# Putin threatens to escalate conflict in Ukraine and reconsider nuclear weapons doctrine following drone attacks



Russian President Vladimir Putin has pledged to "go to the end" on the battlefield in Ukraine and stated that the Kremlin may reconsider its nuclear weapons doctrine in response to perceived Western aggression. This declaration was made during Putin’s visits to North Korea and Vietnam, where he accused Western allies of Kyiv of escalating tensions by allowing the use of NATO weapons against Russian targets. He also accused these countries of lowering the threshold for the use of nuclear weapons, though he provided no evidence for this claim.

Putin's comments came just before one of Ukraine’s most significant drone attacks on Russian territory, targeting oil fields and an airbase. Following these attacks, fires were reported at the Yeysk airbase and Ilsky oil refinery in the Krasnodar region, as well as at an oil depot in Volgograd.

The Russian President indicated that any defeat in Ukraine could result in the "end of Russia's statehood," emphasizing the potential need to update Russia's nuclear doctrine, which was last revised in 2020. This doctrine currently allows for the use of nuclear weapons if Russia or its allies face a threat from weapons of mass destruction or if the existence of the Russian state is at risk from conventional weapons.

Putin’s announcement occurred amid ongoing developments between Russia and North Korea, culminating in a comprehensive strategic partnership and defense pact signed by Putin and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. This new alliance could shift the balance of power in East Asia, raising concerns particularly in China, which remains cautious about losing influence over North Korea and the subsequent instability that might ensue on the Korean Peninsula. The United States has also expressed concerns regarding the implications of this defense pact.