
Vol. 13 (1): 59-62 (2023)

NUCLEAR PEACE IN UKRAINE: A ROADMAP

Massimo Zucchetti

Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, US;

*Corresponding Author Massimo Zucchetti, e-mail: massimo.zucchetti@polito.it;

Received September 2022; Accepted October 2022; Published January 2023;

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31407/ijeess13.107>

ABSTRACT

Situation. The war in Ukraine in 2022 has again risen concerns about the possible use of Nuclear Weapons: in the conflict itself, or in some fringe malevolent scenarios too. Let us examine three recent events, in chronological order, that had the “tag” of nuclear weapons use, related to Ukraine war: The U.K. then-secretary of foreign affairs and now Prime Minister, stated to be ready to use nuclear weapons against Russia [1] as a retaliation for Ukraine invasion and, more in general, as an answer to Russian nuclear threats to Europe. The Russian President, blaming western countries for helping out Ukraine with plenty of modern weapons, stated that “Russia has those modern weapons too” and that if the security of the Russian Federation (RF) would be in danger, they are ready to fight and defend it, without excluding any option” [2]. However less explicit, this statement has been interpreted with attention, if we consider that Russia’s doctrine for nuclear weapons excludes a first strike, but admits a nuclear strike in case of enemy nuclear attack, and/or - beware! - if the “existence of the RF is in danger”. The passage from “existence of RF” to “security of RF” is a *diminutio* that sounded an alarm bell to the analysts. The Ukrainian President, probably unaware of the actual consequences, asked to NATO a “preventive nuclear attack to Russia” [3]. Having Russia nearly 6370 nuclear weapons, either in underground bunkers or in submarines, any “preventive attack” would bring to an immediate full-scale nuclear war. Luckily, the request by Zelensky has not found any credit with his allies, which also convinced him to “clarify” (in practice, retreat) his statement. Mrs. Truss also, once in office, did not repeat her bold nuclear weapons statements anymore. Finally, there is luckily no actual threat to RF existence that could imply the use of nuclear weapons: actually, the threat would be the almost certain (however mutual) assured destruction if RF would use nuclear weapons. The three above statements could then be interpreted just as peculiar but minor misunderstandings. However, the escalation to nuclear war could be paved by misunderstandings like these ones, or by an increasing employment of non nuclear weapons, as it is happening now in Ukraine [4]. The world public opinion must not only repudiate nuclear war, but also the escalation to nuclear war itself. This is a possibility that us, as humanity in its whole, would simply repudiate and make it impossible even to conceive, or put in any political agenda or statement. There must be never any justification ever for even thinking to the use of nuclear weapons. Full stop. Furthermore, many strategic scenarios that have been studied, in the past, about an initially limited use of “strategic” low-yield nuclear weapons in a local war; global thermonuclear war and the end of the world is the most probable outcome of any of those scenarios. [5]

Keywords: risk of nuclear war, nuclear peace, Ukraine.