

Peace through development for the Balkans

The following declaration was issued on April 28, and is being circulated for signatures internationally by the Schiller Institute.

The obvious fallacy in current NATO policy respecting the Balkans is, that the mere fact, that one professes to be acting on behalf of a moral concern, does not mean that the action may not produce results directly contrary to that professed motive.

Such were the considerations in definitions of justified and unjustified warfare. War is not morally justified, no matter what the professed moral pretext, unless that war is necessary as the only alternative, and unless the means applied are likely to succeed in removing the cause for which a war is fought.

The present situation in the Balkans affirms the wisdom of the aforementioned considerations, because so far the military campaign has not been successful, but rather has caused a deterioration of the global security situation, and led the Kosovar Albanians into catastrophe.

We, the signers state that:

1. there is no durable or permanent and just solution of the crisis without reaching a strategic consensus among leading NATO states and leading nations like Russia and China;
2. no single regional crisis can be observed or treated separately from the global financial crisis and its consequences;
3. only by reaffirming the concept based on the development of the real economy, can we have a solution for Kosova, the Balkan region, and southeastern Europe;
4. we greet and support the initiative for the regional development plan presented by U.S. President Clinton.

Therefore, we demand:

1. to reach an urgent diplomatic solution for Kosovo, using UN Secretary General Kofi Annan's plan as a basis, to be conducted through the UN Security Council, and with the full consent of Russia, China, India, and other key nations;
2. to work out a "Marshall Plan" for the region, using the already-existing materials on postwar reconstruction plans for Bosnia-Herzegovina and the region as an integral part of the overall Eurasian development program;

3. an approach to reform the world monetary and financial system by creating an architecture of the "New Bretton Woods" without delay (i.e., fixed exchange rates, protection of national economies, and sovereign credit generation for economic development);
4. an urgent and sharp break with the International Monetary Fund and World Bank practice of imposing austerity measures and unacceptable financial conditionalities on sovereign nations;
5. debt moratoria for the economies of the region, which have been ruined by war and enforced shock therapy;
6. use of the model of the Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau during the post-World War II period reconstruction of Germany;
7. joining the initiative for launching the project of the Eurasian Land-Bridge as a spine of Eurasian development in cooperation with all interested nations;
8. inclusion of all Balkan and southeastern European states into the Land-Bridge project.

This would include exemplary projects such as:

Full rehabilitation of the Danube waterway as the most important European waterway. Development and expansion of the rail line connecting Munich, Vienna, Budapest, Nis, Sofia, Plowdiw, and Istanbul as the southern corridor of the new Eurasian Continental Land-Bridge. Expansion of water systems (canals, etc.) of rivers such as Drava and Sava; linkage of the Danube to the Morava and Vardar rivers, thereby establishing navigable waterways through Serbia, Macedonia, and Greece to the Aegean Sea. These waterways would also serve as infrastructure corridors for the development of industry.

Development of four main regional corridors of rail/road and water connections, such as:

Salzburg to Villach, Ljubljana, Zagreb, Belgrade, Nis, Skopje, Thessaloniki, Athens;

Linz to Graz, Maribor, Zagreb, Karlovac, Split, Ploce, Dubrovnik, Durres, Athens;

Budapest to Pecs, Osijek, Tuzla, Sarajevo, Mostar, Ploce;

Vienna, Gyor, Szombatheley, Nagykanizsa, Maribor, Ljubljana, Monfalcone, Mestre, Milan.

The development of modern agriculture in the whole region as another major priority.

Signed:

Faris Nanic, Secretary General of the Party of Democratic Action (SDA) of Bosnia in Croatia;
Chief of Staff of President Alija Izetbegovic of Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1996

Helga Zepp-LaRouche, President of the Schiller Institute