

EDITORIAL

Schiller Institute's Helga Zepp-LaRouche Appeals for Urgent Support Action for Afghanistan in 'Operation Ibn Sina'

by Marcia Merry Baker

Oct. 30—Schiller Institute founder and President Helga Zepp-LaRouche, in a discussion on Afghanistan Oct. 29 on PTV in Islamabad, Pakistan, said that she is promoting the Schiller Institute's proposed solution to the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan which she calls "Operation Ibn Sina." Zepp-LaRouche participated in the program from Germany, and has indicated that she will be filling out the "Ibn Sina" initiative very soon.

She stressed at the outset that we are "at a watershed" time, in which the United States and other nations now holding back, must instead work closely with the Afghan government, which is the Taliban. Release the Afghan government's funds, support stabilization and a future. The alternative is chaos, more opium production, mass death and terrorism.

The television broadcast was the PTV World program, "Views on News," hosted by Omar Khalid Butt, whose additional guests for the 42-minute discussion were Dr. Andrey Kortunov, Director General of the Russian International Affairs Council (RIAC) in Moscow, and Dr. Farah Naz, foreign affairs expert in Pakistan.

Zepp-LaRouche explained her proposal in her closing remarks, addressing the significance of Ibn Sina, also called Avicenna in Europe. "He was a doctor, who probably was born in what is today Afghanistan, and he was the most famous doctor until the 17th century, who wrote books which were studied in all of Europe.

"So he's a hero in the history of Afghanistan, and right now there is a huge health crisis: COVID—after the collapse of the previous government, more than 2,000 hospitals closed down. There are presently only 100 hospitals for 38 million people, and no medical supplies....

"So I suggest that the international community, everybody who wants to be part of the solution, helps to build up a modern health system in Afghanistan, as the first step to stabilize the situation and give that the name 'Operation Ibn Sina.'

"That can rally all the different ethnic groups inside Afghanistan because he is a figure of the national history and a hero, and he gives pride and also hope for a good, good future for Afghanistan. And building a modern health system can be the first step, because in order to have modern hospitals, you need energy, water, infrastructure...."

Butt began his program by asking the guests to address all aspects of the significance of the crisis situation in Afghanistan, including "the geopolitical and strategic." In opening the discussion, he showed a video of Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov issuing a call at the Tehran conference of Afghanistan's neighbors on Wednesday, Oct. 27, in which Lavrov called "on Afghanistan's neighboring countries not to allow a military presence of U.S. and NATO forces which plan to move there after leaving Afghan territory."

Zepp-LaRouche denounced such a prospect as a continuation of the British Great Game, which she said is unacceptable. Dr. Naz put forward that chaos can well be “the larger goal” of Western circles, which see the rise of China as a threat to be stopped, and are perpetrating vast harm in the Afghanistan region “by design.” Zepp-LaRouche described the West as “in a real collapse phase,” saying it should shift, instead, to working with China’s Belt and Road Initiative. In the immediate term, massive aid must be supplied to Afghanistan to prevent genocide.

The same day as the Pakistan TV colloquy, the latest grim report on the humanitarian tragedy in Afghanistan was summarized by UN Undersecretary for Humanitarian Aid Martin Griffiths in an interview with AP, stressing, “The needs are skyrocketing,” as winter

snows have started. The World Food Program, which had already been supplying daily food, not just supplemental aid, to 4 million people, is now facing that this number will rise to 12 million people. These are people completely dependent on receiving all their daily food, or they will die. In addition, another 12 million need supplemental food.

Dr. Kortunov led off his remarks with three fundamental points: supply the food; act on the medical needs, COVID-19 in particular; and get fuel to people. Later in the dialogue, he forcefully made the additional point that, with the right policies and follow-through, we could expect to see Afghanistan, this beautiful mountainous nation, become the “Switzerland” of Central Asia. There are the soils, the water, the location, the resources, the youth and all the other assets.