

**Letter****Letter: Germany's duty to its past is also to uphold borders**

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In “Germany’s Russia Problem” ([Big Read](#), February 1) you note that “the complex legacy of the second world war is weighing on efforts to craft a coherent policy on Russia”, and you quote foreign minister Annalena Baerbock saying Germany has “a duty to all countries of the former Soviet Union because of the terrible suffering we inflicted on millions of people in the past”.

Staying mindful of the war is a desirable trait in German politicians — and were it to fade, those currently alarmed at Germany’s lack of policy on Ukraine would be the first to complain. But right now, the feature of Nazism most salient for German leaders to remember is the redrawing of national boundaries through force.

The postwar European norm against this has largely held. But even before Russia annexed Crimea in 2014, ex-Yugoslavia and the Caucasus showed how fragile it is. German leaders’ current duty to their past is to take some risks vis-à-vis Russia to uphold this norm.

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