

Live Dialogue with Helga Zepp-LaRouche

BRICS Challenge to the Global North

The following is an edited transcript of the Schiller Institute Webcast with Helga Zepp-LaRouche, which aired on Wednesday, Aug. 30, 2023. The video is available [here](#). Subheads have been added.

Harley Schlanger: Hello, and welcome to our weekly dialogue with Helga Zepp-LaRouche, founder and chairwoman of the Schiller Institute. Today is Wednesday, Aug. 30, 2023, and I'm your host Harley Schlanger. To join the discussion, send questions or comments to questions@schillerinstitute.org.

Since our last webcast, the BRICS Summit concluded in Johannesburg, South Africa, with results that defied the predictions of many in the West that there could be no agreement on expansion. Instead, six new members were admitted, giving the group a significantly larger GDP than the G7 group of nations. What, in your view Helga, was accomplished by the Summit, and what are your expectations as to what you might see ahead from the BRICS?

Helga Zepp-LaRouche: This is a breakthrough for all of mankind, because it is the desire of the majority of the countries of the Global South to end a system which began really about 1500 with colonialism, and which kept these countries of the Global South in significant underdevelopment—denying them their innate rights to develop like all other human beings and nations on the planet.

So I think this is a tremendous, joyful event, and if the West would just give up their geopolitical viewpoint, they would rejoice, because actually, the Western countries are riding on the *Titanic*, with a collapsing economy—at least concerning Europe, that's for sure the case—with the threat of a disintegration of the entire trans-Atlantic financial system; and if they were smart, they would just say, "it's fantastic," that the BRICS, now expanded to be 11 countries, represent now 47% of the world's population, and I think more than one-third

of the world's buying power. So they would say these countries are on a trajectory of growth, of moving forward, of educating their youth: This is a tremendous chance for us to reorganize our ways.

But that will probably require a few more shocks, because right now it's ridiculous. I would advise our viewers, that is, you: do not just read what the *Washington Post* or the *New York Times* or some other liberal paper is saying about the BRICS: Go to the internet, download the speech of South Africa's President Cyril [Ramaphosa](#), of Brazil's President Luiz Inácio [Lula da Silva](#), of India's Prime Minister [Narendra Modi](#), of Chi-



The 15th BRICS Summit marked a tectonic shift in global relations. Shown: the leaders of the five BRICS nations. Six additional nations were admitted at the summit in Johannesburg, South Africa, Aug. 22–24, 2023.

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na's President [Xi Jinping](#), of Russia's Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, and of Russia's President [Vladimir Putin](#).

Read these speeches as a single piece, and you will see that there is a common devotion to overcome the real enemies of mankind: poverty, underdevelopment, hunger. And there is an incredible optimism, because just two days before the summit took place, India launched its successful lunar mission, becoming the fourth country on Earth to successfully soft-land a spacecraft [on the Moon, and the first to land near] the Moon's South Pole, and from there they have made tremendous discoveries. Prime Minister Modi very joyfully said that

he will upgrade the Indian space program and turn it into a *space exploration consortium* of the BRICS, meaning that all the BRICS countries will now participate in a joint mission to explore space.

Now, if you read what these ridiculous newspapers were writing about it, they said, “The only reason why the Indians are happy is because the Russian experiment a few days earlier failed, and the Indians are now happy that they are superior...” It’s not true! That did not happen! There was an incredible sense of joy by everybody, and I think the West is just completely hysterical because they do not want to reflect on their ways.



Cyril Ramaphosa, President of South Africa and host of the BRICS Summit (center), speaking during a media briefing, Aug. 24, 2023.

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The Power of the BRICS-11

This new combination is extremely powerful: it’s optimistic; it offers opportunities to all the countries that are participating. For example, three large oil-producing countries are participating. Russia is already in the BRICS. Then joining are Iran, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, which practically means that the previous control over the oil prices by the U.S., by the West, is no longer there. That means a lot because that takes away the power of imposing unilateral sanctions. So there is a complete change in the power-structure, creating real hysteria, I would call it, which is the reason why they’re not able to portray what really has happened, namely, a tremendous step forward in the history of mankind, giving, for the first time, a chance to overcome the underdevelopment of billions of people.

And somebody who thinks normally, and not geopolitically, or oligarchically, or something of that sort, would be happy about that! That is progress—that is progress for all of mankind. But as I said, it will probably take a few more shocks before people realize that.

Schlanger: Helga, I’ve received emails expressing enthusiasm for the BRICS summit and also happiness for your role in building support to make changes in the Global North, in the U.S., and Europe. One example of that is a question from Pat, who asks if you attended the Summit, and then he asked: “Can the new architecture of the BRICS change a nation which is resisting or opposing it?”

Zepp-LaRouche: No, unfortunately, I did not par-

ticipate in the BRICS Summit, because that was a meeting for government leaders. But I read the speeches and I looked over the coverage in different countries, so I think I have a fairly good grasp of the dynamic. The process is gaining momentum. There are I think 12 more countries, maybe more, that have already formally applied; there are more than 40 more that have expressed great interest to join. The various spokesmen of the BRICS have said that there will be a second wave and a third wave of application, registration or making candidates members.

So I expect the BRICS in maybe a year or so, two years at most, to become really *the* most—it’s already now becoming it, but it will consolidate as the most important, most powerful economic group of nations. And they have clearly said they are open to everybody. They have not said they are against the West, it’s just not true! There were ridiculous headlines in some media saying “this is the biggest threat to NATO,” but that’s not true! Don’t believe it! These countries have never said that they want to make war against the North. And in a certain sense, you have to check your assumptions, because all these countries want to do, is they want to eliminate a system which did not allow them to use their own resources for their own development. And now, they insist that they should have the right to process their own materials, to increase the productivity of what they are doing, and that they be provided credit lines which will allow them to make the kinds of investments to make this possible.

Anybody who has the right thinking, or thinks like a

human being, should be happy! It's nothing to be worried about unless—it's like these things when you shout in the woods, you get an echo back; so, if you shout "Enemy! Enemy! Enemy!" you have a chance that you will actually turn people and countries into enemies; but if you reach out and say "Lets cooperate for the benefit of all of us," then you get that result. So I can only say: I think the countries that will be negative will find themselves sidelined and I think the majority of the world will move in the right direction. That's my absolute belief.

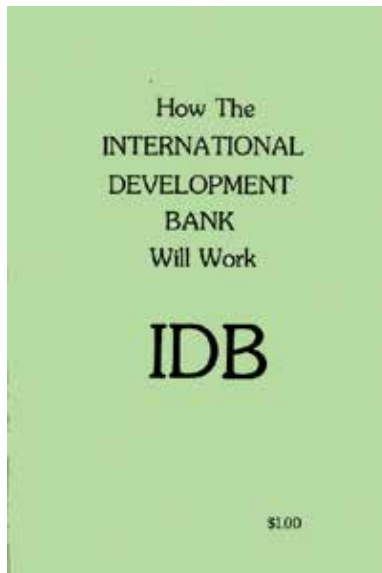
Schlanger: There was a report today that the United Arab Emirates will inject capital into the BRICS New Development Bank. And we have a question: "How significant is this announcement, and will this open the doorway for other nations to invest?"

Zepp-LaRouche: Absolutely. I think the different sovereign wealth funds, especially of the Gulf States which have tremendous reserves, will definitely boost the ability of the New Development Bank to become what President Lula said some months ago, when it was upgraded in Shanghai, that the New Development Bank will become the great bank of the Global South.

Lyndon LaRouche and the New Development Bank

This makes me, in particular, very happy, because I feel that my late husband, Lyndon LaRouche, had an extremely important role in getting the ideas produced and then circulated to eventually lead to such a result. In 1975, coming back from a trip to Iraq and celebrations of the Ba'ath Party where he had met many Third World leaders and discussed the problems there, he made a major breakthrough, a revolutionary proposal to replace the IMF with an International Development Bank.

Now that was a really earthshaking idea, because it dared to challenge the



Campaigner Publications
Lyndon LaRouche's 1975 strategic policy proposal.

conditionalities of the IMF, which was the mechanism that prevented developing countries from having access to credit without conditions, forcing them to pay debt first, before they could invest in social systems and thus keeping them backward in general. His IDB proposal was the idea that, at that time, every year, there should be credit creation of \$400 billion for technology transfer to the developing countries, going into well-defined projects. And that idea, we circulated one full year to the Non-Aligned Movement at the time, and they adopted in their final resolution in 1976 in Colombo, Sri Lanka practically that idea of the IDB, calling for a just new world economic order.

The IDB text is still the best and clearest economic-scientific description of how such a bank should function. ["How the International Development Bank Will [Work](#)"] You can see that the ideas are actually becoming a reality.

For example: China and Iran just made a deal, whereby China will help Iran enlarge their Khomeini Airport in Tehran for \$2.5 billion, and Iran will pay in oil worth \$2.5 billion. So what normally would appear in the statistics as a \$5 billion trade volume, now appears at zero, because it's 2.5 vs 2.5, so it balances out.



CC/Princeofpersia1

In exchange for China contributing the equivalent of \$2.5 billion to enlarge Iran's Imam Khomeini International Airport, China will receive the equivalent of \$2.5 billion in Iranian oil. No money changes hands.

Italy's Michele Geraci, a former Undersecretary of State at the Ministry of Economic Development, said that while it may look like Iran and China are going back to barter deals, this actually gives you a foretaste of how the new currency will function, basically that you will have trade without currencies. A new unit of account will be established which will facilitate such trade through a clearinghouse, and then it will be expanded.

So I think this is exactly what Lyndon LaRouche had proposed with the IDB and in a later [paper](#), "On a Basket of Hard Commodities: Trade Without Currency." And I would say, everybody who wants to know how this new mechanism will function should go to our websites and get a copy of these documents and study them. Because that is actually the basis for what these countries are implementing right now.

Schlanger: There are emails coming in from people asking what they can do to support this. One of the things they can do is to register for our [Sept. 9 conference](#). The Schiller Institute will host the conference, "Let us Join Hands with the Global Majority To Create a New Chapter in World History!" There will be more coming out on that.

Now, Josh writes: "How does a guy from Minnesota get a redevelopment bank bond without investing in Wall Street or the City of London?" Well, you have to stay tuned for that one, because I'm not sure that they're selling bonds to the average investor yet.

But Helga, I want to move on to another aspect of the strategic situation: There are numerous sources, including the *Wall Street Journal* which say that President Joe Biden and the NATO allies intend to keep providing money and military assistance to Ukraine well into next year. David Ignatius, who's often a CIA leaker for the *Washington Post*, said that "strategic patience is the best weapon against Putin." The question is: "What could change this stance in the West? Are there prospects for new peace initiatives?"

Zepp-LaRouche: I think the idea of keeping this war going is the most cynical perspective you can imag-



Michele Geraci, a former Undersecretary of State in Italy's Ministry of Economic Development: Exactly as LaRouche had proposed with the IDB, [the BRICS] is working toward establishing a new unit of account, which will facilitate expanding trade [among BRICS members] through a clearinghouse.

ine, because it all happens on the back of the Ukrainian people! Look, the casualties are enormous on both sides, but I think on the Ukrainian side they're much higher; the Ukrainian people are being destroyed; the economy is destroyed, so it's just a total catastrophe. There was just now a warning of several very prestigious, high-ranking people in Germany, warning that World War I was afterwards regarded as the great tragedy of the 20th century. And we should absolutely make sure that the Ukraine war does not become the great trag-

edy of the 21st century, because it does have the potential to lead to a nuclear war.

I think that is very prescient in the consciousness of many people, so there are many more efforts to go for a peace negotiation. The Africans played a very important role; it was again discussed in the context of the BRICS Summit, the summit between President Xi Jinping and the Africans immediately afterwards; then the initiative of Pope Francis is still very much at issue; also [Katalin Novák], the Hungarian President, was just in Rome and earlier in Kiev. There are many people still trying to find a solution to the whole question, but it does require more people in the so-called Global North to wake up to the dangers.

The Desperation of the German People

I think the mood in the population—I know it in the United States from the accounts I have heard, but in Germany, for example, people are really, absolutely desperate! You wouldn't know this if you only watch the TV or read the newspapers: But look at what is happening as a result of the sanctions against Russia, which did not ruin the Russian economy, as our unspeakable foreign minister is saying; it is not true about Russia. Russia is doing relatively well!

But it's ruining Germany: Germany is in a free fall! You have right now, belatedly, finally, some of the major industrial associations are asking the government to intervene and do likewise what the United States government did with the Inflation Reduction Act, subsidizing investments, lowering the energy prices—because the energy price is killing German industry!

Many are closing down. You have no idea what's going on in Germany: You have bakeries closing down, service shops like barbers, other services; Mittelstand, middle-level industry either closing down or going abroad, investing in the U.S., lured by the advantages of the Inflation Reduction Act, or going to China. Many so-called "hidden champions" that are already invested in China, when they're asked "are you planning to come back?" they say, "Absolutely not. There is no way we can come back to Germany under these conditions!"

So you see right now a collapse of the German economy, which is unbelievable. And I think this will come to a breaking point, because the idea that you can keep the war economy going by producing more and more military armaments, weapons, while at the same time neglecting the real productive base of the economy, will go to a breaking point. I don't know if it will come already this fall: At the end of the fiscal year, you always have a crunch. It may come through unprecedented developments.

But I think the West right now, including NATO, including the war machine is a giant standing on clay feet. The governments conducting these policies are gambling with the wellbeing of the people. They are not only incompetent, they are not leaders; they are bunglers for the most part. They are ruining what generations and generations have built up in the post-war period, and I think we have right now, in some countries, including in Germany, we have the worst governments in the post-war history, and the population is becoming hysterical. It cannot be swept under the carpet for long.

Schlanger: One of the things people can do, is to circulate your "Appeal to the Citizens of the Global North: We Must Support the Construction of a New Just World Economic Order!" to join hands with the Global South. It is available on the Schiller Institute [homepage](#). We've gotten a tremendous response to it, many signatures, but we need more. We need more and more people involved, to push these stubborn governments into reality.

We have a question from a regular viewer, Menashe, who asks: "What are the implications of the current round of *coups d'état* in Africa, to the development of the BRICS nations?" There was another coup today in Gabon. What are your thoughts on that?

Why West Africans Support the Coups

Zepp-LaRouche: I think that is an expression of a similar phenomenon as the BRICS countries expanding its fight against colonialism. But these coups in West

Africa are basically driven by the same motive: In the so-called "*Françafrique*" (the former French colonialist part of Africa), the French are the most hated people. The Europeans are reacting to that, completely ridiculously. There is right now a meeting of EU foreign ministers taking place in Spain, and all they're discussing—from the initial coverage they're discussing to try to encourage ECOWAS to undertake military operations against these governments. The only thing that could be accomplished by that is to set the entire African continent up in flames!

But the majority of the populations of these countries are supporting these coups, and therefore, I think the only thing the Europeans can accomplish is to discredit themselves even more in the eyes of the world as a whole. They are trying to continue the so-called "war on terrorism," training police, training military. But we have seen in Afghanistan or Iraq, how they sat there for decades building military things and then they leave at a certain point, and you see what happens in the meantime: No development has occurred whatsoever! Not in Afghanistan, not in Iraq. And then you have a blowback, and that comes in the form of a new system forming itself.

So it is really time also for the so-called "strategic experts" to reflect on the fact that if they're so smart, why do all their objectives constantly fail?

Schlanger: I have three more questions, and I'll keep them short, so we can get them in. It was announced today that a court in Pakistan has suspended the conviction and sentence that led to the jailing of Prime Minister Imran Khan. And a regular contributor from the United Kingdom asks: "Will there be a backlash against the U.S. given the leak that Blinken had ordered the removal of Khan in March 2022?"

Zepp-LaRouche: I don't know. All I can say is that the followers of Imran Khan are many. I think Pakistan has a tremendous economic crisis. Given its geographic location, it's the natural part of the Belt and Road Initiative, the New Silk Road. There are tremendous developments going on in the whole South and Central Asian region. I know this is still a very contested area, because this is the region where the British had their "Great Game" focussed, basically the plan to destroy Russia and more recently also to destabilize China. So it's a very tense situation, but I think if justice prevails then Imran Khan will be reinstated, and if there is a new election, I think he has a very good chance of winning.

Operation Juárez

Schlanger: This is a question I think you will be happy about from Anthony who asks: “Can you talk about Lyn’s role in the López Portillo attempt at an oil-for-technology deal that was crushed by Brzezinski? Given that now we have the China-Iran deal you mentioned, what was the proposal that Lyn made with Mexico’s President José López Portillo?”

Zepp-LaRouche: Oh, that was a very good thing. In 1982, when the Wall Street banks had organized an incredible capital flight out of Mexico, President López Portillo called in Lyndon LaRouche to help him to defend the Mexican economy against such manipulations. We flew to Mexico and within less than three



Coordinación de Material Grafico

Mexican President José Lopez Portillo rallies a crowd in support of his nationalization of the banks, establishing of capital controls, and issuing lines of credit. The Zócalo square in Mexico City, Sept. 3, 1982.

weeks, Lyn wrote a book-length report Operation Juárez, which was not only a plan for the defense of Mexico, but also for the entirety of the Latin American infrastructural integration.

Shortly thereafter, on Sept. 1, 1982, López Portillo implemented that: He made capital controls, he established a national bank, he started to give credit lines. And at that point there was a complete furor in Wall Street, in Frankfurt, the City of London because they thought the Latin American banks had formed a debtors’ cartel—which never was the idea. The idea was to have an orderly reorganization of the banking system.

Now, unfortunately, at that time Brazil and Argentina did not act in solidarity with Mexico, and therefore, when

López Portillo left office at the end of November 1982, the whole effort came to an end. But now you have a revival of that, in the form of President Lula of Brazil being a very active member of the BRICS, and at the BRICS Summit, he made a very strong point for Argentina to be integrated into the BRICS. Mexico at this point is not asking to be part of the BRICS, but that is what every Mexican always says “for historical and geographic reasons,” of the position where Mexico is located.

So I think this is definitely also an idea which is very much alive in the present configuration.

Schlanger: Helga, I have a question from Maryanne, who I think is expressing the natural response, given the coverup in the media and the lies. She asks: “If we go with the BRICS”—I assume she means the United States—“does that mean as Americans we lose the Constitution and our Bill of Rights?”

Zepp-LaRouche: [laughs] No! No, no, to the contrary, you’ll regain it! Because right now, I think the Constitution is not exactly very safe, but it is the principle of the BRICS to absolutely be based on a partnership of sovereign countries. The principle of sovereignty is very much the starting point for this whole new system, and also the non-interference into the internal affairs of the other country, the respective country. Now, that means that all the

things which belong correctly and justifiably to American history, accomplishments in history, will absolutely remain the sovereign right of the United States. And in a certain sense, the only difference is that it will allow those same rights for every other country as well.

Actually, the American President who had the same kind of idea, very much influenced by Leibniz, was John Quincy Adams, who as you know had also been an ambassador in Europe. He spoke several languages, and he had the very distinct idea that cooperation among sovereign nations is the only way you can have peace. And he’s famous for having said it was not the role of the United States to go out and “chase foreign monsters,” but to actually form such a partnership of “perfectly sover-

eign republics” or nation-states. And I think that that is the big challenge that we have to solve.

Nuclear War Would Be the End of Humanity

And I really would like you to sign this “Appeal to the Citizens of the Global North: We Must Support the Construction of a New Just World Economic Order!” because the peace of the whole world, the future of all of humanity really does not depend on what the BRICS are doing. They’re doing what they had intended for a long time. Now they are getting their act together, they’re forming a system which will be beneficial

to all of them. But if we can avoid the very present danger of the whole situation going out of control, leading to nuclear war—and don’t kid yourself, if it ever comes to the use of nuclear weapons, then that will be it: There will be absolutely no chance for humanity to survive it. And it is the nature of nuclear war, that once you use one nuclear weapon, all of them will be used, and then the result will be a nuclear winter for 10 or more years, and all life on the planet will be extinct, because no one will have anything to eat any more, because nothing will grow any more. And that is the end of everything. No historian will be left to even account for it.

That’s the danger we face, and that’s why we should be strongly mobilized, and you should make a decision that you will become active to—you know, in a period like this when it’s very clear that we are in a transformation, as I keep saying, once in a thousand years—because the period of colonialism was 600 years and that is definitely coming to an end, and it will end either with the extinction of all of civilization, or a new era of mankind in which we all live together, fo-



George Peter Alexander Healy

President John Quincy Adams held that cooperation among sovereign nations is the only way to achieve a durable peace.

cussed on the real enemies of mankind, that is: hunger, poverty, underdevelopment, the danger of being destroyed by an asteroid, unconquered disease—and we should focus on these, the common aims of mankind, and work together.

Consortia of Creativity

I think what Prime Minister Modi said about the BRICS consortium for space collaboration: We should have such consortia for all the fields that are the common aims of mankind! We could make such miracles, and we could spend all our time in creativity, in doing things that make the life of all people

better. And I think that is the moment we are in right now!

So I would really appeal to you, become active. Don’t sit there on your couch as a potato, but make the step to become an activist, to join our various activities, circulate this “Appeal to the Citizens of the Global North” with your signature, and collect the signatures of others. And get into contact with us, because we really

need to put the whole world on a different trajectory, and you are important for that.



ISRO

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi proposed a BRICS Space Consortium at the BRICS Summit in South Africa. Shown: India’s Pragyan rover begins its exploration of the lunar surface, Aug. 23, 2023.

Schlanger: Well, thank you Helga for joining us again this week, and I’d like to thank all of you who sent in emails expressing support and interest in this. But as Helga just said, you need to do more than just express support: Join the fight. You’ll find the “Appeal to the Citizens of the Global North: We Must Support the Construction of a New Just World Economic Order!” on the

Schiller Institute [homepage](#) and also the registration for Sept. 9 [conference](#). And with that, I’ll say good-bye, and we’ll see you again next week.

Zepp-LaRouche: Yes, ’til next week!