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Europe prefers to extend snapback mechanism

By Heydarali Masoudi
International relations professor

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In the new round of diplomacy, European trio—France, Germany and Britain—feel they have been edged aside. They believe they were the architects of the nuclear talks with Iran and drive behind the JCPOA, rooted in early 2000s multilateral and normative European diplomacy. Yet, with indirect Iran-US talks stalling or turning confrontational, European officials now believe that Iran might seek to rekindle direct diplomatic engagement with Europe rather than continue indirect interactions with the US. Meanwhile, rising competition between Europe and the US—particularly during Trump's second term—has pushed Europe to see international dossiers like Iran's nuclear case as bargaining tools to assert their diplomatic clout against the United States. This stems from two motives: first, a belief that negotiations without Europe produced unintended tensions and open conflict, creating a vacuum Europe is ready to fill; second, a broader transatlantic rivalry has encouraged Europe to carve out a fresh diplomatic role on the global stage.

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Hitler returns?

Germany's history of 'dirty work' instances

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OPINION
EXCLUSIVE

On June 17, during a televised interview, German Chancellor Friedrich Merz openly praised Israel's military assault on Iran. Far from condemning the aggression, he bluntly remarked, "This is the dirty work Israel is doing for all of us!" and expressed his "utmost respect" for Israel's "courage" in attacking Iran.



Friedrich Merz
REUTERS

These remarks raise serious questions about Germany's foreign policy — particularly its professed commitment to human rights, peace, and democracy. A closer look at Germany's modern history reveals a country with a long-standing record of what can only be described as "dirty work" — many far worse than what is currently veiled by diplomatic language and polished rhetoric.

By the late 19th century, Germany had become the third-largest colonial empire after Britain and France. During the brutal suppression of the anti-colonial Maji-Maji rebellion in present-day Tanzania (1905-1907), German forces massacred indigenous civilians. Historians estimate that between 75,000 and 300,000 people were killed. This genocide is now considered one of the first of the 20th century, laying the ideological groundwork for the racism and fascism that would follow.

The world will never forget the atrocities of Nazi Germany. Under Hitler's fascist regime, the globe was plunged into World War II — a conflict that left over 70 million people dead. What is deeply alarming today are the echoes of that era in the current German chancellor's rhetoric, which starkly resembles the war-mongering and racially-charged language of Hitler. Can Friedrich Merz be rightfully dubbed the "new Hitler" in recognition of his attempt at cloaking militarism and ethnic aggression in the garb of democracy?

Later, in the 1980s, German companies played a key role in providing Saddam Hussein's regime with the infrastructure to produce chemical weapons. These weapons were soon used against civilians — with the chemical massacres in Halabja and Sar-dasht standing as horrifying examples. Germany has never truly been held accountable for its complicity in these war crimes.

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