

# Uranium ammunition contaminates the world

## Deadly dust “made in USA” contaminated, poisoned, covered up

by Frieder Wagner,\* Germany

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Frieder Wagner. (Picture ma)

Ladies and gentlemen, dear friends, on 6 March this year, the British Secretary of State *Annabel Goldie* declared that the *Challenger 2* tanks announced by the British government would also be delivered to Ukraine including uranium shells. What does that mean?

Well – uranium weapons are made from depleted uranium 238, which is a waste product of the nuclear industry.

### DU – highly toxic and expensive to store

If one tonne of natural uranium is used to produce fuel rods for nuclear power plants, around 7-8 tonnes of depleted uranium is also produced. Although it is only weakly radioactive as alpha emitters, it is highly toxic and must there-

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### DU deployment is a crime: Beginning reappraisal

(rs) The use of *Depleted Uranium* (DU) ammunition is like the use of *Agent Orange* in the Vietnam War – a crime against civilians, against future generations, but also against the environment and nature. Its use cannot be controlled. It is known that DU ammunition was used in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Kosovo, and it is currently being fired by British *Challenger 2* tanks in Ukraine, for example.

After decades of silence, the legal reappraisal continues. The process is tough and repeatedly obstructed by states that use or want to use these weapons.

### Resolution on uranium ammunition

A Resolution on uranium ammunition was passed by the UN General Assembly’s Disarmament Committee in November 2018. 140 countries voted in favour of the motion, which calls for “cautious handling” of the ammunition. 4 countries voted against: the USA, the UK, France, and Israel. A further 26 abstained, including Russia, Turkey – and Germany.

The UN General Assembly had already previously recognised ongoing concerns about the health risks of depleted uranium. In 2016, the plenary session of the UN General Assembly adopted a new resolution on uranium weapons by 151 votes to 4 with 28 abstentions.

The reappraisal of the Kosovo War in 1999 is picking up momentum again: Years ago, Italy compensated thousands of soldiers who had served in Kosovo and later contracted so-called *Balkan syndrome* – a specific type of leukaemia – among other things. They received between 700,000 and 1,000,000 euros in compensation. According to NATO, 15 tonnes of DU ammunition were used on areas in Serbia and Kosovo.

### Lawsuits against DU use prepared

The lawyer *Srdan Aleksic* represents 4,000 cancer patients from the Kosovo war region and is suing NATO. He points out that the illnesses are late effects of the use of DU ammunition. He filed the first lawsuits with the Supreme Court in Serbia in 2021. His clients are suffering from specific types of cancer. These are cancers that, according to medical findings, do not develop naturally. Those affected suffer not just from one specific type of

fore be disposed of and guarded accordingly, which costs money – a lot of money.

Radioactive depleted uranium has a half-life of 4.5 billion years – that’s how old our solar system is – which means we’ll have this stuff forever and there are now around 1.4 million tonnes of it worldwide, with more being produced every day. This heavy metal is almost twice as heavy as lead and so the question soon arose: how can we get rid of this dangerous stuff?

About 50 years ago, military weapons developers discovered that this metal, which is available very cheaply as a waste product, has two excellent properties for military purposes:

### **Penetrates reinforced concrete**

If you mould this metal into a pointed rod and accelerate it accordingly, it penetrates steel and reinforced concrete like butter due to its immense weight. When this depleted uranium rod penetrates armour, it creates an abrasion that ignites explosively due to the enormous frictional heat of 3000–5000 degrees Celsius. This means that when such a projectile penetrates a tank in a fraction of a second, the depleted uranium ignites on its own and the soldiers in the tank are burnt. At the same time, the ammunition in the tank explodes 1–2 seconds later and the tank itself is destroyed. In other words, it is because of these two properties: penetrating steel like butter and the ability to self-ignite and thus act like an explosive, that “depleted uranium”, the waste product of the nuclear industry, is so popular with the military today.

### **Ceramised, insoluble nanoparticles**

But that’s not all: at high temperatures of up to 5000 degrees Celsius, the uranium projectile burns to form ceramised, water-insoluble nanoparticles that are 100 times smaller than a red blood cell. Practically this means a metal gas is produced, and this metal gas is still radioactive and highly toxic.

American military scientists are now also aware of the fact that these nanoparticles, whether inhaled or ingested with food, can migrate anywhere in the human and animal body: into all organs, into the brain, into the female egg cells and into the male semen. As early as 1997, five out of 25 American veterans who have had uranium fragments in their bodies since the Gulf War in 1991 were found to have depleted

cancer, but from two or three at the same time. For example, skin cancer and cancer of the lymphatic system or brain or blood cancer. Another strong indication of the causal link between cancer and the use of DU munitions is the sharp rise in cancer rates in the affected areas.

Courageous advocates like Srdan Aleksic need media and material support. Unlike the arms lobby or state apparatuses, he does not have access to large financial and human resources. And yet Aleksic stands up for the rights of millions of people who want nothing more than to live in a clean environment and bring healthy children into the world.

uranium 238 in their sperm! Wherever this uranium 238 is deposited in the human body, the following symptoms can occur due to the radioactivity and high toxicity: a collapse of the immune system as in AIDS with increasing infectious diseases, severe functional disorders of the kidneys and liver, highly aggressive leukaemias and other cancers, but also disorders in the bone marrow, as well as genetic defects and malformations with miscarriages and premature births in pregnant women, as we also experienced after the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the Chernobyl and Fukushima disasters.

### **DU – the most terrible weapon**

Today we have to say that uranium ammunition and uranium bombs are probably the most terrible weapons used in wars due to their radioactivity and high toxicity, because they inevitably lead humanity into the abyss. This has been a scientific fact for decades and the American physician *Dr Karl Muller* was awarded the Nobel Prize for this as early as 1946. Nevertheless, in the past five wars, the US and NATO allied forces have pretended that this fact does not exist: in 1991, in the first Iraq war, the allied forces used at least 320 tonnes of this uranium ammunition. However, we now also know from a confidential communication from the British Ministry of Defence that the use of just 40 tonnes of this uranium ammunition in populated regions leads to 500,000 subsequent deaths from highly aggressive cancerous tumours and leukaemia. Here is an example:

In 1995, during the Bosnian war, the small Serbian town of Hadzici, 15 kilometres from Sarajevo, was bombed with GBU 28 uranium bombs – the reason: the Serbs had a tank repair

plant there. At the time, the Serbs suspected that the bombs used could be life-threatening for the inhabitants even afterwards and relocated 3,500 citizens from Hadzici to the Serbian mountain town of Bratunac. But it was already too late, as many of these people had by that time been contaminated. And so, over the next five years, 1112 of the 3500 resettled citizens from Hadzici died of aggressive cancers, while very few people in Bratunac itself contracted cancer. The British journalist *Robert Fisk* therefore wrote quite rightly in the British "Independent": One could have written on the gravestones of these people: Died because of the use of uranium ammunition.

### **Multiple aggressive cancers**

Imagine if someone came up with the idea of grinding 1000 tonnes of the nuclear waste product "depleted uranium" into fine dust and then spreading this uranium dust over Germany from an aircraft. That would be a terrible catastrophe. All outdoor sporting events would have to be banned. No more football matches would be allowed to take place, all stadiums and children's playgrounds would have to be closed and nobody would be allowed to go out on the streets without protective suits and gas masks – not even to go shopping. After a few weeks, thousands of small children would fall ill with aggressive leukaemia. Months later, tens of thousands of barely healthy adults would contract cancer, followed by hundreds of thousands, and even millions later on. If you are now saying that, fortunately, this is just a mind game, then I am sorry to have to tell you: welcome to Iraq, Kosovo, Afghanistan, Serbia, Libya, and Somalia. Because the USA, together with NATO, has used these depleted uranium weapons in all its past wars in these countries. With the result that adults in these countries are now suffering from multiple cancers and babies are born without any eyes, legs or arms, babies who carry their internal organs in a skin sack on the outside of their bodies and eventually die in terrible pain.

### **Uranium ammunition – a taboo subject**

As a result of the use of these uranium munitions and GBU 28 and 30 uranium bombs, entire regions in Iraq, Kosovo and, of course, Afghanistan are no longer habitable because of the radioactive and highly toxic contamination caused by the uranium weapons. This was confirmed by a publication by the Iraqi press agency,

which stated that, following investigations by independent Iraqi scientists, it was established that 18 regions in Iraq are no longer inhabitable due to the bombing of the allies with uranium bombs in the 1991 and 2003 wars. Therefore the population should be evacuated at all costs, but there is no money for this. You don't read about this in any of the newspapers here and you don't hear about it in the TV media either, because the subject of uranium munitions and the consequences has become a taboo subject. It is not the much-vaunted climate catastrophe that is the most inconvenient truth, no, the most inconvenient truth is the terrible consequences of uranium ammunition.

I predict at this point, and I agree with many independent scientists worldwide, that of our thousands of soldiers deployed in Kosovo and Afghanistan, and this applies to all soldiers stationed there, around 30 per cent have come home contaminated by uranium ammunition. And these soldiers will all father children with their wives and future wives and will pass on their contamination to their children and grandchildren without knowing it, with all the terrible consequences of deformities, immune deficiencies, leukaemia, cancerous tumours and genetic defects. Yet the responsible politicians in our current federal government continue to say that there are no findings on possible health consequences of using uranium ammunition.

### **Politicians lie to DU**

What conclusions should we draw from the fact that politicians are lying to us like this today? In any case, we can say the following about uranium ammunition: the dangers of uranium ammunition have been public knowledge since the Gulf War in 1991 and the Kosovo War in 1999, including our politicians then and now. Anyone who therefore voted in favour of the war in Afghanistan in 2001 and for another Gulf war in 2003 was not only voting for a war that violated international law, but also knowingly and willingly for the war crime of DU ammunition. None of them can claim to have known nothing about the effects of using DU ammunition and its consequences in the war at that time. And let me tell you: our former Federal Chancellor *Angela Merkel* is a physicist by profession; she must have known all about it. They will all have to answer for the consequences one day. Just as the American scientist *John W. Gofman*, who

worked as a physicist on the development of the Hiroshima bomb and was also a doctor, demanded in an open letter in 1979. Even then he said:

“I think that at least 100 scientists who have worked on the biomedical aspects of low-level radiation – including me, Gofman – are candidates for a court like Nuremberg, as they have committed crimes against humanity with their great negligence and irresponsibility. For now, that the dangers of low-level alpha radiation are known, this is no longer just an experiment we once conducted, but murder.”

And what is our mainstream media saying about this problem today? They are silent – they must be silent now. But this was not always the case, and we can recognise a frightening development. Up until January 2001, most of the major German and European daily newspapers and corresponding television programmes repeatedly reported on possible dangers and even deformities in newborn babies caused by the uranium-containing munitions used by the allies. Magazines such as *Monitor* and *Panorama* had broadcast reports on the consequences of these munitions. At the end of 1999, *Monitor* even spoke of “entire regions in Kosovo” that were possibly contaminated. In January 2001, *Spiegel* editor *Siegesmund von Ilseman* was able to report on the dangers posed by the uranium shells for people and nature in *Spiegel* issues 3 and 4 under the title “Deadly Dust” on almost 12 pages – without success.

### **Reporting only until 2001**

And then, in 2001, the first Portuguese KFOR soldiers died of highly aggressive cancerous tumours and leukaemia. And in the Federal Republic of Germany, Defence Minister *Rudolf Scharping* came under heavy pressure from these reports in the press in spring 2001. It was therefore quickly agreed in the Pentagon and in NATO: the subject of uranium ammunition had to be kept out of the media! The result is obvious: silence in the print media and silence in the established television programmes.

According to the former WHO scientist Dr *Keith Baverstock* on radio Bayern 2 on 4 December 2008, there are 16 studies or collections of facts on the subject of “uranium ammunition and health consequences” in the “poison cabinet” of the *World Health Organisation* (WHO) alone, all of which prove that the two components: high toxicity and radioactivity of this

weapon interact and amplify the effect and thus cause highly aggressive cancers. 16 studies that have not been published – it’s unbelievable!

### **Fact collections for DU – locked away**

And why are they not published? The explanation was provided by journalist *Robert James Parsons* in “*Le Monde diplomatique*” on 16 February 2001. Parsons had found out, and provided the document at the same time, that the WHO had already concluded an agreement with the *International Atomic Energy Agency* (IAEA) in 1959 under pressure from the USA, in which the WHO undertook never to publish findings on radioactivity and health consequences unless the IAEA agreed to this. And because the IAEA still does not agree to such critical publications, such studies remain in the WHO’s “poison cabinet”.

The allies, especially the USA and the British government, therefore, ran the risk that sooner or later the finger would be pointed at them on ethical and moral grounds. In the USA, several lawyers had also filed class-action lawsuits against the American government, in which over 600 Gulf War veterans with severely deformed children were suing for billions in compensation payments. Those responsible in the Pentagon therefore realised that, unlike the climate catastrophe, this was not a problem caused by all the industrialised countries of the world, but that only they and their closest NATO ally, Great Britain, were responsible for the consequences threatening the world and its population by using uranium weapons. So, the topic of “uranium weapons and the consequences” had to disappear from the media.

### **Journalists are banned from the premises**

It is now the case that unpopular journalists and filmmakers no longer receive assignments from their employers. Three colleagues I know by name are now virtually banned from working for public broadcasters. They include people who have worked for these broadcasters for 30 years and some of whom have won *Grimme* awards. This means that such journalists are being sidelined and attempts are being made to silence them to make a critical topic disappear from the public eye. And how do you do that? These people are accused of having written biased articles and therefore their work is not suitable for broadcasting or publication. I must ask: does the

truthfulness of a contribution really label it as biased – and isn't the endeavour to distort and destroy such a contribution even more biased?

**“A series of lies upon lies  
and gross manipulation of the media”**

I would like to quote briefly from *Harold Pinter's* speech, which he gave on 7 December 2005 when he was awarded the *Nobel Prize for Literature*, because his statements are still highly topical today:

The invasion of Iraq was a bandit act, an act of blatant state terrorism, demonstrating absolute contempt for the concept of international law. The invasion was an arbitrary military action inspired by a series of lies upon lies and gross manipulation of the media and therefore of the public; an act intended to consolidate American military and economic control of the Middle East masquerading – as a last resort – all other justifications having failed to justify themselves – as liberation. A formidable assertion of military force responsible for the death and mutilation of thousands and thousands of innocent people. We have brought torture, cluster bombs, white phosphorus, depleted uranium, innumerable acts of random murder, misery, degradation, and death to the Iraqi people and call it “bringing freedom and democracy to the Middle East.”

International law provides for this: The originators are responsible for the removal of war material, poisoned soil, and water. They would even have to answer to the International Court of Justice for civilian casualties. However, it is also clear that powerful institutions and governments have no interest in discussing the issue of uranium weapons and their consequences. – And that is where we still stand today.

The British Secretary of State Annabel Goldie and others want to deliver uranium ammunition

to Ukraine despite these facts and are doing so in the meantime. Do these politicians not realise that at least 18 regions in Iraq alone have been contaminated using these weapons since the 2003 war and that the population living there should be resettled? So sooner or later, hundreds of thousands of people in Ukraine will die of cancer and leukaemia due to the use of these uranium munitions. And all because politicians like the British Secretary of State Goldie and others believe that these uranium ammunition weapons are highly effective in combating Russian tanks and completely harmless! So, everyone must ask themselves, are these politicians crazy and dangerously stupid?

Now our Defence Minister *Boris Pistorius* has publicly demanded of our country: “We must become fit for war.” War participation alone with masses of weapons for warring countries is not enough. Pistorius also specified that there is an aggressor in Europe, namely Russia, and that Germany must be able to wage a “defensive war” against this aggressor.

Ladies and gentlemen, dear friends, that is why we must now actively campaign for peace, for a just peace, for an end of killing each other and all the destruction, that is a positioning that is urgently needed. And we must make it clear to these politicians that we want nothing to do with cynics of power such as the USA and NATO. That is why we must now insistently demand: “Peace without NATO”.

(Translation “Swiss Standpoint”)

