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## Global Peace vs. Global Interventionism and Imperialism

By Belgrade Forum

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*The Belgrade Forum for a World of Equals, the Serbian Host Society, the Club of Generals and Admirals of Serbia and Veterans Association of Serbia (SUBNOR), in coordination with the World Peace Council, on 22 and 23 March 2014 held the International Conference “Global Peace vs. Global Interventionism and Imperialism”.*

*The Conference was held on the occasion of the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of NATO’s armed aggression against Serbia and Montenegro (the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia). The motto of the Conference was “Not to Forget”.*

*More than 500 scientists, experts and public persons from the areas of the international relations and security, from 50 countries of Europe and the world took part in the work of the Conference.*

Participants of the Conference paid tribute to victims of the 78-day bombardment and laid wreaths on memorials. They honored all the victims of the illegal NATO aggression against Serbia and Montenegro and expressed their deep respect for former Yugoslav Popular Army, Federal Government, President Slobodan Milosevic and all heroic resistant fighters. We also must remember the victims of the NATO aggression subsequent to 1999, ongoing persecution of those political and military leaders who defended the country and who were sent to illegal Hague Tribunal including president Milosevic and others, who died there. Considering this Tribunal as

illegal as a tool of NATO propaganda and political blackmailing, the participants demand its dissolution.

The debate unfolded in a constructive and tolerant dialogue regarding most important aspects and problems concerning the international peace and security. The presentations mainly focused on how to preserve global peace and find the ways to stop global interventionism, destabilization of certain countries and provoking the crises all over the world, which undermine the international legal and political world order and pushes the world to the edge of a major confrontation.

The participants analyzed the causes and consequences of NATO aggression in 1999, not only for Serbia and the Balkans but also its global consequences for peace and security in Europe and the world. Further to this, participants of the Conference have agreed as follows:

- NATO aggression against Serbia and Montenegro (the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia) of March 1999 was a war imposed against an independent, sovereign European state, in gross violation of the fundamental principles of the international law, most notably, the UN Charter and the Helsinki Final Act. This was the aggression committed without consent the UN Security Council. Hence it is a crime against peace and humanity, and the turning point towards the global interventionism, the practice of gross violation of the international legal order, and the negation of role of the UN. Subsequently it has been used as the model of interventionism in a number of other cases such as in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Mali and others.

- The leading Western powers, the USA, the UK, France, Germany, followed by the rest of NATO Members, 19 in all, devised a whole new arsenal of euphemisms in a bid to attribute any possible shred of legitimacy to this crime against peace and humanity. So-called “humanitarian intervention” was a cover for indiscriminate killings of civilians in Serbia including children, disabled and senior citizens, for the destruction of the economy, infrastructure, including schools, hospitals, passenger trains and houses. Use of missiles with depleted uranium has contaminated natural environment thus triggering grave and far-reaching consequences for the health of current and future generations.

- Since this is a crime against peace and humanity and a gross violation of the basic provisions of the international law, NATO Member States bear full legal responsibility for the aggression, including liability for the inflicted damage on the order of more than USD 100 billion, as well as responsibility for the use of weapons with depleted uranium and other illicit ordnances of mass destruction. Serbia has the right to initiate the proceedings before the competent international forums against NATO Alliance and all of its member states participating in the aggression, for the purpose of exercising the right to war damage compensation to Serbia and Montenegro as well as to individuals who suffered from aggression.

- Armed aggression has continued by employing other, non-military means. This was reflected in the violent change of power in the October 5, 2000 coup, which was initiated, funded and supported by NATO Member States; in all kind of blackmails and threats aimed at making Serbia denounce its state sovereignty in Kosovo and Metohija as its historical, cultural and civilization heartland; in ignoring UN Security Council Resolution 1244 guaranteeing

sovereignty and territorial integrity of Serbia. Eventually, this led to unlawful and unconstitutional unilateral separation of Kosovo and Metohija in 2008 which was followed by formal recognition by most NATO member countries. The 1999 US NATO aggression grossly violated the UN Charter, 1970 Declaration on principles of International law, Helsinki Final Act, Paris Charter for a New Europe, five Security Council resolutions in 1998-2008, including resolutions 1244 and 1785.

- Immediately after the end of the aggression, a large USA military base has been established in Kosovo and Metohija, “Camp Bondsteel”, the first and crucial ring in the chain of the new USA bases in Bulgaria, Romania, Poland, the Czech Republic, and other Eastern European countries. NATO aggression against Yugoslavia actually accelerated the arms race and militarization of Europe and implementation of US/NATO/EU strategy of “Eastern expansion”.

- Aggression against Serbia and Montenegro (FRY) launched in March 1999 has been serving as a blueprint for global USA/NATO/EU interventionism. In practice, this translates the USA, NATO and the West discretion to intervene militarily or otherwise, as they choose to suite their economic or strategic interests. Toppling legally elected governments and replacing them by hand-picked, pawn regimes, has become part and parcel of so called “democratization process”.

- NATO has always operated as an aggressive military alliance, serving expansion and of imperialistic and neo-colonial objectives of the leading Western powers. The entire experience so far indicates that NATO strategy of global interventionism leaves behind a chaos in international relations, gigantic human casualties, divisions, and long-lasting misery and anguish in all countries and regions which have become immediate victims of such policy.

- NATO is responsible for devastation of the international legal order, for the degradation of the UN, instigating a new arms race, militarization of Europe, destabilization and inducing crises in individual countries and regions all over the world. Therefore, NATO strategy goes against the goals of peace and security, contravenes the democratic and civilization values, and violates the fundamental human rights. Such an Alliance is not a place for peaceful countries who see their interests in compliance of the international law and the UN system. This is why participants of the Conference pleaded for the dissolution of NATO as a relic of the Cold War, for disengaging in policy of free interventionism, and for the respect of freedom, independence and equality of all countries and nations.

- Exporting democracy and dictating cultural and civilization patterns has become a common approach of all Western powers, primarily of the USA, in their aspiring to govern the world pursuant to their own standards and in line with their self-serving interests. The imposition of such cultural and civilization patterns is an act of violence against reality that almost invariably results in conflicts, internal disorders, and deeper fragmentations and divisions; over time, this is prone to undermine the peace in the world, and presents a perfect excuse for external military interference. This model has created the so-called “colored revolutions” in Georgia, Venezuela and Ukraine and high jacked “Arab Spring revolution”, which managed to devastate and turn the clock back for several decades, such as: Libya, Egypt and Syria.

- The strategy of interventionism involves several motives and purposes. These include the control over natural and developmental resources, reallocation of resources, and geopolitical reconfiguration of the world, against and at the expense of the predetermined key geopolitical adversary. This is how the USA/NATO/EU staged the crisis in Ukraine, whose end is still nowhere in sight. One can say that the Ukrainian crisis is the single most dangerous threat to the peace since the end of the Cold War. Instead of acknowledging Ukraine as a natural connection between Russia and Europe, the West chose to interfere, by artificially dislocating it from its natural cultural, civilization, and geopolitical environment and drawing it westwards. In doing so, the West paid no attention at all that the action could lead to internal conflict within Ukraine and that it would put at risk Russia's vital interests.

This dangerous geopolitical game played by America, NATO and the EU against Russia, as a proxy war at the expense of Ukraine under a "fine" but fake excuse of being waged for the benefit of the Ukrainians and their democratic social structure, has completely disregarded the effects of such policy against the interests of Ukraine, its people, the peace, and security in Europe and the world. Participants of the Conference advocated for a peaceful political solution free of interference and external pressures, that is, a solution that will guarantee its peoples will, and respect its role of a bridge between the East and the West. Such solution implies abandonment of the pernicious "Eastern expansion" which has already produced destabilization in Europe. Participants expressed satisfaction that the people of Crimea have used their right of self-determination which resulted in reunification with Russia.

- Participants of the Conference expressed their full support to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Serbia, including the resolution of the issue of Kosovo and Metohija in line with UN Security Council Resolution 1244. They supported the following requests: free, safe and dignified return of 250,000 expelled Serbs and other non-Albanians to their homes in Kosovo and Metohija; restitution of the usurped private, church, state and socially-owned property; reconstruction of 150 destroyed churches and monasteries of the Serbian Orthodox Church, of hundreds of desecrated and obliterated Serbian graveyards and thousands of burnt Serbian homes; conducting effective investigation of trafficking in human organs; determining the fate of all abducted and missing Serbs from Kosovo and Metohija; and identifying and bringing to justice the perpetrators of all other crimes committed against the Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija for which, so far, nobody has been found responsible, let alone convicted.

- Participants of the Conference welcomed worthy initiative of the UN General Assembly which proclaimed 2014 to be the international year of solidarity with the people of Palestine. Finding that this initiative deserves strong support of the peaceful forces in the world, the Conference sent requests for an immediate withdrawal of Israeli occupation forces from all Palestinian territories, for the establishment of independent state of Palestine, within the borders of July 1967 with East Jerusalem as its capital, for the right for the return for the Palestine refugees, based on UN Resolution 194 and the release of all Palestinian prisoners from jail. Fulfillment of these requests is of vital interest for the Palestinian people and for the introduction of a just and durable peace in the Middle East.

- Participants have expressed solidarity with peoples of Latin America in their endeavors to safeguard freedom, independence and sovereignty from aggressive imperial USA strategy. They

demanding closing of Guantanamo base and abolishing blockade against Cuba, as well as the release of the five Cuban political prisoners from American jails.

- By dismissing the policies and actions that endanger the peace and security, participants of the Conference denounced plans and actions aimed at destabilizing the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. Coordinated violent actions in Caracas and other parts of Venezuela are parts of the strategy employed by the local oligarchs and external actors, intended to disable the functioning of the legitimately elected government and impose political changes of their choice but against the interests of the Venezuelan people, by sabotage, violent provocations and blackmails. In condemning those attempts, participants of the Conference expressed their solidarity with the Venezuelan people and the support for its courageous efforts to preserve the freedom, pride, and sovereignty of Venezuela, and to decide their own future.

- Participants have expressed concern over systematic organized revision of European history of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, particularly revision of outcome of the First and the Second World War. This may serve imperialist objectives for redrawing international borders causing unforeseen consequences. We condemn the western promoted rehabilitation of fascism and attempts to equate communism with Nazism.

- Participants of the Conference dedicated significant attention to the global economic capitalist crisis which has led not only to an unprecedented social stratification and impoverishment of the global population, but also to an artificially imposed debt crises in a number of formerly economically very prosperous countries, such as Greece, Spain, Portugal, Italy and Cyprus. The global crisis emerged predominantly in countries which had declared themselves to be the centers of global civilization and the most advanced social order, one that will see no need for serious social conflicts and clashes. The key indicators of this crisis include mass-scale unemployment, especially within the youth, high indebtedness of countries, decline in economic activities, etc. We support the genuine popular protests against the above.

- It is obvious that on Europe and the majority of the world were imposed the neo-liberal cultural, political and economical pattern, which does not function. In the search for the way out of this universal deadlock, the most powerful countries are trying to shift the burden of the crisis onto other countries and nations, ones they pejoratively call “the global periphery”, while in the meantime struggling to win the battle for the global prestige, and in the process stepping down onto the old civilizations and forcibly toppling the unsympathetic ruling regimes. All the above only add to the conflicting feature of the international arena, and makes it exceptionally prone to outbreaks of all types of conflicts, from internal and regional, to the global ones.

- Participants at the Conference noted with concern that there are still US forward-based infrastructures in Europe like missile defense, tactical nuclear weapons and conventional forces, that destabilize the regional and the global atmosphere.

- The global economic crisis cannot be resolved by the printing of ever new trillions of dollars and the makeshift mends of the existing system. This can be done by abandoning the neo-liberal concept and by developing a new, humane society of social justice, equality and the better life for all people and nations in the planet. The focus of the new system of social relations must be

on people and their economic, social, cultural, and humanitarian needs, instead of the profits and self-serving interests of the so-called economical and political elites.

- A part this International Conference was the Youth Forum, which concluded that the global crisis, and globalization and interventionism primarily threaten the rights and perspectives of the young generations. In numerous countries, in Europe and the world, young people below 30 make up some 60% of the total number of unemployed. The youth requests urgent changes in the social relations and internationally, which will ensure active engagement of the young people into economic, political and societal trends, their assuming responsibility for their own future, at the national and international levels. The youth advocates the socially just society and universal human rights, such as the right to employment, free education, social security and health care. Young people advocate the democratization of international relations, the respect for the international law, and denounce the arms race, militarization and neocolonialism.

- Only a world free of dominance of imperialism and militarism will stand a chance to avoid a war cataclysm. The global economic crises and its consequences on popular strata underline the necessity to overcome the system which causes exploitation, wars and the misery. It is absolutely unacceptable and contrary to the international law to have the regional center of power, such as NATO and the European Union be established as a substitute to the United Nations Security Council.

- The only true international community is the United Nations, rather than any self-proclaimed members of any regional groups. We must struggle to ensure the universal character of the international law and to have it equally oblige big and small countries, developed and developing ones. We have to fight even more resolutely to preserve the civilization heritage such as the freedom, ethics and dignity, while determinedly rejecting all surrogates of the corporative capitalism and imperialism, planted by the military-industrial and finance capital.

Participants of the Conference emphasized that the accomplishment of these objectives required active engagement in mobilizing all peace-loving stakeholders, in order to counter and reject any military and conquest ambitions against any given country regardless of its leaders. In parallel, it is necessary to mobilize all forces in developing democratic international relations, based on the principles of the United Nations Charter, the provisions of the international law, and the strict observance of the inviolability and independence of all states and their territorial integrity, and the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs. Such a world would be measured by a human scale, and this grand utopia should be believed in, and persistently fighting for, and this is the key message from the Conference.

Participant in the Conference expressed sincere gratitude to the Serbian side for the excellent performance of the International Conference and for hospitality extended to all participants.