Restoring the Human Connection: The First Step to Global Peace

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On the occasion of the thirty-second anniversary of the founding of the Soka Gakkai International (SGI), I would like to offer thoughts and proposals regarding some of the issues humanity faces at this juncture in our history.

The year 2007 marks fifty years since the second president of the Soka Gakkai, Josei Toda (1900–58), made his historic declaration condemning nuclear weapons as "an absolute evil" and calling for their prohibition.

Fifty thousand young people had gathered beneath a bright blue sky on that early September day, and the summer heat could still be felt at the Mitsuzawa Stadium in Yokohama. In making this declaration, my mentor indicated that this was to be considered first among his instructions to his youthful followers and to subsequent generations. Although his health was already failing, there was something titanic in his bearing, as if holding the weight of the heavens on his shoulders. Even today his powerful tones and burning passion continue to resound in my heart.

The importance and value of this landmark declaration have grown more evident with the passing years and will continue to do so, I am confident, into the future.

Here I would like to quote the core passages:

> Although a movement calling for a ban on the testing of atomic or nuclear weapons has arisen around the world, it is my wish to go further, to attack the problem at its root. I want to expose and rip out the claws that lie hidden in the very depths of such weapons. I wish to declare that anyone who ventures to use nuclear weapons, irrespective of their nationality or whether their country is victorious or defeated, should be sentenced to death without exception.
>
> Why do I say this? Because we, the citizens of the world, have an inviolable right to live. Anyone who tries to jeopardize this right is a devil incarnate, a fiend, a monster. [1]

Toda had often voiced his staunch opposition to the death penalty and supported its abolition. What, then, compelled him to use the phrase "sentenced to death without exception" in denouncing the use of nuclear weapons?

This phrase was an expression of his deep-seated outrage at the forces that would trample the value and dignity of life and undermine people's right to survival. His fervent determination to "declaw" the demonic nature lurking in the depths of these weapons found voice in his choice of this harsh, unforgiving phrase.

His penetrating insight was rooted in the universal plane of human life, transcending differences of ideology and social system. It laid bare the essence of these apocalyptic weapons whose lethal destructiveness could put an end to human civilization and even to humankind's continued existence as a species.

In this sense, his declaration shares a profound commonality with the following passage from the Russell-Einstein Manifesto, issued two years before: "We appeal as human beings to human beings: Remember your humanity, and forget the rest." [2]

For the young members of the Soka Gakkai, whose prime focus had been on propagating Buddhism, Toda's words were as novel as they were unexpected. Many wondered why Toda, as a Buddhist, was focusing his concern so strongly on the prohibition of nuclear weapons and why he should consider this his most important message to the young people who would bear the burden of the future. Many had not grasped the idea that a religious sense of purpose cannot be fulfilled in isolation but must be complemented and completed by a larger social and human mission. This, however, is the profound essence of Buddhism as expressed by Nichiren (1222–82) in his treatise "On Establishing the Correct Teaching for the Peace of the Land."

Today, when humanity's survival continues to be threatened by nuclear weapons, one can feel as a palpable reality the significance, farsightedness and gravity of Toda's decision to speak out at that time.

In the years since this declaration was made, the SGI has developed a program of grassroots activities to embody and implement its spirit. In 1974, for example, the youth membership of the Soka Gakkai in Japan collected ten million signatures calling for nuclear abolition, which I presented to the United Nations at its headquarters in New York the following year.

In 1982, the Soka Gakkai cosponsored, with the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the United Nations Department of Public Information, the exhibition "Nuclear Arms: Threat to Our World" which opened at UN Headquarters. In 1996, an updated version of this exhibition, "Nuclear Arms: Threat to Humanity," was launched. Between them, these exhibitions have been shown in thirty-nine cities in twenty-four countries, including communist countries such as the Soviet Union and China, and been visited by more than 1.7 million people.

In addition to seeking to make people aware of the horror and cruelty of nuclear weapons through these exhibitions, we have organized and participated in a wide range of events to rally international public opinion for peace, in particular for nuclear disarmament and abolition.

Preserving the Experiences of War

These series of books are compilations of the testimonials of victims of war, recollections shared by those who have experienced war as a message to those who have not, in the belief that the knowledge of the horrors of war is the surest guarantee that future generations will never be tempted down that path again.

The Soka Gakkai's youth division has compiled a total of 80 volumes under the title *Senso o shiranai sedai e* (To the Generations Who Do Not Know War) while the women's division has published 20 volumes of *Heiwa e no negai o komete* (With Hopes for Peace). Selections from these have been published in English under the titles *Cries for Peace, Peace is Our Duty* and *Women Against War*. There is also a Japanese-language DVD.

Further, our members have been active in collecting and preserving for posterity the memories of people with direct experience of war. These have been collated as a series for publication, parts of which have been translated into English. These projects, in which young people and women have taken the lead, have been recognized as an expression of the unique qualities of the Soka Gakkai as a grassroots organization.

I personally have sought out paths to nuclear abolition, the renunciation of war and the construction of a culture of peace through annual proposals such as this one and by engaging in dialogue with leading thinkers and decision-makers. A number of these dialogues have been published, including those with former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, chemist and peace activist Linus Pauling (1901–94) and physicist and antinuclear activist Joseph Rotblat (1908–2005).

These efforts have been motivated by my belief that it is the shared and heartfelt desire of the world's people to ensure there is no repeat of the unconscionable slaughter of the twentieth century. That confidence remains unchanged today: I am convinced that this yearning constitutes a universal spiritual current flowing through the hearts of people of good will worldwide.

The will to disarm

The continued existence and threatened spread of nuclear weapons present a grave and critical challenge to our world.

The nuclear weapons test conducted last year by North Korea, together with its ongoing missile development program, has been perceived as a severe threat by neighboring countries, including Japan. Despite global condemnation expressed in repeated UN resolutions, North Korea has shown little inclination to abandon its nuclear development program. Although the stalemated six-party talks evidenced some signs of progress since the start of this year, it is impossible to view the prospects with unreserved optimism.

Uncertainties regarding the nuclear intentions of Iran, meanwhile, are made all the more disturbing by surrounding regional conflicts and the unforeseeable results if a nuclear arms race were set off. And there is profound concern about the prospect that nuclear weapons might fall into the hands of terrorists through illicit international supplier networks, unleashing destruction on an unimaginable scale.

It is the regrettable reality that we have entered the twenty-first century burdened by the existence of 27,000 nuclear warheads. Thus, while it is only natural that world opinion urge North Korea and Iran to refrain from developing nuclear weapons, to focus criticism solely on these countries lacks balance. Much of the responsibility for the current situation must be laid at the feet of the states already possessing nuclear weapons. Calls for nonproliferation will sound self-serving so long as these states refuse to take steps toward disarmament.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) obliges the nuclear-weapon states to take good-faith measures toward nuclear disarmament. However, no progress in this direction can be discerned, and there are even concerns that the NPT will become a dead letter. It is therefore vital that these states take the lead in reaffirming their commitment to the spirit of the NPT, as well as the related Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT).

Every five years, a review conference is held among the states party to the NPT. However, the 2005 conference held in New York was effectively paralyzed by the sharply conflicting positions of the nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon states.

"The current crisis is the worst that I have seen in the entire history of the treaty," [3] Dr. Rotblat told me in our dialogue, and he urged the nuclear-weapon states in particular to reengage in good faith in the NPT process. His words demand our attention, coming as they do from a man who dedicated his entire adult life to nuclear disarmament and who was the last surviving signatory of the Russell-Einstein Manifesto.

We can never lose sight of the fact that any effective movement toward general nuclear disarmament must be predicated on the good-faith efforts of those who already possess these weapons. Without such actions on the part of the nuclear-weapon states, there is little to deter those who would ignore the outrage of the international community and seek to acquire nuclear weapons for the prestige they are thought to confer.

Albert Einstein (1879–1955) declared in 1946, "The unleashed power of the atom has changed everything save our modes of thinking…." [4] Indeed, we need a fundamental reconfiguration of our worldview, to one based on a vision of and commitment to the human future, if we are to move away from nuclear proliferation and toward disarmament.

Einstein was clearly a visionary, and there are those who would argue that his words, while prophetic, are difficult to apply to reality. However, it would seem that even those widely regarded as realists have begun to recognize the need for the kind of paradigm shift that Einstein called for. Evidence for this can be seen in the editorial "A World Free of Nuclear Weapons" recently carried in *The Wall Street Journal*, coauthored by George Schultz, William Perry, Henry Kissinger and Sam Nunn:

> Nuclear weapons today present tremendous dangers, but also an historic opportunity. U.S. leadership will be required to take the world to the next stage—to a solid consensus for reversing reliance on nuclear weapons globally as a vital contribution to preventing their proliferation into potentially dangerous hands, and ultimately ending them as a threat to the world. [5]

Without the kind of shift alluded to in this editorial, it will be difficult to extract ourselves from the quagmire logic of deterrence, which is rooted in mistrust, suspicion and fear.

Reconfiguring our worldview

The challenging politics of nuclear disarmament are indeed, to borrow the words of Max Weber (1864–1920), a process of "… slow, strong drilling through hard boards, with a combination of passion and a sense of judgment." [6] But the energy released by a reconfiguration in our fundamental way of thinking can fuel the persistent exertion required.

At the same time, I feel it is vital that the Japanese people, as citizens of the only country ever to have experienced nuclear attack, never abandon their committed and principled opposition to nuclear weapons. Following the North Korean nuclear weapon test, some in Japan have suggested that the time has come for Japan to begin reviewing its own nuclear options. But I feel a strong sense of foreboding that Japan might get caught in the flawed doctrine of nuclear deterrence should it start to move in this direction.

Dealing with North Korea—both its nuclear ambitions and, for Japanese, the issue of forced abductions—is deeply problematic. There are times in the lives of both individuals and states when we face situations that would appear thoroughly resistant to resolution through dialogue and seem to demand the hard-power application of pressure.

But it is exactly in how we confront and overcome such dilemmas that our true human worth and the strength of our commitment to peace are tested. As was the case for Einstein and other conscientious scientists of his day, we will only be able to find the way toward nuclear abolition by dealing with each agonizing choice as it arises.

In my proposal of two years ago, I offered what I consider guidelines for "humanism in action":

> Recognizing that all is change within a framework of interdependence, we of course see harmony and oneness as expressions of our interconnectedness. But we can even appreciate contradiction and conflict in the same way. Thus the struggle against evil—a struggle that issues from the inner effort to master our own contradictions and conflicts—should be seen as a difficult yet unavoidable trial that we must undergo in the effort to create a greater and deeper sense of connection. [7]

Underlying this statement and expressed in the repeated reference to connection is the belief that we must never lose sight of the bonds we share as members of the same human family, a connection that transcends cultural, ethnic and national borders. This is not to deny the reality of clashing interests and outlooks; these need to be faced head-on if we are to avoid encouraging evil, thus inviting catastrophe.

The challenge of preventing any further proliferation of nuclear weapons is just such a trial in the quest for world peace, one that cannot be achieved if we are defeated by a sense of helplessness. The crucial element is to ensure that any struggle against evil is rooted firmly in a consciousness of the unity of the human family, something only gained through the mastery of our own inner contradictions.

It is this kind of reconfiguration of our thinking that will make possible a skilled and restrained approach to the options of dialogue and pressure. The stronger our sense of connection as members of the human family, the more effectively we can reduce to an absolute minimum any application of the hard power of pressure, while making the greatest possible use of the soft power of dialogue. Tragically, the weighting in the case of Iraq has been exactly the reverse.

The need for such a shift has been confirmed by many of the concerned thinkers I have met. Norman Cousins (1915–90), the writer known as the "conscience of America" with whom I published a dialogue, stated with dismay in his work *Human Options:* "The great failure of education—not just in the United States but throughout most of the world—is that it has made people tribe-conscious rather than species-conscious." [8]

Similarly, when I met with Mohamed ElBaradei, director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), in November of last year, he declared powerfully: "… we continue to emphasize our differences instead of what we have in common. We continue to talk about ‘us’ versus ‘them.’ Only when we can start to talk about ‘us’ as including all of humanity will we truly be at peace…."

In our correspondence, Joseph Rotblat posed the question, "Can we master the necessary arts of global security and loyalty to the human race?" [9] Three months after writing these words to me, Dr. Rotblat passed away. I believe his choice to leave this most crucial matter in the form of an open question was an expression of his optimism and his faith in humanity.

When our thinking is reconfigured around loyalty to the human race—our sense of human solidarity—even the most implacable difficulties will not cause us to lapse into despair or condone the panicked use of force. It will be possible to escape the snares of such shortsighted thinking. We will be empowered to engage in the kind of persistent exertion that Max Weber viewed as the ideal of political action, and the door will be open to the formation of consensus and persuasion through dialogue.

The function of anger

When my mentor Josei Toda used the words "a devil incarnate, a fiend, a monster," he was referring to a destructiveness inherent in human life. It is a function of this destructiveness to shred our sense of human solidarity, sowing the seeds of mistrust and suspicion, conflict and hatred. Those who would use nuclear weapons capable of instantaneously killing tens of millions of people exhibit the most desperate symptoms of this pathology. They have lost all sense of the dignity of life, having fallen prey to their own inner demons.

Buddhism classifies the underlying destructive impulses that give rise to such behavior as "the three poisons" (Jpn: *san-doku*) of greed, anger and ignorance. "The world of anger" can be thought of as the state of life of those in whom these forces have been directed outward toward others.

Buddhism analyzes the inner state of human life in terms of the following ten categories, or "worlds": Hell, Hunger, Animality, Anger, Humanity, Rapture, Learning, Realization, Bodhisattva and Buddhahood. Together these worlds constitute an interpenetrating functional whole, referred to as the inherent ten worlds. It is the wisdom and compassion of the world of Buddhahood that bring out the most positive aspect of each of the other worlds.

In the Buddhist scriptures we find the statement "anger can function for both good and evil," [10] indicating that just and righteous anger, the kind essential for countering evil, is the form of the world of anger that creates positive value. The anger that we must be on guard against is that which is undirected and unrestrained relative to the other nine worlds. In this case, anger is a rogue and renegade force, disrupting and destroying all in its path.

In this form, the world of anger is a condition of "always seeking to surpass, unable to countenance inferiority, disparaging others and overvaluing oneself." [11] When in the world of anger, we are always engaged in invidious comparisons with others, always seeking to excel over them. The resulting distortions prevent us from perceiving the world accurately; we fall easily into conflict, locking horns with others at the slightest provocation. Under the sway of such anger, people can commit unimaginable acts of violence and bloodshed.

Another Buddhist text portrays one in the world of anger as "84,000 *yojanas* tall, the waters of the four oceans coming only up to his knees." [12] A *yojana* was a measure of distance used in ancient India; there are various explanations as to what the specific distance may be, but "84,000 *yojanas*" represents an immeasurable enormity. This metaphor indicates how the self-perception of people in the life-state of anger expands and swells until the ocean deeps would only lap their knees.

The inner distortions twisting the heart of someone in this state prevent them from seeing things in their true aspect or making correct judgments. Everything appears as a means or a tool to the fulfillment of egotistical desires and impulses. In inverse proportion to the scale of this inflated arrogance, the existence of others—people, cultures, nature—appears infinitely small and insignificant. It becomes a matter of no concern to harm or even kill others trivialized in this way.

It is this state of mind that would countenance the use of nuclear weapons; it can equally be seen in the psychology of those who would advocate the use of such hideously cruel weapons as napalm, or, more recently, depleted uranium and cluster bombs. People in such a state of life are blinded, not only to the horrific suffering their actions wreak but also to the value of human life itself.

For the sake of human dignity, we must never succumb to the numbing dehumanization of the rampant world of anger. When the atomic bomb was dropped on the city of Hiroshima, not only military personnel but also many scientists were thrilled by the "success" of this new weapon. However, the consciences of genuinely great scientists were filled with anguish. Einstein greeted this news with an agonized cry of woe, while Rotblat told me he was completely overcome with hopelessness. Their feelings were no doubt intensely resonant with the sentiments that motivated Josei Toda to denounce nuclear weapons.

When Toda spoke of "declawing" the demonic nature of nuclear weapons, he had in mind the struggle to prevent the inner forces of anger from disrupting the ten worlds and going on an unrestrained rampage. He was calling for the steady and painstaking work of correctly repositioning and reconfiguring the function of anger in an inner world where wisdom and harmony prevail. This is the true meaning of "declawing."

For SGI members in particular it is thus vital we remember that not only our specific activities for peace and culture but the movement for "human revolution" based on the daily endeavor to transform our lives from within is a consistent and essential aspect of the historic challenge of nuclear disarmament and abolition.

Unless we focus on this inner, personal dimension, we will find ourselves overwhelmed by the structural momentum of a technological civilization, which in a certain sense makes inevitable the birth of such demonic progeny as nuclear weapons.

Taming capitalism

The world of anger is an integral aspect of human life, and in any age, unless properly positioned and restrained, it will run amok and wreak havoc. No human society has ever been completely free from strife, but there are particular characteristics of contemporary civilization, with its extremely high degree of capitalist and technological development, that cause the potentials inherent in human life to manifest themselves in uniquely problematic ways.

As mentioned earlier, a rampant world of anger causes a corresponding diminution of "the other." The attenuated presence, verging on absence, of the other is an increasingly striking characteristic of modern society, particularly in advanced industrial societies.

In 1930, John Maynard Keynes (1883–1946), known as the founder of modern economic theory and a man with a unique and critical perspective on civilization, published the essay "The Economic Possibilities of our Grandchildren." In it, he critiqued two "errors of pessimism" arising in relation to the economic depression that was then enveloping the world. These are "the pessimism of the revolutionaries who think that things are so bad that nothing can save us but violent change, and the pessimism of the reactionaries who consider the balance of our economic and social life so precarious that we must risk no experiments." [13]

Keynes argued that, with appropriate government intervention and adjustment, it should be possible to resolve the problem of unemployment and restart economic growth. "[A]ssuming no important wars and no important increase in population," he wrote, "the *economic problem* may be solved, or be at least in sight of solution, within a hundred years." [14] Certainly with regard to the advanced industrial societies, Keynes' prediction of a solution to the economic problem has been largely on the mark.

People, according to Keynes, have both "absolute needs," which must be met if we are to survive, and "relative needs," which are felt only to the degree that we seek to surpass and excel over our peers. The former have natural limits, while the latter do not. A person pursuing relative needs finds them expanding ceaselessly; they are, in Keynes' words, "insatiable." This constant desire to be superior to others embodies the destructive essence of the world of anger.

Ensuring that absolute needs are met, especially in developing countries, is the greatest, most crucial challenge facing the world. But as the example of developed countries shows, people will not necessarily be satisfied when their absolute needs are met. The classical ideal that people will behave with decorum once their basic needs have been met has not proven universally true in practice.

A society in which most people have been driven by the imperatives of survival (absolute needs) may respond to sudden sufficiency with disorientation, giving rise to growing numbers of what Max Weber called "sensualists without heart" [15] and a general skepticism about the value of hard work itself.

In human society, and in a capitalist society in particular, there is a strong tendency for people to attempt to assuage this insecurity by accumulating material wealth, especially in the form of money. Money can of course function as a means of meeting the absolute needs of daily life. But when it comes to relative needs, money, as capital, can easily become an end in itself, locked into a spiral of ceaseless increase and accumulation.

Keynes described the plight of people caught up in this spiral:

> The love of money as a possession—as distinguished from the love of money as a means to the enjoyments and realities of life—will be recognized for what it is, a somewhat disgusting morbidity, one of those semi-criminal, semi-pathological propensities which one hands over with a shudder to the specialists… [16]

Karl Marx (1818–83), for his part, is well known for his detailed and precise analysis of what he termed "commodity fetishism"—the state of people enthralled by the love of money.

The present generation corresponds to the "grandchildren" in the title of Keynes' essay, and evidence of the obsession with monetary values that he dubbed the "love of money" is everywhere. Monetary values have ruthlessly trumped and displaced all others, whether social values or the values of daily life.

Nearly all of the disturbing problems plaguing Japan in recent years—repeated incidents of corruption involving major corporations, insurance fraud, bid-rigging scandals, a money-game culture whose influence reaches even young people and children—have arisen from this love of money. It seems that the life-state of the world of anger, together with its neighboring world of hunger (a state controlled by untrammeled desire), has indeed swollen to a height of 84,000 *yojanas*. Its rampancy makes even Keynes' description—"semi-criminal, semi-pathological"—appear understated.

The inhabitants of the world of anger—always seeking to surpass, unable to countenance inferiority—are incapable of any sense of fulfillment. They cling to the insatiable pursuit of money to compensate for the perpetual instability of their standing in the world.

Our present-day system of values is said to be diversifying, but it is in fact becoming more solely focused on money, which penetrates all realms of society and daily life. Within our collective sense of ourselves there is a progressive and fundamental process of decay. This, many point out, is the true face of contemporary society.

Even if one warns against the dangers inherent in the love of money, history has proven the impossibility of eliminating currency from human society as a medium of exchange. Any attempt to forcefully restrict the workings of money will be met with a fierce counterreaction, as the decisive failure of the experiment of communism in the twentieth century proved. And, of course, any return to the premodern model of a communal society in which monetary values rank below those of class and caste (as was the case in Edo-period Japan where classes were ranked in descending order as samurai, farmer, craftsman and merchant) would be unthinkable for people who have known modern freedoms.

We therefore seem to have no choice but to learn to live with, train and tame the capitalist system. As individuals and as societies, we need to develop the capacity to control money and capital rather than sinking into commodity fetishism. Just as we need to position the worlds of anger and hunger properly within the interrelated context of the

ten worlds, it is necessary to reposition economic values within the various hierarchies of values integral to the processes of life.

In last year's proposal, I quoted Michel de Montaigne (1533–92) posing the question, "When I play with my cat, how do I know that she is not passing time with me rather than I with her?" [17] In the same way, we need to ask ourselves as a matter of urgency—as a first step toward the revival and recovery of our humanity—whether, when we are playing with money and capital, we are not in fact being played by it.

"Our problems are man-made, therefore they may be solved by man." [18] John F. Kennedy (1917–63) spoke these words at a time when the world faced nuclear saturation, and we cannot afford to regard them as mere political rhetoric.

Is capitalism moral?

Here I would like to discuss the issues raised by the French philosopher André Comte-Sponville in his recent work *Le capitalisme est-il moral?* (Is Capitalism Moral?). This title is of course intentionally ironic as most people would regard capitalism as entirely unconcerned with questions of morality, and to look for morality in capitalism is as meaningless, as the expression has it, as looking for fish in trees.

Comte-Sponville distinguishes four different orders or domains within human society:

- The first is the technological-economic-scientific order, which revolves on the axis of that which is possible versus that which is not possible.
- The second is the legal-political order, whose axis is the legal versus the illegal.
- The third is the moral order, whose axis is good versus evil and obligation versus injunction.
- The fourth is the ethical order, the order of love, whose axis is joy versus sorrow.

For those upholding a faith, the next order would be that of the supernatural or divine—a fifth order with which Comte-Sponville, an atheist, does not concern himself.

Comte-Sponville stresses that these are distinctions, not divisions, and that we in fact live within the simultaneous overlapping of these four orders. What is crucial are the interrelations among them. Each is directly controlled by the order immediately above it: the technological-economic-scientific by the legal-political, the legal-political by the moral, etc.

Society is disrupted when the functional lines between these different orders are blurred. Marx, according to Comte-Sponville, clearly confused the first and third when he attempted to moralize economics. The result was "the shift from the Marxist utopia of the nineteenth century to the totalitarian horror of the twentieth century of which we are all aware." [19] For us today it is equally a mistake to try to moralize capitalism.

Capitalism revolves on its own axis, pursuing without cease that which is possible and that which is profitable. This is its essential nature. Values such as the assurance of employment and employee benefits will naturally take second place to the pursuit of profit. Further, those living under the sway of the technological-economic-scientific order may be nuclear technocrats who, in pursuit of the possible, would strive to enhance the destructiveness and lethality of weapons with no thought to the horrors resulting from their use. Or they may be bio-technocrats who, in pursuit of the possible, would engage without hesitation in human cloning and germline genetic engineering, which can undermine the fundamental conditions for human dignity. Comte-Sponville lambastes these as "technically competent wretches."

It is not my intention to paint all engaged in the economic and scientific fields with the same broad brush. There are, needless to say, many ethical businesspeople and scientists. But so long as the basic axis is that which is possible versus that which is impossible, there is a persistent danger that the human element will be overlooked.

Looking at our world today, we see clear signs that such negative potentialities are being realized. A purely egocentric life-state, inflated to a height of 84,000 *yojanas,* marginalizes the existence of the other. Human beings, however, can exist only through their interrelations: Where there is no other, there can be no self. Humanity, in a word, has been driven completely from the stage. This kind of estrangement can make young people, especially, vulnerable to those

who would manipulate and prey on their need to believe.

This is the crisis that contemporary civilization confronts. The internal logic of the technological-economic-scientific order is incapable of restraining those most responsible for the crisis—"technically competent wretches." This restraint must be applied from without, principally from the second, legal-political order.

In the same way, the internal logic of the second order is unable to restrain the actions of sly "legalistic wretches" who abide by the letter of the law, and here again restraint must be applied from without, from the third, moral order. But the internal logic of this third order permits the existence of "moralizing wretches"—hypocrites and dogmatists who know how to skillfully mouth the language of morality.

The moral order does not readily accede to restraint from without; the ethical order or order of love has the role of completing and opening the moral order to a higher realm of possibilities. Even if the virtues to which they urge us are the same, the moral order will tend to do this in the language of duty and obligation. In contrast, the order of love is propelled along the vectors of joy and satisfaction.

Comte-Sponville's argument is indeed penetrating in its analysis of a finance-driven global capitalism coldly and solely concerned about what is possible, what is profitable—and what is not. As we trace his line of thought, we can gain new insight into what Gandhi must have had in mind when he asserted: "Those who say that religion has nothing to do with politics do not know what religion means." [20]

Reclaiming our humanity

Comte-Sponville's argument offers an approach for thinking about the ideal of humanism in action I described earlier. An embracing sense of connectedness, for example, is something that would clearly issue from his third and fourth orders. But it is quite difficult to put this directly into action when engaged in the trials that are the struggle against evil. We must recognize that the legal-political order can provide a far more effective restraint on "technically competent wretches" than dialogue or persuasion—at least in the short term.

This is illustrated by the following statements made by some of Japan's leading intellectuals at a 1983 seminar on the challenges of living in the nuclear era: "The problems facing humanity cannot be tackled on a purely ethical level; they require the rational decisions of policymakers." (Shuichi Kato); "While individual conscience and awareness are critical, even more so at the present time is the question of how to apply ethics to the task of changing the policies of states." (Toshiyuki Toyoda). [21]

The universal virtue of solidarity with humanity functions more effectively in undergirding the second order than in directly intervening in the first.

I would also like to note Comte-Sponville's unwavering emphasis on the centrality of the individual in the creation of a more humane social order. He ranks these orders from the first to the fourth in an ascending sequence of priority and states that it is only the individual who can make this ascent. His expectations are focused on the individual in persevering through this progression.

What I would emphasize is the importance of human awakening as the key to this ascent through the different orders. With each upward movement the importance of the human being grows. This process is one of individuals and humanity reclaiming their rightful place from a dehumanized technological-economic-scientific order.

Without the qualitative elevation of individual human beings, neither social transformation nor the creation of a more positive society is possible. While this may seem obvious, reliance on organizations and the submersion of the individual into the group is a failing all too common in human history. As Carl Jung (1875–1961) warned: "Totalitarian demons are called forth, instead of the realization that all that can really be accomplished is an infinitesimal step forward in the moral nature of the individual." [22]

As the genealogy of totalitarianism demonstrates, the more gaping the absence of humanity, the more vulnerable people are to its demonic allure. Contemporary mass society, with its high degree of scientific development and communications technologies, provides ample opportunity for the dark activities of demagogues and their dangerous appeals.

The "infinitesimal steps" Jung refers to are in fact utterly essential, for without them any positive change will be fragile and easily destroyed. Jung's insight is deeply resonant with the SGI's enduring challenge of human revolution: "A great human revolution in just a single individual will help achieve a change in the destiny of a nation and, further, will enable a change in the destiny of all humankind." [23]

The late Michitaro Tanaka (1902–85), one of Japan's most eminent philosophers, expressed his high expectations of the Soka Gakkai even as he noted the risk that so-called higher religions whose essence is a personal faith may, as their adherents grow in number, devolve to a more collectivist form of religious expression. Noting my authorship of

The Human Revolution, Tanaka expressed his hope that I would succeed in the effort to strengthen the personal aspect of Buddhism.

A continued focus on the personal and the individual is the very essence of our movement. It is because, I believe, we have remained firmly rooted in this commitment that the Soka Gakkai and the SGI have grown to their present extent. We can never in any future age allow ourselves to deviate from this path. To do so would be to turn our backs on the spirit of Nichiren, the founder of the Buddhist tradition on which we draw, who clearly declared that we must make the individual our model and exemplar.

From this viewpoint, we can clearly see the potential of our SGI movement to respond to the crisis of civilization and to the needs of people making the laborious ascent toward the recovery and restoration of humanity in the face of the dehumanizing imperatives of the technological-economic-scientific order.

I am firmly convinced that Josei Toda's declared determination to remove the claws hidden in the depths of the nuclear issue illuminates the essence of the task at hand. With that pride and conviction, I trust we will continue to advance along the broad path to peace.

Nuclear-free security

Next, I would like to propose some specific ways to overcome the many problems in the world today spawned by the compulsive competitiveness of those dominated by the world of anger.

Fears of nuclear terrorism are growing amid revelations about the black market in nuclear weapons technology. These are compounded by international concerns surrounding the ultimate objectives of the nuclear development programs of North Korea and Iran.

Against this backdrop, at the Symposium on International Safeguards held in Vienna last October, International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director General Mohamed ElBaradei stressed that, without a new international or multinational approach to the fuel cycle, between twenty and thirty more nations, what he called "virtual nuclear weapon States," would emerge with "the capacity to develop nuclear weapons in a very short span of time." [24] Unless measures are taken to counter this alarming trend, the NPT will be further undermined and the nuclear weapons crisis will continue to escalate.

I would therefore like to propose a strengthening of the structures within which members of the international community can identify a shared sense of purpose and work in concert to fulfill their responsibilities. This would not require a totally new framework. What I am calling for is a recasting—on the basis of a new conceptual outlook—of the obligations set out under the NPT which, with 189 signatories, constitutes the world's most universally accepted arms control agreement.

The preamble to the NPT opens with the words: "Considering the devastation that would be visited upon all mankind by a nuclear war and the consequent need to make every effort to avert the danger of such a war and to take measures to safeguard the security of peoples…." [25] To this end, I wish to stress the importance of all nations, regardless of whether or not they possess nuclear weapons, working as equals to achieve "the security of peoples" without a reliance on nuclear weapons. We must advance together toward the ultimate goal of banning nuclear weapons through a treaty similar to those already in place outlawing chemical and biological weapons.

In the light of this clarified shared sense of purpose, the respective responsibilities for the achievement of nuclear-free security become clear: for the nuclear-weapon states to actively pursue nuclear disarmament, and for the non-nuclear-weapon states to work together to prevent nuclear proliferation.

The report *Weapons of Terror* released last June by the Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission, an independent group of international experts chaired by former IAEA Director General Hans Blix (widely referred to as the Blix Commission), offered a number of suggestions as to how such security could be achieved.

The report stresses the following:

> So long as any state has nuclear weapons, others will want them. So long as any such weapons remain, there is a risk that they will one day be used, by design or accident. And any such use would be catastrophic. … The Commission rejects the suggestion that nuclear weapons in the hands of some pose no threat, while in the hands of others they place the world in mortal jeopardy. [26]

This rejection of the notion of deterrence mired in fear and suspicion coincides with the thinking behind Josei Toda's unequivocal condemnation of nuclear weapons as an absolute evil.

Obviously, the issues surrounding the nuclear development programs of North Korea and Iran need to be addressed individually and with all speed. At the same time, preventing the reemergence of such issues in the future will require a change in awareness across the whole of the international community. To facilitate this, I advocate the early convening of a world summit or a special session of the UN General Assembly to initiate debate and seek consensus toward the goal of global nuclear-free security.

The first tasks of such a gathering would be to bolster the international frameworks for each of the three pillars of the NPT—to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, foster nuclear disarmament and promote cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy—and to adopt a declaration in which all countries would pledge to fulfill their shared responsibility for the achievement of nuclear-free security for all. Such a declaration should serve as the starting point for the nations of the world to earnestly strive toward the ultimate NPT objective of "the cessation of the manufacture of nuclear weapons, the liquidation of all their existing stockpiles, and the elimination from national arsenals of nuclear weapons and the means of their delivery," [27] in other words, toward the abolition and outlawing of nuclear weapons.

The Blix Commission

The Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission (WMDC) is an independent body chaired by Hans Blix, the former Head of the International Atomic Energy Agency, and consisting of 14 experts in disarmament serving in their personal capacities. Funded by the Swedish government, the commission was formed in 2003 to supplement multilateral approaches and address what Blix has called "stagnation" in the field of disarmament. Specifically, it works to identify directions for international cooperation on disarmament as well as realistic approaches to preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction, with a view to their reduction and elimination. The final report of the WMDC was presented to the Secretary-General of the United Nations in June 2006.

Leadership for nuclear abolition

I would here like to make some specific suggestions and proposals to support the transition to nuclear-free security. The first group concerns the need to boost momentum toward nuclear disarmament.

At present, under the Moscow Treaty on Strategic Offensive Reductions signed by the United States and Russia on May 29, 2002, the two countries each pledge to reduce their stockpile of strategic nuclear warheads to a level of 1,700–2,200 by the end of the year 2012. However, this treaty does not include a provision for the complete elimination of all warhead stockpiles.

As the next step, therefore, I appeal strongly to the U.S. and Russia to reduce their strategic missile stockpiles to a few hundred warheads, and conclude a new bilateral treaty in which they commit to the complete elimination of these stockpiles, thus positioning themselves as leaders of the global effort toward nuclear disarmament.

Furthermore, they should work, in accordance with their obligation for nuclear disarmament set out in Article VI of the NPT, for the adoption of a new nuclear disarmament treaty that would include all states possessing nuclear weapons, whether signatories to the NPT or not.

The Article VI Forum

The Article VI Forum was established in response to the crisis of the nonproliferation/disarmament regime manifested by the breakdown of the 2005 NPT Review Conference. In creating the forum, the Middle Powers Initiative—a group of "middle power" governments and international NGOs dedicated to nuclear abolition—sought to "create an informal setting where diplomats, experts and NGOs can discuss ways to strengthen the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime through the NPT." The inaugural forum was held in October 2005 with the participation of the representatives of 28 governments. The forum takes its name from the article of the NPT in which the nuclear states commit themselves to the elimination of their nuclear weapons.

The aim is to advance international cooperation to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and to fulfill existing commitments to achieve the reduction and elimination of nuclear arsenals.

Since last September, the U.S. and Russia have been discussing the outlines of a follow-up inspection and verification regime to take the place of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START 1) set to expire in 2009. Likewise, the British nuclear weapon systems will reach the end of their service life in the mid-2020s, and there was debate last year on the question of renewing these systems. I believe such turning points should provide an opportunity for forward-looking steps toward nuclear disarmament on the part of all the nuclear-weapon states—not for upgrading nuclear arsenals or developing new weapons.

To this end, I would like to propose the formation within the UN of an international nuclear disarmament agency to coordinate negotiations for a nuclear disarmament treaty. This body should have powers of inspection to ensure that, once in effect, such a treaty is properly implemented.

Momentum in this direction is already building. For the last two years, the Article VI Forum consisting of states and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) advocating nuclear disarmament has been calling for negotiations to fulfill the obligation of nuclear disarmament stipulated in Article VI of the NPT, and to examine the legal, political and technical elements required for a nuclear-weapon-free world.

To encourage such initiatives, I would like to repeat the call I made in my UN proposal last year for the declaration of a decade of action by the world's people for nuclear abolition. In particular, I urge Japan, as the only nation to have

experienced the nightmare of nuclear attack, to stand at the forefront of efforts to make such a decade come about, coalescing international society around the cause of nuclear disarmament and abolition, and thus contributing to a transformation in the direction of human history.

The need for widespread popular engagement with disarmament issues is stressed in the Blix Commission report, which notes:

> WMD [weapons of mass destruction] constitute challenges not just for governments and international organizations. Research communities, nongovernmental organizations, civil society, businesses, the media and the general public share ownership of the WMD challenges. They must all be allowed and encouraged to contribute to solutions. [28]

In my view, this is where young people can play a leading role.

For our part, the SGI will continue to work with other NGOs and with UN programs and agencies in promoting disarmament education, harnessing the power and passion of youth to energize and expand the network of citizens seeking to rid the world of nuclear weapons.

In addition, to mark the fiftieth anniversary of Josei Toda's declaration, the Toda Institute for Global Peace and Policy Research, which I founded to give institutional form to his vision, is planning an international conference on nuclear abolition to be held in San Francisco in September. The findings of this conference will be compiled into a report for distribution to the UN and national governments, in the hope that this will stimulate further discussion on the path toward nuclear-free security.

Preventing and reversing proliferation

My second group of proposals concerns measures to prevent the further spread of nuclear weapons.

We must first work to ensure that the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) enter into force at the earliest possible stage. Since its adoption by the General Assembly in 1996, the CTBT has remained in limbo because some countries whose ratification is required for it to enter into force, including the United States, have failed to do so. As a result, doubts have been cast on the ultimate practicability of the CTBT.

However, its moral force alone has had a definite inhibiting effect, as indicated by the absence of nuclear testing in the past few years. Not only have the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, all nuclear-weapon states, declared moratoriums on nuclear testing, but so have India and Pakistan as well. As a result, until North Korea conducted its test last October, there had been no testing of nuclear weapons during the eight-year period from 1998.

Even if entry into force is not an immediate prospect, surely we should be looking for ways to move the CTBT toward full operation, such as bringing it into force provisionally upon ratification by a specified number of nations.

We also need a stronger institutional framework to prevent the diversion of programs for the peaceful use of atomic energy into the development of nuclear weapons.

Last September, the IAEA held a Special Event on Assurances of Nuclear Supply and Non-Proliferation, coinciding with its annual General Conference in Vienna. The meeting examined proposals for multilateral cooperation under IAEA auspices to guarantee a supply of nuclear fuel for peaceful applications. The IAEA will now start work formulating recommendations for such a scheme, aiming for adoption at the meeting of the Board of Governors. I strongly urge states to look beyond their narrow interests to reach consensus on the most effective system for preventing further proliferation of nuclear weapon development capabilities.

I also call for debate at summits and other forums on "no first use" pledges by nuclear-weapon states and further formalization of negative security assurances, by which such states pledge to neither launch nor threaten to launch nuclear strikes against non-nuclear-weapon states. Such measures could help transform the international climate regarding the desirability of nuclear weapons, reducing the number of potential nuclear aspirants. Negative security assurances are particularly vital to securing the effectiveness and integrity of Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones (NWFZ).

Last September, five nations—Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan—signed the Central Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty. The treaty prohibits the development, production or possession of nuclear weapons within the region, and is the world's sixth treaty establishing an NWFZ, following agreements covering the Antarctic, Latin America, the South Pacific, Southeast Asia and Africa.

Of special note is the important supporting role played by the UN leading up to the signing of this treaty. It is to be hoped that the UN can build on this to offer support for similar treaty negotiations in the future, especially in cases where discussions limited solely to the states concerned face difficulties. This must be part of our shared search for modalities of nuclear-free security, and at the same time will delegitimize the possession or threatened possession of nuclear weapons as an extension of state diplomacy.

There are several historical precedents to demonstrate that the development or even possession of nuclear weapons is neither fixed nor irreversible. Canada, for example, took part in the Manhattan Project, but courageously relinquished the option to produce nuclear weapons; Brazil and Argentina abandoned their nuclear weapon development programs; and South Africa dismantled its nuclear weapons and joined the ranks of the non-nuclear-weapon states.

Then there is the example of Ukraine, which inherited a massive stockpile of nuclear weapons on the breakup of the Soviet Union, yet chose to give up these weapons in exchange for security guarantees and economic assistance from the U.S., Russia and elsewhere. Ukraine's experience has been cited as one model for tackling the problem of nuclear weapon development by North Korea.

Ultimately, however, I believe that the only way to resolve the outstanding problem surrounding the nuclear programs of North Korea and Iran is, through processes of dialogue, to rid the regions in question entirely of nuclear weapons: in other words, for Northeast Asia and the Middle East to become nuclear-weapon-free zones. Otherwise, even if countries abandon their nuclear weapon development programs, there will always be the danger these will be restarted due to a change in the international climate or a turnaround in national policy.

Outer space and the arms trade

I would next like to discuss the question of the complete demilitarization of space, a pressing issue for the long-term prospects for world peace.

Principles governing the peaceful use of space are set down in the Outer Space Treaty. However, while this treaty does prohibit all military use of the moon and other celestial bodies, it does not clearly define the limits on the use of other parts of space, and in recent years there have been growing calls to extend and enhance its scope to respond to advances in military technology.

This year marks forty years since the Outer Space Treaty entered into force: What better opportunity to launch an intensive review and debate on the scope and content of the treaty?

The Blix Commission recommends a complete ban on the deployment of weapons in outer space, universal adherence to the Outer Space Treaty, expansion of the scope of the treaty and a ban on testing of space weapons. For my part, I urge that a broad-based panel be formed to discuss the demilitarization of space under the auspices of the UN Secretary-General, charged with devising specific measures and drawing broad international attention to the issue.

The final disarmament issue I wish to discuss here is that of controlling the international transfer of conventional weapons, which take countless lives in civil wars and regional conflicts around the world. These are, for all intents and purposes, weapons of mass destruction.

Currently there are around 640 million small arms and light weapons in circulation worldwide, with some 8 million more manufactured every year. The proliferation of such weapons fuels human rights violations and armed conflicts, killing more than 1,000 people every day.

The Outer Space Treaty

The Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, Including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, or Outer Space Treaty, entered into force on October 10, 1967. It was the second of the so-called "nonarmament" treaties following the Antarctic Treaty of 1961. Like that treaty it sought to prevent "a new form of colonial competition."

Article IV forms the heart of the arms control provisions, restricting activities in two ways:

First, it contains an undertaking not to place in orbit around the Earth, install on the moon or any other celestial body, or otherwise station in outer space, nuclear or any other weapons of mass destruction.

Second, it limits the use of the moon and other celestial bodies exclusively to peaceful purposes and expressly prohibits their use for establishing military bases, installations, or fortifications; testing weapons of any kind; or conducting military maneuvers.

The Control Arms campaign was launched by a group of NGOs in October 2003. It has gained momentum to the point that support among governments produced a resolution by the UN General Assembly in December 2006 that paves the way for an arms trade treaty. Such a treaty would define the legal limits of the international transfer of arms, and would prevent the movement not only of small arms but of all conventional weapons that fall outside those limits.

The UN Secretary-General will seek the views of member states on an arms trade treaty and report back to the General Assembly within the year. A group of governmental experts will then be set up to discuss the issue in greater depth and will submit a more detailed report to the General Assembly in 2008.

For the past thirteen years, I have called repeatedly for the strengthening of international frameworks regulating the arms trade toward the larger goal of the deinstitutionalization of war. It is my fervent hope that such a treaty be concluded as soon as possible. When that happens, it will be the second disarmament treaty, following the Convention on the Prohibition of Anti-Personnel Mines, in which NGOs have played a leadership role. I have no doubt that this would also do much to reenergize negotiations in other disarmament-related fields.

Heritage of SGI's actions for peace

Next, I would like to focus on Asia, a region long afflicted by conflict and tension, and put forward my thoughts on the direction of regional cooperation in the twenty-first century. I would like to preface this with a review of the origins of the Soka Gakkai and the SGI and of the history of my efforts to contribute to the peace and development of the Asia-Pacific region.

The broad underpinnings of the SGI's movement for peace are to be found in the humanistic philosophy of Nichiren Buddhism. As mentioned, we draw specific inspiration from Josei Toda's declaration for the abolition of nuclear weapons, and, looking back over one hundred years, from the book *Jinsei chirigaku* (The Geography of Human Life) authored by Tsunesaburo Makiguchi (1871–1944), the founding president of the Soka Gakkai.

The culminating vision of this work is of a transition from the kind of ruthless competition in which the strong prey upon the weak in pursuit of material prosperity to "humanitarian competition" where states benefit themselves by benefiting others through active engagement with the international community.

When *Jinsei chirigaku* was published in 1903, imperialism and colonialism were the dominant forces in the world. But Makiguchi stressed the need to create mutually enhancing, not mutually destructive, relations among peoples: "[O]ur lives rely on the world, our home is the world, and the world is our sphere of activity." [29]

Characterizing Japan as one storefront on "Pacific Avenue," he also spoke against the policies of military expansionism that Japan was pursuing in the Korean Peninsula and China.

In later years, his devoted efforts, along with those of his disciple Josei Toda, would come to fruition in his major work *Soka kyoikugaku taikei* (The System of Value-Creating Pedagogy). In this work, he elaborated a philosophy of education dedicated to the realization of happiness for oneself and others—in other words, of bringing about a new era of humanitarian competition through the power of education.

November 18, 1930, the publication date of this book—a crystallization of the ideal of mentor and disciple striving together toward a common goal—became the Soka Gakkai's founding day.

The Peace Preservation Law

The Peace Preservation Law was enacted in Japan in 1925, the same year as the law granting universal male voting rights, which it was intended to counterbalance. The law set out punishments of imprisonment up to 10 years for anyone joining an organization whose intent was to alter the system of private property or the "national polity" of Japan, i.e., the emperor system. The law was modified twice, in 1928 and 1941, to both expand the range of prohibited activities and increase the severity of punishment to include the death penalty. The Peace Preservation Law was the principal tool for the suppression of dissident thought in Japan, with tens of thousands of detentions, arrests and prosecutions. Although the death penalty was never officially imposed, a number of detainees died from torture or suicide. The law was abolished by the occupation authorities in October 1945.

Obviously, Makiguchi's stance, which gave clear precedence to the individual and humanity as a whole over the state, was diametrically opposed to that of the militarist government of the time, provoking an increasingly oppressive reaction from the authorities. Eventually, both Makiguchi and Toda were detained (in July 1943) on charges of violating the Peace Preservation Law and failure to show adequate respect to the emperor. They both, however, steadfastly refused to compromise their beliefs.

Already in his seventies at the time of his arrest, Makiguchi died in prison on November 18, 1944. Toda was finally released on July 3, 1945; the two years of imprisonment had taken a heavy toll on his health.

I chose Toda as my mentor in life and joined the Soka Gakkai after the war precisely because he was someone who had fought against fascist militarism to the end, refusing to succumb despite the harsh conditions of his imprisonment.

During the war, my family twice lost our home in air raids. My four brothers were conscripted; the eldest was killed in action in what is today Myanmar. The words he spoke to me while on leave from China—"There's nothing at all glorious about war. What the Japanese army is doing is horrible. Such arrogance and high-handedness! I feel terrible for the Chinese people"—still ring in my ears to this day.

These personal war experiences, together with Toda's tutelage, form the unshakable foundation of my actions for peace.

After the war, Toda strove single-mindedly to rebuild the Soka Gakkai, embracing the vision bequeathed him by his mentor, Makiguchi. At the same time, he intensely longed for the peace of Asia and the happiness of its peoples, and urged young Japanese people to make it their mission to work toward the achievement of these goals.

"All the world's states, great or small, earnestly seek peace, but nonetheless are constantly under the threat of war!" [30] Toda's passionate call to young people was most powerfully expressed in the declaration for the abolition of nuclear weapons and his philosophy of global citizenship, an ideal of remarkable foresight.

Sadly, Toda never had the opportunity to travel abroad. But he exhorted me, in what would be one of his lasting instructions for my life: "There are vast continents beyond the ocean. The world is enormous. There are people afflicted with suffering. There are children trembling in the flickering shadows of war. You must travel! You must go out into the world on my behalf!"

On October 2, 1960, I embarked on my first journey overseas in the effort to contribute to world peace. This was two years after my mentor's passing and soon after I was inaugurated as third president of the Soka Gakkai. I visited destinations in North and South America, carrying Toda's portrait in the pocket of my jacket closest to my heart.

I chose Hawaii as my first stop in light of the immense tragedy unleashed by the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941. I sought to engrave that historical lesson in the depths of my being and reaffirm my determination to generate an unstoppable current toward a world without war.

I visited various cities including San Francisco, the birthplace of the United Nations, and New York, where I observed the debate of the General Assembly at UN Headquarters, and was inspired to think deeply about the central role the international body could play in creating a peaceful world.

Building bridges throughout Asia

In 1961, I traveled to Hong Kong, Ceylon (Sri Lanka), India, Burma (Myanmar), Thailand and Cambodia. At each site I offered sincere prayers for the victims of war and deeply reflected on the challenge of realizing lasting peace in Asia.

When I visited Bodhgaya in India, by tradition the site where Shakyamuni first attained enlightenment, I keenly felt the need for an institution dedicated to multifaceted research into the philosophical and thought traditions of Asia and the rest of the world in order to lay the foundations of a world without war. In 1962, I founded the Institute of Oriental Philosophy to conduct such research and promote dialogue among different civilizations and faith traditions.

Likewise, I unveiled plans for establishing the Min-On Concert Association, which would be founded in 1963, during my stay in Thailand. This grew out of my conviction that mutual understanding among ordinary people serves as the basis for peace, and artistic and cultural exchange play a crucial role in facilitating such understanding.

During this trip through Asia, I directly sensed the dark shadows cast over the region by the deep divisions of the Cold War. Soon after this visit, the Vietnam War expanded to engulf the entire country with the start of U.S. aerial attacks against the North in February 1965.

This was just two months after I began writing what would become a major undertaking in my life, the novel *The Human Revolution,* in Okinawa, which at that point was still under American occupation. The novel begins with the words: "Nothing is more barbarous than war. Nothing is more cruel." [31] When I heard of the escalation of the war in Vietnam, I was filled with a profound anger that this very tragedy was being repeated once more in Asia.

As the fighting intensified, tensions grew to a point where a direct confrontation between the U.S. and China was feared. Feeling it imperative that the war be ended as soon as possible, in November 1966 I made a public call for an immediate ceasefire and a peace conference bringing together the concerned parties, and strongly urged again in August 1967 that the bombing of North Vietnam be halted.

On September 8, 1968, I issued a proposal that outlined concrete steps toward the normalization of Sino-Japanese diplomatic relations based on my belief that ending China's isolation within the international community was an absolute requirement not only for the stability of Asia but also for global peace.

My proposal was met with fierce criticism in Japan where, at the time, there was a deep-seated perception of China as an enemy nation. But it seemed clearly untenable for a country comprising some 20 percent of the world's population to be denied a legitimate seat at the UN or to lack diplomatic ties with its neighbor Japan. Here also I was inspired by my mentor, Josei Toda, who had often voiced his conviction that China is certain to play an essential role in world history and that friendship between the two countries would be of utmost importance.

Global dialogue

Starting in the 1970s, I embarked on a process of dialogue with prominent leaders and thinkers from various countries in order to cast bridges of friendship across the fissures of an increasingly divided world.

In 1970, I met with Count Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi (1894–1972), an early proponent of European unity, and discussed for a total of over ten hours such issues as the prospects for a Pacific civilization. In 1972 and 1973, I held a dialogue with one of the twentieth century's most prominent historians, Arnold Toynbee (1889–1975). Our talks covered a broad range of topics, including the path toward global integration. He urged me, in light of my relative youth, to carry on the work of dialogue in order to help bring the whole of humanity together. I sensed that he was entrusting me with a task dear to his own heart.

Ever since, I have engaged in dialogue with leading figures from a wide variety of religious, cultural and national backgrounds, who are committed to taking action in their respective fields for the sake of our human future. To date, a total of forty-three of these dialogues have been published in book form.

In January 1973, I addressed a letter to U.S. President Richard M. Nixon (1913–94) urging the cessation of the Vietnam War, forwarding this to him via Henry Kissinger, his National Security Advisor at the time. And later that year, I forwarded to President Nixon a proposal expressing my views on America's role in the world. I conveyed my heartfelt respect for the brilliant spiritual heritage dating back to the country's birth, a heritage that must be made manifest in leadership for peace, human rights and coexistence if there is to be positive change in the world.

It was out of a similar conviction that I founded, in September 1993, the Boston Research Center for the 21st Century, an institution dedicated to peace education and dialogue, and also Soka University of America (SUA), which opened in May 2001.

During 1974 and 1975, I visited China, the Soviet Union and the U.S. in my capacity as a private citizen, in the hope of contributing to defusing the tensions among them. At the time there was a real danger the world would split irrevocably into three hostile blocs as relations between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. continued to deteriorate while the Sino-Soviet confrontation escalated.

On my first visit to China in May 1974, I witnessed the people of Beijing building a vast network of underground shelters against the intensely felt threat of Soviet attack. In September the same year, I visited the Soviet Union for the first time, and met with Premier Alexei N. Kosygin (1904–80). I spoke of China's deep concern about the Soviet Union's intentions, and asked him straight out whether the Soviet Union was planning to attack China or not. The premier responded that the Soviet Union had no intention of either attacking or isolating China.

I brought this message with me when I next visited China in December of that year. It was also on this visit that I met with Premier Zhou Enlai (1898–1976), and discussed with him the importance of China and Japan working together for global peace and prosperity.

During our meeting, Premier Zhou stressed that China had no wish to be a superpower. Taken together with Premier Kosygin's words, this statement convinced me that an easing of tensions between the two countries was not far off. And indeed, this proved to be the case.

In January of 1975, I visited the United States and exchanged views with Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. When I told him of Premier Zhou's wish to conclude a Sino-Japanese peace and friendship treaty, Kissinger expressed his agreement and support for the idea.

I met with the Japanese Minister of Finance, Masayoshi Ohira (1910–80), on the same day in Washington. I conveyed Kissinger's words to him and expressed my own sense of the absolute necessity of such a treaty. Ohira, who later served as Japan's prime minister, responded that he was fully committed to bringing such a treaty about. Three years later, in August 1978, the Sino-Japanese Peace and Friendship Treaty was officially concluded.

On my third visit to China in April 1975, I met with Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping (1904–97) in Beijing. I also had the opportunity to confer with the Cambodian monarch in exile, Prince Norodom Sihanouk, to discuss the road toward peace for his country.

It was in the midst of such dialogue-centered efforts to build peace that the Soka Gakkai International was launched on January 26, 1975, in Guam, the site of fierce fighting during World War II. Representatives from 51 countries and territories around the world came together to launch a people's movement for peace that today has grown into a grassroots network in 190 countries and territories.

Around the time of the SGI's founding, I began to pour my energies into educational exchanges, particularly the promotion of university exchange programs aimed at fostering leaders for the next generation. When traveling to different countries, I have always tried to make time to visit universities and educational institutions, sharing views with faculty and students.

In 1968, as heir to the vision of Presidents Makiguchi and Toda, I founded the Soka school system, followed in 1971 by Soka University. My determination was to build these schools up into centers of learning consecrated to the goal of peace, working with educators throughout the world.

In April 1974, just prior to my first visit to China, I was invited to speak at the University of California, Los Angeles, in what was for me the first such occasion. Then, in May 1975, I delivered a lecture entitled "A New Road to East-West Cultural Exchange" at Moscow State University, in which I made the following statement, which still remains my firm belief:

> At no time in history has there been as great a need for a spiritual Silk Road extending all over the globe, transcending national and ideological barriers, and binding together people at the most basic level. [32]

On that occasion I received an honorary doctorate from Moscow State University. Since then, it has been my privilege to receive a total of 202 such degrees and professorships from universities and academic institutions around the world. I consider these honors more a recognition of the SGI as a whole than of myself. They are also proof that the halls of wisdom that are the world's universities can come together in a shared and earnest yearning for peace and humanism.

It is my humble hope that the path of dialogue I have forged will become the kind of Silk Road of the spirit connecting people's hearts that I called for in my Moscow State University address.

From the 1980s on, I have continued to conduct dialogues with leading figures from around the world. Particularly with the leaders of the Asian countries that suffered the atrocities of Japanese militarism during the war and still hold mixed feelings toward Japan, our dialogues have confronted the tragedies of the past and have envisioned a hope-filled future of lasting peace in Asia.

Among the political leaders and heads of state I have met in my efforts to deepen trust and friendship with the peoples of Asia are: Presidents Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao of China; Prime Ministers Lee Soo-sung and Shin Hyon-hwak of South Korea; Presidents Corazon Aquino and Fidel Ramos of the Philippines; President Abdurrahman Wahid of Indonesia; Sultan Azlan Shah and Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad of Malaysia; President S. R. Nathan and Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew of Singapore; King Bhumibol Adulyadej and Prime Minister Anand Panyarachun of Thailand; Presidents Natsagiin Bagabandi and Nambar Enkhbayar of Mongolia; King Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev of Nepal; and Presidents Kocheril Raman Narayanan and Ramaswamy Venkataraman and Prime Ministers Rajiv Gandhi and Inder Kumar Gujral of India.

In addition, every year since 1983, I have set out ideas for strengthening the UN and resolving global issues in my peace proposals commemorating January 26, SGI Day, with a special focus on peace in the Asia-Pacific region.

For example, regarding the quest for peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula, although many challenges remain, over the course of time there has been progress toward realization of a number of the proposals I have made: the holding of a North-South summit, the signing of a pledge of mutual nonaggression and renunciation of war, and the holding of multilateral talks to resolve the issues surrounding North Korea's nuclear program.

In recent years in these proposals, I have called for the promotion of a joint research project to build the foundations for a shared understanding of history in Asia. I have also insisted that it is necessary to recall the spirit that prevailed at the time of the normalization of diplomatic relations between Japan and China as a way to seek an improvement in bilateral relations. My ongoing dialogues with Asia's political and cultural leaders aim to cultivate an environment conducive to the realization of such ideas.

It was particularly gratifying to witness the China-Japan and South Korea-Japan summit talks in October 2006, the first steps toward the betterment of Sino-Japanese and Korean-Japanese relations after several years of heightened tensions.

Moreover, South Korean Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Ban Ki-moon has just been inaugurated as UN Secretary-General, the second Asian to hold the post. I sincerely extend my best wishes for his success, and hope that under his leadership UN-centered efforts to promote global peace will advance with great vigor.

Strengthening regional relations

This year marks the 400th anniversary of the arrival of the first of a long series of Korean diplomatic delegations to Japan, which has been recognized by the two countries as a profoundly significant milestone in their relations. Japan and South Korea have agreed on a new program whereby cities in both countries send youth delegations to each other. Combined with the ongoing youth exchanges between China and Japan, it is anticipated this will nurture

friendship among the young generations of China, Korea and Japan.

The Japan-China Joint Press Statement issued at the summit meeting in Beijing last October was the first such statement in eight years. It contains important elements that will serve as the guiding principles for relations between the two countries into the future. The following section in particular drew my attention: "[I]t is the solemn responsibility of both countries and of the bilateral relations in the new era to contribute constructively to the peace, stability, and development of Asia and the world." [33]

The spirit expressed here is deeply consonant with the vision for the future of China and Japan upon which Premier Zhou Enlai and I concurred when we met over thirty years ago.

It is now thirty-five years since the normalization of Sino-Japanese diplomatic relations, and the time has come to ensure that the progress made thus far is secure and irreversible. To this end we must continue to promote cooperation and exchange in a variety of areas and build relations of trust that will serve as the immovable foundations of peace and coexistence in East Asia.

The Joint Press Statement mentioned earlier includes, among its recommendations for the year 2007, the enhancement of friendly sentiment between the two peoples and the active development of exchange, especially youth exchange, through the Japan-China Year of Culture and Sports. In addition, it calls on the two countries to "strengthen mutually beneficial cooperation particularly in the areas of energy, environmental protection, finance, information and communication technology, and protection of intellectual property." [34]

Here, I would like to suggest that the decade starting from 2008, the year of the Beijing Olympic Games, be designated as a decade for building Sino-Japanese friendship for the twenty-first century, with different areas of cooperation given particular focus on an annual basis; for example, by following the Japan-China Year of Culture and Sports with a year for energy cooperation, a year for environmental protection, etc.

Additionally, as part of this decade, I would like to suggest an exchange program between the diplomats of the two countries. A similar program played a crucial role in helping France and Germany overcome the bitter memories of two World Wars to become the driving force for European integration. The system by which diplomats from each country are assigned to serve in the other's Foreign Ministry has become well established and is said to have been highly effective in preventing misunderstandings and deepening diplomatic collaboration.

Japan has also had similar diplomatic exchange programs with the United States, France and Germany. Extending these programs to include Asian countries such as China and Korea would surely strengthen the foundations for a future East Asian Union.

Next, I would like to briefly consider India which, like China, is one of the emerging powers of the twenty-first century. In July of last year, on the final day of the St. Petersburg G8 Summit, an expanded conference was held with the participation of China, India, Brazil, Mexico and South Africa. There, the leaders of the five countries were invited to exchange views and opinions on the St. Petersburg Plan of Action on Global Energy Security and other outcome documents. This meeting was symbolic of the fact that the views and voices of these major developing nations have become indispensable to the summit process.

In December of 2006, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh visited Japan for a summit meeting, at the conclusion of which the Joint Statement Towards Japan-India Strategic and Global Partnership was released. I welcome this development and wish all success for the Japan-India Friendship Year 2007, which commemorates the fiftieth anniversary of the Cultural Agreement between the two countries.

To contribute to this process, I would like to propose that Soka University of America help organize an international conference of scholars and experts from Japan, the United States, China and India on the theme of deepening and expanding global partnership in the twenty-first century. SUA's Pacific Basin Research Center is dedicated to research on the peaceful development of the Asia-Pacific Region and would be able to contribute significantly to the success of such a conference.

Finally, I would like to make two specific proposals toward the formation of an East Asian Union. The first is for the establishment of an East Asian environment and development organization.

In January 2007, the East Asia Summit was held in the Philippines, the second such summit following the December 2005 meeting in Malaysia. Together with the ASEAN+3 (China, Korea and Japan) Summit that preceded it, this meeting is part of an ongoing process of building trust and strengthening regional relations through dialogue.

Many important issues, however, remain unresolved, and the path to integration such as through the formation of an East Asian Union seems long. In this regard, I believe pilot programs focused on specific concerns can build the structures of cooperation in a way that makes visible the contours of future regional collaboration and enhances and

maintains enthusiasm and interest for this in each country.

In particular, the establishment of bodies focused on crucial issues such as the environment and energy would be desirable. There are an increasing number of voices calling for full-fledged cooperation through, for example, the ASEAN+3 Environmental Ministers Meeting held every year since 2002. The regional initiatives developed to date, such as those working to combat acid rain, should be brought together under the unified aegis of an East Asian environment and development organization. This would make possible more comprehensive and effective responses to the challenges facing the region.

Second, I would like to propose the establishment of an East Asian equivalent of the College of Europe. This center for graduate studies was established soon after the end of World War II, and has fostered the talents of young people who have played an active role in promoting integration in their respective fields. For more than fifty years, the intellectual training conducted at the College of Europe has promoted a European identity among its graduates that transcends the narrow framework of individual states. This identity has been crucial in supporting the growth and development of the European Union.

Establishing such an institution at this point in time would develop a pool of talent essential to any future regional community. There would be no need for the curriculum to be limited to regional issues and concerns. Collaborating with such bodies as the United Nations University, it could become a venue for creative in-depth exploration of the challenges to realizing systems of global governance, systems in which the UN would no doubt play a crucial role.

College of Europe

The College of Europe is a university institute of postgraduate studies and training in European affairs. Originally proposed by Salvador de Madariaga, a Spanish statesman, thinker and writer in exile, at the 1948 Hague Congress, the college was established in Bruges in 1949. A second campus was opened in Natolin, Warsaw, in 1994 to respond to the changing face of the continent after the fall of communism.

The university is funded mainly by the EU and the governments of Belgium and Poland. It is multilingual and multinational: more than 45 different countries are represented in the student body of around 300 in Bruges and 120 in Natolin, and most students speak three to four languages. Courses cover areas such as European legal, political and administrative studies, economic studies and international relations and diplomacy; graduates occupy positions of responsibility in international bodies throughout Europe and the rest of the world.

Toward a dialogical civilization

Surveying the prospects for global peace, nothing is more crucial than the awakened solidarity of the world's people. For only this can give rise to an irresistible current toward the renunciation of war.

In August 2006, I had the opportunity to meet with UN Under-Secretary-General Anwarul K. Chowdhury. At that time, he stressed that it is only the engagement of ordinary people that can make our world a better and more humane place. This echoes my own long-cherished belief.

The goal of the SGI's movement, which has now spread to 190 countries and territories, is to empower the world's citizens to rid this Earth of needless suffering while realizing lives of peace and happiness. With that pride and conviction, we will continue to work alongside people of like mind in building a global culture of peace in the twenty-first century. We are, further, committed to the vision of a "dialogical civilization"—fostering mutual understanding through dialogue and enabling the human dignity of all to shine.

Notes:

1 Toda, *Toda,* vol. 4, 565.
2 Born et al., "The Russell-Einstein Manifesto."
3 Rotblat and Ikeda, *A Quest for Global Peace,* 15.
4 Einstein, "Atomic Education."
5 Shultz et al., "A World Free of Nuclear Weapons."
6 Weber, "Profession and Vocation of Politics," 369.
7 Ikeda, "New Era of Dialogue."
8 Cousins, *Human Options,* 27.
9 Rotblat and Ikeda, *A Quest for Global Peace,* x-xi.
10 Nichiren, *Nichiren Daishonin,* 584.
11 Ibid., 430.
12 Nichikan, *Sanjuhidensho,* 16.
13 Keynes, "Economic Possibilities," 359–60.
14 Ibid., 365–66.
15 Weber, *Protestant Ethic,* 182.
16 Keynes, "Economic Possibilities," 369.
17 Montaigne, *Essays,* 505.

18 Kennedy, "American University Speech."
19 Comte-Sponville, *Le capitalisme est-il moral?,* 81.
20 Gandhi, *Autobiography,* 371.
21 Iwanami Shoten Henshubu, *Nihon,* 46, 55.
22 Jung, "The Fight with the Shadow," 226.
23 Ikeda, *The Human Revolution,* viii.
24 ElBaradei, "CTBT."
25 IAEA, "Treaty."
26 WMDC. "Weapons of Terror."
27 IAEA, "Treaty."
28 WMDC. "Weapons of Terror."
29 Makiguchi, *Jinsei chirigaku,* 26.
30 Toda, *Toda,* vol. 1, 127.
31 Ikeda, *The Human Revolution,* 3.
32 Ikeda, "A New Road," 68.
33 MOFA, "Japan-China Joint Press Statement."
34 Ibid.

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