# Ukrainian Official Warns of Potential Russian Use of Nuclear Weapons in Case of Defeat



**Potential Use of Nuclear Weapons by Russia if War is Lost, Ukrainian Official Warns**

On June 17, 2024, Oleksandr Lytvynenko, the Secretary of Ukraine's National Security and Defense Council, issued a warning that Russian President Vladimir Putin might resort to using tactical nuclear weapons if Russian forces face a significant defeat in Ukraine. Speaking to The Times, Lytvynenko did not rule out the possibility of such an escalation if Russia experiences a catastrophic loss. This statement coincides with the G7 leaders meeting in Italy, where they asserted that any deployment of chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear weapons by Russia would precipitate severe consequences.

Lytvynenko highlighted that a Ukrainian victory could incite desertions within the Russian military and provoke protests in Moscow, potentially driving Putin to consider nuclear options. However, Lytvynenko noted that the use of strategic nuclear weapons by Putin remains unlikely, as it would likely trigger a global conflict.

In other developments, the city of Belgorod, Russia, located 25 miles from the Ukrainian border, has been significantly affected by the ongoing war. Residents, including young individuals like Alina and her 8-year-old brother, Artem, have experienced attacks and live under the threat of shelling and air raid sirens daily. Concrete shelters have been erected around the city following deadly shelling incidents, with the city’s central square now heavily fortified and largely empty.

The ongoing conflict has created a stark contrast between life in Belgorod and Moscow. Belgorod residents feel abandoned by the capital, where life continues as usual. The war has resulted in increased tensions and a more militarized environment in Belgorod, with civilians adapting to frequent warnings and attacks. Residents describe a sense of "quiet horror" as they navigate daily life under the threat of violence, while efforts to secure a "sanitary zone" between Russia and Ukraine persist amid continuing hostilities.