

Peace Proposal Urges Inner Revolution
SGI President's peace proposal addresses disarmament, sustainable development, NGOs and the human solutions to global issues.

COURTESY OF SGI NEWSLETTER

An overemphasis on external reform in the 20th century has resulted in great tragedy and suffering, SGI President Ikeda says in his 1997 peace proposal. We have failed to stem the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and to stop environmental degradation, poverty, hunger and ethnic conflict, President Ikeda explains.

He argues that only a spiritually based, inner revolution can bring about the peaceful transition to a people-centered global order in the 21st century. Only human revolution — the transformation in the depths of people's lives — can bring about a global revolution in all the problem areas we are facing.

"New Horizons of a Global Civilization," President Ikeda's 15th annual peace proposal, was published in the Jan. 26 issue of the *Seikyo Shimbun* to commemorate the 22nd anniversary of the SGI's founding. The entire text will appear in a future issue of *Living Buddhism*.

Mr. Ikeda also details specific measures to address disarmament, sustainable development, the role nongovernmental organizations can play and other related issues. In each case he looks for human solutions to the complex problems he discusses.

The SGI leader observes, for instance, that various environmental problems directly reflect contemporary civilization's structural limits. He underscores the SGI's commitment to this issue by discussing the Buddhist doctrines of dependent origination and the indivisible relationship between human beings and their environment.

Also discussing U.N. reform, Mr. Ikeda urges the international body to more clearly reflect the needs and desires of citizens, rather than just national interests. He points to the important role NGOs can play in allowing the people's voices to be heard and proposes the establishment of an annual Global Forum through which citizens from around the world could serve in an advisory capacity to U.N. policy-making forums.

This year, he also writes, marks the 40th anniversary of second Soka Gakkai President Josei Toda's 1957 declaration for the abolition of nuclear weapons. President Toda decried them as "an absolute evil" that threatens all people's right to survival. This was Mr. Toda's spiritual call to young people to fight without compromise against the evil of nuclear weapons.

The SGI leader cites the Chemical Weapons Convention, to take effect this April, which bans the use, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons, as a sign of hope. Its broad-based verification mechanisms assure reliability, he says. Two remarkable steps were also taken last year against nuclear weapons, President Ikeda mentions: last September's conclusion of the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty and the International Court of Justice's opinion that the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons constitutes a violation of international law. Mr. Ikeda says that it is significant that the debate on nuclear weapons is now occurring in so prominent a forum.

President Ikeda concludes his proposal with a warning: We are now standing at a crossroads — we can either continue as we have in the 20th century, heading ultimately toward self-destruction, or open a new path to a global civilization based on humanism. He calls on humanity to unite as fellow travelers aboard the same ship, urging us not to sit back as idle spectators but to each take responsibility for the future.

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