

every two minutes, about the “rules-based order.” Now, that clearly shows that the “rules-based order” is in complete violation and contradiction to international law. That’s not new, but it’s an incredible, scandalous confirmation.

Now, Merkel, I must say, I never thought highly of her, because I always thought she was mediocre, but this is really even going beyond that. And in the case of Hollande, I think he has deserved, now, the nickname the “Lying Dutchman”: This is a pun on “Hollande,” or Holland, the Netherlands, and the opera *The Flying Dutchman*, in German is *Der fliegende Holländer*, which you can now change into the *Lügenger Holländer*.

I hope that a lot of people repeat that to make it stick, because it’s actually ironic, but also very important that people are constantly reminded about the lying character of the so-called “Western leaders.”

Now, the implication of that is really incredible: because if you think about it, and I actually looked it up—I put in some search engines “Minsk Accords,” “sanctions,” and for years, all kinds of politicians were always saying that the sanctions against Russia can only be lifted after the full implementation of the Minsk accords. And you can be sure, if Merkel and Hollande were saying that, and [then Ukraine President] Poroshenko—I mean Putin was the only one in that

## The Minsk Deception, in the Words of the Perpetrators

In a December 7, 2022, interview with *Die Zeit*, former Chancellor Angela Merkel said:

“The 2014 Minsk Agreement was an attempt to buy time for Ukraine. Ukraine used this time to become stronger, as you can see today. Ukraine in 2014-2015 and Ukraine today are not the same.” She said, “it was clear for everyone” that the conflict was suspended, and the problem was not resolved, “but it was exactly what gave Ukraine the priceless time.”

Former French President François Hollande, in an interview with Theo Prouvost, the French correspondent for the *Kyiv Independent*, which was published on December 28, was asked: “Do you also believe that the negotiations in Minsk were intended to delay Russian advances in Ukraine?”

“Yes, Angela Merkel is right on this point,” Hollande said. “The Minsk agreements stopped the Russian offensive for a while. What was very important was to know how the West would use this respite to prevent any further Russian attempts.... Since 2014, Ukraine has strengthened its military posture. Indeed, the Ukrainian army was completely different from that of 2014. It was better trained and equipped. It is the merit of the Minsk agreements to have given the Ukrainian army this opportunity.”

As Helga Zepp-LaRouche points out, European leaders demanded “fulfillment of the Minsk agreements” from Moscow as a condition to lift sanctions, while at the same time intending to prevent

that fulfillment, but rather to use the Minsk related meetings to gain time for Kiev to rearm.

Here is what EU Council Chairman Tusk and Angela Merkel formulated back in 2015 and 2017:

- “Speaking at an EU summit in Brussels on March 19, European Council President Donald Tusk said that EU leaders decided that ‘the duration of economic sanctions will be clearly linked to the complete implementation of the Minsk agreement, bearing in mind that this is only foreseen by the end of 2015’.” (Radio Free Europe, March 20, 2015)

- “Speaking in Berlin at a press conference with Ukrainian Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk, Merkel said ‘the implementation of sanctions had certain causes, and these sanctions can only be lifted when the causes are eliminated again.

‘I think we need to see the entire Minsk agreement implemented before we can say that sanctions will be lifted,’ she added.” (*Deutsche Welle*, August 1, 2015)

- “The European Union will lift sanctions against Russia once all sides in Ukraine commit to the cease-fire agreed in the Minsk accords, German Chancellor Angela Merkel said Tuesday at a joint press conference with Vladimir Putin, Reuters reported. ‘For me, the aim is to reach the point in the implementation of the Minsk accords where we can lift the European Union’s sanctions against Russia,’ Merkel said on a visit to Sochi, her first trip to Russia in two years.” (*Politico*, May 2, 2017)