



## **SGI Peace News**

**Activities of the Soka Gakkai International (SGI) to Promote a Culture of Peace**

February 2018 (Vol. 21)

### **A Human Rights Focus Is Key to the Resolution of Global Issues and the Nuclear Threat—SGI President Issues 2018 Peace Proposal**

Tokyo, Japan, January 26, 2018

On January 26, 2018, Daisaku Ikeda, President of Soka Gakkai International (SGI), issued his 36<sup>th</sup> annual peace proposal titled “Toward an Era of Human Rights: Building a People’s Movement”.

President Ikeda welcomes the July 2017 adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) as a turning point in the global history of efforts to achieve peace and disarmament, emphatic that while nuclear weapons exist, a world of peace and human rights will remain elusive. He outlines strategies for gaining support for the treaty from the nuclear-weapon states and nuclear-dependent states.

The main theme of this, President Ikeda’s 36<sup>th</sup> proposal, is that a human rights-focused approach is key to resolving global issues, including the nuclear threat. In this year that marks the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, he stresses the need to make the life and dignity of each individual our focal point—the fact that every human being is inherently precious and irreplaceable.

He cites the hibakusha and their determination that no one else should suffer what they have endured as exemplifying a foundational spirit for human rights, saying, “The ideal of international human rights law is the quest to protect the life and dignity of each individual, a quest in which the continued pursuit of nuclear arms has no place.”

President Ikeda also highlights the power of human rights education in overcoming social divides, stating that its real significance lies in reviving our desire to perceive the common humanity of those different from us. He proposes that youth be the focus for the fourth phase

of the UN's World Programme for Human Rights Education, which begins in 2020.

The full proposal will be available in English on February 16.

## **SGI Representative Participates in the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize Award Ceremony**

**Oslo, Norway, December 10, 2017**

On December 10, the Nobel Peace Prize 2017 was awarded to the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) in recognition of its role in achieving the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) in 2017. The award was accepted on behalf of



ICAN by its executive director, Beatrice Fihn, and Setsuko Thurlow, a survivor of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima in 1945 who has long been working for nuclear disarmament. At the Nobel Peace Prize Award Ceremony held in Oslo, Fihn and Thurlow both delivered speeches urging the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Representing SGI, which has been an international partner of ICAN since 2007, Hirotsugu Terasaki, SGI director general of peace and global issues, participated in the ceremony. In his message, Terasaki congratulated ICAN on being awarded the prize, stressing “Nuclear weapons are dangerous from a security perspective. From an ethical and moral perspective, they are wrong. This renders them unacceptable in any hands. Today, with the geopolitical risks of nuclear conflict at almost unprecedented levels, it is vital that this awareness be shared widely by all people.” He also expressed SGI’s determination that the TPNW will serve as a crucial focus for the ongoing campaign for the abolition of these most inhumane of weapons, thereby helping humanity overcome its self-destructive impulses.

To access the full message click [here](#)

## ICAN's Executive Director Visits Soka Gakkai Headquarters

Tokyo, Japan, January 17, 2017

Representatives of 2017 Nobel Peace Prize-laureate ICAN, Executive Director Beatrice Fihn and International Steering Group member Akira Kawasaki, visited the Soka Gakkai Headquarters in Tokyo on January 17. They were welcomed by Soka Gakkai President Minoru Harada.



SGI Youth Leader Mitsushiro Takeoka presented them with the book *Hiroshima and Nagasaki: That We Never Forget*, a collection of over 50 testimonies by hibakusha (A-bomb survivors) including that of his own grandmother, published by the Soka Gakkai Youth Division in September 2017.

At the meeting President Harada conveyed his warmest welcome and congratulatory remarks to Fihn on the conferment of the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize to ICAN in recognition of its contribution to the adoption of the TPNW. She in return congratulated SGI, saying, "You are also ICAN, so congratulations to you!"

Fihn also said that the circumstances surrounding nuclear weapons had entered a new stage after the adoption of the TPNW. She mentioned two priorities at the moment: securing early entry into force of the TPNW, and engaging countries which do not join the treaty. She stressed the importance of the voices of ordinary citizens around the world who wish for a nuclear-free world being heard. She also pointed out the important role that faith-based organizations can play in influencing how people look at nuclear weapons. Fihn thanked SGI for its collaboration with ICAN based on friendship and expressed her wish that they continue to work together toward their shared goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

To see a video of the visit click [here](#)

## **SGI Conducts Disaster Relief Activities and Attends World Bosai Forum**

**Sendai, Japan, November 27, 2017**

In 2017 various local SGI organizations conducted post-disaster relief and recovery activities. In Malaysia, for example, torrential rain in Penang in November last year had caused flooding and forced many residents to move into evacuation centers. Soka Gakkai Malaysia responded by disbursing RM 70,000 in aid and after water levels had subsided local SGI members, and youth division members from Kuala Lumpur, were on hand to help with cleanup efforts, thus enabling the victims to return home as soon as possible.

SGI also undertook advocacy efforts in the field of disaster relief and reduction in 2017 by sponsoring a public session at the World Bosai (disaster reduction) Forum held in Sendai, Japan on November 27. Following presentations given by a Buddhist monk and a local Muslim, a member of Soka Gakkai's local organization in Sendai, Mitsuaki Niinuma, delivered a presentation sharing his own experiences of running a shelter in Soka Gakkai's culture center in Sendai after the devastating earthquake in 2011. He informed attendees about a new exhibition which was now being displayed at the center which was produced to share the experiences and lessons of the Soka Gakkai in the hope that visitors would be inspired by the showcasing of how the affected peoples had undergone such tenacious recovery processes.

The chair's summary of the whole forum mentioned the role that faith-based organizations play in expanding community-based efforts toward disaster risk reduction and toward the post-disaster response and recovery phases.

For more information click the following links:

[http://www.sgm.org.my/en/?cur=news/view&id=639&title=SGM Penang Assists in Flood Relief](http://www.sgm.org.my/en/?cur=news/view&id=639&title=SGM_Penang_Assists_in_Flood_Relief)

<http://www.worldbosaiforum.com/english/report/>

## Annual Consultation with the SGI Office of UN Affairs

Tokyo, Japan, January 8–11, 2018

From January 8 to 11, the SGI Office of UN Affairs (OUNA) had an annual consultation at the SGI Headquarters in Tokyo. During the course of the consultation, the OUNA visited the Mitsuzawa Stadium where Soka Gakkai's second president Josei Toda delivered a statement calling for the abolition of nuclear weapons back in 1957. Following this visit they had an exchange with a local Soka Gakkai member who had attended and listened to the declaration in person in 1957, and she shared how much expectation President Toda had held for the youth to spread his message throughout the world.

## OHCHR Launches New Website to Celebrate 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) is a milestone document which underpins all international human rights law and has helped countless people to gain greater freedom and security. It is the most translated document in the world, now available in more than 500 languages.



The United Nations kicked off a year-long campaign to mark the upcoming 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this foundational human rights document on December 10, 2018.

The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) also launched a new website that gives access to information about the UDHR and related activities and events. The website features a closer look at each of the 30 articles of the declaration, as well as a section to download UDHR-related materials, such as posters, the special commemorative logo, and

banners.

There are also suggestions on how to join the campaign to make a difference toward stronger respect, greater freedom and more compassion. Visitors can “Take Action” to promote, engage and reflect on the UDHR, with targeted activities and social media posts.

## Launch of New People’s Decade Platform for Nuclear Abolition

SGI will be launching a new People’s Decade website in February this year in line with the start of the second People’s Decade for Nuclear Abolition which SGI President Ikeda has put forward in his 2018 peace proposal.

The new website will be launched in the style of a blog and will be optimized for use with mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets. Visitors will be able to watch A-bomb survivors’ testimonial videos and the short animation *Reshape History* which was co-produced with ICAN to promote the TPNW, as well as learn about what nuclear weapons are by visiting the online exhibition *Everything Your Treasure*. The information on the new website will also be able to be shared easily via social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. *SGI Peace News* will be also uploaded and available on the website.



## 2017 Annual Report of SGI’s Peace Activities

The 2017 Annual Report of SGI’s Peace Activities will soon be available online [here](#).



***SGI Peace News is a bimonthly publication highlighting the public education activities carried out by SGI. These activities help to raise awareness of issues such as nuclear disarmament, human rights, gender equality, sustainable development, interfaith cooperation and humanitarian support.***

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