

NATO prepares direct intervention into Russia-Ukraine war

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As Ukraine's NATO-backed regime faces a debacle in its war with Russia, the NATO powers are accelerating preparations for a massive military escalation in Ukraine. This was the outcome of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly held on Monday in the Bulgarian capital, Sofia.

"Russia can and must suffer strategic defeat in Ukraine," the Sofia communiqué declared. It called for a "clearly stated strategy premised on the goal that Ukraine must be provided with all that it needs, as quickly as possible and for as long as it takes for it to win."

If NATO seeks to inflict a "strategic defeat" on Russia, dealing a shattering blow to its army and forcing regime-change in Moscow, it will require the more direct entry of NATO forces into the war. Ukraine's army has been bled white, losing over a half-million men, and is in retreat all along the front.

The Sofia communiqué advocated "lifting some restrictions on the use of weapons provided by NATO Allies to strike legitimate targets in Russia." Until now, Ukrainian strikes on targets in Russia have largely been confined to the nearby city of Belgorod, within range of Ukrainian-built missiles. The Sofia meeting demanded that the western powers let Ukraine use longer-range Storm Shadow, SCALP, Taurus and ATACMS missiles provided by NATO to bomb cities deep inside Russia.

Workers and youth internationally must be warned: NATO is carrying out a monumentally reckless escalation of a war between major nuclear-armed powers.

After UK Foreign Secretary David Cameron said Ukraine could use British Storm Shadow missiles to bomb Russia, the Russian Foreign Ministry called in British Ambassador Nigel Casey and warned that Russia would retaliate by striking targets in Britain. By

nonetheless echoing Cameron's threats, NATO is making clear it is prepared to risk open war with Russia.

Last night, at a summit in Meseberg, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and French President Emmanuel Macron both called for letting Ukraine bomb Russia with NATO missiles. Macron said, "If we tell them they can't hit where the missiles are fired from, in fact we're saying, we give you weapons but you can't defend yourselves."

This came amid the announcement that Finland, Poland and the Baltic states are fortifying a "drone wall" along the Russian border to prepare to fight Russian military drones.

On Saturday, Polish Foreign Minister Radosław Sikorski told the *Guardian* that US and Russian officials are discussing the potential use of nuclear bombs: "The Americans have told the Russians that if you explode a nuke, even if it doesn't kill anybody, we will hit all your targets [positions] in Ukraine with conventional weapons, we'll destroy all of them. I think that's a credible threat."

While Sikorski mentioned a scenario in which the Kremlin was the first to use nuclear weapons, his remarks suggest that NATO has greater motivation to do so. Indeed, he admitted that Europe would be at a disadvantage in a conventional war with Russia, whose troops are now heavily armed veterans of two years of war.

Sikorski said that after the Stalinist dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, "Europe didn't just disarm, it deindustrialised in the defence field. ... And with hindsight it looks like a mistake. It is obvious that Europe is lagging behind."

He added:

We focused on high-value, hi-tech platforms and weapons. We are only now rediscovering that actually you just need millions of shells. You need large volumes of low-tech stuff as well.

This raises the danger that NATO could decide to use nuclear weapons in a war to counterbalance this relative weakness.

NATO war plans against Russia are bound up with a global imperialist agenda. In Sofia, NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg attacked China for trading with Russia during the Ukraine war. The Sofia communiqué called for “denouncing the military assistance provided by the Belarusian, Iranian and North Korean regimes to Russia’s war,” concluding that “aid to Ukraine ... is therefore a small investment compared to the strategic benefits related to Ukraine’s victory.”

That is, NATO does not only hope to gain access to Russia’s vast reserves of oil, gas and critical strategic minerals by dealing a “strategic defeat” to Russia and installing a puppet regime in Moscow. Escalation against Russia is bound up with war in East Asia, the Middle East and against Iran. This takes its sharpest form in NATO’s backing of Israel amid its genocide in Gaza.

Moscow responded to Stoltenberg’s comments by denouncing NATO. “NATO is flirting with military rhetoric and falling into military ecstasy,” Kremlin spokesman Dmitri Peskov said. Asked if NATO was close to a direct confrontation with Russia, he replied, “They are not getting close; they are in it.”

The NATO escalation, however, is exposing the bankruptcy of the nationalist strategy underlying the Russian capitalist regime’s reactionary invasion of Ukraine. The Kremlin’s bid to use Russia’s military might to bring NATO to the negotiating table and to force it to recognize Russia’s security concerns has failed. Russia now faces the prospect of a war with the entire NATO alliance that would likely escalate into a nuclear conflagration.

The greatest danger in this situation is that masses of workers and youth are not fully aware of the extent and immediacy of the danger. NATO governments are plotting this escalation behind the backs of the people,

mouthed phrases about “aid to Ukraine” and a “European war economy” without explaining the catastrophic implications of such policies.

There is overwhelming popular opposition in Europe to French President Emmanuel Macron’s proposal to send NATO troops to fight Russia in Ukraine. Polls have found that 68 percent of French people, 80 percent of Germans and 90 percent of Poles oppose this policy. This opposition would undoubtedly be higher and more active if masses of workers and youth were aware of the vast scale of the war that NATO is preparing to unleash.

Workers and youth must be alerted, and the conspiracy of militarist governments and media spouting war propaganda to hide the danger from the masses must be exposed. There is no way to halt the war via a national strategy and on a capitalist basis. Averting a Third World War in Europe depends on building an international, socialist anti-war movement in the working class.

NATO’s escalation against Russia is unfolding alongside global mass protests against the NATO-backed Israeli genocide in Gaza. Youth and workers involved in this struggle must be armed with the understanding that both the Gaza genocide and the NATO escalation against Russia flow from the imperialist powers’ pursuit of global hegemony via war.

It is necessary to mobilize the working class against the global escalation of imperialist war, and to fuse the struggle against war with the social and economic demands that have propelled workers into struggle all over the world. The fight against war is inseparable from the fight to end the capitalist social order that is the root cause of war and to replace it with socialism.



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