

International U.N. Support Group Honors SGI President
Courtesy of SGI NEWSLETTER
Tokyo, Sept. 13

At a meeting marking the 40th anniversary of second Soka Gakkai president Josei Toda's call for the abolition of nuclear weapons, the World Federation of U.N. Associations lauded SGI President Ikeda for his dedication to peace. The award was given "in recognition of his invaluable services rendered in support of the United Nations and promotion of world peace."

WFUNA President Hashim Abdul Halim said that the United Nations is receiving support from people throughout the world who are demanding an end to war. He also lauded the SGI president for his relentless devotion to realizing a peaceful world.

WFUNA was founded in August 1946, only nine months after the birth of the United Nations. It is an international nongovernmental organization devoted to supporting the purposes and principles of the U.N. Charter and to the promotion of public awareness and understanding of the activities of the United Nations and its agencies. It has member associations in almost 80 countries all over the world.

Mr. Ikeda remarked in his acceptance speech (which will be in an upcoming issue) that to solidify and invigorate the United Nations, it is vital to transcend national interests and bring together the goodwill of people and the passion of youth. More than 250 youth from 50 countries and territories were attending the event.

On the same day, Mr. Ikeda met with President Halim, who recounted how the first Soka Gakkai president, Tsunesaburo Makiguchi, boldly resisted Japanese militarism and subsequently died in prison. Without true courage and a firm desire for peace, Mr. Halim said, Mr. Makiguchi could not have given his life when his country betrayed him and branded him a traitor. He went on to say that, with Mr. Makiguchi's example as its foundation, the SGI has advanced a global movement of peace.

Mr. Halim further emphasized that no one comes out a winner in war; the citizens of warring countries suffer no matter who claims victory. War inflicts irrevocable damage, leaving people maimed and disabled, and it causes lasting mental and psychological disorders, he said. For this reason, President Halim stressed, his organization, WFUNA, firmly supports the United Nations in its efforts to stop war.

Concurring, President Ikeda stated that war is an absolute evil, and that it is vital for people to join together toward raising voices of conscience if there is to be any hope for the future of humankind. Herein lies the importance of the United Nations, he said. But without the support of nongovernmental organizations such as WFUNA, the SGI leader added, the United Nations will not be able to accomplish its fundamental purpose.

Mr. Halim agreed that the importance of NGOs would increase as the United Nations continues on its quest for peace, and he expressed the desire to see WFUNA and the SGI strengthen bilateral cooperation toward U.N. reform.

WT