

## Masami Saionji receives Circle Award at UN



On October 13, 2010, Byakko Chairperson Masami Saionji received the Circle Award at the first Women Leaders Summit on Millennium Development Goals, held at the United Nations in New York City.

The summit was hosted by Won Buddhism International, with the partnership of the United Nations, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Foundation (UNF) and Religions for Peace, to promote women's rights and support the leadership of women.

Among the participants were religious and spiritual leaders, university professors, people affiliated with the United Nations, and leaders of various grassroots activities. Mrs. Saionji was one of four women to receive the Circle Award. She received it as a spiritual leader, in recognition of her efforts to elevate people's consciousness. Also receiving the award were Mary Robinson, a prominent politician, Jude Currivan, for her contributions in the fields of science and business, and a representative of the United Nations Population Fund.



Upon receiving the award, Mrs. Saionji spoke not only about women's issues, but also about the importance of awakening to a consciousness of wishing for harmony among all things. Many of the participants were deeply moved by her words

## Masami Saionji and Hiroo Saionji join World Forum of Spiritual Culture in Kazakhstan



Chairperson Masami Saionji and her husband Hiroo Saionji, President of the Goi Peace Foundation, were invited to participate at the World Forum of Spiritual Culture, held on October 18-20, 2010, in Astana, Kazakhstan. The international conference, which was supported by the president of Kazakhstan, was attended by 150 prominent individuals working in the fields of education, religion, spirituality, politics, finance, the arts,

and science, among others.

On the first day, Masami Saionji was invited to the stage as one of several distinguished speakers. Her speech drew high praise from many of the participants. The next day, participants were divided into ten subgroups, and Mrs. Saionji's group discussed the topic of spirituality.

She spoke about the need for consciousness transformation and the quest for peace within each individual, in order to create a culture of spirituality. She also said that people must recognize the power of words and build a new world together. Her ideas were well received by the group.



Mr. Saionji's group, which included scientists, economists, a Nobel Peace Prize laureate, and other distinguished individuals, discussed global strategic initiatives. Mr. Saionji introduced the activities of the Goi Peace Foundation, including the 'Declaration for All Life on Earth' and the 'Creating a New Civilization' initiative. On the third and final day, a closing ceremony was held. Each group presented a brief report, and participants adopted the 'Astana Declaration: Peace through Spiritual Culture.' During the event, Mr. Saionji introduced the world peace prayer movement and presented a peace pole to the organizers, amidst great applause from the participants.