

## III. Strategic

INTERVIEW: *Georgy Toloraya*

# BRICS Summit in Kazan Will Be a ‘Real Milestone’

Oct. 10—Earlier this month, in Moscow, Richard A. Black, Schiller Institute representative at the United Nations in New York, interviewed Dr. Georgy D. Toloraya, Executive Director of the Russian National Committee on BRICS Research, and concurrently Director of the Asian Strategy Center at the Institute of Economics and Chief Researcher of the Institute of China and Contemporary Asia of the Russian Academy of Sciences. Mr. Black was in Moscow to speak at the 8th BRICS International School, October 2-4. His talk was titled, “The Role of Principle in the Current Development of BRICS.”



Dr. Georgy Toloraya

Liana Brix

portant. In this school they receive training from leading experts based in Russia and other BRICS countries, and we now include other international experts, like yourself. This year the event is also supported by BRICS-related units at the state-run Higher School of Economics and Moscow University of International Relations.

This year it was particularly challenging, because we had some new countries joining the BRICS. As of this year, we had more than 40 countries represented at the BRICS School. We hope to continue with this practice in the future, because this is an important tool to promote knowledge of the BRICS among young people,

provide direct contact, and for supporting networks and expanding mutual understanding.

**Richard Black:** I just had the honor of giving a presentation on a panel of the Eighth BRICS International School in Moscow. Can you tell us how this yearly event was first launched? What is your view of what was accomplished this past week at the school?

**Georgy Toloraya:** First of all, about the school: The BRICS School was inaugurated in 2017 by the National Committee for BRICS Research (one of the first Russian NGOs, in existence since 2011). At that time, we gathered people from, mostly, five countries, about 30 of them, and it was very successful. Since that time, we have had this kind of function on an annual basis, constantly increasing the scope, and the participants of this school have already formed networks of future and current leaders of BRICS, which is very im-

### ‘Biggest BRICS Gathering Ever Held’

**Black:** How is BRICS evolving, as we approach the yearly Summit, here in Russia? How can the four or five new members of the BRICS be best integrated? What about the 30 or more nations which have expressed their hopes of joining?

**Toloraya:** The Kazan BRICS Summit is a real milestone, because it gathers the old and new members for the first time. Also BRICS plus/outreach countries are coming, altogether a quarter of a hundred top leaders, as well as a dozen more countries on a lower level. This is the biggest BRICS and BRICS outreach/plus

gathering which was ever held. Simply in matter of numbers this is the most important international event in Russia this year (which also is significant for Russia as an indication of international recognition), and also one of the biggest events for Global South and East leaders.

**Black:** I understand that Kazan is an Islamic center of culture, renowned throughout Asia. Is there a special significance of the BRICS Summit being held in Kazan?

**Toloraya:** There is always strong competition among Russian cities to be the host to BRICS summits and events, because it means investment from the state, and development, and lots of international contacts. So it's very beneficial, although a challenging task for any city or location.

Kazan is the capital of Tatarstan, one of the biggest and strongest republics in the Russian Federation, where the majority of population are ethnic Tatars. It's a Muslim republic, but that was not a decisive factor for its self-identification. It's an important coincidence to show that Russia is not only a Christian country, but also it has a strong Muslim minority, and Buddhist and other religions. Well, it's still Russia proper, and it's very good that the foreign leaders will see for themselves that Russia is multinational, very tolerant, and has a lot of cultural and national variety.

**Black:** Schiller Institute leader Helga Zepp-LaRouche has been circulating a concise document titled, "[Ten Principles for a New International Security and Development Architecture](#)." Is this relevant for BRICS?

**Toloraya:** As I mentioned, look at the number of countries and actors, and the number of ideas and suggestions which have been flowing in from many sources, and all these ideas and principles will be discussed. It will be all the norm in the course of the Summit. Many ideas have been tossed around, including the Helga Zepp-LaRouche "Ten Principles," which are also there in circulation in preparation for the Summit, along with many, many other ideas and suggestions which are important for the Global Majority to dwell upon: cooperation for a new world order—more just, and more transparent.



Belarus TV 1

*Interviewer Richard Black, Schiller Institute representative at the United Nations in New York.*

## **Toward a New Paradigm of International Relations**

**Black:** In a TASS interview, Zepp-LaRouche expressed the suggestion that the Kazan BRICS Summit use its potential authority to launch "a new paradigm," a new architecture of international relations, even amidst the war escalations in Southwest Asia and Europe. What are your thoughts on this proposal?

**Toloraya:** The new paradigm of international relations—new order, or new type of relations—all is being discussed by the BRICS for years, and not only discussed, but is being implemented in practice by the BRICS. It's not in a direct way that these suggestions are implemented, but any suggestions available influence the discussion, and they finally determine the rules by which this new world-order construct will be built.

**Black:** As a Director of Asian Studies within the Institute of Economics and a Chief Researcher of the Institute of China and Contemporary Asia of the Russian Academy of Sciences, do you see a pathway—even if difficult—for practical improvement of India-China relations?

**Toloraya:** India and China have many problems between them—historically and more generally geostra-

tegic ones. And as for BRICS, our rule is that the countries which have some issues between themselves don't bring them to the table of the BRICS, because the BRICS is for providing joint vision, finding paths of cooperation and opportunities for collective efforts, not about discussing conflicts.

But, paradoxically, in many cases which I have witnessed, sometimes the discussion between the countries on different issues—general global issues—somehow helps them to look at their own bilateral contradictions from a new angle, find new solutions for them. Even having contacts on other matters helps the politicians and experts to better understand each other on the “damned issues.” So, it's a useful tool to help settle these contradictions.

India-China contradictions exist in a much more fundamental way than between a number of other countries. But anyway, it's easier to handle and manage them with BRICS than without BRICS.

### **Lyndon LaRouche's Eurasian Land-Bridge Concept**

**Black:** Do you see the prospects again for the ideas of American economist and statesman, Lyndon LaRouche, in Russia today? Concepts such as the Eurasian Land-Bridge; a principled, expert “dialogue of civilizations”; BRICS as a bridge from the East and South to the West; rising energy-flux densities of power plants supplied to the Global South?

**Toloraya:** I would say that some of the Lyndon LaRouche insights were very helpful. Dialogue of civilizations approach is the founding spirit in BRICS. The Eurasian Land-Bridge is actually now being embodied both in the Belt and Road concept of China and the Eurasian security concept—the Greater Eurasian cooperation concepts of Russia. So, this idea lives on, as well as other ideas, including the BRICS' role as a bridge between the West and the Global Majority.

I would say that BRICS is a platform for collecting and codifying opinions for working out a joint position by the Global South and Global East and Global Majority—however vague this definition is—which can be negotiated with a more, I would say, coherent Western position, which is usually very well formulated within the G-7 and other collective Western

institutions. So, BRICS provides maybe a discussion and a joint-position formulation platform, and a negotiation platform, provided the West would be interested in that kind of a dialogue. In fact a rudimentary mechanism of this nature can be witnessed in G20 activities.

**Black:** Helga Zepp-LaRouche has called for an extraordinary “Council of Reason” of former high government officials, scholars, and artists to debate and formulate a pathway out of the current deadly crisis. What is your view?

**Toloraya:** The Council of Reason, or as I have called it, the “Club of Wisemen,” which could gather together leading thinkers from BRICS countries, as well as from Western countries, I think it's a very good idea to discuss the global issues, and at least express some opinion on that to make it clear for both sides.

I have doubts whether it is possible to persuade the West, or to make it change its position, because all attempts at this effort have been not very successful. But at least the West should be aware of the Global East & South joint position, not shrug it away.

I noticed that one of the New Development Bank former directors was frustrated enough to comment at the time of his resignation, that, in fact, the Western financial system is irreformable—it cannot be reformed—only another can be created, which would compete with it.

So, I think this might be the same with ideology. I think it is very difficult to achieve a convergence of the ideologies and practices which would make it in both Western interests and East-South interests, such that they merge together in a sort of recipe for global development and global peace. But we must coexist on one planet and should not let it perish. So the Wisemen (and women) should discuss and suggest some *modus vivendi* and *modus operandi* for the future. How the competing nations should behave themselves and interact. What common development and progress priorities, not artificially limited to neo-liberal values, can they pursue jointly and separately. How these processes can be globally governed in a just and representative manner. A sort of global Westphalian and human-centered development ideological construct of a kind.