

Moscow Fumes Over 'Monster' Zelensky's Preemptive Strike Calls

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Ukrainian Presidential Press Off/Planet Pix via ZUMA Press Wire/TASS

Russian officials voiced anger over Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky's [remarks](#) Thursday on preventive strikes that his spokesman later said had been misinterpreted.

Zelensky appealed for the international community to “do preemptive strikes” instead of “waiting for Russian nuclear strikes” when asked about NATO’s role in the conflict in an address to an Australian think tank.

His remarks follow Russian President Vladimir Putin’s thinly veiled threats to use what analysts believe to be a tactical nuclear weapon as his forces face mounting losses in Ukraine. U.S. President Joe Biden said Thursday the world was on the brink of nuclear “Armageddon” for the first time since the Cold War.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov [called](#) Zelensky’s comments “nothing else than a call to start a world war.”

And Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova [labeled](#) Zelensky a “monster” in response to the comments.

“Everyone on the planet must realize that Zelensky, a puppet pumped with weapons, has turned into a monster whose hands could destroy the planet,” she said in a Telegram post.

Both [blamed](#) Western countries for “stoking nuclear war,” with Peskov singling out the United States and the United Kingdom for “directing” Kyiv’s actions.

“That’s why it is them who are responsible and must held accountable for the actions and statements of this man and this regime,” Putin’s spokesman told the state-run RIA Novosti news agency.

At the same time, both officials urged the international community to condemn the Ukrainian president’s words.

Zelensky’s spokesman Serhii Nykyforov later clarified that the “preemptive strikes” the Ukrainian president mentioned concerned economic sanctions instead of nuclear strikes.

“You will never hear such calls from Ukraine,” Nykyforov said in a Facebook post.

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