

SGI Annual Peace Proposals

Beginning in 1983, over a period of 40 years, Soka Gakkai International (SGI) issued [annual peace proposals](#) authored by Daisaku Ikeda, the president of SGI. These proposals, as well as statements he continues to issue, serve to guide the SGI's work at the UN. They also inform the activities undertaken by local Soka Gakkai organizations around the world.

The peace proposals have consistently focused on ways of revitalizing and strengthening the role of the UN and the importance of civil society participation, with the belief that the global solidarity of ordinary citizens committed to supporting the UN will help empower and strengthen it. In 2013, a compilation of 30 years of proposals addressing the United Nations was published as [A Forum for Peace](#). Additionally, proposals on specific issues such as UN reform, nuclear abolition, and education for sustainable development, have been issued occasionally.

Why peace proposals?

In the proposal on UN reform, written in August 2006, Ikeda writes: “The core principles that guide the UN are cognate with the principles of Buddhist humanism—peace, equality and compassion. Motivated by these values, it is perhaps inevitable that SGI members feel compelled to support the UN.” The peace proposals offer insights into current global issues from Buddhist philosophy, which emphasizes respect for human dignity, the infinite potential of individuals, and the interconnectedness of all life. At the same time, they offer concrete proposals and suggested action for the UN and civil society.

What themes and topics are covered in these proposals?

The main themes consistently examined in the SGI's annual peace proposals are inner transformation, dialogue, and global citizenship.¹ They are based on the SGI's belief that to bring any change at the societal level, one must begin with a change within. At the same time, complex global challenges require solidarity of like-minded people, which we believe can be fostered through transformative dialogue.

The proposals cover a wide range of topics, including nuclear weapons abolition, UN reform, education for global citizenship, climate change, human rights, gender equality, and humanitarian relief. Examples of concrete proposals put forward over the years include:

- Establishing a United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development
- Establishing a World Programme for Human Rights Education
- UN decade of action by the world's people for nuclear abolition
- Calling for a new international law on autonomy in weapon systems
- A UN Decade of Education for Global Citizenship
- Creating a People's Fund for the UN
- Establishing a UN Youth Entity
- An International Decade for the Empowerment of Women

¹ For an in-depth analysis of the peace proposals, see: Urbain, O. (2010). *Daisaku Ikeda's Philosophy of Peace: Dialogue, transformation and global citizenship*. Bloomsbury Publishing.

Selected Quotes:

"Peace is not some abstract concept far removed from our everyday lives. It is a question of how each one of us plants and cultivates the seeds of peace in the reality of daily living, in the depths of our being, throughout our lives. I am certain that herein lies the most reliable path to lasting peace."

—2004 Peace Proposal, *Inner Transformation: Creating a Global Groundswell for Peace*

"Visions that can only be realized in the far-distant future—however grand and lofty—will not propel the kind of ceaseless spiritual struggle that is required to nurture possibilities and bring them to fruition. Nor do they provide concrete opportunities for people to change their surroundings through the transformation they achieve in their own lives. Only when hope is experienced on an immediate day-to-day level as 'the coming of spring' can we succeed in patiently cultivating with joy and with pride the seeds of possibility. Only then can we have a positive impact on those around us through our own inner transformation and work in a sustained way for the betterment of society.

Such a perspective is, I believe, valuable not only for the challenges of constructing a culture of human rights, but also for realizing a sustainable society."

—2013 Peace Proposal, *Compassion, Wisdom and Courage: Building a Global Society of Peace and Creative Coexistence*

"In the Lotus Sutra, Shakyamuni dispels the boundaries dividing people in society, stressing that the most sublime state of being resides equally within all, including women—who had long been subjected to harsh discrimination—as well as individuals who had committed evil deeds. Clearly declaring the dignity of those who have been the target of various forms of oppression and discrimination, the Lotus Sutra is interlaced with the lively exchange of voices in mutual celebration and affirmation of the dignified essence of our being. Through this rich drama of lives inspiring and becoming inspired, it gives concrete form to the principle of the inherent dignity of all humankind.

Based on the Lotus Sutra's teaching of human dignity, committed to building a society which opposes any and all forms of discrimination and to ensuring that no one is denied their dignity, the SGI has consistently worked to promote human rights education as called for by the United Nations."

—2021 Peace Proposal, *Value Creation in a Time of Crisis*

"Most crucial is to forge bonds of solidarity from the realizations of connectedness that have come to us deeply and intensely during this unprecedented crisis, and make these the basis for shared efforts to find a way out of the storm.

[The first Soka Gakkai president] Makiguchi treasured the Buddhist maxim "When the skies are clear, the ground is illuminated" because he firmly believed that people inherently possess the ability to dispel the seemingly impenetrable gloom that hangs over the world and to light the way to a hopeful future."

—2022 Peace Proposal, *Transforming Human History: The Light of Peace and Dignity*

"Overcoming negative forms of attachment to difference—discrimination—and bringing about a true flowering of human diversity is the key to generating a lasting culture of peace. And dialogue is the means. The Buddhist approach outlined here can, I believe, loosen the shackles of abstract concepts and language that can be so destructive. Thus freed, we can use language to the greatest effect, and can engage in the kind of dialogue that creates the greatest and most lasting value. Dialogue must be pivotal in our endeavors, reaching out to all people everywhere as we seek to forge a new global civilization."

—2000 Peace Proposal, *Peace through Dialogue: A Time to Talk Thoughts on a Culture of Peace*