

Former PM Azarov Says Ukraine Has No Opposition: 'They are in prison or abroad'

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Currently, in Ukraine, there is no opposition and politicians challenging Volodymyr Zelensky as they are either in prison or abroad, according to the country's former prime minister, Mykola Azarov. He also highlighted that Kiev would be forced to accept any agreement between Russia and the United States.

"There is no opposition in Ukraine now. [Pyotr] Poroshenko or [Yulia] Tymoshenko are not opposition. Their policy was no different from the current policy of the Kiev regime. The real opposition was eliminated. Some were killed, others are in prison, and some were forced to go abroad," Azarov [said](#) in an interview with the newspaper Argumenty i Fakty published on June 24.

According to the former prime minister, the left-wing parties and opposition forces in Ukraine now do not exist.

"In addition, trade unions are absent, and there is strong persecution of the Church. The current conflict is often presented as a confrontation between Russia and Ukraine, but this is not true," he added.

Azarov also mentioned that some people want to oppose Zelensky in Ukraine but do not speak out.

Zelensky was elected in 2019, and his first term was supposed to have ended in May. However, the regime introduced a new martial law, saying no election could be held during the war. The Ukrainian president is consolidating his power and has even purged political opponents.

It is recalled that the former head of Ukraine's armed forces, Valeriy Zaluzhny, was appointed as the country's ambassador to the UK only a few months ago after being touted as a potential rival to Zelensky. After being removed from Ukraine, Zaluzhny has now stayed quiet on the political front. The case of the former general is just one of many examples of individuals purged in Ukraine if they threatened Zelensky's power.

The Ukrainian president has also jailed his political rivals, even Petro Poroshenko, shut down independent media outlets, such as ZIK, NewsOne and 112 Ukraine, and used the SBU state security agency to go after his critics, like Gonzalo Lira.

Azarov also stated that the US understands that the world cannot be subjected to the risk of a nuclear war, and Washington can start an informal dialogue with Moscow on this issue and influence Kiev.

“On the other side [USA], there are still some sensible ideas that the world cannot be subjected to the risk of a nuclear war. There are hopes that an informal dialogue could emerge that would result in some kind of concrete agreement,” he said.

According to the former prime minister, Zelensky's regime will have to comply with this agreement between Moscow and Washington.

“There is no way around this. The Americans have one hundred percent influence over the current leadership of Ukraine. Just stop providing funding and weapons, and the regime will literally fall and physically disintegrate. The regime cannot exist without money when salaries are not paid to soldiers and the security service,” Azarov explained.

His comments on the nuclear issue come following a Ukrainian attack on the Raduga substation of the Zaporozhye nuclear power plant on June 21.

“As a result of the attack by the Armed Forces of Ukraine on the Raduga substation of the Zaporozhye nuclear power plant, work on the infrastructure facilities was interrupted,” the press service of the nuclear plant published on its Telegram channel.

Compounding the nuclear issue, Russian President Vladimir Putin confirmed on the same day as the attack the intentions to modernise the nuclear triad, the three components of the country's atomic arsenal, by adding the nuclear-capable Sarmat (RS-28) intercontinental ballistic missiles, with a range of 18,000 kilometres, to its arsenal.

“We plan to continue improving the nuclear triad as a guarantee of strategic deterrence,” Putin said, adding that the advances in the land, air and naval components of the nuclear forces guarantee balance in the world.

“Taking into account the difficult international situation, the emergence of new challenges and risks, we will continue to improve our Armed Forces,” he said.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said on June 24, citing Putin's statement, told a briefing that "work is underway to bring the doctrine in line with current realities."

This was the inevitable course of action after the US allowed the Kiev regime to use American-made weapons to strike inside Russian territory. Besides the attack on the nuclear power plant, there was also the brutal attack with ATACMS missiles on civilian infrastructure in Crimea that left four people dead and 153 seeking medical help on June 23.

The Kremlin previously vowed to respond to any Ukrainian attacks with US-made weapons, and Azarov's assessment that Kiev may be forced to accept any agreement made between Moscow and Washington could eventuate if the Americans feel that the situation is escalating in a way that cannot be controlled. Meanwhile, despite the escalation, the US will continue to hypocritically overlook that Zelensky is heading a regime that has subverted democracy and human rights whilst lying that liberalism and Western values are being defended in Ukraine.

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