



NATO warns: "We are the next target of the Russians". Admiral Bauer: "The war can become nuclear"

Published on 11/12/2025

The NATO Secretary General, **Mark Rutte**, issued a warning of rare severity during the "MSC in Berlin" event, organized by the Munich Security Conference.

"We are the next target of Russia and we are already in danger," declared the leader of the Alliance, emphasizing that what is happening in Ukraine could directly extend to NATO countries if the trend of complacency and the illusion that time is on the West's side is not reversed.

Rutte recalled warning since his appointment that Europe needed to return to a **wartime mentality**, adjusting military spending and production to a historical phase marked by increasing risks. Despite this, too many governments "do not feel the urgency" and believe that the situation will remain under control. For the Secretary General, this is not the case: **"The**

time to act is now. Defense spending must increase rapidly.”

Negotiations, peace, and the role of the United States

On the diplomatic front, Rutte expressed confidence that **Ukraine, the United States, and Europe** could reach a common understanding for a path to ceasefire and stability. The real question, however, remains Moscow's attitude.

“I am not sure the Russians will accept. This is the test,” he stated, urging the international community to hold Vladimir Putin accountable for his choices.

Rutte praised the commitment of the United States and President **Donald Trump**, who he said are working “tirelessly” to facilitate an agreement. He then reiterated the key role of the main European allies – including Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Poland, Italy, and the Netherlands – along with Canada, united in supporting Ukraine and any credible peace effort.

Security guarantees and the reconstruction of Ukraine

A lasting peace, Rutte emphasizes, will require very clear conditions. Ukraine must be put in a position to **never again suffer Russian aggression**. Real, solid, and credible security guarantees will be needed.

Putin must know that any new attempt at attack would receive a “**devastating**” response. On the issue of occupied territories, the NATO Secretary reiterated that the final word belongs exclusively to the Ukrainians.

According to Rutte, Trump would be the only leader capable of exerting enough pressure to force Putin to come to the negotiating table. **“We want to test whether he truly desires peace or prefers the massacre to continue,”** he declared, stressing the importance of maintaining constant economic, political, and military pressure on Russia.

Russian economy under stress

The judgment on the internal conditions of the Russian Federation is also very harsh.

Rutte cited an economy now transformed into a war machine, no longer oriented towards the well-being of the population. **Almost 40% of the Russian budget is absorbed by the war,**

while about 70% of industrial machinery is used for military production.

Rising prices, out-of-control inflation, rationed gasoline: for the NATO Secretary General, it is Putin himself who is weakening Russia. **“His next slogan could be: make Russia weak again,”** he quipped.

The alarm from Admiral Rob Bauer: “Yes, the risk of war exists and also nuclear”

Further clarifying the strategic picture are the recent statements by **Rob Bauer**, Chairman of the NATO Military Committee from 2021 to 2025, interviewed [by the Spanish newspaper *El Mundo*](#).

When asked if there is a real risk of war between Russia and NATO in 2029 or 2030, Bauer answered without hesitation: **“Yes”**. And when asked if a nuclear escalation could be ruled out, he responded just as bluntly: **“A war is a war”**.

According to Bauer, the Russian military doctrine **includes the use of tactical nuclear weapons** even in a conventional conflict. A reality that Europe cannot ignore.

Conclusion: a Europe at a crossroads

The message from Rutte and Bauer is clear: Europe is going through the most delicate moment since the end of the Cold War. Deterrence capability can no longer be based on political promises or insufficient investments. A strategic, industrial, and cultural shift is needed.

At stake is not only Ukraine but the **security of the entire Euro-Atlantic area**. The West must prepare, strengthen, and choose whether to face the threat united or suffer the consequences.

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