Peace Through Development in Africa’s Great Lakes Region

Walluf, a small town on the Rhine River in Germany, was host to a seminar on April 26-27 that brought together leaders of East Africa in a strategy session organized by the Schiller Institute, the Forum for Peace and Democracy, and Executive Intelligence Review magazine.

Leading speakers at the event were Lyndon LaRouche and his wife, Helga Zepp LaRouche; Godfrey Binaisa, former Ugandan President and founder of the African Civil Rights Movement; William Munyembabaz, secretary general of the National Council for the Defense of Democracy of Burundi; François Nzabahimana, president of the Rally for the Return of Refugees and Democracy to Rwanda (RDR); and Nkiko Nsengimana of Rwanda Pour Tous (Rwanda For All). Also attending were leading opposition activists from Uganda and Zaire.

For the Africans assembled at the seminar, the tragedy unfolding in Central Africa has robbed them of their nations and their families. The question posed was how to stop the current genocide policy of the British Empire in Africa, and bring about its true independence.

The global strategic perspective was put forward by Lyndon LaRouche, who asked the participants to “climb the mountaintop” and see their situation in Africa globally, and from the standpoint of the last five hundred years of world history.

“We are heading into a Dark Age,” LaRouche said. The nation-state is being destroyed, phony food shortages are being engineered, parts of Africa are being turned into a terra incognita. This is a warning sign of what will happen to the entire planet, if the policy direction is not changed. The hope of reversing this process lies in the Eurasian Land-Bridge, which would extend into Africa.

LaRouche asked, “Where will we find the passion” to bring about these changes? The horrors now going on in Africa can be a key part in compelling world leaders to solve the crisis. What is happening in Africa must arouse the conscience of nations. We must use our very own weakness, as a force to move the powers. “We say, if you allow this to happen in Africa, you have lost the moral fitness to survive. Mankind is often pushed by calamities, to act. Otherwise the universe acts, to purge itself of the disease that civilization has become. This is the time to act. We must see what is required from the mountaintop, and use our knowledge of the very horror, as a lever to force people to discover the passion to do what is necessary, to save all humanity.”

Former Ugandan President Godfrey Binaisa appealed to Africa to resist the “new Hitlers” of the continent. What must be revived, said Binaisa, who was a leading figure in the Ugandan independence movement, is Pope Paul VI’s 1968 concept of “peace through development.”

The concept of peace through development was also taken up by the secretary general of the Burundi National Council for the Defense of Democracy (CNDD), who traced his organization’s history from the founding of the Frodebu party for democracy in Burundi. Peace through development, he said, is the only strategy for Africa. He debunked the ethnic myth of Tutsi versus Hutu, describing the collaboration of both during the short reign of democracy in the country in the period of the Frodebu government (June-October 1993).

François Nzabahimana, president of the RDR, gave detailed evidence on how the United Nations High Commission on Refugees was complicit in the genocide, and documented how eastern Zaire was invaded, beginning in October 1996, by the combined militaries of Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi.

At its end, the seminar’s participants designating an organizing committee, and affirmed their commitment to the concept that Africa’s true development is the only pathway to peace, and to broadening this new seed-crystal of African leadership.