

MESSAGES FOR THE WOMEN'S MEETINGS GENERAL MEETINGS

IT'S A NEW ERA!

I offer my heartfelt congratulations on your meeting commemorating SGI-USA Women's Day (Feb. 27). I want to sincerely thank all of you who have contributed to making today's meeting a success.

Recently, SGI President Ikeda, the president of our worldwide lay organization, met for three hours with renowned American economist Lester Thurow. They discussed the direction in which society is presently going, and what society's goals should be toward the 21st century. President Ikeda stated that we must go beyond the era of politics and economics and enter the era of philosophy and spirit. This new era would focus on making the happiness of each individual its prime objective.

In light of his discussion with Professor Thurow, I find it highly significant that President Ikeda has named the 21st century "the century of women." This means he is relying upon the women to usher in this new era of humanity. In order to do so, each of us must steadily expand our capacity to care about others. This means challenging ourselves to care about another when it is the most difficult; for example, when that person is giving you a hard time. Our ability to stay engaged at this time and take total responsibility to create a bond of mutual trust and respect is how we will usher in a new era of humanity. Our ability to show others that we care will melt the walls that exist between people and create in its place an ever-widening circle of harmonious relationships.

President Ikeda states in *The New Human Revolution*: "The course of history is determined by the people. When we each challenge our limitations and give full play to our unique potential, becoming the protagonist in the drama of our life and sphere of endeavor, the door to the new era for humanity definitely opens" (vol. 3, p. 35).

Beginning with today, let us unite in "breaking through the barriers of our own limitations," our women's motto for this year. President Ikeda and his wife, Kaneko, continually show us how much they think about us and genuinely care about our happiness. Together with them, let us take the lead in establishing a new era of humanity for the 21st century.

I am praying for your excellent health, longevity, prosperity and happiness.

*Wendy Clark,
SGI-USA Women's Leader*

PEACE STARTS HERE

Our sincere congratulations on your women's division general meeting. We have heard that bright and cheerful gatherings filled with smiling faces are being held throughout the United States.

The late Dr. Linus Pauling once said: "The most praiseworthy people are those who act for peace, and it is Soka Gakkai members who are spearheading [the efforts for peace]. I hope they continue to advance fearlessly."

Let us advance alongside SGI President Ikeda toward our individual happiness, con-

tributing to a better society and world peace while remaining true to ourselves on the stage of our mission.

As Nichiren Daishonin states, “Do not spend this life in vain and regret it for ten thousand years to come” (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 5, p. 173). Let us treasure each and every day.

We are praying for the further success of all your endeavors.

*Eiko Akiyama,
SGI Women's
Division Leader*

*Yumiko Hachiya,
SGI Vice Women's
Division Leader*