

## GLOBAL FRIENDSHIPS FOR PEACE SGI ACTIVITIES REPORT

*DESPITE social and cultural differences, SGI President Ikeda is convinced that people throughout the world share a universal humanity and a common desire for happiness. Numerous works, many based on dialogues he has held with leading figures and dignitaries, have been translated into more than twenty languages. All of his dialogues, lectures and writings—along with the various institutions he has founded— have been directed toward the promotion of peace and understanding. Throughout the year of 1998, the SGI leader continued his peacemaking activities, actively promoting cross-cultural exchange. In the following pages, we have highlighted some of his visits with leading figures from around the world in the past year.*

On July 29, 1998, SGI President Ikeda met with former United Nations secretary-general Boutros Boutros-Ghali in Tokyo. Dr. Boutros-Ghali now serves as the first secretary-general of La Francophonie, an organization of fifty-two French-speaking countries dedicated to peacemaking through dialogue.

On October 17, 1998, SGI President Ikeda and his wife, Kaneko, received honorary citizenship from Ullung County of Kyongsangbuk Province, South Korea at Tokyo Makiguchi Memorial Hall. They were presented with a Plaque of Special Commendation and an official invitation to visit the area by Ullung County Governor Chung Jong Teh, Assembly Chairperson Lee Joong Chul, among other delegates. This was a precedent-setting event because Mr. and Mrs. Ikeda were the first non-Koreans to be officially honored by the country. Governor Chung lauded the SGI of Korea for their efforts in promoting harmonious relations based on cultural exchange. He further commended President Ikeda's support of efforts to gain the right to vote for Korean residents of Japan, and for the introduction of the Tokyo Fuji Art Museum's "Masterpieces of European Oil" exhibition to Seoul in 1990, and resolved to actively assist the SGI leader in fostering a new era of Korea-Japan friendship.

On September 19, 1998, after attending an SGI Youth Peace General Meeting in Tokyo, noted American futurist and activist Dr. Hazel Henderson presented Daisaku Ikeda with a copy of her book, *Building a Win-Win World: Life Beyond Economic Warfare*, and discussed the outlook for grassroots movements in the twenty-first century.

The Sakha Republic, part of the Russian Federation, elected its first president, Mikhail E. Nikolaev, in 1991. He successfully developed a policy of independence and democratization, achieving for his country a state of economic self-reliance and autonomy. SGI President Ikeda and Mr. Nikolaev met on October 20, 1998 in Tokyo, where Mr. Nikolaev received an honorary doctorate from Soka University and an invitation from President Ikeda to visit the university the next time he's in Japan.

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Keywords: Chapter Death Dialogue Life Lotus Span Study Sutra

Rector Iván Rodríguez Chávez of Ricardo Palma University bestowed an honorary doctorate upon SGI President Ikeda on July 24, 1998 in Tokyo. Rector Rodríguez hailed the SGI leader for his endeavors to restore people's sense of humanity as well as his efforts to improve education. Mrs. Ikeda was also honored for her forty-six years of unflagging support of President Ikeda and as a representative of women working for the future of humanity the world over.

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