

Donald Ramotar

## The World's People Must Make Their Voices Heard

*This is the edited transcript of the presentation by Donald Ramotar to Panel 2, "Peace Through Development," of the Schiller Institute's Nov. 22 conference, "For World Peace—Stop the Danger of Nuclear War: Third Seminar of Political and Social Leaders of the World." Mr. Ramotar was the President of Guyana (2011-2015), and a Member of Parliament. The full proceedings of the conference are [available](#) at the Schiller Institute website.*



Schiller Institute

Donald Ramotar

Hello to everyone!

It is now universally accepted that the world has never been so close to nuclear destruction as it is today. It is also clear that the longer the war in Ukraine lasts, the greater the possibilities of nuclear confrontation. This was brought home to us rather forcefully only last week. We saw missiles landing in Poland, and that country suggested the invocation of Article Five of the NATO Treaty.

This act of firing rockets at Poland was very likely a deliberate act of Ukraine to get the Western NATO powers to put in troops against Russia. This is nothing short of criminal. The longer the war lasts, the real reasons for the conflict sometimes get lost. This was due mainly to the massive offensive of the corporate media on the minds of the masses. Therefore, it is essential that we identify the real causes of the present situation, so that we can evolve a path to a just and lasting solution.

The general cause of this dangerous situation in the 21st Century, is due to the nature of the Western socio-economic system. This is the system that seeks world domination. It seeks world domination fundamentally to continue exploitation of the world's resources and peoples; to continuously expand its profits. This can only be done in a neo-colonial type of relationship with the rest of the world.

In my view, the war in Ukraine began long before the first shot was fired there. Imperialism could not resist taking advantage of the weakened state of Russia and its allies at the beginning of the 1990s. Therefore,

they had to break their own promise not to expand NATO one inch toward the East. The whole idea was that Russia must never rise again to challenge the power of the West, that socialism, as an alternative socio-economic system must not re-emerge on European soil.

Before the end of the last century, we saw the dress rehearsal for what is taking place today in Ukraine. I am speaking about the massive bombing of Yugoslavia, the dismantling of the Yugoslav state into several smaller entities.

This was accompanied by a deluge of propaganda and disinformation to mask the true reasons. It is interesting to note that the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia was aimed at the civilian population, to force the masses to abandon their democratically elected government. This was done at a time when the Warsaw Pact was dismantled, and Russia was at its weakest. However, it was clear from then, that Russia would have been the next target.

One may ask, "Why attack Russia now? After all, socialism is no longer the system that operates there." The answer to that is that Russia has a long civilization and cannot accept a neo-colonial type of domination. Even though capitalistic, it wants to remain sovereign, and not be dictated to. It wants to be respected as a strong international power. Moreover, 74 years of socialism has had a great impact on the transformation of Russian mentality. After all, Russia owes its modernization to the socialist system. The benefits of socialism remain as a factor in the collective memory of the people. To defeat that, the West must try to destroy Russia's influence. To do that, they must try by force to dominate Russia, and then balkanize the country. In this endeavor, Ukraine was chosen as a tool for such a job.

The war in Ukraine has another dimension. It is a war being waged by the United States to preserve the old order of neo-colonial exploitation, and to prevent the emergence of a new system of international relations which we see emerging in our world today. The new development was brought about by the U.S. itself.

Its use of economic sanctions has caused countries who value their independence to take countermeasures. Russia is among the leading countries struggling for a new international economic order. Recall that this was one of the main planks of the Non-Aligned Movement; therefore, this position of Russia is reaching a lot of receptive ears in many emerging economies and among forces in dominated countries now trying to break the neo-colonial bondage. The Non-Aligned Movement practically disappeared, with the collapse of the Soviet Union. This is now another attempt to find another way.

In trying to reduce the influence of the almighty dollar, in which Russia has advanced and is taking bold steps in that direction, Russia and others have created deep fears in the collective West. If these efforts succeed, then the importance of the dollar as an international reserve currency would be greatly reduced. And by extension, the ability of the West to dictate their policies to the world would be curtailed. This has made the West much more aggressive. It is on the march to halt and abort any new, more democratic international relations, by force if necessary. That is why they are eager to expand NATO.

In this very dangerous situation, the world's peoples must make their voices heard. In the first place, we have to fight for a safer world. The most important step in this direction is to renew the call for disarmament. In the first place, we must demand nuclear disarmament. We must call on the United Nations to immediately convene a meeting of all countries possessing nuclear weapons and include those close to having nuclear weapons, to begin the process of eliminating all of these weapons of mass destruction. If we accept that a nuclear war cannot be won, and should not be fought, then we should get rid of them. We should not have them; it is not keeping the peace. We must also campaign for the total elimination of chemical weapons. Moreover, conventional weapons have become extremely powerful and destructive. This, too, must first be limited and eventually removed.

It would be a wonderful period in human history when our great discoveries in science and technology are made to serve peaceful purposes and for the fulfillment of mankind's pursuit for a world environmentally healthy, prosperous, and safe.

Thank you for your attention.

Jorge Robledo

## The Only Positive Thing About This War Is for It To End

*This is the edited transcript of the presentation by Jorge Robledo to Panel 2, "Peace Through Development," of the Schiller Institute's Nov. 22 conference, "For World Peace—Stop the Danger of Nuclear War: Third Seminar of Political and Social Leaders of the World."*

*Mr. Robledo is a former Senator in Colombia. He spoke in Spanish, with English simultaneous translation. The full proceedings of the conference are [available](#) at the Schiller Institute website.*



Schiller Institute

Jorge Robledo

Thank you for your hospitality!

It's such a pleasure to be back with you again. I have been listening to all the presentations, and I've heard many important and interesting things.

I will offer a brief presentation, keeping in mind this

is the third event of this kind that we have carried out at Mr. Dennis Small's initiative. We had first a very limited conference, then a larger, better attended one, and now we have reached out to Europe, with a single idea of stopping this war danger that appears to be a war between Ukraine and Russia, but is far more complicated and involves all of Europe. The main goal is to prevent this from becoming a nuclear war of global extinction. This has to be avoided at all costs. The trajectory of this process we have initiated is quite noticeable. We've been

gaining ground.

I was a Colombian Senator for 20 years, up through July 20th of last year, I was a Senator for the Dignity Party in Colombia. As regards this armed conflict, I can