



# SGI Peace News

Promoting a Culture of Peace  
Soka Gakkai International (SGI)  
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## A Joint Appeal to Youth Calling for Resilience and Hope Issued by Adolfo Pérez Esquivel and Daisaku Ikeda

Rome, Italy, June 5, 2018

On June 5, in Rome, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Adolfo Pérez Esquivel and SGI President Daisaku Ikeda released a joint appeal titled “To the Youth of the World: An Appeal for Resilience and Hope,” calling for a new world built on justice and solidarity.



In the appeal, they stress the critical role of empowered young people in transforming history. They also mention the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in 2017 as a significant advance, stating: “In pursuing the goal of a world without nuclear weapons, we must eliminate not only the threat these weapons pose, but also the urge to power and the desire to realize security for one’s own country even at the expense of the lives and the dignity of other peoples. There is an urgent need to disarm our ways of thinking.”

This initiative builds on a dialogue titled “The Power of Hope” between Pérez Esquivel and Daisaku Ikeda. The appeal states: “The two of us have lived through the storms of war and violence of the twentieth century. These experiences drive our insistent efforts to expand the bonds of friendship among peoples across ethnic and religious differences.”

Dr. Adolfo Pérez Esquivel, Argentinian sculptor and architect, became director of SERPAJ, the Latin American Peace and Justice Foundation based on Christianity and non-violence, in 1974. He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1980 for his human rights advocacy and activism.

The full text of the appeal can be read [here](#).

## Faith Communities Welcome UN Secretary-General’s Disarmament Agenda

Geneva, Switzerland, May 24, 2018

On May 24, UN Secretary-General António Guterres announced his new disarmament agenda titled, “Securing Our Common Future: An Agenda for



Disarmament” in Geneva.

Considering the current dangerous reality surrounding us, Mr. Guterres pointed out that cold war tensions had returned to a world that is now much more complex and where armed conflicts have become more devastating for civilians, and demands therefore that disarmament and nonproliferation are put at the center of the work of the United Nations.

Focusing on three priority points: weapons of mass destruction, conventional weapons, and new battlefield technologies, the agenda discusses the disarmament issues comprehensively, including the need for the disarmament of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, the need for the disarmament of conventional weapons, and how the security of future generations is being endangered by emerging new weapon technologies, and the importance therefore of strengthening partnerships for disarmament between governments, the expert community and civil society. In conclusion, Mr. Guterres urged all “to use every opportunity to carry forward momentum for disarmament where it exists, and to generate new impetus where it is needed, in order to achieve a safer and more secure world for all.”

In response to the secretary-general’s agenda, an interfaith statement was issued on behalf of a wide variety of religious organizations to support the appeal by the secretary-general. The statement, which the NGO Committee on Disarmament, Peace and Security in New York played a central role in issuing, is endorsed by groups of Christian, Quaker, Muslim, Jewish and Buddhist traditions, including Soka Gakkai International (SGI).

The statement affirms the view, previously expressed by many religious authorities, that nuclear weapons are inherently immoral because of their horrific and indiscriminate effects on both civilians and the environment. The statement also expresses support for the United Nations in urging the nuclear-weapon states to resume arms-control negotiations without further delay.

The secretary-general’s agenda can be read [here](#).

The interfaith statement can be read [here](#).

## **Faith Groups Issue Interfaith Statement Calling for Urgent Action towards Nuclear Ban**

Geneva, Switzerland, April 25, 2018

On April 25, a group of diverse faith-based organizations and individuals delivered an interfaith statement as one of the civil society presentations during the second session of the Preparatory



Committee for the 2020 NPT Review Conference at the UN Office at Geneva.

Hayley Ramsay-Jones of SGI read the joint statement on behalf of Faith Communities Concerned about Nuclear Weapons, highlighting the moral and ethical imperatives for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Signatories included 20 groups and individuals from different faiths, including Christian, Quaker, Muslim and Hindu traditions and Soka Gakkai International (SGI).

The statement reads: “As people of faith, we advocate for the right of all people to live in security and dignity; we seek to heed the commands of conscience and the call to justice; we are united in our determination to protect the vulnerable and to exercise the stewardship that will safeguard Earth for present and future generations.”



The full statement and signatories can be viewed [here](#)

## **SGI Issued Statement to 2018 NPT Preparatory Committee**

Geneva, Switzerland, April 20, 2018

On April 20, the SGI made public a statement to the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to be held in Geneva from April 23 to May 4.

The statement noted that the second session would be the first venue for debate involving non-nuclear-weapon, nuclear-weapon and nuclear-dependent states since the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), and that it represented an important opportunity to consider the deep compatibilities between the goals and commitments of the NPT and the TPNW.

It also urged all States parties to engage in constructive dialogue toward the goal of a world free from nuclear weapons at the session and to support the signing, ratification and early entry into force of the TPNW.

On April 25, SGI Executive Director for Peace and Global Issues Kazuo Ishiwatari, met with Ambassador Adam Bugajski, chairman of the second session of the 2018 NPT Preparatory Committee, in Geneva to hand over the statement issued by SGI for



the conference. Ishiwatari stated his hope that States parties will continue to heed the voices of civil society, especially those of the world’s hibakusha, so that the NPT process will have a consistently human focus, and that they will heed the shared commitment of the world’s people that the suffering endured by the hibakusha must never be repeated. Ambassador Bugajski expressed his appreciation for the efforts made by civil society.

The full statement can be read [here](#).

## **SGI Commits to Collaborative Projects for Nuclear Ban with ICAN**

Geneva, Switzerland, April 21-22, 2018

SGI representatives participated in the ICAN Campaigners Meeting held in Geneva, Switzerland, on April 21 and 22, prior to the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 NPT Review Conference. Activists and experts from around the globe gathered to discuss how best to promote an early entry into force of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) as well as its universalization.

During discussions, SGI shared its approach and work plan on how it would contribute to strengthening momentum toward the universalization of the TPNW as a Buddhist faith-based organization, using the [Everything You Treasure](#) exhibition and other educational tools.

SGI Executive Director of Peace and Global Issues Kazuo Ishiwatari also exchanged views with ICAN Executive Director Beatrice Fihn on future collaborative working toward their shared goal of the abolition of nuclear weapons.

In a plenary session on April 21, Hayley Ramsay-Jones, Director of the SGI Office for UN Affairs in Geneva, updated participants on the recent activities of ICAN’s faith-based partner organizations around the world.



## **Progress Study on Youth, Peace and Security**

March, 2018

In March 2018, a new report titled [“The Missing Peace: Independent Progress Study on Youth, Peace and Security”](#) was published in the six official languages of the UN. This study was mandated by the [UN Security Council Resolution 2250 on Youth,](#)



[Peace and Security](#) (SCR 2250) adopted in December 2015, which requested the UN Secretary-General “to carry out a progress study on the youth’s positive contribution to peace processes and conflict resolution.” SCR 2250 is the first resolution fully dedicated to the important and positive role young women and men can play in the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security.

Upon request by the UN, SGI submitted two reports as a contribution to the study. In one report, entitled “[The Role of Youth in Nuclear Disarmament: Examining the Project, ‘The People’s Decade for Nuclear Abolition’](#)”, examples of SGI youth activities for nuclear disarmament were highlighted. The other report, “[Disaster Recovery and Youth, Peace and Security: Examining the Project, ‘The SOKA Global Action’](#)”, used the example of the SOKA



Global Action campaign to review the contribution of youth to peacebuilding in Japan, particularly focusing on the postdisaster recovery efforts that took place after the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake. Both reports have been published on the [Youth4Peace Global Knowledge Portal](#), a web-based platform that is managed by UN agencies and NGOs working on the implementation of SCR2250.

## Seeds of Hope Shown at Radboud University’s Green Week

Nijmegen, Netherlands, May 14, 2018

The “Seeds of Hope: Visions of sustainability, steps toward change” exhibition, a joint initiative of the SGI and the Earth Charter International, was shown at Radboud University in Nijmegen in the Netherlands from May 14 to 17, as part of the annual “Green Week” organized by students.



For the opening, one of the panels was displayed next to an outdoor stage, with speakers including Hubert Bruls, mayor of Nijmegen, Wilma de Koning-Martens, vice president of the Executive Board of Radboud University, and Prof. Irene Dankelman, lecturer in sustainable development.



The full exhibition was on display in a small chapel in the student chaplaincy, a quiet space in which dialogues could be held individually with most of the visitors. On the first day, Daniel Wigboldus, president of the Executive Board of the University, viewed the exhibition and engaged in lively discussion with the support staff.

***SGI Peace News is published every two months. It highlights the public-education activities carried out by SGI which help to raise awareness around issues such as: nuclear disarmament, human rights, gender equality, sustainable development, interfaith cooperation and humanitarian support.***

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