



Soka Gakkai International

Report on Disarmament Education Activities July 2012-June 2014

Soka Gakkai International (SGI) submits herewith a report on its disarmament education activities covering the period from July 2012 to June 2014 as an input to the Sixth Biennial Report of the Secretary-General on Disarmament and Non-proliferation Education to be submitted to the sixth-ninth session of the General Assembly.

Executive Summary (within 150 words):

The Soka Gakkai International continued its People's Decade for Nuclear Abolition, a grassroots educational initiative launched in 2007 with the aim of building international public opinion against nuclear weapons.

It includes exhibitions *From a Culture of Violence to a Culture of Peace*, which presents the nuclear weapons issues through human security lenses, and *Everything You Treasure*, which brings together different areas of concern such as humanitarian, environmental and economic to build a broader constituency for nuclear abolition.

A youth survey was conducted in nine countries including the United States and the United Kingdom to find attitudes toward nuclear weapons and their humanitarian consequences.

The People's Decade has been encouraging local actions. SGI-Italy launched its own awareness-raising initiative *Senzatomica* while SGI-USA youth started *Our New Clear* (not 'Nuclear') Future campaign. The Youth Division in Japan is conducting hibakusha forums in all 47 prefectures as part of their SOKA Global Action efforts.

What follows is a report on the SGI's disarmament education activities covering the period from July 2012 to June 2014:

People's Decade for Nuclear Abolition

The People's Decade is a grassroots educational initiative with the aim of rallying international public opinion against nuclear weapons and expanding the network who share the common goal to eliminate those weapons from this planet. In August 2006, SGI President Daisaku Ikeda proposed a UN decade of action by the world's people for the abolition of nuclear weapons to influence the debates among policy makers. In line with this idea, SGI launched the People's Decade in 2007 coinciding with the 50th anniversary of the declaration calling for the abolition of nuclear weapons issued in 1957 by then-Soka Gakkai President Josei Toda at a gathering of 50,000 Soka Gakkai youth. It has been engaged and supported by the SGI community worldwide since its launch.

The activities and projects which have been conducted over the last two years include:

- **Exhibition: *From a Culture of Violence to a Culture of Peace*** (Recommendations 2,3, 5, 12, 29a, particularly 2, 3)

The *From a Culture of Violence to a Culture of Peace* exhibition highlights the synergy between the goals of human security and disarmament, particularly nuclear weapons abolition. It also refers to personal dimensions of disarmament, suggesting that the issue of nuclear weapons provide us with an opportunity to make a change in our mindset to build a culture of peace overcoming a culture of violence.

Launched in September 2007, the exhibition has been shown in more than 230 cities in 31 countries and territories. During the period from July 2012 to June 2014, it was shown at the University of Hong Kong (February 2012), National Museum of Nuclear Science & History in Albuquerque (September 2012), Bahrain National Museum (March 2013). It is available in English, Spanish, German, Italian, Chinese, Japanese, Thai and Nepali, as well as in Serbian and Macedonian with partial translations.

Youth have been playing significant roles for the exhibition—taking part in developing its content and organizing symposia, teach-ins, and related events; university campuses have been popular venues.

- **Exhibition: *Everything You Treasure – For a World Free From Nuclear Weapons*** (Recommendations 2,3, 5, 12, 29a, particularly 2, 3)

The *Everything You Treasure* exhibition examines nuclear weapons issues from twelve different perspectives: humanitarian, environmental, medical, economic, human rights, energy, scientific, political, spiritual, gender, generational and security. It was launched at the 20th World Congress of the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) in Hiroshima in August 2012 and has been shown in 13 cities in 9 countries and territories including such venues as the ICAN Civil Society Forum in Oslo (March 2013), the NPT PrepCom in Geneva (April 2013), the Second Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons in Nayarit (February 2014) and National Assembly Members' Office Building in Seoul (May 2014).

- **DVD: *Testimonies of Hiroshima and Nagasaki: Women Speak Out for Peace*** (Recommendations 2, 3, 4, 5, 26, particularly 2, 3, 26)

In 2005, the Soka Gakkai Women's Peace Committee in Japan filmed interviews with 31 female war survivors from all over Japan. In 2007, eight of those interviews of *hibakusha*, or atomic bomb survivors, were compiled in a DVD that was translated into five languages: English, Japanese, Chinese, French and Spanish. The same content can be viewed at the People's Decade website (<http://www.peoplesdecade.org/>). It has been shown on various occasions including conferences, exhibition openings and small group study sessions.

- **IPS/SGI joint media project** (Recommendations 2, 4, 5)

Since 2009, the SGI and the Inter Press Service (IPS) have jointly undertaken a global media and communication project (www.nuclearabolition.net) which aims to strengthen public awareness of the urgent need for nuclear abolition by shedding light on the issue from civil society perspectives. The site provides in-depth reports by IPS correspondents and project

partners from around the world, as well as columns by experts and disarmament-relevant news feeds.

➤ **Youth survey on attitudes toward nuclear weapons and their humanitarian consequences** (Recommendations 2, 5)

SGI youth from nine different countries jointly conducted a survey on young people's attitudes toward nuclear weapons and their humanitarian consequences. The survey was carried out in Australia, Brazil, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, South Korea, United Kingdom, and the United States from December 2012 to February 2013.

The findings from the total of 2,840 respondents were shared at the NPT PrepCom in Geneva in 2013 and presented to PrepCom Chair Ambassador Cornel Feruta.

➤ **Videoconference linking Spain and Japan** (Recommendation 21)

SGI-Spain helped organize a live videoconference between some 150 high school students and local citizens in Rivas-Vaciamadrid, Spain, and atomic bomb survivors in Nagasaki, Japan. The exchange was held as a part of the Peace-Net program, an initiative of the Nagasaki Peace Memorial Hall and Nagasaki Foundation for the Promotion of Peace, which uses online technology to promote peace education for those unable to physically visit the atomic bomb sites in Nagasaki and Hiroshima. It was joined by Nagasaki Mayor Tomihisa Taue through his video message and by Rivas-Vaciamadrid Deputy Mayor Marcos Sanz Salas with his welcome remarks.

➤ **Interfaith symposium on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons** (Recommendations 5, 29a)

As a follow-up to the Nayarit Conference held in February 2014, SGI organized "Making a Difference—Faith Communities and the Humanitarian Consequences of Nuclear Weapons," a one-day interfaith symposium held at the US Institute of Peace in Washington DC in April 2014. Over 100 participants from diverse faiths including Buddhist, Christian, Jewish and Muslim traditions came together with peace activists and experts to identify common concerns and refresh their determination to rid the world of these inhumane weapons. A joint statement pledging increased activism by religious communities toward nuclear weapons abolition was issued and presented to the Chair of the NPT PrepCom, Ambassador Enrique Roman-Morey in the following week at UN Headquarters.

SOKA Global Action

In 2014, the Soka Gakkai Youth Division in Japan launched the SOKA Global Action with the following three objectives: 1) foster a culture of peace and achieve the abolition of nuclear weapons; 2) strengthen ties of friendship within Asia through cultural exchanges; and 3) further reconstruction efforts following the Great East Japan Earthquake.

"Vow for Peace" Forum, which invites hibakusha to share their experiences, is underway to be held in all 47 prefectures, so that youth throughout the country will be given an opportunity to listen directly to hibakusha.

Senzatomica

Senzatomica is SGI-Italy's grassroots campaign started in 2009 by a group of youth to raise awareness about the threat of nuclear weapons.

Our New Clear Future

Our New Clear Future is SGI-USA's youth-led movement with the goal of abolishing nuclear weapons by 2030. There have been a number of activities on university campuses throughout the US such as exhibitions, workshops and film screening.

SGI Annual Peace Proposal (Recommendations 2, 3, 4)

Since 1983 SGI President Daisaku Ikeda has been issuing his annual peace proposal 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.

In 2013, Ikeda proposed ideas for making disarmament a key theme of the Sustainable Development Goals, initiating the negotiation process of a Nuclear Weapons Convention, and holding an expanded summit for a nuclear-weapon-free world in 2015, the seventieth anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In 2014, he proposed his idea of convening a world youth summit for nuclear abolition.

Building a Culture of Peace

The SGI has been actively supporting the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace (A/RES/53/243) through a range of educational and outreach activities. These have included exhibitions, lectures, workshops and conferences.

➤ **Culture of Peace Resource Centers and Distinguished Speakers Series** (Recommendation 12)

SGI-USA has opened the Culture of Peace Resource Centers in its community centers in New York, Santa Monica, Chicago, Honolulu, Washington, D.C. and San Francisco, with the aim of promoting a culture of peace. The Culture of Peace Distinguished Speaker Series has been held regularly since 2007. Speakers have included Anwarul K. Chowdhury, former Under-Secretary-General and High Representative of the UN; Jeffrey Sachs of the Earth Institute at Columbia University; Betty Reardon of the Teachers College Peace Education Center; former child soldier Ishmael Beah; Sergio Duarte, former UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs; and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Betty Williams. Selected lectures from this series have been published as *Voices for a Culture of Peace, Volume 1*. The Chicago Center organizes an annual community discussion program titled "Think Peace Take Action."

➤ **Pocket-sized Booklet and Bookmark for promotion of a Culture of Peace** (Recommendations 2, 4, 12)

The SGI has produced a pocket-sized booklet of the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace as well as a bookmark of the definition and eight action areas of a culture of peace. These materials have been widely distributed.

➤ **Women’s Forums for a Culture of Peace** (Recommendation 12)

The Soka Gakkai Women’s Peace Committee and the Young Women’s Peace and Culture Conference in Japan have been organizing fora, exhibitions and publications promoting a culture of peace.

➤ **Victory Over Violence** (Recommendations 2, 4, 5, 6 and 12)

Launched by SGI-USA in 1999, Victory Over Violence (VOV) is a grassroots initiative to help promote a culture of peace and nonviolence among youth. Youth facilitators who make presentations in schools have been trained, and over 5,000 grassroots discussions have been held. Over 1 million individuals have signed a “Victory Over Violence” pledge to lead nonviolent lives. VOV actively supports the United Nations Culture of Peace initiative, sustainability initiatives such as the Earth Charter and nuclear abolition. VOV activities have been conducted by SGI organizations around the world. SGI-New Zealand, for example, has introduced the Victory Over Violence program in high schools in the Reporoa area. Students make a personal pledge to value their own life, to respect all life and to inspire hope in others.

Soka Gakkai International

SGI is a Buddhist association with more than 12 million members in 192 countries and territories. It has had consultative status with the Economic and Social Council since 1983. Headquartered in Tokyo, the SGI maintains UN liaison offices in New York, Geneva and Vienna.