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A New International Security and Development Architecture To End War and Looting

by Helga Zepp-LaRouche

The following is an edited transcript of Helga Zepp-LaRouche's keynote address to the Sept. 4, 2026 EIR-IPC Roundtable, "An Alternative to War and Looting in the Americas." Zepp-LaRouche is editor-in-chief of Executive Intelligence Review (EIR), founder of the Schiller Institute, and convener of the International Peace Coalition (IPC). Subheads have been added. The video is available here.

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Helga Zepp-LaRouche

Hello, dear ladies and gentlemen. I will speak to you today about the pivotal role of Ibero-America in shaping the future: The new name for peace is development. It is actually a great pleasure for me to address you, albeit only in a virtual manner, since it brings forward very pleasant memories of previous visits to your continent, to Brazil, Peru, and Mexico.

The world finds itself at an unprecedented crossroads. Ordinary citizens all over the globe are horrified by a worsening strategic situation, and they fear for their future. Two regional wars in Ukraine and Southwest Asia are threatening to spin out of control. In the United States, an open debate about the possible use of tactical nuclear weapons has erupted. It is clear to anyone who has studied the matter that the use of only one nuclear weapon implies the danger of an escalation to a global nuclear war, which, if it comes to that, would be followed by a nuclear winter of 50 years, and all life on the planet would end.

The continued blockage of the Strait of Hormuz is impacting an already devastated global economy. Increased energy and fertilizer prices are worsening economic conditions for large segments of the world population, threatening hunger and economic devastation. The gap between the few becoming richer and richer, and the billions who are becoming poorer and poorer, is widening.

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Aftermath of an attack by U.S. forces on an Iranian oil tanker six nautical miles off Kharg Island in the Persian Gulf on August 5, 2026.

So, what can Ibero-America, which is geographically quite distant from these spots mentioned, but has its own problems, do to show a way out of the crisis? The answer was already given by Pope Paul VI in his encyclical, *Populorum Progressio*: the new name for peace is development. If Brazil takes a leading role in the

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Leaders of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), member states, and dialogue partners meet at the SCO summit in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, September 1, 2026.

promotion of the landmark development project, the Bi-Oceanic Railway corridor linking Peru's Chancay Deepwater Seaport on the Pacific with the Atlantic coast, this would be a signal for all other countries in Ibero-America to join together in a development strategy benefiting all people of the continent.

The countries of the Global South, which de facto represent the Global Majority of 85% of the world population, are in an epochal change, striving to end an era of 500 years of colonialism. This system of suppression, which continued to exist even after the formal acquisition of independence in the form of neocolonialism, as was warned by Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, and Indonesian President Sukarno at the Bandung Conference in 1955, must be ended once and for all. All countries of the Global South aspire to overcome a condition where they are only raw material exporters, by developing the value chain in their own countries, with the perspective to industrialize and become middle-range-income countries in the not-so-distant future.

The just-concluded summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, reflects the fact that a new world economic order is being built. There were 10 member states which—not counting the 15 dialogue partners and 2 observer states—represent 42% of the world population, about one-quarter of the world's GDP and 24% of the territory of the planet, who declared their intent to build a system based on common development. This was followed by a highly successful Eastern Economic Forum in Vladivostok with the participation of 7,000 representatives of over 70 countries, all determined to build up their nations into modern industrial states.

Industrialization Requires Infrastructure

For any industrialization, the development of basic infrastructure is the indispensable precondition. That was already recognized by Alexander von Humboldt, who, together with his brother Wilhelm von Humboldt, was one of the towering giants of the German Classical period. And during his great American journey from 1799 to 1804, he recognized, through his own experience, how much the economic development of the Spanish and Portuguese colonies was hampered by a lack of transport connections. He realized that the river systems of the Orinoco and the Amazon, including where they connect in the Casiquiare, had a crucial importance for trade and regional connectivity. He developed several proposals for inter-oceanic corridors and canals across Central America. He argued explicitly that the economic benefit of such transport routes would not be the admission of the fee earned but the improvement of the framework for the general economic conditions through such infrastructure. Humboldt regarded Ibero-America as one geographically and economically connected space, whose development would be sped up and improved through better roads, channels, and later railroads, including the natural connections among rivers, and potentials for worldwide trade and exchange.

It was that vision of Alexander von Humboldt, which my late husband, Lyndon LaRouche, had in mind when we traveled in May 1982, during the Malvinas War, to Mexico, where President López Portillo had invited us, in a situation where the Mexican peso was under attack from the speculators, and the total debt of Mexico, Brazil, and Argentina had grown to the equivalent of $200 billion. Out of these discussions came the proposal for

an integrated Ibero-American-wide economic development plan, the so-called Operation Juárez, which referred to the historic cooperation between President Lincoln and President Benito Juárez during the time of the American Civil War.

Operation Juárez proposed an integrated Latin American infrastructure program, as well as credit mechanisms for development. Both Alexander von Humboldt and my husband regarded the Bi-Oceanic Railway corridor between Brazil and Peru as an indispensable backbone for the development of Ibero-America. Operation Juárez also proposed an Ibero-American common market, the establishment of a common banking institution to facilitate exchange of credit, currency, and trade among them, and as an institution of common defense of the financial and economic interests of the member nations and the continent as a whole.

President López Portillo started to implement these proposals on September 1, 1982, by establishing a national bank and nationalizing the banking system. And for a short moment, the financial interests of Wall Street and the City of London feared that all of Latin America would form a debtors' cartel and bankrupt the system. Contrary to these dystopian fantasies, that was not what LaRouche had proposed, but an orderly reorganization by transforming short-term debt with high interest rates into long-term development credit with low interest rates. These measures would have organized the banking system and created the basis for prosperity of the entire continent of the Americas.

But at that time, the necessary unity could not be mobilized. The consequences were what Argentina had to experience in the Malvinas War, where Argentina was at that time not backed up by the United States. Now, more than four decades later, these $200 billion look almost like the proverbial peanuts. The U.S. federal debt bypassed the $40 trillion barrier a couple of weeks ago. The U.S. federal budget for 2027 puts over one-third into the defense budget, $1.5 trillion, and for interest payments, $1 trillion.

Economic Suffocation of the West

The Western world is currently suffocating under a $2.4 *quadrillion* speculative financial bubble, which cannot conceivably be paid. The physical economic production ultimately required to sustain such a financial bubble has been collapsing. And the effort to replace productive jobs in areas of the physical economy with gigantic investments in rearmament is threatening to produce the same result as the one achieved by German central bank head Hjalmar Schacht, financing the war machine of the National Socialists with MEFO bills almost 90 years ago. This rearmament becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy and will lead to World War III.

Coordinación de Material Gráfico

Mexican President José López Portillo participates in a rally at Mexico City's Plaza de la Constitución in support of nationalization of the banks, Sept. 3, 1982.

The time has come that the countries of the Global South have to assume a leadership role in the world of today, and prove that Kissinger's mantra that history is not made by the South is utterly false. If the countries of Ibero-America unite around a common development plan, they can assume sovereignty of all and determine their own future. Rather than having the South American continent be a playground for a geopolitical confrontation, a united Ibero-America can influence the course of world politics.

Brazil is a founding member of the BRICS, and in that capacity can play the role of a mediator between the Global Majority and the Global North, invoking the tradition of the spirit of cooperation between Brazilian President Getúlio Vargas and U.S. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. By putting the Bi-Oceanic Railway

Ricardo Stuckert/PR

Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva addresses the G7 in Évian-les-Bains, France, June 16-17, 2026.

corridor on the agenda, Brazil can invite both China and the United States to participate in the perspective of common development.

Why would the United States agree to such a perspective? Pope Leo XIV, who is a guiding voice of the highest moral standard in the world today, during his recent trip to Spain, provided a moral standard for how to deal with the migrant crisis. He demanded that migrants must not only be integrated into the country where they are seeking asylum, based on their dignity as being individuals in the image of God, but that equally, if not more important, the world has to create conditions where the people can remain in the country they are coming from, because everybody likes it better to be in their home country than to take the burden of flight upon them. But that means that there has to be a perspective for the economic development of these countries, so that the refugees can remain home and be part of the economic development of their country.

If the countries of Ibero-America unite around a common development perspective based on the building of the Bio-Oceanic Railway corridor and related infrastructure projects, and if they can come to a fruitful cooperation between the United States and China, together with the countries of the continent, then very quickly the migrant crisis will disappear and will be replaced by the perspective of a common development of all nations of the Americas.

A Powerful Appeal to Pope Leo

There is right now a powerful appeal to Pope Leo XIV circulating internationally, with thousands of signatures being gathered. It suggests that the Pope should convene a summit of the leaders of the most powerful nations of the world. In a few weeks, Pope Leo will visit Peru, a nation where he lived and worked for many years. This could become an extremely important opportunity to present the Pope with the intention of the people of Ibero-America for such a joint development plan in his spirit. Let us mobilize as many people and institutions in all countries of the continent to deliver such a message to the Holy Father. Let us send delegations to Peru from all countries for his visit, as a welcome to demonstrate the will of the people of Ibero-America that we are hearing his beautiful vision.

To re-elect Brazilian President Lula da Silva, who has been playing an extremely important role as a world leader of this new emerging system, would likewise send a very important signal to the whole world.

As the old colonial order, which was based on dominance and suppression, is crumbling, a new order is being built based on the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, the UN Charter, and the idea that all nations have an equal right to development. With it, crumbles the barbaric, typically brutish conception of Winston Churchill that countries don't have friendships, only interests. The new paradigm will be based on true friendship among nations and respect for their unique contribution to the universal history of mankind. After all, we are the only creative species in the universe known so far. If the nations of Ibero-America can unite for their own development, bringing together those countries who would otherwise be involved in geopolitical confrontation, they can be the initiators of a new era of mankind where the barbaric idea that conflicts will always be resolved by war can be put aside forever.

Thank you.

Closing Remarks to Panel 1

Well, on the surface of things, obviously I agree with the pessimistic outlook, because I'm living in Germany right now, and I can only tell you that if you listen to the government, the main politicians, the mass media right now, you would think you are in an insane asylum of people who are on a kamikaze suicide mission trying to provoke war with the strongest nuclear power on the planet, Russia. They have only the chance of a snowflake in Hell to win, so why are they doing it?

I have been thinking a lot about what one can do under these circumstances, which are, you could argue, almost hopeless. It is my absolutely deepest conviction—and that is based on decades-long work with the Global South. After all, my late husband proposed the International Development Bank in 1975 to replace the IMF with a credit mechanism which would enable long-term development of the Global South. We worked with the Non-Aligned Movement, and for more than half a century we have been involved with that. That is why I am optimistic. In 1975, it was just an idea; now you have the Non-Aligned Movement in the form of the Global South, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the BRICS countries, the whole perspective of the Belt and Road Initiative, which has transformed the globe tremendously. Options exist now that did not exist before.

It is my absolute conviction that the only factor that would make a difference would be if the Global South is speaking out so loudly that they cannot be ignored. I believe that if the people in Germany, France, Italy, the United States, and other countries knew what the reality of the situation is—including what the idea is of people in the Global South about the West—they would wake up. You have maybe 20% of the people in all of these countries who even have an inkling of what is going on. The rest of them are under the wrong impression and subject to cognitive warfare, being kept from even recognizing things as they are.

I think the only hope we have is that the Global South unites and offers an opportunity to cooperate. China has made many very good examples of how to bring in the idea of a harmonious development for all. I think that model is gaining more strength than security cooperation, which does not bring development to the countries of the world.

So, if I have provoked or helped to provoke a little bit the idea of what the view of the West is [from the rest of the world], I think that is very important. Because I think that is the only thing which can wake up the people in my country and other countries of the so-called West.

So, I want to thank you, and we should absolutely continue this dialogue, because it is the only hope to prevent a disaster for all of us.