

GLOBAL FRIENDSHIPS FOR PEACE SGI ACTIVITIES REPORT: JAPAN

“Josei Toda, my mentor and the second president of the Soka Gakkai, passionately longed to eliminate misery from the face of the Earth. His fervent wish is the basis of my thought and action. My own efforts to discuss the most vital topics with informed and concerned people from all over the world are my response to Mr. Toda’s exhortation. I have refused to be deterred in my efforts to enter into dialogue with representatives of all peoples on the basis of our common humanity.” (SGI President Ikeda’s 1999 Peace Proposal, page 19)

THE SGI president’s efforts have been recognized by scores of nations and institutions throughout the world. On February 17 at the Okinawa Training Center in Japan, the SGI President, and founder of Soka University, received the Philippines’ Cagayan Capitol College’s first Persona Integra “Total Person” Award. The school’s president Casimiro B. Juarez and his wife and executive vice president Fe R. Juarez made the presentation. The honor was established to recognize exemplary individuals who have actualized the school’s ideal of the well-rounded person who makes outstanding contributions to society.

Mrs. Juarez is the daughter of the school’s founder, Madame Laureana S. Rosales, who today at 73 is the president of Iligan Capitol College. Madame Rosales is a survivor of the infamous Bataan Death March, the forced march of 70,000 American and Philippine prisoners of war captured by the Japanese in the Philippines in 1942 in which seven to ten thousand died.

Expressing indignation at the savage treatment that Madam Rosales had received at the hands of the Japanese military, Mr. Ikeda offered his heartfelt apologies as a Japanese citizen. He later handed an SGI Peace and Culture Award to Mrs. Juarez saying, “I wish to humbly present this award to your mother as a small recompense for Japan’s atrocious conduct in the past.” □

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