

Oasis Plan Conference

Russia: ‘A Large International Infrastructure Project ... Certainly a Very Attractive Idea’

by Ilya Andreev

The following is an edited transcript of the presentation by Ilya Andreev, First Secretary, Russian Federation Mission to the UN in New York, to the second panel of the April 13 conference of the Schiller Institute, “The Oasis Plan: The LaRouche Solution for Peace Through Development between Israel and Palestine and for all of Southwest Asia.” An article summarizing the conference and an 80 minute video of the highlights is available [here](#). The full proceedings are available [here](#).



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Ilya Andreev, First Secretary, Russian Federation Mission to the UN in New York.

tant and necessary to talk about the restoration of Palestine and change the development paradigm of the entire region, although this is not the most important task right now. The main thing today is an urgent and real ceasefire. This is the only way to prevent the apocalypse, after which there may be nothing left to restore. It must be borne in mind that the “Palestinian collapse” will inevitably engulf the entire region if the parties fail to reach peace agreements in the near future.

Dear participants, on the eve of the conference, the organizers published a fragment of an interview

Good afternoon, colleagues.

First of all, I would like to express our gratitude to the organizers of today’s conference for the opportunity to speak and share our views on the situation in the Gaza Strip, and in general, on the prospects for the development of the Southwest Asia region.

Unfortunately, we are witnessing a catastrophic humanitarian situation in Gaza, where, contrary to UN Security Council Resolution 2728, which demands an immediate ceasefire, the ruthless military operation of Israel continues. Two previously adopted UN Security Council resolutions on the issue of humanitarian access are also “not working.” Israel is still creating obstacles for humanitarian workers “on the ground” who are deprived of adequate and safe conditions. The shelling continues, killing civilians, medical and humanitarian personnel, as well as volunteers who have assumed the duty to help those in need in this difficult situation. One of the latest examples is the attack on the organization World Central Kitchen. Unfortunately, this is not a single case. This particular incident was widely publicized due to the fact that citizens of Western countries were killed.

In the current circumstances, it is of course impor-

with the founder of the international Schiller Institute, Mrs. Helga Zepp-LaRouche, as “food for thought.” We support the main message, which involves the implementation of the large-scale Oasis Plan to supply the region with water, including for irrigation needs. It is precisely such a large international infrastructure project that could serve as an incentive for the economies of Palestine, Syria, Yemen and other countries. Its launch would definitely have a positive impact on providing young people with jobs, including qualified ones; on creating conditions for the return of refugees; and on the economic stability of the entire region. This is certainly a very attractive idea.

Yes, it is obvious that its implementation depends not only on the political will of states, but also on significant investments. According to various expert estimates, Israel has already spent more than \$100 billion on the war in Gaza, and this is not counting the humanitarian aid that the international community is sending, or trying to send, to the region to deal with the consequences. I leave out the arguments about the price of human lives—it cannot be measured at all.

Just imagine that these funds could be used for

peaceful purposes, which, in theory, should be in the interests of Israel as well. Perhaps these resources would not have been enough to implement such a large-scale project [as the one] which Mrs. Zepp-LaRouche told us about, but the basis for it would definitely have been created. We could already see the multiplier effects in the economy, and growth incentives would definitely appear.

There are also estimates by the World Bank and the United Nations Development Program that the reconstruction of Gaza will require around \$18 billion as of today. UNCTAD [UN Conference on Trade and Development] is also working on the assessments. However, even the groundwater aquifers in Gaza are now damaged. Therefore, at this stage it is difficult to calculate how much time and money it will take to improve such a complex environmental situation in Gaza.

We continue to believe that the economic development of states based on open trade is the fundamental basis of stability. The fight against poverty, which is so often talked about in the UN system, is also based on the principle of economic development. It is impossible to ensure the elimination of hunger if you offer only

ready-to-eat food; you need to provide those in need with a “fishing rod.” States should pay more attention to infrastructure projects, including international ones. Such cooperation, based on the principles of mutual respect, actually creates those very strong industry ties and common ground that allow peoples to live in peace and harmony.

Dear ladies and gentlemen, unfortunately, today is not the best time to talk about the long-term prospects for an Israeli-Palestinian settlement. As I said, the primary task at the moment is to ensure that the “Swords of Iron” are sheathed again as soon as possible. Of course, this does not stop us from thinking about new approaches to the long-term resolution of one of the most complex and confusing conflicts of our time.

We are glad that such work is underway, including under the auspices of the Schiller Institute, and we are confident that it will be in demand after the start of the so-far delayed, but still inevitable fundamental transformations that will increasingly change both Palestinian and Israeli societies.

Thank you for your attention.

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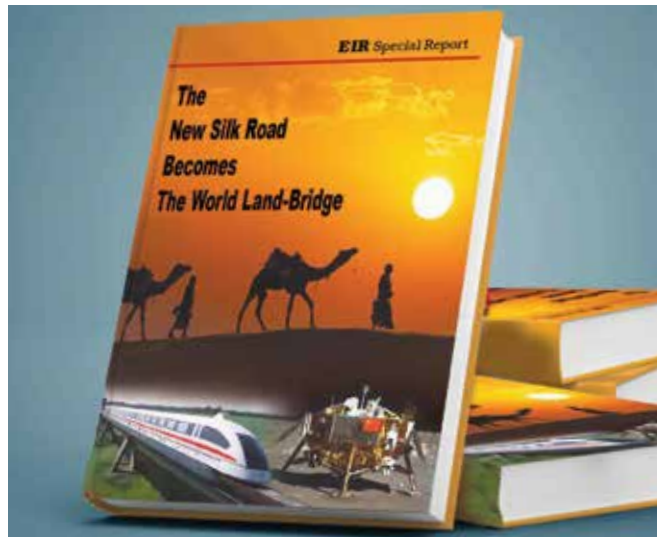
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