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Zelensky threatened Belarus – then declared victory out of thin air

The relay-station drama exposed Kiev's appetite for escalation – and its fear of consequences

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By **Sergey Poletaev**, information analyst and publicist, [Vatfor project](#)
co-founder and editor of the *Vatfor project*.

On June 19, Ukraine's Vladimir Zelensky issued an ultimatum to Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko, demanding the removal of drone relay stations allegedly located on Belarusian territory and being used to guide Russian drone attacks on Ukraine.

Zelensky threatened Belarus – then declared victory out of thin air

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On June 24, Zelensky stated that Lukashenko had complied with his ultimatum and the relay stations were no longer operational. Lukashenko did not comment, and no evidence of either the existence or removal of these stations was provided. We are supposed to take Zelensky at his word.

Below, we examine what the story was all about, why Kiev

resorted to such rhetorical escalation, and why it ended the way it did.

What happened and where?

While Russia is Ukraine's eastern and northeastern neighbor, Belarus lies directly to the north of Ukraine. From Belarus, the western regions of Ukraine and the Ukraine-Poland border are accessible via the shortest possible route. And the straight-line distance to Kiev from the Ukraine-Belarus border is less than 100 km.

Belarus, however, is not participating in Russia's Special Military Operation. The only time Russia entered Ukraine via Belarus was in February-March 2022, when Russian troops were airdropped from Gomel region to the Gostomel airfield near Kiev, followed by ground supplies for the Gostomel group. Russian troops also withdrew toward Gomel, Belarus, in early April 2022. According to Russia's rhetoric,



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Belarus is an *“ally not involved in the hostilities.”*

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Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko considers himself more of a mediator between Russia and Ukraine: the first negotiations between Russia and Ukraine occurred in Gomel in 2022, and then moved to Istanbul a week later.

However, Belarus in the north poses a constant and serious threat to Ukraine: the latter has to maintain infantry cover and air defense units along the entire 1,000 km-long Ukraine-Belarus border. Meanwhile, these tens of thousands of servicemen, though not of the best combat quality, could be useful at the front, considering the Ukrainian army’s catastrophic personnel shortage.

Zelensky himself is quite nervous. Since January of this year, he has toughened his rhetoric towards Lukashenko, and in February even imposed sanctions against him.

The issue of the relay stations has also been raised repeatedly. For example, on February 23, Zelensky stated that the Ukrainian side had done everything possible to ensure that *“three or four”* of them *“no longer exist”* on Belarusian territory. Just like today, no data on the existence of the stations or their removal was published at the time.

On April 18, Zelensky stated that Belarus, on orders from Russia, was preparing to attack Ukraine (allegedly, on Lukashenko’s orders, roads to the border were being built and artillery positions were being set up) and, in a rather rude manner, threatened the Belarusian president with the fate of the kidnapped Maduro.

All these stories appeared in the media and then quickly disappeared, while nothing happened on the ground. The Belarusian side responded in a reserved manner; Belarusians made it clear that they weren’t seeking conflict, but if necessary, were ready to defend themselves and would not tolerate aggression.



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We must note that the Belarusian army, although well-equipped, is quite small: in peacetime, its ground forces number approximately 20,000 people. This number could quickly be increased to 100,000 by calling up reservists, but despite regular mobilization exercises, there have been no signs of calling up reserve forces in Belarus.

In any case, Zelensky's ultimatum on Saturday was a logical continuation of his increasingly aggressive rhetoric, and it caused a stir only because of the clear deadline: within a week, Zelensky promised to *"remove"* Russian equipment from Belarusian territory himself. He also threatened to strike Belarusian oil refineries, which allegedly supply fuel to the Russian army.

What were the options?

Ukraine's supporters took Zelensky's threats seriously and even enthusiastically. This is understandable: according to Western media, Ukraine has turned the tide of the conflict since the beginning of the year and is decisively defeating Russia in the air. From this perspective, it is quite logical to expand the conflict to Moscow's allies.

We identified four possible outcomes of Zelensky's ultimatum:

First (improbable) option: Lukashenko could have complied with the ultimatum, publicly admitting that the relay stations were in place but were removed at the request of the Ukrainian side. Alternatively, he could publicly refuse to supply Russia with fuel.

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Second option: Ukraine could have carried out a widespread, massive air attack on targets in Belarus; in addition to the suspected relay stations, he could have targeted the oil refinery in Mozyr, infrastructure, and energy facilities.

Third option: As in February, Zelensky could declare that the relay stations were removed. He announced the threat, he resolved it. The story would soon become irrelevant and would be forgotten in a few days.



Read more: Zelensky threatens to attack Belarus

Finally, the fourth option: Ukraine could have launched minor provocations against Belarus, pushing its red lines. First, one or two drones could strike insignificant targets, or even an isolated forest area. Then the drones would increase in number, the targets would become more serious, and in just a few weeks or months, the skies over Belarus would become as turbulent as in the European part of Russia. Moscow would have to supply its ally with missile defense systems, which would mean pulling air defense systems from its own territory and weakening its own airspace.

It might look like the latter option could be a win-win for Kiev. Since Ukraine is already under fire, it has nothing to lose, so it could complicate matters for Moscow without much risk – most likely, such ‘salami tactics’ would not provide grounds for a decisive response.

However, this option comes with significant risk. So far, Kiev has refrained from declaring that the air attacks on Ukraine are carried out from Belarusian territory. But after the first Ukrainian strike, Lukashenko would be able to ask Moscow for

protection, and Moscow, in accordance with its allied obligations, would provide such protection.



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What would happen next is that Belarusian airspace would be used for attacks on Ukraine. We've already mentioned the 1,000 km-long Ukraine-Belarus border. Currently, to attack Kiev, a Geran-type drone has to fly 300-500 km over Ukrainian territory. This means that Ukrainian mobile fire teams have a good chance of identifying and shooting down the drone before it reaches the target.

However, the distance from the Belarusian border to Kiev is less than 100 kilometers by air, and the Ukrainian capital could be attacked directly with UMPK precision-guided munitions, against which air defenses are virtually ineffective. Currently, UMPK bomb kits are used only at the front; they cannot reach Ukrainian cities in the rear.

These precision-guided munitions would also be able to target the strategically important railway route from Poland to Kiev and the northern part of the Ukraine-Poland border. Therefore, a proper and decisive response would have the opposite effect to what Kiev intended: the Ukrainian capital and cities in the rear would become more vulnerable, not safer.

Therefore, Kiev certainly understands that drawing Belarus into the conflict will dramatically worsen Ukraine's strategic position.

We all know how the story with the relay stations ended. Just like in February, Zelensky chose the third option, declaring that the stations had been shut down at his request. His attempt to 'bluff' Lukashenko with his ultimatum failed. Meanwhile, Minsk hasn't commented on the situation at all, ignoring both the ultimatum and its miraculous revocation.

However, in a wider sense, this is hardly the end of the story. Zelensky's logic of verbal escalation leaves him with no other option but to resort to threats again and again. After all, the drones will continue flying and the aerial threat can't be solved with magic spells on the internet.

ANALYSIS

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c

catch 22 6/26/2026 at 4:20 AM

1

This Zelensky's show reminds me of Don Trump who declared victory over Iran after wasting \$300B and losing his allies.

[Reply](#)

b

b keegan 6/26/2026 at 8:55 AM ↗

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This filthy dirty little nazi parisite is toally out of control on whatever drugs he is using. He is totally up his own axxxxxxe.

[Reply](#)

L

Less ISMORE 6/26/2026 at 9:47 AM ↗

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Though you hide it well, we can tell you don't like him.

[Reply](#)

L

Less ISMORE 6/26/2026 at 9:46 AM

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He must have thought Lukashenko's hair was white powder and decided to make friends.

Zelensky is bonkers.

This must be clear to everyone.

Please, Russia, just go and arrest him and end this madness.

[Reply](#)



From Someone 6/26/2026 at 7:55 AM

0

Russia is either in the hands of totally useless, corrupt, pro-Western, and pro-oligarchs political and military elites in Russia, or is led by utter cowards who have nothing between their legs. I cannot be more explicit because RT is protecting them by preventing the publishing of any more directed description based on an algorithm searching for any unguided words. RT accepts only words full of praise and love for the actual criminals. Can anyone explain how it is possible that Russian political oligarchs are happy to communicate with Trump, who shows no respect towards Russia and is openly supporting and praising Zelenski and his Nazi regime in killing Russians? Why is this anti-Russian Dimitriyev, who is Witkof's friend and co-conspirator against Russia, still free to walk in the Kremlin? We know that he is under Putin's protection, and we have to ask ourselves whether Putin is really a patriot or maybe just subservient to Western interests. Just asking.

[Reply](#)



N A 6/26/2026 at 7:50 AM

1

z and the west behave like petulant crackheads because inexplicably, no one is clamping down, figuratively or literally.

which is a big mistake.

[Reply](#)



Max Holbrook 6/26/2026 at 5:15 AM

0

So he did learn something from The Trumpstein, Whining

[Reply](#)

P Perry Widhalm 6/26/2026 at 4:18 AM

2

It seems fairly clear that Russia has no intention of winning the war with Ukraine otherwise Russia would mobilize 3 million young men, destroy all the bridges over the Dneiper River and pulverize the Uke-Nazi government. Until those things happen, Russia is not serious about ending the war.

[Reply](#)

A Anna Peel 6/26/2026 at 4:18 AM

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«Europe has plans to cease residence permits for military age male Ukrainians. There's a million of them... it's easier to send those Ukrainian males rather than their own males (who may get their chance in a later step, don't fret).» — Moon of Alabama

The crushing global financial system and the Vampire State of Lies need a major war desperately.

[Reply](#)

A Anna Peel 6/26/2026 at 4:10 AM

0

«Western masters of today's Ukraine are used to arranging "safaris" for people. This was the case in Donbas in 2022, this was the case in the Balkans, Afghanistan, Vietnam and Iraq.»

Epstein Class' values.

[Reply](#)

L Louella Cerejo 6/26/2026 at 3:16 AM

1

This guys delusion never ends.

[Reply](#)

R Robert Shultz 6/26/2026 at 3:16 AM

0

Russia, you need to take out (via proxies as done with Nordstream) the LNG imports EU making from the US as this the main drivers for the war for both the EU and US. Iran war and Hormuz has taught us when their wallet start to hurt they usually stop wars. 👍🙏

[Reply](#)



Jim Kolaroff 6/26/2026 at 3:07 AM

1

No point of commenting on this!? The gay is a fool of it

[Reply](#)



Roger Dodger 6/26/2026 at 2:45 AM

2

Globalist little ape.

[Reply](#)



peterVK 6/26/2026 at 1:34 AM

4

Drone relay stations ? What is the point of *drone relay stations* when there is a perfectly good and extremely accurate GLONASS system orbiting the planet ?

I suspect this *drone relay station fantasy* is just an excuse for the expired leader to escalate tension in the region. The money, money, money and weapons, weapons, weapons is beginning to run dry for the corrupt Kiev regime.

This sad excuse of a lower primate is a dead man walking. He knows once peace has been achieved and he no longer unconstitutionally controls his corrupt government the people of Ukraine are going to hang this freak on the nearest lamp post in Kiev.

He should enjoy breathing whilst he can. Peace will be achieved either politically or military on Russia's reasonable terms and then elections will be called. The expired leader is toast on the long term forecast. As for UK, they should back off helping this monster commit acts of terrorism. Starmer is gone, who is next ?

[Reply](#)



Erik Bruner 6/26/2026 at 2:26 AM ↑

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We need the mon'i the mon'i where's the mon'i

[Reply](#)



El Calambre 6/26/2026 at 2:11 AM

2

No point bothering to reply to the little creep.

[Reply](#)



IAM M 6/26/2026 at 2:03 AM

6

The Ukrainian dictator having another little tantrum. 😂

[Reply](#)



as dubaniew 6/26/2026 at 1:23 AM

1

...still don't understand the existence of this guy on the world stage getting millions killed...is it just «math» – «yes, it was worth the loss of 500K civilian lives»....?

[Reply](#)



S 6/26/2026 at 1:06 AM

0

U.S would have blown him
up back when this all started ... case closed

[Reply](#)



Vangel Vesovski 6/26/2026 at 12:58 AM

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What next? Will he demand that Belarus get rid of the Targaryen dragons so that Russia could not use them?

[Reply](#)



GeorgeBMac 6/26/2026 at 12:31 AM

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