

# The Biggest Priority Today Must be to Avoid the Third World War and a Nuclear War

By [Bharat Dogra](#)

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*In recent days the chances of a direct war between Russia and NATO/USA have increased like never before since the Cuban missile crisis of 1962.*

*This has happened due to a series of red lines being crossed culminating with increased possibility of long range weapons supplied by the USA and close allies to Ukraine being used to strike targets in mainland Russia, and Russia declaring this to be the weapon supplying countries like the USA and the UK in particular engaging in warfare against Russia.*

While at the time of writing it is still possible that better sense may prevail and the weapon supplying countries may still convey a clear message, more or less, that they are not going to cross this red line (by restraining Ukraine from using these long-range weapons against mainland Russia), nevertheless the enormity of the dangers should not be underestimated at a time when such serious transgressions of safety are taking place.

Further, direct confrontation between Russia and USA/NATO implies World War 3 and nuclear war. Instead of merely, and perhaps falsely, hoping for better sense to prevail, let humanity realize that we are in fact closer to nuclear war compared to any other time since 1962.

Any confrontation between Russia and USA/NATO means a confrontation involving countries which have close to 12,000 nuclear weapons, the actual use of just 5 per cent of which is enough to destroy the world from its direct and indirect (including 'nuclear winter') impacts.

One reason why such possibilities have not received the kind of enormous public attention and concern, ironically, is that people tend to believe that such unthinkable horrors will never be allowed to happen by the world's top leaders, particularly western leaders.

However, quite apart from the fact that some of these leaders have been acting in extremely irresponsible and dangerous ways in matters relating to wars and weapons, we need to realize that in certain conditions if some countries remain in danger and high tension zones for a long enough time, it is possible that misunderstandings, high levels of suspicions and technological flaws relating to weapon and surveillance systems can result in starting a nuclear war that no one actually wants.

A nuclear war that no one actually wants can also start, and once it starts very extreme harm can be done to our beautiful, full of life but also highly targeted and vulnerable world

in a matter of minutes and hours, not days or weeks.

This is why the advice of wisdom and caution in the context of nuclear weapon countries is—don't ever step into the danger zone, and if you have entered get out as early as possible.

This is the voice of caution that the USA-led West in particular has neglected in recent times. Instead they have chosen foolishly to play very dangerous games and to practice brinkmanship. This can prove to be a huge, unprecedented disaster for humanity and in fact for all forms of life.

Imagine a family that suddenly finds that there is a bomb in a part of their home. The family comes to know that if the bomb explodes near them they all will die, but the actual chance of this bomb exploding is only about one per cent or so.

On the basis of that one per cent risk, it is considered wise for the family not to remove the bomb on their own but to evacuate from the house till a specialized bomb defusing squad with all the specialist equipment is called to defuse and remove the bomb. All this trouble is taken on the widely accepted and respected principle that when there is risk of 'everyone dying', even a one per cent risk is unacceptable. But in the course of brinkmanship and recklessness to enter and stay in the danger zone for too long, western leaders have already raised the risk of a nuclear war in which 'everyone dies' to at least 5 to 10 per cent.

This is not an alarmist view; this may well be an understatement. Kindly also consider that one of the important actors involved in the decision making, the President of Ukraine, has given several indications that he is actually keenly interested in making this a wider war involving his western supporters more directly, and he has some even more hawkish persons and forces (like neo-Nazi elements) on his side who may press for even deeper or more frequent strikes beyond the permissions given by the weapon supplying countries.

In such a situation, of course, the best option is to end the Ukraine war as early as possible, without any further destruction. But if this does not happen, then other means of preventing escalation to a level of third world war or nuclear war certainly need to be considered. Such a high level of possibility of such a big danger as exists today is unacceptable.

One immediate possibility is for several eminent statesmen, diplomats and war veterans, particularly of leading western countries, to emerge from their retirement and get together to prepare a number of appeals, one after the other, to move away from the high danger zone. They should form committees and take out delegations to meet senior policy makers and to help public campaigns till the desired results can be achieved. Secondly, there should be a big surge in the peace movement all over the world, but more particularly, in leading western countries, till the desired results of avoiding the escalation towards a nuclear war and WW3 can be achieved. Thirdly, the United Nations should be involved much more actively in reducing the possibilities of a major escalation towards WW3 and nuclear war.

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*Bharat Dogra is Honorary Convener, Campaign to Save Earth Now. His recent books include Protecting Earth for Children, Planet in Peril, Earth without Borders and A Day in 2071. He is a regular contributor to Global Research.*

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