

# Peace Proposal 2016

## Universal Respect for Human Dignity: The Great Path to Peace

### Synopsis

All people have the right to live in happiness. The prime objective of the Soka Gakkai International (SGI) movement is to forge an expanding solidarity of ordinary citizens committed to protecting that right and, in this way, to rid the world of needless suffering.

Our activities in support of the United Nations are a natural and necessary expression of this. In carrying out these activities we have taken a learning-centric approach, one that emphasizes the practice of dialogue and fostering an ethos of global citizenship.

One important function of learning is to enable people to accurately assess the impact of their actions and to empower them to effect positive change. Another is to bring forth the courage to persevere in the face of adversity. Educator and founding Soka Gakkai president Tsunesaburo Makiguchi termed this "the courage of application." Such courage keeps us from being overwhelmed by our circumstances and enables us instead to create the kind of future we desire.

In addition to this learning-based approach, we have stressed the importance of dialogue as the foundation for all our activities.

Our awareness of people belonging to different religions or ethnicities can be transformed through direct contact and conversation with even one member of that group. When we engage in open and frank dialogue, the world begins to appear in a warmer, more human light.

It is my conviction that dialogue is absolutely essential if we are to build a world in which no one is left behind.

### Three areas of action

I would like to offer ideas on three areas that require prompt and coordinated action by governments and civil society:

- Humanitarian aid and human rights protection;
- Ecological integrity and disaster risk reduction; and
- Disarmament.

These proposals are oriented to the ideal of a world in which no one is left behind, as articulated in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted in September 2015 as a successor framework to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The SDGs represent a significant advance on the MDGs through their commitment that no one should be

abandoned to their fate, as epitomized by the very first goal, "End poverty in all its forms everywhere."

With regard to humanitarian aid and human rights protection, I would like to offer two concrete proposals for the World Humanitarian Summit set to take place in Istanbul, Turkey, this May.

First, that all participants reaffirm the principle that our response to the worsening refugee crisis must be based on international human rights law; and I urge them to express a clear commitment to the primacy of protecting the lives and human rights of refugee children.

Second is to strengthen UN programs in support of host countries taking in refugees in the Middle East, and to prioritize a similar approach in other regions of Asia and Africa.

The UN's Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) currently links refugee relief operations to support for recipient communities in the Middle East. I propose that the World Humanitarian Summit express a commitment by all countries to work in solidarity to facilitate activities under the 3RP, such as improvements in the supply of food and safe drinking water and provision of health care.

### **Ecological integrity and disaster risk reduction**

I would like to call for cooperation among China, Japan and Korea--which together account for one-third of global greenhouse gas emissions--in sharing of knowledge and best practices in the fields of energy efficiency, renewable energy and efforts to minimize their resource footprint.

I welcome the renewal of the summit meetings between the leaders of the three countries. The Tripartite Environment Ministers Meeting has continued to contribute to cooperation on environmental issues even at times of heightened political tensions, based on the understanding that Northeast Asia is "one environmental community." I urge the leaders of the three countries to adopt a China-Japan-Korea environmental pledge focused on regional cooperation to counter global warming.

In addition to cooperation among national governments, I would like to propose that the world's cities work together to promote the goals set out in the 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change. If cities change, the world will change.

In recent years, the role of ecosystems in disaster risk reduction has attracted growing attention. As a follow-up to the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD), the UN has launched the Global Action Programme for ESD. The engagement of young people is listed as one of the program's priorities, and in this context I would like to wholeheartedly encourage young people and children everywhere to become engaged as active participants in Ecosystem-based disaster risk reduction (Eco-DRR), such as tree-planting campaigns.

## **Disarmament**

I would like to offer two proposals regarding disarmament.

The first relates to strengthening the institutional framework to prevent the proliferation of conventional weapons, which exacerbate humanitarian crises and contribute to incidents of terrorism around the world.

International activities to prevent terrorism can be strengthened significantly through the synergies between the Arms Trade Treaty, which seeks to regulate the trade in conventional weapons, and the numerous antiterrorism conventions that have been established.

Each year, an unconscionable number of lives are lost due to the influx of small arms into conflict areas. I urge states to promptly ratify the Arms Trade Treaty as proof of their pledge to make steady efforts toward the achievement of the SDG target of reducing violence, insecurity and injustice.

The second area of disarmament I would like to address concerns the use of nuclear weapons, which could render meaningless in an instant all of humankind's effort to resolve global problems.

It is the firm pledge of the SGI to offer our unflinching support for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by fostering the solidarity of youth, the generation of change. In this way we will continue to work for a world, a global society, in which no one is left behind.