

NATO's top military officer calls for NATO weapons strikes deep inside Russia

Andre Damon
15 September 2024

Over the weekend, the military committee of the NATO alliance met to plot the next stage in its war against Russia, with the alliance's top military policy-maker calling for Ukraine to be allowed to use NATO weapons to strike inside Russia.

Admiral Rob Bauer, the chair of the NATO Military Committee, argued that NATO had the legal right to facilitate strikes against the Russian mainland. "Every nation that is attacked has the right to defend itself. And that right doesn't stop at the border of your own nation," Bauer said.

He continued, "You want to weaken the enemy that attacks you in order to not only fight the arrows that come your way, but also attack the archer that is, as we see, very often operating from Russia proper into Ukraine."

He added, "So militarily, there's a good reason to do that, to weaken the enemy, to weaken its logistic lines, fuel, ammunition that comes to the front. That is what you want to stop."

Bauer's remarks were part of a torrent of demands from within the US and European political establishment and media for further NATO escalation against Russia.

The meeting of NATO's military committee followed a high-level meeting Friday between US President Joe Biden and UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer, which discussed the question of allowing Ukraine to strike inside Russian territory.

US and UK media outlets reported during the week that the decision to allow Ukraine to strike Russia with NATO weapons had already been taken. Initially, the announcement was expected following the Friday meeting. Ultimately, Biden and Starmer made no public announcement, with the attacks now expected to begin later this month.

On Thursday, the day before Biden and Starmer met, Russian President Vladimir Putin warned that the decision to allow Ukraine to use NATO weapons to strike deep inside Russia would mean the entry of NATO into war with Russia.

"If this decision is made, it will mean nothing less than the direct participation of NATO countries, the US and European countries, in the conflict in Ukraine," he said, adding, "Their direct participation, of course, significantly changes the very essence, the very nature of the conflict." The day after Putin spoke, Russia announced the expulsion of six UK diplomats.

Over the weekend, former Russian President Dmitry Medvedev explained the significance of Putin's remarks, saying that Putin outlined the "formal prerequisites" for a decision by Russia to use nuclear weapons. Any such decision, he said, would be "understandable to the entire world community and consistent with our doctrine of nuclear deterrence."

Medvedev warned that "a nuclear response is an extremely difficult decision with irreversible consequences," and the current NATO position risks Kiev being turned into a "giant gray melted spot."

After his meeting with Starmer, Biden was asked about the threat of war between Russia and the US to which he replied, "Be quiet," and declared that he does not "think about" Vladimir Putin.

The remarks by Admiral Bauer in support of attacks by Ukraine on Russia using NATO weapons took place during a high-level meeting devoted to planning out NATO's escalating war with Russia.

The annual meeting of the Military Committee Conference, which took place in Prague, outlined the systematic efforts by NATO to expand its military and defense industrial base to prepare for high-intensity warfare.

In his opening remarks, Bauer said, “The NATO Military Authorities have two herculean tasks that they need to undertake simultaneously. While continuing and ramping up our support to Ukraine, we must also bolster our own deterrence and defense.”

Bauer noted that this was the first meeting of NATO’s military committee since the July NATO summit in Washington, which agreed to implement a sweeping expansion of NATO’s military forces in Eastern Europe.

Bauer said, “When we held this committee conference in Oslo last year, NATO’s new defense plans, the so-called DDA Family of Plans, had just been approved. NATO now has 500,000 troops on high readiness, we established the Allied Reaction Force. We are adapting our Command and Control structure and Allies are rapidly developing and expanding their capabilities.”

It is becoming increasingly clear that the expansion of NATO’s brinksmanship in Ukraine is driven by the deteriorating military situation for the Ukrainian war effort.

In a sober assessment of the current state of the war, *Washington Post* columnist David Ignatius warned, “Ukraine is bleeding out. Its will to fight is as strong as ever, but its army is exhausted by a ceaseless drone war that’s unlike anything in the history of combat. ... Ukraine doesn’t have enough soldiers to fight an indefinite war of attrition.”

But Ignatius’s solution is for Biden to massively expand the list of Russian targets that can be attacked by Ukraine using NATO weapons. “If Russia’s surge continues, Putin’s bases within ATACMS range should be legitimate targets. He’s the one crossing the ‘red line’ every day he continues his unprovoked aggression,” he declared.

At the same time, NATO countries are moving to dragoon Ukrainian men who fled the war to return to Ukraine to serve as cannon fodder.

On Friday, Radoslaw Sikorski, Poland’s foreign minister, visited Kiev to call for an end to all social welfare payments to Ukrainian refugees living in Europe. “Stop paying those social security payments for people who are eligible for the Ukrainian draft. There should be no financial incentives for avoiding the draft in Ukraine,” Sikorski said.

He continued, “It’s not a human right to be paid to

avoid the draft, to defend your country. We in Poland don’t do it.”

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha welcomed Sikorski’s call, saying, “It’s time really to raise the question of the European Union developing programs to return Ukrainians home.”



To contact the WSW and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact