



## Organization Center

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**DISTRIBUTE TO:** District through Territory Leaders  
Zone and Territory Office Managers

**FROM:** SGI-USA Organization Center – Renu Debozi

**SUBJECT:** SGI President Ikeda's 2012 New Year's Message

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Attached please find SGI President Ikeda's 2012 New Year's Message in English, Chinese, Korean, Japanese and Spanish. Please feel free to share at the New Year's Eve and New Years Meetings.  
Congratulations!

**Note:** Message in English is published in the New Year's issue of the *World Tribune*.



## **SGI President Daisaku Ikeda's New Year's Message**

### **Illuminating the World and the Future With the Great Light of Hope**

Congratulations on the start of 2012—the Year of Developing a Youthful SGI—a year brimming with new possibilities!

Thanks to your wonderful efforts, we have entered a new age of *kosen-rufu*, where the SGI continues to grow as never before, with surging numbers of capable young Bodhisattvas of the Earth appearing around the globe.

Together with our fellow members in 192 countries and territories, let's bring forth the bright sun of time without beginning in our hearts day after day, and illuminate our communities, our societies and the future with the great light of hope.

It was six decades ago, during a youth division study seminar held in 1952, that my eternal mentor, second Soka Gakkai president Josei Toda, articulated his vision of “global citizenship.” He asked us whether we would take on the lofty mission of *kosen-rufu*, of world peace. “Yes!” we answered enthusiastically. Staying true to that youthful vow to my mentor, I have striven with my dedicated fellow members to build the foundations for worldwide *kosen-rufu*. Now, countless young successors across the globe are taking action with the same determination and commitment. Nothing could be more inspiring or reassuring.

Nichiren Daishonin writes: “Since the Law is wonderful, the person is worthy of respect; since the person is worthy of respect, the land is sacred” (*The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol.1, p. 1097). Why has the SGI been able to foster so many admirable people around the globe who are working earnestly for the prosperity of their communities and societies? It is because we have based our activities on the writings of Nichiren Daishonin—a rich treasury of wisdom grounded in respect for the dignity of life—and steadfastly advanced on the path of putting Buddhism into practice in society.

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the publication of the *Nichiren Daishonin Gosho zenshu* (Collected Writings of Nichiren Daishonin), which was realized under the auspices of Mr. Toda.

The Daishonin's direct disciple Nikko Shonin writes, “When the time comes for the sage words of this teacher of ours of Japan [Nichiren Daishonin] to be transmitted to the world, they can be rendered into Sanskrit and Chinese” (*Gosho zenshu*, 1613). And today, the Daishonin's writings have been translated into English, Chinese, Spanish, French and other languages through the initiatives of the SGI, and are read by people around the globe. How happy this would surely make the Daishonin and his loyal successor!

Dr. Carlos Rubio, the supervising editor of the Spanish translation of *The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, a professor of Japanese language and literature at the Complutense University of Madrid, said he was impressed by the fact that Nichiren, a priest of humble origins, stood up to champion the cause of people's happiness at the risk of his life in 13th-century Japan. He also voiced admiration for the unwavering strength of character shown by the Daishonin—whom he described as a “fighter”—throughout the course of his lifelong struggle amid continuous persecution.



Dr. Dennis Gira, the supervising editor of the French translation of *The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, an esteemed Buddhist scholar and Christian specialist in interfaith dialogue, has commented that if people transcend religious differences and listen in a spirit of dialogue to what Nichiren is trying to communicate, they will hopefully discover what is most fundamental in his religious experience, an experience other than their own, and be enriched by his philosophy, which is part of humanity's spiritual heritage.

The teachings of the Daishonin have the power to draw forth the inherent strength and life force of the individual—transcending differences of ethnicity, culture and language. They provide a source of inspiration and illumination that can strengthen people's commitment to championing the cause of justice and humanity, and can promote greater openness and understanding. Nichiren Buddhism, I declare for all to hear, is the great philosophy of renewal and revitalization that the world is thirsting for.

Nichiren writes: "There is no true happiness other than upholding faith in the Lotus Sutra. This is what is meant by 'peace and security in their present existence and good circumstances in future existences.' Though worldly troubles may arise, never let them disturb you. No one can avoid problems, not even sages or worthies . . . "Suffer what there is to suffer, enjoy what there is to enjoy. Regard both suffering and joy as facts of life, and continue chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, no matter what happens" (WND-1, 681).

When we align our lives with the Mystic Law, we have nothing to fear. The SGI is an indestructible network of individuals dedicated to the cause of good, courageously facing adversity and together overcoming all obstacles, based on the hope-filled principle of "changing poison into medicine."

The Swiss philosopher Henri-Frédéric Amiel (1821–81) observed that the good become better when tested by trials, while individuals who have never suffered lack depth.

In recent years, we have seen a series of natural disasters—the March 11 earthquake and tsunami in Japan, the flooding in Thailand, the destructive hurricanes in the United States—as well as the continuing crisis in the global economy. In spite of this, people around the world have been standing up to rebuild their lives, exerting themselves admirably.

Our SGI members, too, though having undergone many of those same tribulations, are striving valiantly to support and assist others as indispensable pillars of their communities, exhibiting the truly noble behavior of Bodhisattvas of the Earth.

Nichiren writes, "Strengthen your resolve to seek the way all the more and achieve Buddhahood in this lifetime" (WND-1, 946). Our Buddhist practice, directed toward attaining Buddhahood in this lifetime and realizing kosen-rufu, always starts from the present moment onward, from the place where we are right now. This bright, positive spirit of continually moving forward is the Soka Gakkai spirit.

Dr. Jim Garrison, former president of the John Dewey Society in the United States, has commented: "The SGI is still young and flowering. As long as it remains open, flexible and willing to learn as well as teach, it will continue to grow."



Let's continue to exert ourselves in the "two ways of practice and study" (WND-1, 386) with an eternally youthful seeking spirit, always striving to keep learning, and to take action with courage and initiative. That is the way to develop a more expansive state of life, a wider circle of trust and friendship and an ever-youthful SGI.

This year also marks the 55th anniversary of Mr. Toda's Declaration for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons. On behalf of my mentor, I have taken his historic call—which he entrusted to the youth to fulfill—and spread it around the globe. "The world is your stage," Mr. Toda said to me. With these words in my heart, I have engaged in countless dialogues and built a great network for world peace. My sole wish was always to do my best for Mr. Toda and bring him joy. That is why I have never hesitated. That is why I have no regrets. When we devote ourselves to fulfilling the shared vow of mentor and disciple, we can manifest our own innate strength and potential limitlessly.

As we continue to vibrantly chant Nam-myoho-renge-kyo and infuse our lives with "the greatest of all joys" (*The Record of the Orally Transmitted Teachings*, p. 212), let us triumphantly create a magnificent network of peace, culture and education that shines as a bright beacon of hope for humanity.

My wife and I are praying earnestly for your health, happiness, safety and successful endeavors.  
My best wishes to you all in the year ahead!

Daisaku Ikeda  
President  
Soka Gakkai International  
January 1, 2012