

## **DIALOGUES ON EDUCATION FOSTERING CREATIVE PEOPLE**

**‘Youthful hardships are conducive to building character and inner strength.’**

SGI President Ikeda met with Moscow State University Rector Victor A. Sadovnichy on Nov. 15, 2000, at the SGI International Conference Hall in Shinanomachi, Tokyo. They discussed the future publication of their ongoing dialogue on the theme of universities and society in the 21st century. Rector Sadovnichy was in Japan to participate in a Japan–Russia forum, at which he chaired a session on cultural exchange.

President Ikeda and Rector Sadovnichy have discussed a variety of subjects over the years since their first meeting in 1987, pursuing their dialogue in person and by correspondence. The volume they will publish focuses primarily on the role and mission of universities in the future and also covers such topics as fostering creative people, elementary and secondary education, home schooling, and the impact of information technology on education.

Dr. Sadovnichy is one of Russia’s leading mathematicians. He is a member of the Standing Committee of European University Rectors, the Russian Academy of Sciences, and the Russian Academy of Science and Engineering.

Noting that youthful hardships are conducive to building character and inner strength, President Ikeda asked his guest about his own struggles as a young man. Dr. Sadovnichy shared that for two years before entering the university, he worked as a coal miner by day—laboring almost 2,000 feet beneath the ground—and studying at night. Asked what books he would recommend to young people, the educator cited the works of the well-known Russian writer Alexandr Pushkin and American author Jack London, and he stressed the importance of literature for character development. On the subject of his mentors, the educator said that when he was in elementary school he had a teacher who helped him reveal his potential, and that at the university he was also greatly influenced by the renowned mathematician and biologist Dr. Israel Gelfand, under whom he studied.

Dr. Sadovnichy, who has published some 50 books and 300 academic papers, remarked that his greatest pride is a treatise he wrote on space-flight simulation. This work, he explained, made it possible for astronauts in training to experience all the stages of space flight—including the sensation of weightlessness—in a controlled environment on earth.