

hence we are benefiting the whole human race. For peace is not simply the absence of warfare, based on a precarious balance of power; it is fashioned by efforts directed day after day toward the establishment of the ordered universe willed by God, with a more perfect form of justice among men and women.¹

With over 800 million fellow human beings struggling to survive on less than the international poverty line of just \$1.90/day, and with 300 million children going to bed hungry every night, the world's more economically secure nations have a moral responsibility to end this tragedy as quickly as possible.

Pope John Paul said:

If “development is the new name for peace,” war and preparations for war are the major enemy of the healthy development of peoples. If we take the common good of all humanity as our norm,

instead of individual greed, peace would indeed be possible. [*Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, Encyclical Letter, Dec. 30, 1987]

On Sept. 7, 2013, countless believers across the globe—and there were 100,000 people in St. Peter's Square—prayed with Pope Francis for peace in Syria and throughout the world. During the four-hour prayer service at St. Peter's, the Holy Father said:

We bring about the rebirth of Cain in every act of violence and in every war... We have perfected our weapons, while our conscience has fallen asleep, and we have sharpened our ideas to justify ourselves. As if it were normal, we continue to sow destruction, pain, death! Violence and war lead only to death, they speak of death! Violence and war are the language of death!

Let us commit ourselves, not to death but to developing a world of peace based on justice and equality among all men and women.

1. See [Populorum Progressio](#), March 26, 1967.

Dr. Kirk Meighoo

Reviving the Bandung Spirit of the Non-Aligned Movement

This is the edited transcript of the presentation by Kirk Meighoo 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.” Dr. Meighoo is a former Senator in Trinidad and Tobago. The full proceedings of the conference are [available](#) at the Schiller Institute website.



Schiller Institute

Dr. Kirk Meighoo

Good afternoon from Trinidad and Tobago in the Caribbean. You may be hearing in the background the sounds of a tropical shower right now. I'm not in a studio, so this sound may be leaking through. I want to thank the organizers for inviting me to bring the previous contribution under a single overarching theme which I believe best places

this current crisis in proper historical perspective.

This NATO-Ukraine-Russia conflict is the latest chapter in the unfolding story of the Spirit of Bandung. The replacement of the old imperial Western order with a truly inclusive, equitable, international order whose primary aim is the development of all humankind in every country, not the geopolitical domination and exploitation of the many by the few.

This historical transition is what the NATO-Russia conflict is about; not a phony geopolitical or ideological battle of “Eastern authoritarianism” versus “Western democracy.” The NATO-Russia conflict is the latest episode of the old system desperately, and self-destructively, trying to prevent the new system from emerging. This is a long story, be-

ginning in 1955 when the first official Asian-African, or Afro-Asian conference was held in Bandung, West Java, Indonesia.

The global order, which we still have with us, was newly defined then by the United Nations, founded in 1945, the IMF and the World Bank, founded in 1944, and NATO, founded in 1949. When the UN was established in 1945, there were 51 member states. Most of Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean were still colonies of European empires, and therefore not members. Only when they became independent, would these countries gain membership in the UN. When they did join the international community as independent nations, they and their concerns were marginalized, even though they represented the bulk of humanity. Many of these countries experienced crushing, dehumanizing levels of poverty. Independence was seen as an opportunity to achieve development. It was, and remains, our first and highest priority; not democracy, not climate change, not even human rights; laudable as all these things may be, but development.

After the Bretton Woods institutions rebuilt Europe from the devastation of World War II, the former imperial powers of the West concentrated their global attention on the geopolitics of the Cold War against the Soviet Union, not the economic development of the newly independent countries. The Bandung Conference was the first organized attempt to assert the interests of these countries on the international stage. Their stated aim was to promote Afro-Asian economic and cultural cooperation, and to oppose colonialism or neo-colonialism by any nation.

The 29 countries that participated represented a total population of 1.5 billion people—54% of the world's population at the time. The conference was organized by Indonesia, Burma, India, Ceylon, and Pakistan. In the following year, the number of newly independent countries emerging from European colonialism grew almost exponentially. By 1970, UN membership had swelled to 127 countries. Today, there are 193 members. I want to emphasize that the coming into freedom of 142 nations since 1945, the majority of humankind, has been the most important development in human history in the last 100 years.

Unfortunately, however, the post-World War II international order has not accommodated these countries—the mass of humanity. Instead, the old imperial powers and their allies organized themselves into the G7, and together with NATO, their ruling classes have

struggled to maintain control and hegemony over the other 100-plus countries, while also increasingly impoverishing the populations of their own countries. Despite the efforts of the old Western imperial powers, the transformation to the new order is inevitable. The old imperial powers cannot stop it, no matter how hard they try. This is the overarching story of the past 75 years.

But the story is not so simple, however. While the transition itself is inevitable, how the transition unfolds is not. The questions have always been: How long will this transition take? What will the new system be like? Will the transition be peaceful, or warlike? Will the old powers become partners in ushering in the new system, or will they be hostile and aggressive? Where will the new centers of political, economic, military, social, and cultural influence be? Will the new system be as exploitative as the old system, or can we hope for more widespread development and prosperity?

This is the context that I offer for us to frame our discussion going forward. This is the objective movement of history as I discern it. And we should seek to navigate it as productively and harmoniously as possible, for the benefit and development of all.



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