

thousands of years ago.

The United Nations must rebel against the prevailing totalitarianism and convene a General Assembly of the peoples who want peace. It must put an end to the wars and the hypocrisy of the rulers. They must adopt their own preamble: “We the Peoples of the World want Peace.”

Let us save the life of the planet, our common home. We cannot continue to be spectators. We must

undertake a rebellion of values and spirit to transform this reality that overwhelms all humanity.

Juan, you have all my solidarity and support in this common challenge to achieve peace together with so many brothers and sisters in the world. I wish all the participants in the conference much strength and hope. I join my voice to that of all humanity.

Adolfo Pérez Esquivel—Buenos Aires, April 11, 2023.

Wolfgang Effenberger

The Foundations of International Law

This is the edited transcript of the presentation of Wolfgang Effenberger to Panel 1, “The Growing Danger of World War III Underlines the Necessity for a New Security Architecture,” of the Schiller Institute’s April 15-16 Conference, “Without the Development of All Nations, There Can Be No Lasting Peace for the Planet.” Mr. Effenberger is an author and retired officer of the German Bundeswehr. Watch the entire conference [here](#).

Subheads have been added.



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Wolfgang Effenberger

Because while both American and Russian soldiers here in Torgau were enthusiastic about the dawning peace, British general staff officers were already working on the “Operation Unthinkable” war plan commissioned by Winston Churchill to force back the then Soviet Union and restore an independent Poland. The attack, with more than 100 divisions, including Wehrmacht units that had not been designated as prisoners of war, was about to start on July 1, 1945—less than ten weeks after the handshake.

Thank you very much for the invitation to the Schiller Institute event, “Stop the Nuclear War Danger Now!” Thanks to all who are participating in this conference.

Dear movers for peace, in a few days it will be the 77th anniversary of the historic meeting of American and Soviet soldiers in Torgau. The photograph of the “Handshake of Torgau” on the destroyed bridge over the Elbe river went around the world. At that time, it stood as a sign of the imminent end of the war and the hope for a peaceful future. And, as a student at the time, it had a powerful effect on me.

Today, that image is symbolically associated with the end of the Second World War and the liberation from National Socialist tyranny. It unites remembrance and commemoration with the admonition to preserve peace. Unfortunately, the hope associated with this photograph 78 years ago was only a mirage.

This attack did not happen, because, just in the nick of time, Stalin delivered an ultimatum, demanding the arrest of the German successor government under [Admiral Karl] Dönitz that had been established right next to the British headquarters in Flensburg-Mürwik, and demanding the transfer of the German soldiers into captivity. This indeed happened on May 23, 1945.

In early September 1945, U.S. President Harry S Truman tasked General Eisenhower with “Operation Totality.” With 20 to 30 atomic bombs, 20 Soviet industrial cities were to be destroyed in one fell swoop. Such plans were being constantly refined. On May 15, 1947, Truman announced his doctrine for containing the further expansion of the Soviet Union.

This was followed by the Marshall Plan on June 6, 1947. Its goal was to strengthen Western Europe against the Eastern Bloc and to open markets for the American economy, which was still overheated by the

war. By accepting the aid, the countries had to cede their financial sovereignty to Washington—the beginning of the economic colonization of Europe which, by the way, did not cost much at all. Between 1948 and 1952 only about \$15 billion were transferred.

The Real Purpose of NATO

On July 26, 1947, the National Security Act was passed for military penetration of the world, one of the most important laws in U.S. postwar history. It remains the basis of worldwide American military power to this day. Its purpose was to make Europe fit for war against the Soviet Union. On April 4, 1949, NATO was officially founded as a defensive alliance against the Soviet Union. NATO's first Secretary General and chief planner of "Unthinkable," Lord Ismay, flippantly stated that NATO's real mission was to "keep the Russians out, the Americans in, and the Germans down." The alliance treaty stated that economic reconstruction and economic stability were important elements of security—hence the Marshall Plan.

Then, beginning in 1991, Eastern European countries joined NATO, expecting financial and economic aid. And [in 2014] when Ukraine's elected head of state, Yanukovich, did not accept military-political cooperation with the EU (and thus NATO), he was unceremoniously ousted.

On April 4, 2023, 74 years to the day after NATO's founding and in the midst of the conflict that Yanukovich had foreseen, Finland was admitted to NATO with great pomp. On the same day, the U.S. military magazine Stars and Stripes had the headline, "NATO Doubles its Land Border with Russia as Finland Joins the U.S.-Led Alliance." NATO's eastern flank was strengthened when Finland became its 31st member, increasing its military clout in the Arctic region, where the allies say they are now better able to deter further Russian aggression. The accession of Finland, which has one of the largest artillery arsenals in Europe and a conscript ground force that can muster up to a million reservists in a crisis, ends decades of military non-alignment for the Nordic nation.

On December 19, 1949, the U.S. adopted the "Dropshot" war plan to attack the Soviet Union in 1957 in order to keep the new superpower, with its aggressive agenda and world power ambitions, at bay.

For comparison, approximately one million U.S. soldiers died in World War II, while the Soviet Union

suffered well over 20 million war dead. The United States was spared destruction. Factory chimneys continued to smoke, and unimaginable profits were reaped. Large parts of the Soviet Union, on the other hand, had been destroyed by the war and their industry permanently damaged.

The "basic premise" of Dropshot literally states that on or about January 1, 1957, war was forced upon the United States by an act of aggression by the Soviet Union and/or its satellites. As a result, 300 atomic bombs and 29,000 high-explosive bombs were to be dropped on 200 targets in 100 cities, destroying 85% percent of the Soviet Union's industrial capacity in a single stroke. The timing was undoubtedly coordinated with the originally planned completion date of the remilitarization of West Germany. However, when the beeping Sputnik made its orbit around the Earth in 1957, the war plans had to be revised.

A New Strategy to Destroy the Soviet Bloc

National Security Decision Directive 54 (NSDD-54) of September 2, 1982, created an instrument with which the Soviet bloc could be subversively undermined. State after state was induced to break away from the Soviet Union with the promise of American support. In addition to destructive operations, "undermining the military capabilities of the Warsaw Pact," economic incentives were provided, most notably the prospect of loans and cultural-scientific exchanges. The long-term strategy papers TRADOC 525-5 of 1994 and 525-3-1 of 2014, titled "Win in a Complex World 2020-2040," serve as further developments and supplements.

Russia and China were deliberately built up as threatening enemies in order to establish the U.S. as a protective military power through NATO and through various Asian defense alliances. As early as 1945, U.S. philosopher James Burnham foresaw the United States being "called on to make a bid for maximum world power" in confrontation with the other superpowers.

In early August 2017, publisher and former Deputy Treasury Secretary under U.S. President Ronald Reagan, Paul Craig Roberts, expressed dismay at the looming threat of war:

For two decades, the Clinton, George W. Bush, and Obama regimes have thrown sticks, stones, and nasty words at the Russian bear. The U.S.

has broken and withdrawn from security agreement after security agreement and has compounded the threat that Russia sees by conducting war games on Russia's borders, staging a coup in Ukraine, a province of Russia for centuries, and by a continuous stream of false accusations against Russia.

In response to this irresponsible, thoughtless, reckless—and ignored by the media—policy toward Russia, Russian military planners have concluded that Washington is preparing a surprise nuclear attack on Russia. “This is the most alarming event of my lifetime,” Roberts said. Now that “Washington’s criminal madmen have convinced Russia that it is involved in Washington’s war plans, Russia has no choice but to prepare for a first strike.” Given the current situation in eastern Ukraine, it looks as if Russia has not prepared in time, while Western-backed Ukraine has.

What Angela Merkel has declared in a *Die Zeit* interview on Dec. 7, 2022 has now also been confirmed by François Hollande, the President of France between 2012 and 2017: “The Minsk agreement was just a sham to buy Ukraine more time to prepare for war with Russia.” Meanwhile, the Kremlin sees the Minsk agreements as a sham. Speaking to *Rossiya-1* anchor Pavel Zarubin on April 9, 2023, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov stated that this only aggravated the situation and brought the military operation closer: “Yes, the Minsk agreement was a ‘shell game.’ We were deceived, and that escalated the situation.”

A Community Born in the Spirit of Peace

What will happen next? Probably, we will see more provocations and attacks blamed on Russia. How can such a hypocritical imperial policy be stopped? The UN is apparently unable to do so. Thus the world—the League of Nations in 1919 and the UN in 1945 were born out of war situations—must finally find its way to a community born in the spirit of peace, and capable of sanctioning any anti-peace policy.

U.S. Congressional recommendations on Nov. 15, 2022, quoted from the Oct. 12 fact sheet on the new 2022 National Security Strategy:

The United States is a global power with global interests; we are stronger in each region because

we are engaged also in all the other regions. If one region is in chaos or dominated by a hostile power, it adversely affects our interests in the other regions.

The Congressional paper goes on to say:

U.S. policymakers are pursuing the goal ... to prevent the emergence of regional hegemony in Eurasia.... U.S. military operations in World War I and World War II, as well as numerous U.S. military operations and day-to-day operations since World War II ... appear to have contributed in no small part to supporting this objective.

For over a century, the primary goal has been to increase the wealth of a group of tycoons in the City of London and on Wall Street. A look at current financial flows confirms this. For example, the financial elites in the U.S. and the UK seem to have little interest in settling the Ukraine conflict. Today, the same circles would like to lead us into a Third World War. It would be extremely tragic if Thomas Mann’s appeal to European listeners in 1953 were to go unheard. In American exile, Mann had recognized the tendency of the U.S. “to treat Europe as an economic colony, a military base, a glacis in the future nuclear crusade against Russia, as a piece of the Earth that may be antiquarian and worth traveling to, but whose complete ruin will be the devil’s care when the struggle for world domination is on.”

According to U.S. international law expert and former UN official Alfred de Zayas, who served as the UN Human Rights Council’s independent expert on the promotion of a democratic and just international order from May 2012 to April 2018, there needs to be a strong message from the civilian population and/or the BRICS countries, otherwise the war will last indefinitely or end in Armageddon.

The globe must no longer be the playground of an irresponsible financial oligarchy that prepares the ground for ruthless exploitation. Let us throw the sinister narrative of “good here, evil there” into the dustbin of history!

Let us outlaw war! And above all: Let us dare to be more human! Thank you.