



Soka Gakkai International

Report on Disarmament Education Activities July 2016-June 2018

Soka Gakkai International (SGI) submits herewith a report on its disarmament education activities covering the period from July 2016 to June 2018 as an input to the 2018 Biennial Report of the Secretary-General on Disarmament and Non-proliferation Education to be submitted to the seventy-third session of the General Assembly.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Between July 2016 and June 2018, the Soka Gakkai International (SGI) conducted a wide range of disarmament education activities, particularly focusing on raising public awareness of the dangers of nuclear weapons and promoting the new UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). During the TPNW negotiations, together with some governments and other NGOs, SGI emphasized the importance of disarmament education, which was included in the preamble of the treaty. In 2018, SGI launched the second People's Decade for Nuclear Abolition, whose aim is to support the current efforts to realize the early entry into force and universalization of the TPNW. SGI continued its interfaith efforts to call for the abolition of nuclear weapons. SGI's constituent organizations around the world also conducted a variety of educational activities, including the showings of exhibitions, discussions, and film screenings, often led by women and young people.



FULL REPORT

What follows is a report on the SGI's disarmament education activities covering the period from July 2016 to June 2018:

[The UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and Peace and Disarmament Education](#) (Recommendations 1, 2, 26)

From 27 to 31 March and from 15 June to 7 July 2017, the United Nations conference to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading toward their total elimination, was held in New York. On July 7, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) was adopted. During the negotiations, the SGI emphasized the role of disarmament education in promoting the norms of the treaty. The SGI issued a working paper and statement containing this point, and also worked with other



partner organizations of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) and led the efforts to speak with the delegates about the importance of peace and disarmament education. As a result of the concerted efforts by the governments and civil society, the Preamble of the TPNW includes the following clause:

Recognizing also the importance of peace and disarmament education in all its aspects and of raising awareness of the risks and consequences of nuclear weapons for current and future generations, and committed to the dissemination of the principles and norms of this Treaty....

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. This is also expressed in the Preamble of the TPNW, which states:

Stressing the role of public conscience in the furthering of the principles of humanity as evidenced by the call for the total elimination of nuclear weapons, and recognizing the efforts to that end undertaken by the United Nations, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, other international and regional organizations, non-governmental organizations, religious leaders, parliamentarians, academics and the hibakusha....



For this reason, the SGI has worked with other faith groups and individuals to continuously call for the abolition of nuclear weapons. Between July 2016 and June 2018, Faith Communities Concerned about Nuclear Weapons, which SGI helps coordinate, issued five public statements including on the occasions of the adoption of the TPNW (July 2017) and at the 2018 Preparatory Committee for the 2020 NPT Review Conference (April 2018). Those statements can be found [here](#).

As part of its faith-based effort, the SGI attended the conference “Perspectives for a World Free from Nuclear Weapons and for Integral Disarmament” held at the Vatican in Rome on 10 and 11 November 2017. The SGI was one of 13 cooperating organizations involved in the conference hosted by the Vatican’s newly created Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development. Hiromasa Ikeda, SGI vice president, spoke at the conference, stressing the SGI’s educational focus on creating opportunities for dialogue toward the shared goal of a world free from nuclear weapons.



Launch of People’s Decade for Nuclear Abolition II

(Recommendations 4, 12, 26, 29a)

In 2018, the SGI launched the second People’s Decade for Nuclear Abolition, which has an increased focus on peace and disarmament education to support the efforts to realize the early entry into force and universalization of the TPNW. This initiative builds on the first People’s Decade, launched in 2007 to increase the number of those in the world who reject these weapons, and to expand the grassroots network of diverse groups and individuals around the world who share the common goal of eliminating nuclear weapons from this planet, by collaborating with various international anti-nuclear movements.

[The new website for People’s Decade](#) shares information on blog-style news articles. The visitors can also view and share educational resources such as A-bomb survivors’ testimonial videos and online exhibition “Everything You Treasure (more details of the exhibition below).

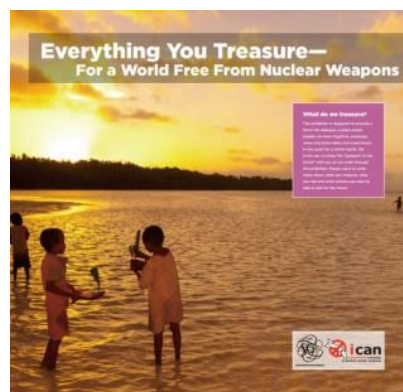
Exhibition: Everything You Treasure – For a World Free From Nuclear Weapons

(Recommendations 4, 12, 22, 29a)

Since 2012, the exhibition “Everything You Treasure—For a World Free From Nuclear Weapons,” created by the SGI with the support of ICAN, has been showcased in many venues worldwide. The exhibition was launched with the aim of reexamining the issue of nuclear weapons from 12 different perspectives, including humanitarian, environmental, economic, human rights, spiritual and gender.

As of May 2018, the exhibition has been shown in 81 cities in 19 countries, and in 9 languages (English, Japanese, Spanish, Malay, Chinese, German, Korean, French and Thai).

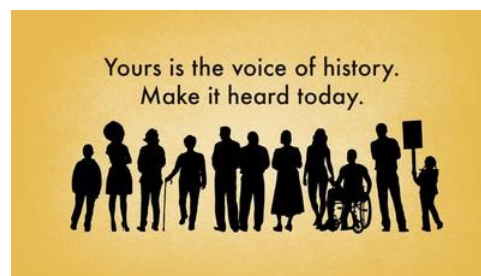
Exhibition activity highlights in the period of 2016 and 2018 include the first-ever showing of the Thai-language version held at King Mongkut’s University of Technology Thonburi in Thailand in October 2016, and a showing at the University of York in UK in September 2017 as the part of the congress titled “Health Through Peace 2017,” which was organized by International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) and Medact.



Animation: “Reshape History”

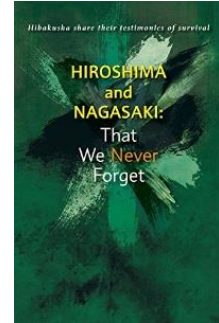
(Recommendations 2, 26)

On 26 September 2017, commemorating the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, the SGI released an animation “[Reshape History](#).” It was produced in cooperation with ICAN and informs people about the dangers of nuclear weapons and the importance of the TPNW.



Publication: *Hiroshima and Nagasaki: That We Never Forget*
(Recommendation 2)

In September 2017, a new English-language book *Hiroshima and Nagasaki: That We Never Forget* was compiled by the Soka Gakkai Youth Division in Japan to share the testimonies of over 50 hibakusha from Hiroshima and Nagasaki.



Educational Activities Around the World
(Recommendations 2, 4, 12, 22, 26, 29a)

As a global network with membership in 192 countries and territories around the world, some of the constituency organizations of the SGI conducts disarmament education and awareness-raising activities in their local communities. Below are examples of such activities.

Japan

- Since 2014, the Soka Gakkai Youth Division in Japan has organized a campaign called the SOKA Global Action with the following three objectives: 1) abolish nuclear weapons to build a culture of peace; 2) strengthen ties of friendship within Asia through cultural exchanges; and 3) further our reconstruction efforts following the Great East Japan Earthquake.
- On 2 September 2017, SGI youth representing 30 countries joined some 540 people, including distinguished guests, for the SGI Youth Summit for the Renunciation of War, held in Kanagawa, Japan.
- In 2017, Soka Gakkai student division members in Hiroshima conducted a survey with more than 2000 people, asking their perspectives on nuclear weapons. In Nagasaki, Soka Gakkai youth division members organized a peace forum and peace walks, where participants tour around the memorial sites including the Nagasaki Hypocenter Park. At the 9th General Conference of Mayors for Peace held in August 2017, Soka Gakkai youth division members in Nagasaki held the exhibition: "Everything You Treasure—For a World Free From Nuclear Weapons."
- Since 2017, the Soka Gakkai Women's Peace Committee has held film screenings of documentaries introducing testimonials of hibakusha at more than 2000 venues across Japan, which were attended by 70,000 people from all walks of life.

Thailand

- Starting September 2016, the Youth Division of Soka Gakkai Thailand (SGT) has organized the showing of the "Everything You Treasure – For a World Free of Nuclear Weapons" exhibition at various universities and other venues across the country, to raise public awareness on the issue of nuclear weapons. To date, the exhibit has toured 8 locations and has been visited by 29,566 individuals.



- The first showing took place at King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi (KMUTT), on 3 through 9 October. Through the week, more than 100 youth volunteers engaged in dialogue with participants of the exhibition about various consequences of nuclear weapons. A total of over 1,400 people attended. Along with the exhibition, a documentary film by an a-bomb survivor, Masaaki Tanabe, was screened.
- The group trains youth to be the “exhibit guides” who would explain the panels to the visitors. The youngest guide they have had so far is a 12-year-old student, who volunteered at a Prince Songkla University (largest university in the south of Thailand). She then was able to bring the exhibition at her school, working with her teacher and her peers.

United Kingdom

- The Youth Division of the SGI-UK organized an event titled “Generation Hope” on 17 March 2018 in three cities, gathering some 6,000 young people, to talk about the role of youth in creating more hopeful, peaceful society. One of the speakers at the event shared her involvement in nuclear disarmament activities and called for youth to participate in the cause.
- On 3 May 2018, the SGI-UK organized a public forum to discuss the SGI’s 2018 peace proposal.

United States

- The SGI-USA hosted “Toward a Fundamental Change in Nuclear Weapons Policy” in April 2017 at the U.S. Capitol Visitor Center in Washington, D.C. This conference brought together nearly 100 policy experts, scientists, elected officials, religious leaders and students to further the important conversation on how to advance toward a world without nuclear weapons.
- Some of the local organizations of SGI-USA have organized educational events in their communities to raise awareness of the dangers of nuclear weapons. For instance, in Las Vegas, NV, local SGI-USA members hosted the Everything You Treasure exhibition in August 2017, immediately following the adoption of the TPNW. At an opening event, a woman from Nagasaki, who was 13 and was staying with her grandparents in the outskirts of the city when the bomb was dropped, gave a testimony of how the incident affected her family and the community.
- Ira Helfand, Co-President of IPPNW, spoke at SGI-USA's New York Culture Center as part of the Culture of Peace Distinguished Speakers Series in February 2018.

Spain

- On 2 November 2017, the faculty of education at the University of Alcalá organized a public forum to discuss the SGI’s 2017 peace proposal which was joined by students and experts on the issues of nuclear weapons, humanitarian affairs, and human rights as well as general director of SGI-Spain.

Mexico

- On 25 August 2017, an opening ceremony for the Everything You Treasure exhibition was organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mexico, the Agency for the

Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL) and SGI and SGI-Mexico at the Plaza de las Tres Culturas in Mexico City. It was attended by Ambassador Luis Javier Campuzano, Director General for the United Nations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mexico; Ambassador Luiz Filipe de Macedo Soares, Secretary-General of OPANAL; Minoru Harada, President of Soka Gakkai, and Nereo Ordaz, General Director of SGI-Mexico. At the event, a plaque commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco), and the 60th anniversary of the Declaration Calling for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons made by second Soka Gakkai President Josei Toda in September 1957, was also unveiled.

In addition, SGI constituency organizations in Malaysia, South Korea, the Philippines, Canada, New Zealand, Argentina, Cuba, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and Germany also conducted educational activities on nuclear disarmament during the time period covered by this report.

Supporting a Youth Network, Amplify (Recommendations 4, 13, 29a, 29b)

Based on the successful completion of the International Youth Summit for Nuclear Abolition, which the SGI co-organized along with other NGOs, and seeing the needs and desire from the participants to continue working together for our shared goal of nuclear abolition,

[Amplify](#), an international network of youth dedicated to nuclear abolition, was launched in 2016. The SGI supported Amplify's 2017 International Youth Summit for Nuclear Abolition, held in June 2017 in New York.



The Summit brought together 16 young people from 13 countries in June 2017, on the margins of the UN conference to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading toward their total elimination. Highlights of the five-day summit included participating in the Women's March to Ban the Bomb through a rain storm; meeting the *hibakusha*; and hosting a Youth Reception for Nuclear Abolition supported by 10 co-sponsor organizations. Briefings were held with the President of the Conference, Austria, Ireland, UN Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, and ICAN.

Supporting a Grassroots movement, Senzatomica (Recommendations 2, 4, 22, 23, 29a)

Initiated by SGI-Italy, Senzatomica has grown into a nation-wide grassroots campaign in Italy that promotes nuclear disarmament through an exhibition and numerous initiatives in collaboration with like-minded associations to inform and make people aware, especially young people, in order to spread a wave of actions for peace. From 2014, the "From a Culture of Violence to a Culture of Peace" exhibition was organized in numerous cities and visited by over 320,000 people. The campaign has also organized other related events, which were joined by over a million people.

Thematic Paper for the Progress Study on Youth, Peace and Security (Recommendations 27, 29b, 29e)

The SGI submitted a thematic paper entitled *The Role of Youth in Nuclear Disarmament; Examining the Project, “The People’s Decade for Nuclear Abolition”* to the UN as a contribution to the Progress Study on Youth Peace and Security. This Progress Study was mandated by the UN Security Council Resolution 2250 and aims to highlight young people’s positive contributions to peace and security. The SGI’s paper highlighted the positive contributions youth in Japan and around are making to raise awareness toward nuclear abolition, which was also mentioned in [the final document of the Progress Study](#).

Annual SGI Peace Proposals (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. Between July 2016 and June 2018, two proposals were published, in January 2017 and January 2018, respectively.



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 had 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.

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