

SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA'S INTERVIEW VIOLENCE MUST NEVER BE TOLERATED

'I am unequivocally opposed to any form of violence or terrorism,' says SGI President Ikeda, 'not only that perpetrated in the name of religion. It must never be tolerated. Terrorism by a religious group is an act of suicide for that religion.'

The Sankei Shimbun, one of the largest newspapers in Japan, recently interviewed SGI President Ikeda on a wide range of topics. Following is a summarized translation of President Ikeda's responses to questions asked by Sankei concerning the recent terrorist attacks in the United States.

Sankei Shimbun: Concurrent terrorist attacks, the worst the world has known, took place against core establishments of the United States. While the facts are not entirely clear, what is your view on the acts of terrorism carried out by Islamic fundamentalists or other religious groups?

President Ikeda: I am deeply grieved by what has happened. I would like to express my deepest condolences to the victims. I am unequivocally opposed to any form of violence or terrorism, not only that perpetrated in the name of religion. It must never be tolerated. Terrorism by a religious group is an act of suicide for that religion.

Sankei: It cannot be denied that one aspect of religion, which should serve to cultivate one's humanity, drives others to murder one another instead.

President Ikeda: This is a very grave problem. I have friends in the Jewish as well as Islamic communities. I am also making efforts to help resolve problems in the Middle East. The issues are highly complex and convoluted, requiring an examination of every possible approach. One such possibility may be the intervention of the United Nations. Now is the time for the leaders of the world's major powers to take action to end this cycle of hatred and violence. They must strive to create a massive groundswell of public opinion to this end, which will in turn transform both our times and the people who live in it.

Sankei: Is there any way to avoid religious conflict within international society?

President Ikeda: From my experience of having engaged in dialogue with people from around the world, I can say with certainty that it is possible to reach mutual understanding even if our religious beliefs are different. We must remain committed to dialogue, no matter what. The foremost challenge for religions in the 21st century must be to realize a wider, more active commitment to dialogue.

Courtesy of www.sgi.org.

For the latest information on the SGI response to the Sept. 11 tragedy, please visit the SGI-USA Web site: <http://www.sgi-usa.org>.