

## **EDITORIAL**

# The Spirit of Operation Ibn Sina: India Ships Wheat to Afghanistan via Pakistan

by Marcia Merry Baker

Nov. 26—A shipment of 50,000 tons of wheat and life-saving medicines is currently making its way from India to Afghanistan, across Pakistan. Imran Khan, Pakistan’s Prime Minister, personally announced approval for the transit on November 22, which transit through Pakistan is otherwise prohibited. In recent times, only exports from Afghanistan to India could cross Pakistan, but not the other way around, due to the enmity between India and Pakistan. Now, for a common humanitarian project, India and Pakistan have set their enmity aside.

This is just one instance, not grand, but it is in the direction—the spirit—of Operation Ibn Sina, called for by Schiller Institute President Helga Zepp-LaRouche in October. She is calling for a multi-nation, all-out response to Afghanistan’s dire situation, to provide emergency aid, and infrastructure-building, with healthcare capacity in the forefront, and for an immediate return of Afghanistan’s now-frozen financial assets to the nation of Afghanistan. This is in the interest of all throughout the region, and worldwide.

This perspective is urgent for the 38 million people of Afghanistan, 95% of whom are without reliable food, as well as lacking water, shelter, fuel and power. The same driving spirit is needed to address the world hyperinflationary breakdown and pandemic, as well as to provide relief for all places of extreme need, including Haiti, Yemen, Syria, Libya, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and elsewhere.

Institutionally, this spirit was expressed in the

new white paper, “China and Africa in the New Era: A Partnership of Equals,” released today by China, on the eve of the Nov. 29-30 Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), which meets every three years, and will be held this year in Dakar, Senegal, as well as online. President Xi Jinping will address the Forum by video Nov. 29. The hallmark of the report’s message is how the Belt and Road Initiative serves the mutual benefit of Africa and China, and all participating nations.

The need for major multinational collaboration against the pandemic could not be more conspicuous than in the latest turn of events on the pandemic virus. Today, a new SARS-CoV-2 variant has been designated a “variant of concern” by the World Health Organization, which dubbed it Omicron. First identified in recent weeks in South Africa, which has proficiency in genetic mapping, the virus has since shown to have been present in many places in Africa, and has travelled outside Africa, showing up in Hong Kong, Israel, and Belgium. Among the features of concern about Omicron, are mutations of its protein spikes which may allow it “to escape,” as the epidemiologists say, the current vaccines. These and other traits are still under scrutiny.

The first reaction in the trans-Atlantic countries today was to “pull up the drawbridge and fill up the moat” to fend off Omicron by banning travel to eight designated African countries. Whatever justifiable role travel bans and lockdowns may have, what is needed

overall is what is spelled out by former U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Joycelyn Elders in her “Open Letter to Virologists and Medical Experts Around the World to Address the COVID-19 Pandemic,” released on November 23, 2021.

However, the pathological commitment to geopolitics is still blinding the trans-Atlantic to reality of all kinds, and what must be done. Worse, it hardens people to not give a damn. Look at the latest of what is called the “migrant crisis”—in the Americas and in Europe, which is really a terrible expression of the breakdown of the West. The recent decades of multiple so-called R2P (Right To Protect) wars and forced austerity have inevitably uprooted millions of people, now roaming in desperation to find some place on Earth to be able to live and work in peace.

Look at the English Channel. On one day this month, 1,000 people tried to cross from France to land in Britain. On Wednesday, Nov. 24, twenty-seven people died when their boat capsized, and meanwhile, the same day France interdicted 671 people, preventing them from attempting the crossing. So far this year, 25,000 have sought asylum in the U.K., after crossing the English Channel, and thousands more have entered by other means. On Sunday, Nov. 28,

there is the emergency meeting of European migration officials precipitated by the death of the 27 migrants in the English channel. But now a feud is in play between Britain and France. After Prime Minister Boris Johnson tweeted an open letter to President Emmanuel Macron with proposals including that France should take back Channel-crossers, Macron disinvited Priti Patel, the British Home Minister, from the Sunday meeting. Macron denounced the Johnson letter. No one is addressing the causes of the collapse and desperation.

This brings us again to the need for activation of people, wherever their location, to exert leadership for the policies that will end this quickening hell. Helga Zepp-LaRouche spoke of this in her Nov. 24 strategic weekly Schiller Institute [webcast](#). After reporting on the latest dismal government-formation process in Germany, bringing with it a very bad set of policies, she made the general point: “I can only say, people have to wake up and start to fight for a different policy. And that can only be peaceful cooperation with Russia and China, the development of the developing countries—Africa, Southwest Asia, together with the Belt and Road Initiative of China. So, the alternatives are there, but we need people to become very active in fighting for this.”