



**Annual Report on World Humanitarian
Summit Commitments - Soka Gakkai International (SGI)
2016**



Stakeholder Information

Organisation Name

Soka Gakkai International (SGI)

Organisational Type

Faith-based Organisation

City and Country where Headquartered

Tokyo, Japan

Focal Point Name

Nobuyuki Asai

Region

Asia

Twitter ID

sgi_info



2E Uphold the rules: a global campaign to affirm the norms that safeguard humanity

Core Commitments

Commitment	Core Responsibility
Commit to promote and enhance respect for international humanitarian law, international human rights law, and refugee law, where applicable.	Uphold the Norms that Safeguard Humanity

Where did your organization stand on these issues prior to making these commitments

There are more than 15,000 nuclear weapons in the world today. Studies find that even one detonation of such a weapon, by accident or design, will bring about inhumane consequences, including physical harm caused by heat, blast and radiation, climate disruption, and loss of food production. Despite this vastness of the potential damage, nuclear weapons are not prohibited under international law. SGI believes that a treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons would be a significant step toward their complete abolition, creating a legal norm stigmatizing nuclear weapons.

Achievements at a glance

SGI has supported the “humanitarian initiative” and called for a treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons. As a Buddhist organization, SGI helped form a group called “Faith Communities Concerned about the Humanitarian Consequences of Nuclear Weapons” together with various other faith traditions, and the group has issued joint statements at UN conferences, such as the Open-ended Working Group taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations and the 71st session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) First Committee.

SGI also promoted grassroots education to raise awareness of the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons and to encourage people to take action. As an example, since 2013, the exhibition “Everything You Treasure—For a World Free From Nuclear Weapons,” created by the SGI with the support of ICAN, has been showcased in many venues worldwide. The exhibition was created with the aim of reexamining the issue of nuclear weapons from 12 different perspectives, including humanitarian, environmental, economic, human rights, spiritual and gender. As of December 2016, the exhibition has been shown in 71 cities in 18 countries in 9 languages (English, Japanese, Spanish, Malay, Chinese, German, Korean, French and Thai).

In December 2016, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a landmark resolution to convene a conference in 2017 to negotiate “a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination.”

How is your organization assessing progress

We believe that the December 2016 UNGA resolution mandating a conference in 2017 to negotiate a treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons is a great sign of progress. Since the humanitarian initiative was initiated in 2010 (<http://www.icanw.org/campaign/humanitarian-initiative/>), thanks to the efforts of the civil society and core group of states, it has gained a much-needed momentum to move forward the stalled nuclear disarmament discussions. For this reason, SGI has worked with other NGOs and faith groups to voice our support for the initiative.

Challenges faced in implementation

Nuclear-weapon states and nuclear-dependent states have been expressing their opposition and skepticism, trying to undermine the effort toward negotiating a treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons. Furthermore, the recent tensions in East Asia may bolster public opinion in support of nuclear deterrence. As an organization dedicated to promoting non-formal education, SGI believes that our main challenge is to help shift the narrative about nuclear weapons – from necessary evil or being part of security, to inhumane weapons of mass destruction.

Next step to advance implementation in 2017

SGI will support the upcoming negotiations in 2017 as a member of civil society to ensure that the treaty will consist of a strong text. We will continue to encourage all States to participate actively in the negotiating process while also continuing our efforts to raise public awareness about this historic negotiation process.

Tag with other relevant transformations, keywords, initiatives

Keywords

Religious engagement

Humanitarian principles



Specific Initiatives

- Charter for Faith-based Humanitarian Action

Agenda for Humanity

- 2A - Respect and protect civilians and civilian objects in the conduct of hostilities



4A Reinforce, do not replace, national and local systems

Individual Commitments

Commitment	Commitment Type	Core Responsibility
Soka Gakkai International (SGI) commits to establish a network of FBOs in Asia within a year and to promote dialogue with national and local governments toward collaborative response in emergency.	Partnership	Change People's Lives: From Delivering Aid to Ending Need

Core Commitments

Commitment	Core Responsibility
Commit to reinforce national and local leadership and capacities in managing disaster and climate-related risks through strengthened preparedness and predictable response and recovery arrangements.	Change People's Lives: From Delivering Aid to Ending Need
Commit to increase investment in building community resilience as a critical first line of response, with the full and effective participation of women.	Change People's Lives: From Delivering Aid to Ending Need
Commit to ensure regional and global humanitarian assistance for natural disasters complements national and local efforts.	Change People's Lives: From Delivering Aid to Ending Need

Where did your organization stand on these issues prior to making these commitments

Faith-based organizations (FBOs) and local faith communities have a vast human network at the grassroots level and conduct humanitarian activity when faced with a crisis. Nevertheless, in Asia, their roles are not well recognized by other stakeholders, and they are not connected through an effective network. Such a network will help them share lessons with each other and promote humanitarian activity more efficiently. In addition, they have the potential to motivate individual citizens in their daily lives. Good educational tools will promote their activity.

Achievements at a glance

At the Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction held in Delhi last November, FBOs organized a side event and created a joint statement, inviting various kinds of faith communities including Buddhists, Christian, Hindus, and Muslims. At the conference FBOs were for the first time regarded as one of the stakeholder groups and were given an opportunity to officially share a statement. Soka Gakkai International's panel exhibition titled "Restoring Our Humanity," an educational tool developed for humanitarian affairs, was displayed at a couple of occasions, viewed by some thousand people.

How is your organization assessing progress

It was beyond our expectation that FBOs as a group were regarded as one of the stakeholder groups. We would like to keep this momentum.

Challenges faced in implementation

Some governments in Asia are still reluctant to involve FBOs in their efforts to address humanitarian affairs. We have to improve their understanding.

Next step to advance implementation in 2017

As an FBO network, we plan to launch our own message at the Global Platform for DRR held in May. We plan to display the panel exhibit at some venues this year.

Tag with other relevant transformations, keywords, initiatives

Keywords

Religious engagement

Disaster Risk Reduction



Specific Initiatives

- Charter for Faith-based Humanitarian Action