



Report on Disarmament Education Activities June 2020-May 2022

Soka Gakkai International (SGI) submits herewith a report on its disarmament education activities covering the period from June 2020 to May 2022 as an input to the 2022 Biennial Report of the Secretary-General on Disarmament and Non-proliferation Education to be submitted to the seventy-seventh session of the General Assembly.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Between June 2020 and May 2022, the Soka Gakkai International (SGI) conducted a wide range of disarmament education activities despite the COVID-19 pandemic, as a partner organization of International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN). The activities particularly focused on raising public awareness of the dangers of nuclear weapons and the significance of the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), including online events, exhibitions, film screenings, and developing educational tools. SGI worked to promote the importance of disarmament education at the UN fora through its public statements and presentations. SGI worked with Stop Killer Robots (SKR) to raise awareness on the threats of autonomous weapons systems, supporting its new documentary and other activities. Additionally, SGI worked to reach out to those outside the disarmament community to raise awareness, through linkages with the SDGs, nonviolence gender equality, anti-racism and other social justice issues.

FULL REPORT

What follows is a report on the SGI's disarmament education activities covering the period from June 2020 to May 2022:

Proposals on Disarmament Education (Recommendations 4, 12, 22)

Since 1983 SGI President Daisaku Ikeda has been issuing annual peace proposals to share his thoughts and recommendations on a wide range of issues with the international community. Disarmament issues, particularly nuclear disarmament, have been most frequently, consistently and extensively discussed throughout the years.

During the reporting period, two proposals were published in January [2021](#) and [2022](#), respectively. The 2021 proposal suggests holding a forum for discussing the relationship between nuclear weapons and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the context of the first Meeting of States Parties to the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW).

Exhibition “Everything You Treasure – For a World Free from Nuclear Weapons”

(Recommendations 4, 12, 22, 29a)

The antinuclear exhibition [“Everything You Treasure – For a World Free from Nuclear Weapons,”](#) which was produced by SGI with the support of ICAN, has been shown in many countries and regions since 2012. The exhibition aims at raising public awareness on the issue of nuclear weapons, examining it from 12 different perspectives including humanitarian, environmental, economic, human rights, spiritual and gender.

As of May 2022, the exhibition has been showcased in over 90 cities in 21 countries and in various languages including English, Japanese, Spanish, Malay, Chinese, German, Korean, French, Thai, and Russian. During the reporting period, due to the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, the exhibition was held online. Exhibition highlights include the launch of the virtual exhibition co-organized by SGI-Germany and the city of Cologne and the online showcasing held by SGI-Mexico.

Raising Public Awareness of the TPNW

On the occasion of the entry into force of the TPNW on 22 January 2021, SGI produced two educational tools – [TPNW visual storytelling tool and a handbook about the treaty](#) – to inform the public about the significance of the milestone. The visual storytelling tool was produced in collaboration with ICAN to provide a brief introduction to the treaty and its significance, while the handbook briefly explains about what the treaty is about, how it was adopted, and what it envisions.

SGI has drafted a working paper on peace and disarmament education toward the First Meeting of States Parties to the TPNW in May 2022. It emphasizes that peace and disarmament education plays a critical role in creating accountability among states parties to take steps to encourage other states to join the treaty and in raising awareness of the risks and consequences of nuclear weapons among people, leading to universalizing the treaty and strengthening the norms for disarmament.

Organizing and Supporting Public Events and Campaigns for Nuclear Disarmament

(Recommendations 2, 4, 12, 22, 26, 29a)

SGI organized and supported various events promoting nuclear disarmament, including the following:

- **Hibakusha Appeal (2016-2021, Japan):** As a member of the campaign’s Liaison Council of the Hibakusha Appeal, the International Signature Campaign in Support of the Appeal of the Hibakusha for the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons launched in 2016, the Soka Gakkai Peace Committee in Japan, together with the Soka Gakkai Youth Division and Women’s Peace Committee, actively engaged in and widely promoted the campaign, collecting more than 610,000 signatures by the end of 2020. The Hibakusha Appeal submitted 13,702,345 signatures in total to the United Nations in early January 2021.

- **Webinar on Nuclear Ban Treaty and the NPT (August 2020, Online):** The Arms Control Association (ACA) and the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) co-organized a webinar titled “The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty” on August 27. In her capacity as an ICAN campaigner, Anna Ikeda of SGI spoke at the event and discussed the status of the TPNW with respect to its entry into force, and its implications in the context of the NPT.
- **Annual Hibakusha Testimonies (August 2020 and August 2021, Japan):** To mark the day of the bombing in Hiroshima, the Soka Gakkai Women’s Peace Committee organized annual hibakusha testimonies in 2020 and 2021. The 2020’s testimony event included the storytelling of hibakusha and the presentation about the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, while the event in 2021 highlighted the experiences of four foreign nationals who contributed to rebuilding the city of Hiroshima after the bombing. As the events were held online, more participants from younger generations joined to listen to the testimonies together with their families at home. The online testimonies have become a valuable opportunity for families to listen to real voices of hibakusha and have dialogues for peace.

Beyond the Disarmament Community

(Recommendations 2, 4, 6, 12, 22, 23, 26, 29a)

SGI has made efforts to reach out to people outside of the disarmament communities to inform them of the urgency of disarmament, its connection with other issues, and the importance of disarmament education. Examples include the following:

- **Launching an Interview Series “Building the Culture of Peace” (2019-2021):** In January 2019, an interview series called “Building the Culture of Peace” started in the *Seikyo Shimbun*, to mark the 20th anniversary of the UN Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace. It is a series of interviews with various experts and leaders from around the world who are contributing to building a culture of peace in their respective fields. One of the interviews featured Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu, UN Under-Secretary General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs. In the interview, she emphasized that the world free from nuclear weapons is a shared goal of the world, and the culture of peace will be established in the process of thriving toward the goal. The English translation is available [here](#).
- **Holding Film Screenings on Nuclear Weapons and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (August 2021 and May 2022, Japan):** To mark the 76th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Soka Gakkai Peace Committee held an online screening of the film *Hiroshima Lost – A Labor of Love* – (in Japanese) directed and composed by Masaaki Tanabe, an atomic bomb survivor and filmmaker, as part of the SDGs Online Cinema Series in August 2021. As part of the same series, another film screening was held in May 2022. *The Vow From Hiroshima*, the documentary film which portraits the life of Ms. Setsuko Thurlow, was screened, and Ms. Keiko Nakamura, Associate Professor at Nagasaki University’s Research Center for Nuclear Weapons Abolition (RECNA), provided a lecture on the current situation around nuclear weapons and the significance of the TPNW.

- **High-Level Forum on the Culture of Peace (September 2021, United States):** SGI supported the High-Level Forum on the Culture of Peace hosted by the 75th president of the United Nations General Assembly at the United Nations Headquarters in New York on September 7. The forum was held under the theme “Transforming Role of the Culture of Peace: Promoting Resilience and Inclusion in Post-Covid Recovery.” Beatrice Fihn, Executive Director of ICAN, delivered a keynote message, while Kazumi Matsui, Mayor of Hiroshima and President of Mayors for Peace, sent a video message. Afterwards, a panel discussion was led by former UN Under-Secretary-General Anwarul K. Chowdhury. SGI supported the organization of the forum as a founding and core member of the Global Movement for the Culture of Peace (GMCoP).

Faith-Based Initiatives for Raising Public Consciousness

(Recommendations 12, 29b)

Faith communities offer opportunities for people to reflect on their values and ways of thinking. As such, they play an essential role in raising public awareness and helping shift their perceptions about nuclear weapons – an important aspect of disarmament education. For this reason, SGI has worked with other faith groups and individuals to continuously call for the abolition of nuclear weapons. During the reporting period, the Faith Communities Concerned about Nuclear Weapons, which SGI helps coordinate, issued statements in commemorations of the 75th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August [2020](#) and the entry into force of the TPNW in January [2021](#). Furthermore, on the occasion of the first International Day of Human Fraternity, the joint interfaith statement “[A Plea for Preserving Our Shared Humanity](#)” on killer robots was issued by Pax Christi Northern California, the World Council of Churches and SGI.

As part of the faith community, SGI also supported several interfaith events such as follows:

- **Webinar on Interfaith Perspectives on Nuclear Weapons (August 2020, Online):** The Parliament of the World’s Religions’ Next Generation Task Force hosted a webinar titled “Interfaith Perspectives on Nuclear Weapons: A Multigenerational Conversation” on August 15, where panelists engaged in a conversation on nuclear weapons, the importance of disarmament and the critical role of interfaith and multigenerational action toward a world free of nuclear weapons. Anna Ikeda of SGI was one of the four panelists and spoke about the role of faith communities in the abolition of nuclear weapons. The webinar was launched in partnership with the Charter for Compassion, Religions for Peace, United Religions Initiative and the Parliament of the World’s Religions. It was hosted in commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki nuclear bombings and organized as a supplement to the Hiroshima/Nagasaki Accord, which SGI has endorsed.
- **Webinar on Nuclear Disarmament and Climate Protection (May 2021, Online):** The Grassroots Advocacy Table of the United Religions Initiative (URI) Voices for a World Free of Nuclear Weapons Cooperation Circle organized a webinar titled “100 Seconds to Midnight: The Moral Imperative for Climate protection and Nuclear Disarmament.” As part of the organizing team, Anna Ikeda of SGI joined the panel discussion as one of the speakers. Addressing the two existential threats: climate change and nuclear weapons, the event aimed to bring together those working for climate protection and nuclear disarmament

and inspire them to engage using a spiritual perspective and to take creative action at the grassroots level.

- **8th Annual Symposium on the Role of Religion and Faith-Based Organizations in International Affairs (January 2022, Online):** SGI joined 7 other faith-based partners, UN Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC), UN Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect and the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) to co-organize the 8th Annual Symposium on the Role of Religion and Faith-Based Organizations in International Affairs. It was held on January 25 under the theme of “Mobilizing Moral Influence and Governance to End the Systemic Injustices of Racism, the legacy of Colonialism and Slavery.” Ivy Koek of SGI was part of the organizing team, and Hayley Ramsay-Jones of SGI spoke about SGI’s intersectional approach to disarmament on the panel about “Deepening understanding of how pernicious and all-encompassing racism, and the legacy of colonialism and slavery remain today.”

Promoting Youth Participation

(Recommendations 4, 13, 23, 29a, 29b)

- **Tūmanako - Children’s Art Exhibition for Peace (2020-2022, New Zealand):** Tūmanako is an annual exhibition of children’s art supporting an inclusive Aotearoa where all lives are celebrated and supporting a nuclear-free world. Each year local children will express in art their hopes and dreams for a peaceful world to thrive in. The resulting exhibition will display artworks of children and youth aged 18 years old and under. The exhibition has been held in more than 18 locations all over New Zealand and attended approximately 47,000 participants. SGI-New Zealand assisted events at various cities in 2020, 2021 and 2022.
- **Youth-led Initiative SOKA Global Action 2030 (2020-2022, Japan):** The Youth Division of the Soka Gakkai in Japan launched an initiative called SOKA Global Action 2030, with the following three objectives: 1) abolish nuclear weapons and renunciation of war; 2) strengthen ties of friendship within Asia; and 3) promote the SDGs. As part of this initiative, the Youth Division launched a series of sessions where participants can listen to hibakusha testimonies virtually. Furthermore, members of the Student Division and the Youth Division conducted interviews to collect war testimonies from Okinawa as well as from hibakusha in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. These were published in the fall of 2020. In addition, the youth in Okinawa collected drawings of the Battle of Okinawa for the last 40 years, and the drawings were showcased at schools and other places in 2021. They were also utilized for peace education at a school in Okinawa. The Student Division also conducted peace awareness survey twice in Chugoku region of Japan during the reporting period.
- **Youth Summit for the Renunciation of War (August 2020 and September 2021, Online):** The Youth Division of the Soka Gakkai in Japan held a Youth Summit for the Renunciation of War in August 2020 and September 2021. The annual peace summit has taken place since 1989 as a forum to discuss concrete steps for peacebuilding. At the summit 2020, youth representatives of both SGI-UK and Soka Gakkai Malaysia introduced the peace activities taking place in their respective countries, while Daniel Högsta, Campaign Coordinator of ICAN, gave a video message to the participants at the summit 2021.

- **Nuke Clear Campaign (March-April 2021, Malaysia):** Soka Gakkai Malaysia (SGM)'s initiative Rakan TPNW and a dance organization Tarinao supported the “Nuke-Clear” campaign, a month-long online event featuring “Youth against Nuke.” The event was organized by second-year students of Bachelor of Public Relations from Tunku Abdul Rahman University College (TARUC) in Kuala Lumpur. Starting with an online sharing session, the campaign held a series of programs and activity highlights, along with dance and music performances integrated with anti-nuclear and peace messages by young local dancers and musicians. The campaign also made its 3D virtual exhibition available online, consisting of historic artworks from Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum and several panels of the SGI/ICAN antinuclear exhibition “Everything You Treasure.”
- **Supporting the Youth Network “Amplify”:** SGI continues to support Amplify, an international network of youth dedicated to nuclear abolition, launched in 2016.

Collaborating with Stop Killer Robots and Raising Awareness of the Threats of Autonomous Weapons Systems

(Recommendations 1, 2, 4, 17, 22, 23, 29(b))

As a member of Stop Killer Robots (SKR), a campaign that calls for new international law on autonomy in weapons systems (AWS), SGI has worked to raise awareness on the threats and social justice concerns around AWS. Such efforts include the following:

- **Supporting the Humanitarian Disarmament Forum (2020-2021, Online):** SKR and SGI cohosted the Humanitarian Disarmament Forum, which was consisted of three parts started in October 2020 concluded in November 2021. This is an annual forum held parallel to the UN General Assembly First Committee session. Since 2012, the forum has brought together campaigners from various humanitarian disarmament campaigns and has sought to substantively explore the crosscutting challenges and themes between them and to collectively identify solutions including practical measures. The theme of the 2020-2021 forum was “Race and Intersectionality.” The discussion covered the social mechanism of discrimination and disadvantage caused by the combination of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, and social class, and their impacts on disarmament.
- **Contributing to “Smashing the Patriarchy: The Case Against Killer Robots” (May 2020):** Hayley Ramsay-Jones of SGI, was interviewed by the Centre for Feminist Foreign Policy to feature in their report and video series, highlighting a feminist lens on killer robots. The report and video were published online.
- **The First Meeting of the Working Group on Intersectionality (WGI) (August 2020, Online):** The SKR’s Working Group on Intersectionality (WGI) conducted its first official meeting in August 2020. The primary objective of the group is to improve the diversity and inclusion of the campaign itself and to help the campaign adopt an intersectional approach to its work. Due to her prior work on these issues, Hayley Ramsay-Jones of SGI was one of the three campaign members invited to become the founding members of the WGI.

- **Instagram Live (September 2020, Online):** Ramsay-Jones of SGI was featured in the campaign’s Instagram Live and spoke about killer robots, racism and intersectionality. This was part of an interview series by the campaign called “Killer Robots Q&A,” which was launched in May 2020.
- **Interview on the New SKR Website (October 2021):** In October 2021, SKR launched its new website which included an interview with an SGI representative. The interview covered the risks of AI technology that does not involve human control, the discrimination and repression fostered by algorithms, and why SGI is involved in the killer robot issue.
- **Launching the documentary film “Immoral Code” (May 2022, United Kingdom):** An in-person launch of the film “Immoral Code” was held on May 19 at the Prince Charles Cinema in London’s Leicester Square. It is a 23-minute documentary produced by Stop Killer Robots, an international network of concerned NGOs, which demonstrates the complexity of human decision-making and the dangers posed by autonomous weapons that could “decide” who to kill. SGI supported the launch, along with Amnesty International, Article 36, Human Rights Watch, Mines Action Canada, and Privacy International.

Media as a Non-Formal Education Tool

(Recommendations 4, 12, 17, 22, 23)

Organ newspapers of various Soka Gakkai organizations, including the *Seikyo Shimbun* of the Soka Gakkai in Japan, often carry articles related to disarmament, including interviews with experts and reports of SGI’s activities in the field.

SGI also partners with International Press Syndicate (INPS) in implementing a joint media project [“Toward A Nuclear Free World”](#) with the aim of raising and strengthening public awareness of the urgent need for non-proliferation and ushering in a world free of nuclear weapons.

In May 2022, we launched a [new website](#) to introduce activities in support of UN initiatives as an NGO in consultative status with the UN. The new website comprehensively highlights various campaigns and activities for peace and disarmament which have been initiated by the SGI Office for UN Affairs and SGI local organizations in respective countries. There are resources available on the website, including President Ikeda’s peace proposals to the UN, reports and exhibits.

About Soka Gakkai International (SGI)

The SGI is a community-based Buddhist organization with more than 12 million members in 192 countries and territories. It has been in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council since 1983. The SGI is headquartered in Tokyo, and there are UN offices in New York and Geneva.

Contact: contact@peacesgi.org