

Zelensky Calls for NATO to Launch Preemptive Strike on Russia

Russia says Zelensky is trying to start World War III, Ukrainian officials tried to downplay the comments

By [Dave DeCamp](#)

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Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on Thursday [called for NATO to launch a "preventative strike"](#) on Russia to prevent Moscow from using nuclear weapons, a move that would almost certainly spark World War III and possibly nuclear war.

"What should NATO do? Exclude the possibility of use of nuclear weapons by Russia," Zelensky said via video link at an event hosted by the Lowy Institute, an Australian think tank.

"But the most important, I'm again addressing the international community, is how it was before February 24: preventative strikes, so that they know what will happen if they use [a nuke]," he said. "And not the opposite, waiting for Russia to strike and then saying 'oh, that's how you are, now you can take it from us.' Reconsider how you apply pressure, the order of application."

The Kremlin jumped on the comments and said that Zelensky was trying to spark a world war. Ukrainian officials [tried to downplay what Zelensky said](#), with his advisor Mykhailo Podolyak insisting that Zelensky "said nothing about a preventive nuclear strike" on Russia.

Serhii Nikiforov, Zelensky's press secretary, also said that the Ukrainian leader was not calling for a nuclear strike and claimed he was talking about other actions, such as sanctions. "The president was speaking about the period before February 24. Preventative measures should have been used at that time to prevent Russia from unleashing a war. I will remind you that the only measures discussed at that time were preventative sanctions," he said.

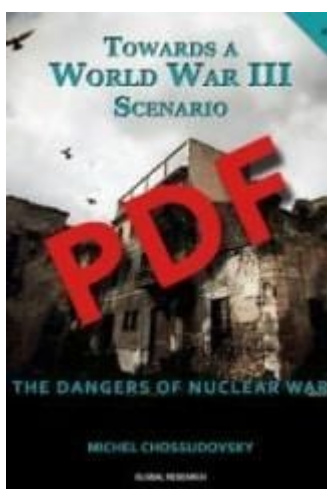
But Zelensky has previously called for direct US and NATO military intervention in the conflict. Earlier in the war, Zelensky pushed hard for the Western powers to impose a “no-fly zone” over Ukraine, which would have required shooting down Russian warplanes and bombing surface-to-air missile systems inside Russia.

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[Michel Chossudovsky](#) is Professor of Economics at the University of Ottawa and Director of the Centre for Research on Globalization (CRG), which hosts the critically acclaimed website www.globalresearch.ca . He is a contributor to the Encyclopedia Britannica. His writings have been translated into more than 20 languages.

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