

## International Peace Coalition Meeting #145, March 13, 2026

**HELGA ZEPP-LAROCHE:** Well, first of all, let me say hello to you, and especially to Your Excellency, Ambassador Pasandideh from Iran. We are very happy that you are joining our discussion, because you never hear in the Western media the side of Iran. And in the spirit of the dialogue for truth-seeking, I'm very happy that you will join us today.

We are now entering the third week of the war against Iran. This is an unprovoked war of aggression that has been stated in the meantime, even by former Western leaders and diplomats. And the goal of regime change in Iran clearly has not been accomplished. There is no victory in sight. And even the German TV is reporting today that President Trump obviously totally miscalculated the situation. This, however, was completely unnecessary, because there was a classified national intelligence report in the United States published a week before the 28th of February, in which they stated that in their estimate, even a large-scale assault would not lead to regime change in Iran, and that the opposition would take power would be very unlikely.

So, why did President Trump do this anyway? Well, now it seems, and he is even saying that he was convinced to do this by four people, Hegseth, Rubio, Witkoff, and Kushner. And in particular, Rubio went on the record to basically explain that since they knew that Israel was about to attack, and this would lead to a counterattack from Iran, that they had to do a preemptive attack on Iran, which is a completely strange logic, but that's what he is saying. So, what is the situation? I mean, we are in a complete strategic mess as a result. If you just review the events since the beginning of this year, on January 7th, President Trump had declared in an interview with the {New York Times} that he did not need international law.

Subsequently, you had the kidnapping of an elected head of state in Venezuela, President Maduro, and more recently, the assassination of the Supreme Leader of Iran, who at the same time not only was the leader of Iran, but also the head of all Shi'ites worldwide. So, this is clearly a new phase, because the targeted eliminations, be it through kidnappings, be it through assassination of elected leaders of state, clearly is a sign of a plunge into lawlessness, where the question of where this should all end, is worrying many people.

Now, as the military campaign apparently is not going well, and there are many reports from knowledgeable scientists like Ted Postol, Ray McGovern, and many others who describe in great detail that the military operation is not going as planned; but naturally the big danger is that this conflict can escalate. Now, how could it escalate? There was the absolutely shocking article by one person with the name of Helman Ullman, who is an advisor to the Atlantic Council, which is a pretty official position, who wrote an article in the paper {The Hill}, which is distributed to the Congress every day, to every Congressman and Senator. And there he wrote that any attempt for strategic bombing never resulted in the desired goal; not in Vietnam, not in Afghanistan, not in Iraq. And that there's only one example in history where strategic bombing

succeeded, and that is Hiroshima and Nagasaki. And therefore, the potential use of a nuclear weapon to accomplish the goal would be within the options available.

Now, this is extremely shocking, because we know that Israel is in possession of nuclear weapons, even if it never admitted it and never joined the Non-Proliferation Treaty. And famously, John F. Kennedy, in the context of the Cuban Missile Crisis, basically said one should make sure one never brings a nuclear-owning power into a position where they either have the choice of humiliation and defeat, or use of a nuclear weapon.

Now, I think this is an imminent danger. And that is why, despite the fact that the public opinion clearly is shifting, for example, the Foreign Minister of Oman, who was the chief negotiator with Iran and the United States in the negotiations in Geneva on the 26th—they had negotiated in Geneva on the 27th. He went to the United States and briefed President Trump, saying that major breakthroughs had been accomplished; that Iran had already agreed to massively reduce or downgrade its enriched uranium, and that he was very confident a solution could be reached. And that was basically now turning out for the second time to be the cover story for launching the attack with all the Israeli input in the background. This Oman Foreign Minister, in the meantime, put out a statement saying that this war is an illegal war; that it completely violates international law, and that one has to rethink the entire security structure of the Middle East.

Now, I think that we are in an incredibly dangerous moment of history. The additional element is the economic consequences of this war following the blocking of the Strait of Hormuz, the oil price going through the roof; naturally, this is leading to enormous consequences for millions of households who have enormous problems with their livelihood as a result. But it could also be the final blow to an already very fragile financial system. And it could, if not reversed soon by ending the war and going back to the table of negotiations and diplomacy; if this continues, it could lead to a blowout of the entire financial system. Given the fragility of the Western financial system, it could lead to a repetition of a systemic crisis like 2008. Just this time, the so-called tools of the central banks have all been used up.

So, what is the solution? There are all kinds of scenarios saying how the world will look like after the war is ended, that Israel will have greater Israel in the Middle East, be the strongest military power; that Europe eventually will have got its independence, rearming Europe in an unprecedented militarization with the German army being the strongest army in Europe, and the United States controlling the Western Hemisphere and the Indo-Pacific. Anyway, I think none of these things will happen quite that way. I think we are in an unprecedented epochal change because what is underlying all the hotspots, Ukraine, Iran, Venezuela, Cuba, the new war between Afghanistan and Pakistan, there is in each case a specific reason. But the underlying dynamic is the fact that the old order clearly is disintegrating and the global majority, which represent 85% of the human species, are intended to create a

more just world order based on the BRICS, the SCO, and similar organizations. There are forces in the West who absolutely want to prevent such an order from coming into being.

So given the fact that this strategic situation has many, many complicating elements, I have been saying, and that was the purpose of the International Peace Coalition from the very beginning, and the Schiller Institute after the outbreak of the special military operation in Ukraine, we started to campaign for a complete change in the paradigm. That if we stay in these geopolitical games, the danger that what happened with geopolitics two times in the 20th Century will be repeated; namely a world war. Given the fact that we have now thermonuclear weapons, and the likelihood that these weapons would be used in such a global war, being almost 100% certain, which would mean the end of civilization, we have to get together and find a solution based on reason, a New Paradigm which allows the survival of civilization.

For that reason, I issued as a result of the discussion of last week in the IPC, a letter to Pope Leo XIV, and I appealed to the Holy Father, because he already had referenced the great thinker Nicolaus of Cusa on the 25th of October last year, citing in particular the method of thinking of the {Coincidencia Oppositorum}, the Coincidence of Opposites, that he should reach out to the Patriarchs of the Russian and the Greek Orthodox Churches in the spirit of the unity of the Council of Florence and Ferrara of 1439; and that he should basically reach out also not only in his capacity as being of American background to President Trump; but also to all other religious leaders. Urging that they should all come out and work for peace, pray for peace, and get unity of all religious leaders in the spirit of Nicolaus of Cusa and his writing {De Pace Fidei}, which is a beautiful Socratic dialogue where all the religions are discussing with God how they can find peace in faith.

Now, also in the meantime, a high-ranking ayatollah from Iran has appealed to the Pope, basically in the same spirit, obviously referring to him as the morally outstanding figure, who is maybe the last person who can intervene to avoid a terrible catastrophe of humanity. So, we have started to circulate this letter. I naturally sent it to the Holy Father directly, and that is one of the topics we should be discussing today.

Otherwise, I can only say that the danger to humanity, in my view, has never been more grave than right now, and we have to appeal to all people of good faith to help us to avert a catastrophe which mankind would not survive if it really comes to its consequence.

**ANASTASIA BATTLE:** Next, I would like to welcome the Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Mexico, His Excellency Ambassador Pasandideh. It is important that we hear from the government of Iran at this time of crisis, and I kindly ask the audience for your patience as we have an extra layer of interpretation today, so please be mindful. Thank you for joining us, Your Excellency. You have the floor.

**AMB. ABOLFAZL PASANDIDEH:** I would like to greet all the participants of this webinar. I'm very happy to be with you, my friends, in this webinar today. I explain in Persian and my colleague translates in Spanish.

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak about one of the most irrational wars in contemporary history. Since February 28, Iran has been the victim of an unfair and unequal war. This war has crossed several human boundaries:

1. It was a betrayal of diplomacy; for the second time, we were attacked in the middle of negotiations.

2. It was a mockery of the Charter of the United Nations. The UN Charter was the achievement of two world wars, written after the deaths of tens of millions of people to prevent pointless wars and to ensure that innocent human beings would not be killed again.

3. It was a blatant symbol of the use of force and power instead of international law.

4. It replaced multilateralism with unilateralism.

Dear free-minded friends of the Schiller Institute, we are living in the 21st Century and in the age of the internet. It was expected that in this era, negative and aggressive nationalism would give way to humanism. Unfortunately, racists and radical nationalists have taken better advantage of the Internet age. Today we see that supporters of human rights and human values are more isolated than they were in the era before the Internet.

Today, Iran has become a bastion of resistance. Venezuela was taken easily; if Iran is also taken, resistance against coercion and unilateralism will collapse like a row of dominoes. It is not clear who will be next after Iran: Mexico or China? Silence in the face of this aggression will make life more difficult for the people of the world. Here, scientists, thinkers, and free-minded intellectuals are expected to become more active and to free the realm of thought from the monopoly of racism and radicalism. The tools of thinkers and intellectuals are the pen and the word. With the pen and the word, it is also possible to neutralize the effects of guns.

We have very few platforms to counter the narratives of powerful actors. Before becoming victims of F-35 and B-2 warplanes, we had already become victims of narrative-building.

I would like to thank the free-thinking members of the Schiller Institute for listening to my remarks.

**BATTLE:** Thank you, Your Excellency, for that contribution to the discussion today. This was very important that we hear from the government of Iran, and we greatly appreciate you joining us today. Let's go to Helga Zepp-LaRouche for a response.

**ZEPP-LAROUCHE:** Yes, I want to basically state our motives in inviting Your Excellency to this discussion, because I think if truth is the first victim of war, then there is no hope of ever getting to peace. We have been following the events since the end of last year very closely, and

found that there was a complete difference in the narrative being told by the Western media, and what we were able to put together in terms of what actually happened. I only want to quote Mr. Bessent, Scott Bessent, the Secretary of Treasury, who in a hearing with the Senate was so blunt as to say that the economic warfare which the United States had conducted against Iran by basically bankrupting a bank, by causing a run on the currency, causing inflation, which caused the demonstrators to go on the streets. And when the government of Iran started to talk to these demonstrators promising relief, that then there was an outside intervention from agents with weapons and so forth, he called that "economic statecraft." And if you look at the title of the Schiller Institute, we from the very beginning named ourselves an institute for statecraft. So the notion of statecraft is a dear notion for us, because we thought that statecraft was in jeopardy already. That's why we called it the Institute for Statecraft, meaning that it is the function of the state to improve the livelihood of the citizens, to make sure the well-being of the people is proceeding and so forth. So Bessent admitted that there was an outside economic warfare operation, which he falsely called statecraft. And then Pompeo put out a tweet, saying that every demonstrator had a Mossad agent by his side.

So therefore, when the narrative pushed by the Western media, and most politicians except some very good exceptions, like the Spanish government, for example, I think it's just very dangerous if falsehood, which naturally in case of war is always the case, but nevertheless, if we ever want to go back to peace, we have to remedy this situation. So that is just my comment to your remarks.

**PASANDIDEH:** I thank you very much for your different points of view. Precisely everything that we had said in our remarks coincides. We are interested to hear from the other panelists, and at the end I will state some further views.

**BATTLE:** Great. Thank you. All right, I see that we've resolved the technical problem with President Ramotar. President Donald Ramotar is the former president of Guyana. Please, if you have any reflections or thoughts from the discussion so far.

**DONALD RAMOTAR:** First of all, I would like to say how happy I am to have listened to the Ambassador from Iran and to tell the people of Iran through him how much we admire their tenacity and the courage that they're showing in the face of this unprovoked attack against the people of Iran. I can't think of any other country that I have known in conflict which has had the attack on its leadership and the decimation of its leadership on more than one occasion. We remember Qasem Soleimani, who was murdered some years ago, and then many of their scientists were killed and many of their leaders were also killed. And yet, when the attack came last Saturday, the Iranian people could have so quickly mobilized a defense and a counterattack on that. That type of heroism is hardly known in our world these days.

But I would like to also say that this is a continuation of a policy that seems to have been going on for a while. It has been for some time now a deliberate attempt to destroy international institutions and to degrade them, including the United Nations, the Criminal Court, the International Court of Justice, and we also see the attack on the destruction of international law. And this is a continuation of the aggression against the Palestinian people, because of the whole Middle Eastern countries, the only country that is standing up to defend the human rights and the rights of the Palestinian people to live as normal human beings, are the Iranian people. And they are the only ones that are supporting the resistance in the place. And that is why they are under this tremendous attack, because Iran is being seen as the main obstacle of Israel to control the whole Middle East, and is the main obstacle to the United States to control all the resources in that territory.

So Iran is fighting a battle not only for its own survival, but for the struggle of peoples of the whole Middle East, all those in the Middle East, in Lebanon, in Palestine, in other places, who are fighting for their survival. And the stance of Iran has really exposed the cowardice and the sell-out of many of the Arab leaders against the people of Palestine. I think there probably may be an element of shame in that as well for them.

I want to mention too that the fight that Iran is putting up also is a fight for Cuba, because Cuba is under tremendous pressure at this point in time. For more than three months now, Cuba has not had a single drop of oil for transportation purposes and for other types of activity. The blockade in Cuba has become almost unbearable. And the Cuban people are showing a lot of heroism at this point in time to resist this kind of pressure.

And the main tactics in this, in my mind, is similar that has happened in many other parts of the world. They're trying to create dissatisfaction within countries to get countries' populations to rise up against the governments by using sanctions and, in the final analysis, using force to attack them.

With those words, I wanted to extend to the people of Iran my own solidarity, the solidarity of other like-minded people from the Schiller Institute and other places for the kind of resistance they're showing. And if I may say one word of a little bit of disappointment, Ambassador, I hope that you take your security much, much stronger. You've suffered too much at the leadership. You had too much of penetration. And any other country, any other smaller country, would have been totally decapitated. But you managed to survive. But I think you should take that as a lesson in strengthening your security. But best wishes and good luck. Thank you for your attention.

**BATTLE:** Okay. Thank you very much, President Donald Ramotar, for your remarks. I see the Ambassador has raised his hand. Please go ahead, Ambassador.

**AMB. PASANDIDEH:** First I would like to thank Mrs. Zepp-LaRouche for going to the roots of this problem. She has provided a very broad analysis of everything that has happened, and as well as the reasons behind this entire conflict.

Obviously all of these sanctions which have been imposed by the United States on our country are pressure on their behalf. We are now glad people are defending our country.

We also thank former President Donald Ramotar for his analysis and the solidarity which he has expressed. We thank him very much also for his truthful analysis with regard to the current global circumstances. Thank you very much.

**BATTLE:** Thank you very much, Your Excellency. Okay, so we shall continue with our agenda and then come back for more discussion with the panel. So next, I'd like to bring in Father Harry Bury, a Catholic priest for 70 years. He's a lifelong peace activist. He's with the Twin Cities Nonviolent and the U.S. Catholic Priest Association. Please go ahead, Father Bury. You have the floor.

**FATHER HARRY BURY:** Thank you. Thank you very much. Our hearts are breaking, truly breaking, at what is happening to Iran. The insane action of Israel and the United States attacking Iran is not only crazy, it's immoral. And as a Catholic Christian priest, I'm here to say that Jesus came, in my faith, Jesus came to reveal what God wants us to do. And what God wants us to do is to love one another as God loves us. And we are to love one another because that is the answer to peace.

Jesus said very carefully, very strongly, that we are to love our enemies. Love our enemies, do good to those who hate you. Bombing them is not a way of doing good. It's insane. The cultural norm all over the world is that the best way to end wrongdoing is by violence, punishment. And history has shown us that it doesn't work. It doesn't work. Violence is not the answer to peace. Violence, as we've been doing it, has been an act of vengeance, not an act of love. And so what we need to do is be good to those who hate us. That's what God is asking us to do in my mind and in my faith, to do good.

And that's really what the Oasis Peace Plan is about. The Peace Plan is promoting people to do good through development, to help other nations have what they need for the people to lead happy, decent lives. And BRICS is one group; B for Brazil and R for Russia and I for India, C for China and S for South Africa. And now another 14 nations have joined them and others are about to do so. And they're practicing the Oasis Peace Plan. They are actually trying to help other nations be equal to other nations. And that's what is being good to others, doing what Jesus asked us to do. And so that's what the Oasis Peace Plan is about. That's what the Schiller Institute is about. And that's what BRICS is about. And we need to join them.

And in doing so, Helga LaRouche has written a letter to our Holy Father to join us in this action of doing good to others. And she has called us to endorse that letter. So I'm asking all you

who are listening to this that you sign the letter. She is inviting you to sign this letter to the Holy Father, asking him to stand with us in bringing about peace by doing what Jesus has asked us to do; namely to be good to those who hate us. Not to bomb them, not to hurt them.

What was the first action that happened when Israel and the United States attacked Iran? It was to destroy a school of some, I understand, 173 children were killed in that first action. And it brings tears to many people who understand what that is. And so we've got to change. We've got to change the way we think, as Nicholas of Cusa and Lyn LaRouche urged us to do. Not to be thinking the old way that the way to end violence is by violence. It doesn't work. And our history shows that.

So please, please answer Helga's invitation and sign the letter. And you can do it by going to [schillerinstitute.com](http://schillerinstitute.com) and have your name with all of us, asking the Holy Father to join with us in doing good to those who hate us. And that's the way we're going to end violence and have peace, is by loving our enemies, not killing them. It doesn't work. So please, please consider signing the letter with us to the Holy Father. Thank you very much.

**BATTLE:** Thank you, Father Bury, for your remarks and your continued fight for truth. I see the ambassador has raised his hand. Please go ahead, Your Excellency.

**AMB. PASANDIDEH:** If truth be told, the words of Father Bury have touched our spirit gravely. What a shame that very few politicians are in this meeting to listen to the words of the Father; such beautiful words.

Just as there are also extremist groups that are killing people in the name of Islam and religion. But taking into account that the spirit of Islamic religion is a religion of friendship and peace; and also the spirit of Catholics and Christians is the same. It is friendship and the search for peace. I too am in total agreement with what Father Bury has said, because Donald Trump is hiding behind religion and is killing people by hiding behind religion. And this is obviously an aggression against any and all religions in the world. Thank you very much.

**BATTLE:** Thank you, Your Excellency. And next, we'll continue with the agenda. And I just kindly ask our next speaker, if you can end your remarks at 11:50; only because we have to get closing remarks from the ambassador before he has to leave. And then we can come back to you. So next, I would like to introduce Jack Gilroy with Veterans for Peace, Pax Christi Upstate New York and Pax Christi International.

**JACK GILROY:** Well, thank you, Anastasia. And I was prepared for much more than three minutes. But in three minutes, I can just say that what Father Barry had to say, of course, is not anything new. Because he's been saying it ever since he chained himself to the Saigon fence during the horrible war of the United States, slaughtering almost three million people in

Vietnam. So the contrast between what Father Bury is saying as a Christian, believing in the nonviolence of Christ, and the falsehood of the Christian Zionist with their Jewish Zionist friends, that violence is part of the culture, is something that we really have to clarify. And later, I would like to, if I have a chance, go into some areas along these lines as to how children are a very important point.

As Father Bury indicates, the first attack on Iran was against children. Then there is the fact that the Israelis, the Zionists, have been killing children in Gaza by the tens of thousands; snipers intentionally shooting babies and young children. These despicable acts are something that surely is not in line with the nonviolent Christ. And it's not in line with the Jewish sense of justice. These are perverted individuals, and we'll talk a little bit more about that later on.

**BATTLE:** Thank you very much, Jack Gilroy, for your understanding and keeping your remarks concise. And we will absolutely give you more time to go through what you had planned to discuss.

I'd like to go to His Excellency Pasandideh for his final remarks before he has to leave.

**AMB. PASANDIDEH:** I think that if we search a bit further back, and look to the roots of these problems, we will find a point where unilateralism is being strengthened. This kind of unilateralism in the First and Second World Wars arose as Nazism, fascism. And we saw that more than 80 million people were killed in the world.

In fact, the creation of the UN, the United Nations Charter, was for the same purpose; that the world has to be based on the rule of laws and rights. But we are finding today that all of these norms that were written down are not being respected. False information is given and no one apologizes. We have to take this into account. If countries are viewed as enemies, why do children have to be victims of this? We have reached the point where we attack areas and the oil and gas is kept, and there is great contamination. What is civilians' responsibility for this? Why should they have to breathe poisoned air?

We should also mention that they are attacking places which are the cultural patrimony of Iran. This is part of humanity's patrimony. How can they dare attack places that belong to all of humanity?

I think a very positive conclusion that we can draw from this meeting is what we can do to be able to return to unite and maintain multilateralism, so that the permission is not given for any person or any country to make the decision to make a change of regime in a country. Or to say that this Supreme Leader cannot work anymore, he cannot be in his post. I am the one who gets to choose who will be the next Supreme Leader.

I think that what has been lost in the world today is peace. God has not created us to fight and kill each other. And obviously, if we go towards multilateralism, we will find a world that is more positive and more beneficial to all. Because when we achieve multilateralism, it is

because we are accepting the cultural differences of each people and of each nation. Thank you very much.

**ZEPP-LAROUCHE:** First of all, I want to full-heartedly thank Father Bury, because it is people who have a beautiful soul like you who give us hope that we will get out of this crisis in the human way. So, thank you very, very much.

Otherwise, I just would like to suggest that maybe in this moment it is time to revive the proposals of the former President of Iran, Khatami, who was putting the idea of a dialogue of civilization on the table. Because I think that if people would know the true character of the other side, the culture, the contribution to universal history, bridges can be built even in the most difficult situations. So, I did not discuss this with anybody, so I don't know if this proposal is timely or not. But I would like to give it to you for consideration.

And otherwise, I thank you also, Ambassador Pasandideh, for joining our meeting. And I'm looking forward to keep in contact.