

Tolerance Brings Peace, Says European Academy President
Courtesy of SGI NEWSLETTER
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The earth's fate rests on our efforts to promote dialogue, said the president of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts in an address at Soka University today. Dr. Felix Unger afterward met with SGI President and Mrs. Ikeda at the Tokyo Makiguchi Memorial Hall.

In his address, titled "Tolerance — A Basis for Intercultural Dialogue," Dr. Unger stated that the ability to understand and appreciate the differences of others is conceived through dialogue. When put into action, tolerance enables us to lay the groundwork for peace, he asserted.

Dr. Unger went on to stress the importance of interfaith dialogue toward establishing mutual understanding among the various religions and cultures, and using it as the foundation for building a new, global culture. In conclusion, he held that respect for life and the development and protection of humanity are fundamental in creating harmonious coexistence — that only when we take action based upon universal values can we solve global problems.

The European academy, located in Salzburg, Austria, named Mr. Ikeda an honorary senator this past March. During their meeting, the SGI leader said that Dr. Unger, a heart surgeon and social activist, reminded him of the Greek physician Hippocrates, whose oath to use his judgment and abilities for helping people — not causing them harm or hurt — is well known. Dr. Unger's academy embodies this spirit, President Ikeda affirmed.

The SGI president also said that the world is presently in a state of chaos, and that people everywhere are seeking answers to questions about what the 21st century holds, about what they can do. It is the responsibility of all thinking people in the world, he said, to address such queries and propose solutions, and provide inspiration and education. He added that a new solidarity among intellectuals is vital, not only in Europe and North America, but throughout Asia, especially in China and India, and in South America and Africa.

Agreeing with the SGI leader, Dr. Unger emphasized that it is the duty of people of conscience around the world to clarify global human values.

President Unger also introduced the academy's plan to establish a Monument of Tolerance in a suburb of Salzburg. He then presented Mr. Ikeda with a marble sphere, explaining that the monument's foundation will be made of the same material, and that it will be a symbol of the academy's desire to unite the world in a network of tolerance.

The European Academy of Sciences and Arts, established in 1990, is a community of leading social figures whose aim is to contribute to the development of humanity and promotion of harmony on a global scale. Its executive advisors include King Juan Carlos I of Spain, Chancellor Helmut Kohl of Germany, President Václav Havel of the Czech Republic, President Árpád Göncz of Hungary and President Jacques Santer of the European Commission. Former Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev also takes part in one of the academy's divisions.

Represented organizations include the Club of Rome, All-European Academies and the European Council. More than 50 countries in Europe, North and South America, Asia and the Middle East participate in the organization's wide-ranging scientific and scholarly research projects.

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