

After modifying Russia's nuclear deterrence policy, Putin responds to Ukraine's use of ATACMS & Storm Shadows with missiles & threats.



President Putin speaking yesterday after Ukrainian attacks with ATACMS & Storm Shadows.

Over the past several weeks, Ukraine requested on several occasions that the U.S. government authorize it to use the U.S. Army Tactical Missile System (ATACMS) against targets in Russia. Fired from a High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) launcher, ATACMS missiles have a range of 300 kilometers (190 miles). Ukraine likewise asked the British and French governments to authorize it to use the British-French Storm Shadow and the French SCALP missiles against Russian targets. The U.S. had been reluctant to approve Ukraine's use of the ATACMS against Russian targets, fearful of a possible escalation in the conflict both in regard to the weapons Russia might use and the targets it might attack in response. The U.S. reluctance had prevented the British government from approving Ukraine's use of the Storm Shadow since that weapon contains American components in its tracking system. The French government likewise was unwilling to authorize Ukraine to use SCALP missiles without American and British authorization to use the ATACMS and Storm Shadows.

Obviously aware of the repeated requests and internal debate about them within the American and British governments, on September 25, after meeting with Russia's Security Council, President Putin said the government was considering changing the rules and preconditions for its use of nuclear weapons. Specifically, he said Russia would consider an attack from a non-nuclear state that is backed by a nuclear-armed state a "joint attack" in what could be construed as a threat to use nuclear weapons. He said a new nuclear doctrine would "clearly set the conditions for Russia to transition to using nuclear weapons" and that among those conditions would be conventional missile strikes against Russia. He said Russia would consider the possibility of using nuclear weapons if it detected the start of a massive launch of missiles, aircraft and drones into its territory which presented a "critical threat" to the country's sovereignty. And

importantly, he added: “It is proposed that aggression against Russia by any non-nuclear state, but with the participation or support of a nuclear state, be considered as their joint attack on the Russian Federation.”

On Tuesday, Putin signed an Executive Order Approving the Basic Principles of State Policy of the Russian Federation on Nuclear Deterrence and that proposition became official Russian nuclear deterrence policy. The order, which took effect with Putin’s signature, replaces one dated June 2, 2020. According to the new Order, “The Basic Principles represent a strategic planning document in the area of ensuring national defense and reflect the official views on the essence of nuclear deterrence, identify military risks and threats to be neutralized by means of nuclear deterrence, outline the principles of nuclear deterrence, and specify the conditions under which the Russian Federation may proceed to use nuclear weapons....Overall guidance of state policy in the area of nuclear deterrence is carried out by the President of the Russian Federation.”

In his televised address Sunday evening, President Zelenskyy said President Biden had authorized Ukraine to use ATACMS missiles against targets in Russia, and on Tuesday Ukraine fired ATACMS missiles at targets in Russia, including a weapons depot in Karachev in Bryansk region, about 30 miles southeast of the city of Bryansk and 120 miles northwest of the city of Kursk. Ukraine launched an incursion into the Kursk region in August and its troops are now facing a strong counterattack by a large number of North Korean troops sent to Russia after the Russian Parliament formally approved a Russia-North Korea security treaty agreed in June. The Russian Ministry of Defense subsequently claimed it shot down five ATACMS missiles and damaged a sixth. On Wednesday, Ukraine fired up to a dozen Storm Shadow missiles, which have a range of 155 miles, at targets in Kursk region, reportedly including a headquarters building in the village of Maryno.

Yesterday, Russia fired a hypersonic intermediate-range ballistic missile at the Ukrainian city of Dnipro in response to the American and British missiles attacks on Tuesday and Wednesday. In a televised address later yesterday, Putin said, “I would like to inform the military personnel of the Russian Federation Armed Forces, citizens of our country, our friends across the globe, and those who persist in the illusion that a strategic defeat can be inflicted upon Russia, about the events taking place today in the zone of the special military operation [Putin’s euphemism for the war], specifically following the attacks by Western long-range weapons against our territory.”

“The escalation of the conflict in Ukraine, instigated by the West, continues with the United States and its NATO allies previously announcing that they authorize the use of their long-range high-precision weapons for strikes inside the Russian Federation. Experts are well aware, and the Russian side has repeatedly highlighted it, that the use of such weapons is not possible without the direct involvement of military experts from the manufacturing nations.”

“On November 19, six ATACMS tactical ballistic missiles produced by the United States, and on November 21, during a combined missile assault involving British Storm Shadow systems and HIMARS systems produced by the US, attacked military facilities inside the Russian Federation in the Bryansk and Kursk regions. From that point onward, as we have repeatedly emphasized in prior communications, the regional conflict in Ukraine provoked by the West has assumed elements of a global nature. Our air defense systems successfully counteracted these incursions, preventing the enemy from achieving their apparent objectives.”

“The fire at the ammunition depot in the Bryansk Region, caused by the debris of ATACMS missiles, was extinguished without casualties or significant damage. In the Kursk Region, the attack targeted one of the command posts of our group North. Regrettably, the attack and the subsequent air defense battle resulted in casualties, both fatalities and injuries, among the perimeter security units and servicing staff. However, the command and operational staff of the control center suffered no casualties and continues to manage effectively the operations of our forces to eliminate and push enemy units out of the Kursk Region....”

“In response to the deployment of American and British long-range weapons, on November 21, the Russian Armed Forces delivered a combined strike on a facility within Ukraine’s defense industrial complex. In field conditions, we also carried out tests of one of Russia’s latest medium-range missile systems – in this case, carrying a non-nuclear hypersonic ballistic missile that our engineers named Oreshnik. The tests were successful, achieving the intended objective of the launch. In the city of Dnepropetrovsk, Ukraine, one of the largest and most famous industrial complexes from the Soviet Union era, which continues to produce missiles and other armaments, was hit.”

“We are developing intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles in response to US plans to produce and deploy intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles in Europe and the Asia-Pacific region. We believe that the United States made a mistake by unilaterally destroying the INF Treaty in 2019 under a far-fetched pretext. Today, the United States is not only producing such equipment, but, as we can see, it has worked out ways to deploy its advanced missile systems to different regions of the world, including Europe, during training exercises for its troops. Moreover, in the course of these exercises, they are conducting training for using them....”

“To reiterate, we are conducting combat tests of the Oreshnik missile system in response to NATO’s aggressive actions against Russia. Our decision on further deployment of intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles will depend on the actions of the United States and its satellites. We will determine the targets during further tests of our advanced missile systems based on the threats to the security of the Russian Federation. We consider ourselves entitled to use our weapons against military facilities of those countries that allow to use their weapons against our facilities, and in case of an escalation of aggressive actions, we will respond decisively and in mirror-like

manner. I recommend that the ruling elites of the countries that are hatching plans to use their military contingents against Russia seriously consider this.”

“It goes without saying that when choosing, if necessary and as a retaliatory measure, targets to be hit by systems such as Oreshnik on Ukrainian territory, we will in advance suggest that civilians and citizens of friendly countries residing in those areas leave danger zones. We will do so for humanitarian reasons, openly and publicly, without fear of counter-moves coming from the enemy, who will also be receiving this information. Why without fear? Because there are no means of countering such weapons today. Missiles attack targets at a speed of Mach 10, which is 2.5 to 3 kilometers per second. Air defense systems currently available in the world and missile defense systems being created by the Americans in Europe cannot intercept such missiles. It is impossible.”

“I would like to emphasize once again that it was not Russia, but the United States that destroyed the international security system and, by continuing to fight, cling to its hegemony, they are pushing the whole world into a global conflict. We have always preferred and are ready now to resolve all disputes by peaceful means. But we are also ready for any turn of events. If anyone still doubts this, make no mistake: there will always be a response.”

Angry words. And threatening words. The question now is whether the U.S. and the Europeans will have the intestinal fortitude to continue to fight, with Ukraine, to reclaim the territory now held by Russia that belongs to and is part of Ukraine.

David R. Cameron
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