



SGI Peace News

Newsletter introducing Soka Gakkai International (SGI)'s activities to promote a culture of peace

May, 2016 (Vol. 11)

[“Moral imperative of ridding the world of nuclear arms” by Daisaku Ikeda](#)

Tokyo, Japan, May 7, 2016 (The Japan Times)

Today, many countries have started to advance toward the shared goal of a world free from nuclear weapons. What is needed now is to breathe new energizing life into that vision, and to construct a new and powerful momentum of collaborative action.

The question of nuclear weapons cannot remain one debated solely among governments. The many individuals committed to peace who make up global civil society must raise our voices. We must express our unyielding determination to move forward the processes that will finally bring about the prohibition and abolition of these weapons of mass slaughter...[and more](#)



Faith Communities Joint Statement and SGI's Working Papers Presented at the Open-ended Working Group

Geneva, Switzerland, May 2-11, 2016

The second session of the 2016 UN Open-ended Working Group (OEWG) taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations was held in Geneva between May 2 and 13. A diverse group of faith-based organizations issued a powerful statement highlighting the moral and ethical imperatives for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

The joint statement was presented to OEWG Chair, Ambassador Thani Thongphakdi by representatives of PAX, the SGI and the World Council of Churches (WCC) who had taken the lead in drafting the statement.

The SGI also submitted the working paper [“Nuclear Weapons and Human Security” \(A/AC.286/NGO/17\)](#) to the OEWG which is available as a UN document. The statement reads: “People everywhere seek security. This very natural and legitimate desire does not, however, require or justify the possession of nuclear weapons; nuclear weapons do not meet the real security needs of people or States.” SGI took the floor a couple of times during the panels to introduce key themes contained within the working paper.

“Amplify,” a collaborative international youth network dedicated to the complete abolition of nuclear weapons, in which the SGI participates, submitted the working paper [“Youth: A necessary stakeholder in nuclear disarmament processes” \(A/AC.286/NGO/26\)](#). It is available on the UN website. Launched on April 30, the network was developed by participants of the International Youth Summit for Nuclear Abolition held in Hiroshima last year to continue working together alongside providing information and recourses for youth on nuclear weapons.



Committee on the Status of Women (CSW)

New York, US, March, 2016

The 60th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW60) was held from March 14 to 24 on the priority theme “Women’s Empowerment and Its Link to Sustainable Development” which focused on implementing the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which was adopted last year in the UN General Assembly as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The CSW adopted agreed conclusions which commit themselves to the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda. One of five highlighted areas of these conclusions was: “Strengthening women’s leadership and women’s full and equal participation in decision-making in all areas of sustainable development.”

NGO participation at the CSW is among the largest of all the conferences held at the UN Headquarters. Registrants numbered 8,206 representing 1,033 organizations—almost as large as last year which set a new record for CSW at over 8,400 registrants.



Asia Pacific CSO Forum on Sustainable Development 2016

Bangkok, Thailand, March 31-April 2, 2016

The Asia Pacific Civil Society Forum for Sustainable Development 2016 was hosted by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).

This was the first regional forum on sustainable development to take place following adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, serving as a preparatory event for the Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD).

This event was held in collaboration with Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD) on behalf of Asia Pacific Regional Civil Society Engagement Mechanism (AP-RCEM).

Over 150 participants from 30 countries discussed ways to effectively implement the SDGs on both regional and national levels in order to “leave no one behind.” SGI’s presentation addressed ensuring universal health, education and services for all based on SGI President Ikeda’s 2016 peace proposal.



Global Buddhist Climate Change Collective (GBCCC)

New York, USA, April 20, 2016

At a multi-faith ceremony with Buddhist chants, Zoroastrian prayers and Sikh drumming in the chapel of the Church Center for the United Nations, Ambassador Mogens Lykketoft, President of the UN General Assembly delivered the statement [“Interfaith Climate Change Statement to World Leaders”](#) signed by 270 high-level religious leaders, 4970 individuals and 176 religious groups from around the world.

The statement is to encourage the states to sign, ratify and implement the provisions of the climate change treaty that resulted from the COP21 in Paris. Photo Credit: Our Voice

The statement was presented to Ambassador Lykketoft who commented, “There is need for a deep moral motivation for change - religion can continue to be a powerful part of the solution.”



SGI Participates in the World Humanitarian Summit

Istanbul, Turkey, May 22-24, 2016

An official side event highlighting the role of faith groups to humanitarian response took place at the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) in Istanbul, Turkey. Titled “One Humanity, Shared Responsibilities: Evidence for Religious Groups’ Contributions to Humanitarian Response,” it was co-organized by the SGI and the Joint Learning Initiative on Faith & Local Communities (JLIF&LC), an international collaboration providing evidence for faith groups’ contribution that was supported by academic institutions.



Five “Evidence Briefs” that powerfully put the case for religious groups’ contributions to humanitarian assistance were introduced, structured according to the key messages of the WHS preparatory report. In addition, the SGI launched a new exhibition at the WHS Exhibition Fair at the Istanbul Congress Centre (ICC). Titled “Restoring Our Humanity,” and coproduced with the Asian Disaster Reduction and Response Network (ADRRN), the exhibition aims to encourage individual citizens to find ways to take action to enhance the resilience of their respective societies...[and more](#)

SGI Emergency Task Force Supports Earthquake Victims in Kumamoto and Ecuador Earthquakes

April, 2016

On April 16, a severe earthquake with magnitude of 7.3 hit Kumamoto, southwestern Japan. From its headquarters in Tokyo, Soka Gakkai immediately organized an emergency task force for delivering relief supplies to those affected and provided shelters to accommodate some 3,500 evacuees by opening up ten community centers in Kumamoto and Oita prefectures. Many youth members volunteered to support the evacuees.



In Ecuador, an earthquake with the magnitude of 7.8 hit northern part of the country on April 16. As soon as transportation routes were restored SGI Ecuador provided relief supplies to disaster-affected areas.

This bimonthly SGI Peace News provides recent updates on SGI’s public educational activities to help raise awareness on issues such as nuclear disarmament, human rights, sustainable development, interfaith cooperation and humanitarian assistance.

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