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Putin warns of 'lengthy' Ukraine conflict, rising nuclear tensions

December 8, 2022 *spacewar.com* reported: Russian President Vladimir Putin warned Wednesday that the war in Ukraine could go on for a long time, and said nuclear tensions had risen because of it. Speaking more than nine months after his forces invaded, the Russian leader gave no sign of any intent to let up in the battle, as intense shelling continued along the front in eastern Ukraine.



President Putin

"Of course, it might be a lengthy process," he told a meeting of the Kremlin's human rights council.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky -- who was declared Time magazine's iconic "Person of the Year" on Wednesday for his "defense of freedom" -- said six people were killed in the latest Russian strikes, this time on a village in the frontline region of Donetsk.



Ukraine President
Zelensky

That came a day after Ukrainian artillery strikes killed six people in the Russian-occupied regional capital city of Donetsk, according to local officials.

In the Kremlin meeting, Putin appeared to caution against expectations of any early resolution of the conflict, repeating that it would be a long process.

But he sparked fresh concerns in the West as he broached anew the issue of whether the war could escalate to the use of nuclear weapons. Putin, who has previously hinted at use of small tactical weapons in the war, remained evasive on his intentions.

"Such a threat is rising. Why make a secret out of it here?" he said.

"Russia will under no circumstances use them first," Putin said.

"But if it does not use them first under any circumstances, then it will not be the second to use them either, because the possibilities of using them in the event of a nuclear strike against our territory are very limited," he said.

US State Department spokesman Ned Price condemned the nuclear talk, as vague as it was. "..."

Germany arrests 25 accused of plotting coup

December 7, 2022 *bbc.com* reported: "Twenty-five people have been arrested in raids across Germany on suspicion of plotting to overthrow the government.

The group of far-right and ex-military figures are said to have prepared for a "Day X" to storm the Reichstag parliament building and seize power.

A man named as Heinrich XIII, from an old aristocratic family, is alleged to have been central to their plans.

According to federal prosecutors, he is one of two alleged ringleaders among those arrested across 11 German states.

The plotters are said to include members of the extremist Reichsbürger [Citizens of the Reich] movement, which has long been in the sights of German police over violent attacks and racist and antisemitic conspiracy theories.

They also refuse to recognise the modern German state. Other suspects came from the QAnon movement who believe their country is in the hands of a mythical "deep state" involving secret powers pulling the political strings.

Interior Minister Nancy Faeser assured Germans that authorities would respond with the full force of the law "against the enemies of democracy"..."

Iranian regime faces unprecedented challenge in protesters' push for change

December 6, 2022 *timesofisrael.com* reported: "Almost three months of protests in Iran have left the clerical regime facing an existential challenge by shattering taboos and shaking its ideological pillars in a push for change that shows no sign of retreating.

The demonstrations, which erupted in mid-September following the death of Mahsa Amini who had been arrested by the Tehran morality police, are a reflection of pent-up public anger over economic shortcomings and social restrictions, analysts say.

While there have been protests in Iran before, this movement is unprecedented due to its duration, its spread across provinces, social classes and ethnic groups and its readiness to openly call for the end of the clerical regime.

Banners of supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei have been set alight, women have openly walked down streets without headscarves, and demonstrators have at times sought to challenge the security forces. Iran, for its part, accuses hostile foreign powers of stoking what it labels “riots,” chiefly its arch-foes the United States, Israel and their allies, but also exiled Kurdish Iranian opposition groups in Iraq whom it has targeted in repeated missile and drone strikes.

In an apparent response to the protests, Iran’s prosecutor general said Saturday that the morality police had been abolished. Activists received the declaration with skepticism, given the continued legal obligation for women to wear a headscarf.

French President Emmanuel Macron, after holding a landmark meeting with exiled Iranian dissidents last month, described the movement as a “revolution” by a generation of “young women and men who have never known anything other than this regime.”

“It was very obvious from the beginning that the protests were not about reform or the morality police, but were targeting the entire regime,” said Shadi Sadr, founder of the London-based Justice for Iran group that campaigns for accountability for rights violations.

“What is happening is a fundamental challenge to the regime,” she told AFP. “They know they are facing a real threat from protesters.” ...”

Iran may be able to build ‘crude’ nukes within six months – report

December 6, 2022 jpost.com reported: “A new think tank report obtained by *The Jerusalem Post* warns of the possibility of Iran launching an accelerated effort to achieve a few ‘crude’ nuclear weapons in six months.

According to Monday’s report by Institute for Science and International Security president David Albright, even though top Israeli officials recently told *the Post* that the Islamic Republic’s weapons group was two years away from being able to deliver a nuclear warhead via a ballistic missile, there could be a much more pressing threat. In popular discussions, this option is often referred to as a ‘dirty’ or ‘suitcase nuclear bomb,’ but the truth is much more complex, although still quite threatening...”

North Korea Fires Artillery Near Border in Warning to South Korea

December 5, 2022 voanews.com reported: “North Korea fired about 130 artillery rounds on Monday into the water near its western and eastern sea borders with South Korea, the latest military action contributing to worsening relations between the neighbors. North Korea’s military said the firings were a warning against ongoing South Korean artillery exercises near the inland border town of Cheorwon and blamed the South for worsening tensions.

South Korea’s Joint Chiefs of Staff said the North Korean weapons, fired Monday afternoon from North Korea’s western and eastern coastal areas, fell within the northern side of buffer zones created under a 2018 inter-Korean agreement to reduce military tensions. There were no immediate reports of shells falling inside South Korean territorial waters.

South Korea’s military said it communicated a verbal warning to North Korea over the firings and urged it to abide by the agreement. The South Korean and U.S. militaries were closely monitoring North Korea’s military activities while strengthening their readiness to respond to any ‘potential contingency,’ the Joint Chiefs of Staff said in a statement...”

‘Complete and Thorough Disarmament’: China Demands U.S. Destroy Its Nuclear Arsenal

December 2, 2022 breitbart.com reported: “The Chinese Foreign Ministry demanded in remarks on Wednesday that U.S. armed forces make ‘substantial and substantive cuts to its nuclear arsenal,’ with the goal of ultimately ending America’s nuclear program.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian – a zealous ‘wolf warrior’ diplomat known for spreading the unsubstantiated conspiracy theory that the Chinese coronavirus pandemic began as e-cigarette lung injuries in Maryland – demanded an end to the American nuclear program in response to a question on a Pentagon report revealing that the Chinese Communist Party is working to dramatically expand its own nuclear capabilities...”



*Chinese Foreign Ministry
Spokesman Zhao Lijian*