

## Live Dialogue with Helga Zepp-LaRouche

# Peace through Development! Ideas Change History, Not Slogans

*This is an edited transcript of Harley Schlanger's weekly dialogue with Helga Zepp-LaRouche, founder and leader of the Schiller Institute on Wednesday, Nov. 8, 2023. Subheads and embedded links have been added. The video of this dialogue is available [here](#).*

**Harley Schlanger:** Hello and welcome to this week's dialogue with Schiller Institute founder Helga Zepp-LaRouche. It's Wednesday, Nov. 8, 2023. I'm Harley Schlanger and I will be your host. Send questions or comments to [questions@schillerinstitute.org](mailto:questions@schillerinstitute.org).

Last weekend there were several million people around the world marching for peace, calling for a ceasefire and ending Netanyahu's "mighty vengeance" campaign which has already killed more than 4,000 children in Gaza. But at the G7 foreign ministers' meeting in Tokyo over Nov. 7–8, there was no resolution for a ceasefire—in fact, it was rejected—and U.S. Secretary of State Blinken reaffirmed U.S. support for Netanyahu's actions. He said, a ceasefire would lead to an "unacceptable result."

### Strategic Assessment

Given this, it's clear that there's a cry from around the world for peace, but it doesn't seem to be falling on receptive ears in the West, especially in the United States and the NATO countries. So, Helga, what's your assessment of where things stand and what needs to be done?

**Helga Zepp-LaRouche:** There are many people who have said important things, but I want to quote the

Secretary General of the United Nations António Guterres, who said that "Gaza is turning into a graveyard for the children." I think that captures the situation the best. He also said, this is not a crisis of the region, but a crisis of humanity. I think that is absolutely the case, because there is no doubt any more what is happening before our eyes, that the proportionality with which Israel is answering to the [ Hamas ] attack of Oct. 7 is completely out of proportion, that more than 10,000

people have been killed, 4,000 of them children. There is no way to rationalize what is going on, and it is also very clear that Israel's aim is to stay in Gaza, after the war is over (whatever that means).

So, there are several levels on which this thing has to be looked at: One is the immediate danger of an escalation into a wider war. You have an unbelievable deployment of U.S. military force in the region; you have the two U.S. aircraft carrier groups off the coast of Israel. Then, the latest news is that the Ohio-class submarine, probably the USS *Florida*, is on the way to probably the Persian Gulf, and the only reason why you would have such a vast deployment—it's mooted

that there are 30,000 American troops deployed there—is in the expectation of a wider war, possibly opening a second flank with Lebanon and Hezbollah, somehow, then, involving Iran. If that happens, then we are in immediate danger of an escalation of war way beyond Southwest Asia, the so-called Middle East. That is the one danger.

There are major efforts by both China and Russia to try to propose an immediate peace conference for the entire region. There is hectic diplomatic activity. The



UN/Mark Garten

*António Guterres, UN Secretary General:  
"Gaza is turning into a graveyard for the children."*



U.S. Navy/Jonathan Word

*The Ohio Class cruise missile submarine USS Florida transits the Suez Canal to join the USS Dwight D. Eisenhower carrier strike group in the Red Sea, Nov. 5, 2023.*

no water, and it's just unbelievable that there would be people who are not calling for a ceasefire in the face of this situation. But there is a larger aspect: The larger aspect is the danger of a military escalation beyond the regional war. But whatever happens, the fact that the Western establishments did not respond, to try to cool down the situation, and go for a ceasefire, go for humanitarian intervention in Gaza, this is changing the image of the so-called "rules-based order" for good. Around the world, in Germany, for example, in Britain, in Sweden, in the United States, there is an effort to impose gag orders, so

Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) comprised of the large Islamic organizations and countries, which altogether represent more than 1 billion people, will have an emergency meeting this coming Sunday, Nov. 12, called by Saudi Arabia; the meeting will take place in Riyadh. The new factor in that situation is that Saudi Arabia and Iran have re-established diplomatic relations and are working together on the effort to coordinate some response. Then there are many, many bilateral discussions and so forth, of [Russian Foreign Minister Sergey] Lavrov, of the Chinese, in particular talking to all the Arabs.

that people are not allowed to comment on that.

For example, in the United States, Congresswoman Rashida Tlaib (D-MI), who is of Palestinian origin, has said that there is no difference to her between the cry of Israeli children and Palestinian children, and that there is something wrong with people who only hear the cries of the Israeli children. The U.S. House of Representatives voted to censure her. There are similar moves in Sweden, in Germany, where there is a reaction to the demonstrations which took place last Saturday, Nov. 4. I'm not commenting whether all of these

However, this thing could really only be stopped in the United States. Israel is one thing, but if the United States would definitely say this has to be stopped, it could be stopped. But it is Blinken, who went around in the region, talking to various Arab foreign ministers, basically refusing to use the word "ceasefire."

Now, there is the immediate effect this has in Gaza itself, in the West Bank, where, since Oct. 7, some 133 Palestinians have been murdered as well. One can only start to think what people are going through, now that the cold and rainy season is starting. Half of the people are already homeless, they have no food, they have no shelter,



CC/Fars News Agency/Saaleh Najm and Anas Sharif

*A group of Palestinians in Gaza, half of whom are homeless, without water, food, or fuel, gather to pray and bury their loved ones, Oct. 17, 2023.*

demonstrations were focused in the right way or not—the point is, you have right now an ongoing situation, which many people—including Brazilian President Lula da Silva, Craig Mokhiber, the former head of the UN human rights division in New York, who resigned over the situation, who said he has seen many genocides, but that this one is the worst—are calling it “genocide.”

Now, look at what the Latin American governments are saying. They have a complete condemnation in unmistakable terms, and I think if the West does not change their attitude on this question, their reputation in the global majority of the world population will be lost, maybe forever, at least for this important juncture, where we seek in any case a change where the old colonialist order is no longer respected, and the countries of the Global South are trying to create a new system. So, if they in this situation then—look at the completely immoral attitude of the countries of the so-called “Global North” and the so-called “rules-based order”—if these are the rules, I think no country wants to be part of it.

So, I think that this whole thing will have ramifications of a dramatic historic impact. The former Prime Minister of Israel, Ehud Barak, has said that he thinks the Israel Defense Forces have maybe, at best, two weeks to defeat Hamas, because he thinks that the whole world opinion is crumbling, that the mood is even shifting in the United States, and that the loss of support for Israel will mean two weeks at most, and maybe less, he said.

This is highly dramatic, and I can only say, if you cannot intervene when something is so completely out of whack, then we do, indeed, have a crisis of humanity, as Guterres was saying.



*Rep. Rashida Tlaib: “The cries of the Palestinian and Israeli children sound no different to me.” She was censured by the U.S. House of Representatives.*

## Arab, Muslim, and Chinese Interventions

**Schlanger:** Helga, you just answered some of the questions in your opening remarks, but I’ll give you these questions, because you can get a sense of how people are looking at what you’re talking about. From a contact in Southwest Asia, as well as one from Oakland, California, they both ask:

“Why have the Muslim and Arab governments not done more to put pressure on Israel and the West, for example, an oil embargo?”

**Zepp-LaRouche:** I think the Arab governments could have done for a long time, far more for the Palestinians. I’m not going to make a big judgment about that, but that’s generally the opinion of many people. I mean, why did they not invest their sovereign wealth funds into Gaza and make it an example of economic prosperity?

I think this is now changing—I hope. This coming Sunday, when the OIC (Organization of Islamic States) meets, I think they will come out with some policy, putting the weight of the entire Islamic world behind it. The best would be if they would wholeheartedly support the Chinese and the Russian peace proposals. Both of those governments are demanding a peace conference, an immediate ceasefire, and humanitarian corridors to immediately save the people whose lives are in utmost danger. But then beyond that there needs to be a real settlement of the situation, basically like the

Peace of Westphalia. You have to bury the hatchet; you have to say for the sake of peace that all crimes on both sides have to be forgiven; for the sake of peace, one has to take into account the interest of the other, because without that, no peace is possible.



*Ehud Barak, former Chief of the Israel Defense Forces and former Prime Minister: The IDF has at best two weeks to defeat Hamas as world support for Israel is crumbling.*

But then, most important, there has to be a comprehensive, total economic development plan for all of Southwest Asia: This is basically the idea of my late husband, Lyndon LaRouche, who already proposed in 1975 the famous “Oasis Plan,” which was the idea to green the deserts, to develop new freshwater, to build basic infrastructure for industrialization and the development of agriculture in the entire region. And right now, if you look at Southwest Asia, you have Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Libya (which is North Africa): But this whole region has been destroyed by these interventionist wars, and the humanitarian situation in all of these countries is absolutely terrible. Gaza, now, is the worst by far. But you need an economic development plan for the entire region: This is so urgent, and fortunately, with the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative, the possibility to really look at the region as a whole, as one comprehensive plan, is absolutely there.

So, I think this initiative will come from China for sure. I’m sure it will be supported by whatever Russia is doing, and given the fact that the three major oil-producing countries, Iran, the United Arab Emirates, and Saudi Arabia, are in the process of joining the BRICS-11, they are all supposed to become full members of the BRICS on Jan. 1, 2024, I think the potential to turn the situation around and go for an economic buildup of the entire region is absolutely there. And if there are signs coming out in this direction, I think the best that the West European nations, the United States could do, is to wholeheartedly support that, rather than looking at it as something to be defeated.

### The Unique Role of the United Nations

**Schlanger:** Here’s a question about China’s presidency of the UN Security Council, and their call for an international peace conference. The person wrote that according to Craig Mokhiber, the former Director in the New York Office of the High Commissioner for

### LaRouche’s ‘Oasis Plan’



*Without regional economic development, no enduring peace is possible. Shown: Lyndon LaRouche’s 1975 ‘Oasis Plan’ proposal.*

Human Rights (OHCHR), who resigned on Oct. 28, the UN is impotent to enforce its resolutions. Mokhiber accused the U.S., UK, and Europe of complicity in genocide, and the person asks:

“Is there any other venue that can enforce international law, if the UN is impotent?”

**Zepp-LaRouche:** No, I don’t think so. I think the United Nations is the only body in existence, representing all the countries of the world. In the last years, the authority and integrity of the United Nations have been undermined. One major step in that direction was when the United States lied to the UN Security Council about what the aim was of their operation against Libya in 2011, which led to the NATO strikes, and then finally



UN/Paulo Filgueiras

*Craig Mokhiber resigned Oct. 28 as Director of the New York Office of the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights: “Once again we are seeing a genocide unfolding before our eyes and the organization we serve appears powerless to stop it.”*

the murder of Qaddafi.

It was clear afterwards that the United States and NATO had planned a full-fledged attack, a military takeover of Libya, and they had said it was an “air operation.” And that is why, at that point, Russia and China remained silent, or they voted neutral. After it was clear that this was a much, much larger operation, from that point on, the UN Security Council practically did not function anymore, because when you start to lie in that sort of top leadership of the world, then the potential to use it for peaceful purposes has been greatly diminished. And at that point, Lyndon LaRouche, with absolute prescience said that this was not just an operation against Libya, but that this was the beginning of a coming world war against Russia and China. And if you look at all the subsequent developments—the Ukraine Maidan coup in 2014; the global NATO efforts to create a global NATO involving the Indo-Pacific—what has the Indo-Pacific to do with the North Atlantic defense treaty? I don’t know.

The problem is, all the votes in the United Nations have been completely compromised since then, because only those countries that are strong enough that they feel they can resist pressure, voted their real opinion, their real conviction; while many of the smaller countries, countries that are only a small island, or a little country here or there, they normally

would vote with the West on resolutions against Russia and China, and that has naturally been noted by everybody. There is no secret, there is only stupidity, one can say.

The United Nations definitely needs reforming! There are many former UN officials who are working on such proposals, but I think the [Ten Principles](#) for a New International Security and Development Architecture that I proposed, the last three principles are not programmatic: The first seven principles are programmatic; they call for a new credit system, health system—all of these things; but the last three principles I put in, having in mind the shortcomings of the United Nations, and these three principles are philosophical, because I always thought—I discussed this a lot in the past at various occasions—the United Nations always suffered from a lack of what you could call a *metaphysical component*: Meaning that you have to have something in there, which is beyond daily necessities, programmatic things, you need something which pertains to the way the universe is organized. In European history, this was generally called “natural law.”

Now, natural law has been rejected by modern-day legal people, because, they say, it’s something you can’t touch, it’s not clear what that’s supposed to be. But for 2,000 years, the idea of natural law has been that there is something in Creation, which is inherently part of the Creation, or, if you don’t want to be religious, you can say, which is part of the laws of the physical universe.

The United Nations needs some grounding in such principles, because in all great philosophies and religions, you have such ideas. In India, it’s called “cosmology,” that the politicians have to respect the laws of the cosmos; in China, it’s the idea that there’s such a thing as a “Mandate of Heaven,” that if the government is not following the Mandate of Heaven, the people have the responsibility to replace that government; and natural law is the idea that this is a God-given law, created with the Creation which human beings have to respect, and if they don’t respect it, it will fall back on them, and lead to their demise, sooner or later.

There are some other ideas, such as, how do you train the mind to think about the higher One, first, before the Many? This is important, if you want to have the idea of the one humanity being the first

principle for guidance of politics; and naturally, the idea about the nature of man: that you have to go from the assumption that the nature of man is basically good, and that all evil comes from a lack of development, and therefore, can be overcome through development.

Now, these philosophical questions have been debated by great minds over the centuries. For the UN to go back to a functioning level, as it was intended, and still is very valid with the UN Charter, I think it would be important to include some of these more fundamental principles in a necessary reform.

**Schlanger:** That's certainly a very profound answer to the question. Here's another question along those lines, in practical terms. This individual asks on Facebook: "Should the UN remove the veto power from the Security Council, because the system is outdated and not democratic?" I think you sort of answered that by bringing in the question of a higher component, but maybe you want to say something more.

**Zepp-LaRouche:** Yeah, I think that would be a big mistake. This may not be the final answer. However, at this point, removing the veto would open the Security Council up to complete takeover by the kind of corruption we have seen in recent years. So, while it is not totally satisfactory for the veto to be only in the hands of the five nuclear powers, which was established at the end of the Second World War. Nevertheless, I can only say, if you were to remove it at this point, and were to make the vote into a majority rule, that would unleash a dangerous process of unbearable pressure being brought against countries that are too weak to resist. Therefore, I think it absolutely should not be done at this point.

### **Not Unipolarity or Multipolarity**

**Schlanger:** Here's a question from a journalist in Pakistan. Again, you touched on this in your opening remarks: "Do you think the U.S. has lost its credibility as the enforcer of the rules-based order? And if so, what follows?"

**Zepp-LaRouche:** I have said many times that the unipolar world is gone, irreversibly. There is no way it will come back, and any effort to impose the so-called Western-designed "rules-based order" on the rest of the

world, where nobody knows what these "rules" are, and these rules are being bent at every occasion, and if you have one aim, you bend them in one way, and if you want something else, you bend them in another—this has become a farce. And it has been recognized as such.

On the other hand, I'm not completely convinced that the multipolar order in the world is the greatest wisdom, because it still implies the possibility and existence of geopolitical thinking: With a multipolar order, each pole represents a different geopolitical interest. This is no good. In my view, the more that conflicts like Ukraine and now Gaza continue, the more I'm absolutely strengthened in my conviction that geopolitics is one of the greatest evils which we absolutely must get rid of if we are supposed to survive as a human species. Geopolitics is exactly the kind of stuff out of which two world wars erupted in the 20th century, and if we don't overcome it now, by going in the direction of a new paradigm, which puts the cause of humanity first, then we will probably not get rid of this mortal danger in which we are in.

The only country that has suggested something going in this direction, is, indeed, China. Xi Jinping always talks about the "shared community for the one future of mankind"—and if you think about it, it's so obvious: We're all sitting on one boat! There *is* a shared community of the one future, since the existence of nuclear weapons, pandemics, and the internet. I could list a whole bunch of other things, which should demonstrate to people that we are sitting in one boat! If we have a nuclear war, that will kill all of humanity. If we do not shape up, it will come to that.

So, we'd better think about the fact that we are one human species. I think that's very, very important.

**Schlanger:** We have one final question, from Thomas. He's a little despairing, since even though millions of people are marching, the policies are not changing. He asks: "Helga, can you give us advice on how we can keep optimistic, when the killing of the totally vulnerable Palestinian people continues?"

**Zepp-LaRouche:** Well, I think one can, indeed, change the situation. The many people marching—it's very important that people go and take to the streets,

and express their demand for a ceasefire, their demand for a peaceful resolution. But all the marches I have heard about or read about, are a little bit not yet strong enough; they keep chanting “Free Palestine,” which is obviously an important demand, but they’re don’t really have power. If these demonstrations were more idea-heavy, so to speak, if they would really fight for—for example, for a Middle East peace conference and even the Oasis Plan development plan, I think then they would gain a lot more weight. I think we should work in the direction that the different marches pick up these demands.

### **Operation Ibn Sina**

I’ll give you one very good example: There was just a wonderful conference in, of all places, Afghanistan—a country which has been completely forgotten by most people. It has been out of the news for about two years. There was a big hoopla when NATO left in August 2021, and then what followed was a huge humanitarian crisis. But then, Afghanistan disappeared from the headlines.

But we worked on Operation Ibn Sina, an economic plan for a coming economic miracle in Afghanistan, and we worked out a very comprehensive economic development plan, taking into account every aspect, from infrastructure, energy, health, industrial, water management—just every aspect. There was just a wonderful conference in Kabul which completely adopted that program: 600 participants and there is now a tremendous idea to economically build up Afghanistan.

I think this is excellent news, and that is an example which can be replicated by every single country: You need such economic development plans, and if you find patriots in every country, who fight for their sovereignty and the buildup of their country, I think there is reason to hope and we can turn this around. You know, Gottfried Leibniz was absolutely right when he said that a great evil always evokes an even greater good. That that is exactly the principle of the universe; and we need a lot of people of good will, but I think we can absolutely do it, because that’s how the universe is.

**Schlanger:** Well, Helga, we do have several emails of congratulations to you, since Operation Ibn Sina was originally your idea. People are very enthusiastic about

the potential for this kind of development program.

We’ve come to the end of our questions—do you have any final comments?

**Zepp-LaRouche:** Look at the strategic picture. Former [Israeli] Prime Minister Ehud Barak says the situation with Israel has about two to three weeks before the pressure becomes too great. I don’t think Israel can win against Hamas in two weeks. So that is a certain point, or deadline crisis, or window where certain things have to happen.

Similarly, you have now a public debate in Ukraine. Gen. Valery Zaluzhny, the chief of the General Staff of the Ukrainian army, just said that there is no way that Ukraine can win this war. Russia is way ahead in terms of its economy, military buildup, ability to produce weapons, so Ukraine would do better to negotiate even at the loss of certain territories. This has caused a huge outcry against him and his remarks. But what he is saying is true! Gen. Harald Kujat, the former Chief of Staff of the Bundeswehr, the German armed forces, had said at the end of August, that NATO would soon be faced with a situation to either go for a ceasefire and a diplomatic solution, or there would be the danger of an escalation.

### **Join the International Peace Coalition**

You have now two situations where that is exactly the alternative. In Ukraine, and in respect to Israel and Gaza, this is not going to go on forever. The only way we can avoid World War III is to have a ceasefire now, and to have a diplomatic solution.

I appeal to all of our listeners and viewers—that is, you: please join our effort. We have the International Peace Coalition, which we are building. Every Friday, we have very important discussions, if you want to cooperate in that. We now have members participating from four continents—I think we are still lacking Australia, but all the other continents are represented. Join this effort, be a voice for peace and a better world. Do not be passive! Get active with us! These are the most important weeks of our lives.

**Schlanger:** Helga, thank you for that, and thank you for your inspiration. Hopefully, we’ll make it to next week and have another conversation with you.

**Zepp-LaRouche:** Yes, one hopes.