

SUMMIT ON PEACE AND SECURITY
- The address of the representative of the SUBNOR of Serbia –

Dear Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Organization of Serbian Veterans (SUBNOR), I wish to warmly greet all participants of this distinguished international gathering dedicated to international peace and security. Leadership of the SUBNOR of Serbia hails the initiative of the World Veterans' Federation to hold this summit, and expresses deep gratitude to our Host, the Swedish Veterans' Federation, for their kind attention and hospitality. We are convinced that this Summit shall bring new ideas and energy to all Veterans' Organizations in their striving to safeguard, promote and strengthen international peace and security.

Allow me to use this occasion to briefly present the positions of the SUBNOR of Serbia on the current issues of international peace and security and possible ways out of the present situation.

Following the ending of the Cold War by the end of last century, when the global peace and security had been resting on a balance of powers of strategic potentials of the two super-powers, new hope was born that the beginning of new era would bring a more durable peace, better security and the strengthening of peaceful coexistence and cooperation among peoples and countries. In lieu of that, we live today in a world of chain-wars, wars being waged in flagrant violation of international law, without observance of sovereignty of states, and in violation of interests of numerous nations. Brute force and threats of force have dominated over the last two decades. Under circumstances of such utmost negative developments in international relations, no one feels secure anymore because there is no more protection by the international law.

Worrisome expansion of military bases in Europe and in the world, exceeding in numbers those at the peak of Cold War, is accompanied by increasingly emphasized militarization of international relations and further enhancement of military factor. In turn, increasing domination of power factors leads to further consolidation of dangerous arms race. This also triggered some countries' urge to get weapons of mass destruction, as well as rise of threat of international terrorism on a global scale. Instead of the desired faster development of underdeveloped countries, a dangerous gap between most developed and undeveloped parts of world is only getting deeper. Global crisis, however, affects more or less the whole world.

More recently, we are witnessing the so-called “humanitarian interventions” against some sovereign countries, which evolved into a model of conduct on a global scale. In this way, justifiable concerns for human rights and fight against the international terrorism are being abused as a motive or excuse for unilateral military interventions against certain countries. Increasingly common use of force is pushing the world into new conflicts and results in constant rise of number of local and regional wars, that take big toll in human lives. I am coming from a country, which was a victim to such an alleged “humanitarian intervention”, that is, NATO aggression against Serbia (and Montenegro) in 1999. That model was later also applied against some countries in other parts of the world. Threat of repeating such intervention remains permanent.

Preparations for so-called “humanitarian intervention” typically include various allegations and accusations against leaders of a country targeted for next attack, intended as a cover for military intervention. Governments of certain powers do not hesitate to declare that their national interests are at stake somewhere in the world. Most powerful among them have no limits in doing so: they will find a threat for their interest at any point of the Planet. Instigators and implementers of military actions resort to war-mongering propaganda to demonize regime of targeted country, victim of attack. Massive killings of innocent civilians – due to foreign intervention with weapons of latest technology – are explained to the public as “collateral damage.” An important tool in applying this kind of strategy, are certain “non-governmental organizations”, mainly funded by the same power centers that apply force and are controlled and in service of their policy and strategy. Corporative media in some countries have vital role in giving legitimacy to these destructive military actions. Some countries even assume a right to order a chief of another state to leave the power.

Integral parts of this strategy are economic and other sanctions, commonly applied against some countries. Experience so far shows that such sanctions are, in fact, a sort of war used by some power centers. They are meant to inflict suffering and hopelessness to the entire population of a country, to turn the people against their leaders and topple them with foreign support, and eventually install an acceptable set of leaders. Experience clearly shows that sanctions are most often a precursor for a direct military aggression, as in the case of Serbia (and Montenegro) in 1999, and later with Iraq. There are ongoing continuous attempts to weaken some countries by way of economic war intended to catalyze the change of government. Such a practice is not just highly inhumane and damaging, but it also directly jeopardizes peace and security.

Overall past experience shows that one-sided use of brute force in international relations has not solved a single problem but, rather, always created new, more complex and more serious. Countries, victims of aggression, including my own country, Serbia, were faced with terrible human tragedies, enormous number of victims, sufferings, massive displacements of population, and immense material devastation. In case of Serbia, in addition to huge number of innocent human victims, hundreds of thousands of refugees and expelled people and material devastation, including use of weapons with depleted uranium, the seventy-eight day long aggression led to seizure of a big part of its national territory. It was and is an attempt with blessing of aggressors, to facilitate creation of another Albanian state in the Balkans, on the territory of an internationally recognized country – the Republic of Serbia. It is understood that this makes a dangerous precedent, threatening not only Serbia and the Balkans, but also Europe and the entire international legal order created on the basis of outcomes of the First and the Second World Wars.

Two decades after the era of Cold War, Europe and the world are faced with NATO's doctrine claiming its right to global military interventionism. Such doctrine includes limitlessly expanded definition of national interests of certain countries and clear pretensions to mineral and other natural reserves in other countries, rocketing increase of military budgets and, this way, militarization of international relations. This is followed with aggressive and immensely funded attempts to revise the history and reverse the outcome of First and WWII.

We believe the time has come to seriously reflex on how to join forces and put an end to brutal lawlessness in international relations, how to restore the power of international law and the United Nations, how to reverse the trend of revision of twentieth century history. Our organizations, our millions-strong members with their experience, have a moral obligation to actively fight for it in all national and international institutions, before it gets too late for any effort.

Peace, security and progress are indivisible. Aggression and wars in any part of the world jeopardize other countries and peoples, too. We are deeply convinced that peace, security and progress may be ensured by linking of all anti-war and peace-loving forces and by creating broadest possible anti-war peace movement at the national and international levels. One of key pillars of such movement ought to be veterans and their organizations, as champions of the belief that the future of humankind may be secured only in peace and security for all of us. We are deeply convinced that in years to come, World Veterans' Federation, as a renown and highly appreciated international organization, with authority of "Peace Messenger"

along with all Veterans of the world and their organizations, will have a special place, responsibility and role to play.

Strict adherence to the International Law and the United Nations Charter is the firmest guaranty of peace and security in the world. We have to strongly stand against any attempt of use of force in international relations, beyond the letter of the UN Charter and decisions of the UN Security Council. Countries and their leaders who violate that principle must take responsibility and blame for their lawless actions and their consequences. We sincerely believe that foreign military interventions, be they named “humanitarian”, “friendly” or otherwise, not only directly jeopardize peace and security, but also cause numerous human victims and people suffering, inflict huge material destruction and other permanent consequences. It is vital to resolutely stand against any attempt leading to ruining the role of UN Security Council in safeguarding international peace and security. It is unacceptable and in contravention with international law that regional power centers, as NATO and the EU, impose themselves as substitutes for the Security Council i.e. the United Nations. We have to fight for the international law to get a universal character and to equally oblige big and small countries, developed and developing nations.

Therefore, we face great but honorable challenges - work on safeguarding, strengthening and promoting international peace and security. To achieve these objectives, it is necessary to actively engage in mobilizing the nations to reject all sorts of military and expansionist ambitions against any country and no matter who are the perpetrators. In parallel with that, it is necessary to mobilize all forces with the view to building democratic international relations, based on principles of strict observance of inviolability and independence of all countries, their territorial integrity and non-interference in internal matters.

We have the task, Ladies and Gentlemen, to actively work on building an honest and democratic order, armed with new ideas from this conference, ascertaining stable peace, security and social progress, not only for the “chosen” ones, but rather for all the peoples and countries. That is the only way to have a future that the humankind deserves.

Thank you for your attention.

Stockholm, 28–31 May 2013

Mr. Dragomir Vucicevic,
Member of the Presidency
of the SUBNOR of Serbia