Declaration on establishing the Institute of Philosophy and Human Values
-To Eliminate Nuclear Technology and Promote World Peace-

given by
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Our universities are built on the principle of a national commitment to the arts, and aim to be peace seeking. On the realization that humanity is sinking into crisis, we have sensed the need to restore or create a new human value that cherishes life as viewed through the arts; one based on human conscience, knowledge, and practice. For this reason, we have resolved to establish the Institute of Philosophy and Human Values.

One day the following sentences came into my mind:
Bow before the mysteries of space
Embrace the awe of Earth’s majesty
Love and respect every living thing on this planet

I started wondering: What is humanity? What is civilization? How are humanity and civilization related? What is our role?

The history of humanity is the story of the rise and fall of civilizations; societies that have emerged and prospered, only to decline and decay. After many such cycles, we have eventually reached where we are today. "Whichever the civilization, the basic cause of breakdown is disintegration from inside," wrote Arnold J. Toynbee, who made an exhaustive study of the rise and fall of civilizations. He adds: "Civilizations die from suicide, not by murder." No civilization lasts forever. Throughout history, in an attempt to satisfy their immediate desires, people have relentlessly pursued convenience and efficiency over thoughtfulness, plundering all manner of living things, destroying the planet, and eventually coming to believe that such actions are actually civilized.

In the whole of human history, there has never been a time of such wealth and bounty as today. At the same time, there have never so many people suffering through distress and indignity of privation: more than one billion people still live in poverty. Large
numbers of children still die from starvation. Wars and massacres continue without end. The destruction of nature drives species after species into extinction.

Above all, we have nuclear technology, the greatest evil created by modern civilization; the most serious mark against modern society.

While nuclear technology is the product of advanced science—the de facto standard for modern civilization—science and technology are incapable of controlling it. Unless it is eliminated, there is no way to open up a path to a new civilization.

What is our role in opening up a new civilization? Civilization has both light and darkness. If we reflect on what humans have achieved in the last ten thousand years, have previous civilizations achieved good or bad?

Despite seeking happiness and peace, humans have been manipulated by their own desires. Despite admiring beauty and truth, humans have not hesitated to eliminate other lives for their own preservation. Humans are constantly wavering between good and evil. We must look directly at the contradictions of human existence, and confront arrogance and self-preservation.

What is civilization? What is a good life, for others and for ourselves? Starting from these fundamental questions, we must embark on a new effort. As humanity sinks into crisis, we must block the forward path of self-centered desire, turning instead in the direction of fostering human values and a well-thought philosophy based on our belief in man’s inherent wisdom.

Our weapon in this struggle is human conscience. We must thoroughly reflect upon and atone for the wrongs of our predecessors. Above all, we must revive and stress the importance of conscience, instilling a strong sense of right and wrong. That, more than anything, is the point of departure for new research into philosophy and human values.

By establishing the Institute of Philosophy and Human Values, we pledge here and now to build firm links with people of similar aspirations throughout Asia, and people worldwide who hope for peace. Together, we will make our mission the creation of a new civilization based on human conscience.

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