

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.



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Jorge Robledo

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

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

say that when Russia invaded Ukraine, the Dignity Party expressed its disagreement. We, as a matter of principle, feel that peaceful solutions must be found among countries, and the force of arms should never be resorted to. That is a fundamental principle.

But how is everything going? The day after tomorrow, we will have reached nine months of this conflict, and the losses have been enormous. Russia has also suffered large losses, not just in lives lost and destruction, but the whole economic and social destruction I mentioned. There have also been terrible losses for Europe, as well as the entire world. In the case of Colombia, we are a major food exporter—14 million tons a year—and we are affected by increases in fuel costs and other inputs that make us victims as well.

We know, as Winter approaches, far greater hardships will hit Europe, and if it hits Europe and Russia, it ends up hitting the entire world. We too will suffer the effects. Europe could end up in an unfathomable economic crisis, and this will have repercussions throughout the world, causing rising interest rates and inflation. This all derives from this confrontation. The best we can hope for is for this confrontation to end.

So, at this point then, the next step is what can we do? What should we propose? This is not just a war between Russia and Ukraine, as many think. This is a war occurring on Ukrainian territory, but it is a war in which the United States and NATO have used Ukrainian territory for a war against Russia. This needs to be realized. It affects the entire world and could lead to a confrontation affecting the entire world.

This relates to world history in recent years with the disappearance of the Soviet Union and thus the Warsaw Pact, which was the military alliance of the Soviet Union and its allied nations. And NATO, which was the war instrument of the United States and its allies. Instead of letting go of that opposition, NATO began to advance towards the East with the option of absorbing Ukraine. This would put NATO weapons practically within arm's reach of the Russian border. If this is not resolved, the risk of nuclear war is not a literary exercise, or some whimsical concern. It is quite possible that it can actually occur, because I see no way that a nuclear power such as Russia would accept the loss of the security protection that a nuclear power requires. That's where we are.

In my first talk, at the second event, I brought up

something that I want to allude to once again—the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis. The news told us of Soviet ships carrying nuclear weapons, sailing towards Cuba, where several of these missiles were already installed. Then, the U.S. government let the Soviet Union know that either they had to take those missiles away, or we would go into world war. In a matter of days, the United States and the Soviet Union agreed to removal of those missiles from Cuba. But also, the United States removed some of the missiles it had installed in Turkey, which were a threat to the Soviet Union.

There was in this case a pragmatic action by both the Soviet Union and the United States to not threaten each other, such that one or the other would suffer irreversible harm. I think this is the model that the United States and Russia, NATO, and the European countries should follow. That's where we are. Primarily, an agreement has to be reached between NATO, the United States, and Russia. Of course, including Ukraine, but it has to be an agreement that will dismantle the build-up toward nuclear war.

Now, as I state these issues, you are hearing my point of view. There may be many other perspectives that also need to be brought in. I am calling for these other opinions. Even though we may have disagreements on the origins of the conflict, in the midst of all these disagreements, we need to agree on the simple idea that this conflict needs to be drawn down, to be solved. We need to eliminate the possibility of having a nuclear war. This requires that the forces engaged in this carnage find some way of preventing any nuclear power to prevail over another.

Today, we are in a situation of mutually assured nuclear destruction, which requires an acknowledgement of this reality. So, I call on every single human being on this planet, regardless of what your opinion is on the reasons we got here, to do something about it. There is nothing else to do but agree on that one idea; it must be stopped.

These are the proposals coming out from these seminars, that we need to agree on *not* destroying each other, either with conventional or nuclear weapons. This is the proposal that I insist on, and will continue to insist on, because it is of the utmost urgency that we deactivate this. If the world falls into a nuclear confrontation, the huge pile of calamities which would befall us are beyond anyone's imagination. Any problem we've ever experienced so far would vanish in importance.