliminated by an agreement leaving parts of the Ukrainian territory under the control of Putin's regime, and above all against the will of Ukrainians. None of them can forget that in the autumn of 2022 Putin simply proclaimed the annexation of four regions of Ukraine, of which he occupies only a part today, in addition to Crimea in 2014 - and that his power keeps denying the very legitimacy of an independent Ukrainian state!

From this point of view, the declarations of the Brazilian president Lula, stating that if the Ukrainians want peace they should forget Crimea, tend to put the responsibility for the continuation of the war back on them, in disregard of the right of peoples to self-determination - which plays such a significant role for the peoples of Latin America - instead of emphasizing the necessary (although obviously not sufficient) condition of qualitatively weakening Putin's power if we want a just and lasting peace in Eastern Europe.

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**JACQUES BABEL**

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**P.S.**

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