

II. Security and Development

BRICS Peru Conference Brings Optimism: Building a New Paradigm of Development

by Dennis Small

Oct. 3—The optimism was almost palpable in the audience of over 500 students, professors, diplomats, and others who gathered in the auditorium of the Central Library of San Marcos University in Lima, Peru, to discuss the role of the BRICS in “Development Strategies and Mechanisms for Cooperation in the Multipolar World.” The event, one of the nearly 200 official BRICS events organized internationally under Russia’s rotating presidency of the BRICS in 2024, was sponsored by the Russian embassy in Peru, San Marcos University, and the Schiller Institute–Peru. It was addressed in person by the ambassadors in Peru of BRICS nations Russia, Brazil, China, Egypt, and India, and remotely by South Africa’s ambassador in Chile. And it featured remarks by the President of San Marcos University (the oldest university of the Americas, founded in 1551), Jeri Ruffner; Russia’s BRICS sous-sherpa, Pavel Knyazev; Viktoria Panova, the head of the BRICS Russian Expert Council; Helga Zepp-LaRouche, the founder of the Schiller Institute; and many other international experts from India, Egypt, Brazil, Italy, and Peru.

The event was a *statement*: The BRICS, which is growing in numbers of members, represents the aspirations of the Global Majority. The disorder, instability, poverty, and war in the world today must be ended, and replaced with new institutions that meet the needs of our people. We represent different cultures and civilizations—but that is not a weakness; it is our strength. We are optimistic about the potential to

change the world!

This was the underlying message of nearly every speech delivered at the Lima event.

“The BRICS has really become the core of the changing world order,” Dr. Panova stated. “We are doing things nobody expected us to do.” She directly addressed the hundreds of students present in the Lima



San Marcos University Radio and Television

The Lima, Peru BRICS conference, sponsored by the Russian embassy in Peru, San Marcos University, and the Schiller Institute–Peru.

auditorium, and those listening online in Spanish and in English simultaneous interpretation: “I’m speaking to you now from our ongoing BRICS International School that has been happening since 2017. In fact, I hope that your students, your youth, will be participating in the next ones. This school now encompasses not just BRICS members, but 36 countries altogether.... There is certainly a group of countries that is very much supportive of a fair international system, and that could work together” to make that goal a reality.

China's Ambassador to Peru, H.E. Song Yang, also suggested there was room in the BRICS for Peru and many other countries, noting with a smile that the BRICS does not yet have a Spanish-speaking member. He emphasized that, in a world of growing disorder and conflict, the BRICS is playing a stabilizing and positive role. And he said that the needed changes include a reform of the international financial architecture, and establishing a system of security for all nations, because "security is indivisible, and no one nation has the right to seek security at others' expense."

Two of the Peruvian speakers—Luis Vásquez, representing Lyndon LaRouche's *EIR* magazine; and Walter Heredia, Peru representative to the BRICS Municipal Forum—called explicitly for Peru to join the BRICS. Vásquez elaborated on the kinds of great infrastructure projects that are needed to pull nations out of poverty, such as linking Peru's massive Chancay port project, now nearing completion with Chinese help, to other South American nations through a bi-oceanic high-speed rail corridor, connecting the Atlantic and Pacific coasts of the continent. Vásquez also emphasized that a global financial reorganization is required to rid the world of the \$2.1 quadrillion speculative bubble, and identified Lyndon LaRouche's 1975 International Development Bank proposal as a model to be studied.

India's Ambassador H.E. Vishvas Vidu Sapkal emphasized that the BRICS New Development Bank is the best example of the successes the group has already achieved, with more to come. The Indian expert who later addressed the event, Nilanjan Ghosh, director of the Center for New Economic Diplomacy, placed particular emphasis on the way India's scientific and R&D capabilities can be of use to all the BRICS nations, at a time when innovation and technological advance is central to development.

Italy's Michele Geraci, former Undersecretary of State at the Ministry of Economic Development and the architect of his country's 2019 agreement to join China's Belt and Road Initiative (which was subsequently abandoned by the current Meloni government), focused the audience's attention on the way China's development strategy is playing a major role in helping lift African nations out of poverty, by helping build infrastructure and investing in job-creating manufacturing enterprises there. Geraci made a sharp political point directed to European nations as well: "Instead of having poor migrants that come to

our European countries and become marginalized ... the role of China, and the Belt and Road in Africa, is to create those economic development opportunities so that people no longer migrate."

But it was left to Schiller Institute founder Helga Zepp-LaRouche to present the broadest strategic challenge to the audience in Peru and beyond:

"The tension in the world affairs has never been stronger in human history," she began. "On the one side, the genocide happening in front of the eyes of the world public and the terrifying threat of the possible extinction of mankind in a global nuclear war; and on the other side, the concrete perspective for the creation of a new economic system, where the aspiration of the Global South nations for development, prosperity and a fulfilled life for all of its citizens is about to come true. This tension characterizes the end of the epoch of colonialism, which started about 500 years ago, and is now about to end—one way or another."

Zepp-LaRouche noted that "the effort by the BRICS and nations aspiring to become BRICS members has already evoked the 'Spirit of Bandung,' meaning a tremendous sense of optimism that economic independence can finally be accomplished." She then quoted from Indonesian President Sukarno's historic speech at the Bandung Conference in 1955:

What can we do? We can do much! We can inject the voice of reason into world affairs. We can mobilize all the spiritual, all the moral, all the political strength of Asia and Africa on the side of peace. Yes, we! We, the people of Asia and Africa, 1.4 billion strong, far more than half the human population of the world, we can mobilize what I have called the Moral Violence of Nations in favor of peace. We can demonstrate to the minority of the world which lives on the other continents that we, the majority, are for peace, not for war, and that whatever strength we have will always be thrown onto the side of peace.

Other distinguished speakers at the Peru conference included: Igor Romanchenko, Russia's Ambassador to Peru; Clemente Baena Soares, Brazil's Ambassador to Peru; Ahmed Bakr, Egypt's Ambassador to Peru; George Monyemangene, South Africa's Ambassador to Chile; Marta Fernández, head of Brazil's BRICS Policy Center; and Carlos Aquino, the director of the Center for Asian Studies at San Marcos University.