



SERVICE CIVIL INTERNATIONAL

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SCI International's Statement on COVID-19 Pandemic

Dear friends of SCI,

The recently classified pandemic COVID-19 has swept the world in a manner previously unseen in this generation. In the last week, measures have been taken by countries in order to slow the spread of this virus so that nations can have the opportunity to react. These measures are not only focused on a societal level, but also call on individuals to do their part to slow the rate of infection, including travel recommendations, social distancing and event cancellations.

SCI works for peace through organizing volunteering projects and activities, both national and international, focused on intercultural dialogue and understanding. A core part of our work is bringing people together to create this dialogue. These new national measures therefore directly impact our work and activities, however we fully support the actions taken by communities and nations to address the COVID-19 virus and protect those vulnerable amongst us. Working together to ensure as many people stay healthy and safe is our top priority at the moment. SCI is working on regulations for our work and activities that will be shared in the coming days to ensure that we are contributing to these measures.

However, we would like to emphasize the need to stay focused on one of the core values of SCI: solidarity. There are groups in the community who are not able to move as easily during these times, either because they are more vulnerable, they have mobility limitations, or they may indeed be sick without a support structure. During times of self-isolation or social distancing, loneliness will also be an issue we will have to consider, especially for those who are less comfortable with technology or who don't have a large social group.

We implore those who are at a lower risk to show solidarity to those people who are not able to be as mobile in a time of limited social opportunities. This can be done through offering to support with groceries, medicines, other necessary shopping or further support for those who are unable to leave their homes, always taking the necessary preventive precautions in order to make sure that we are not causing harm in the process. We ask people who maybe have a few spare moments to connect with other people online, through the phone, through letters, to make sure that loneliness does not become prevalent during this time.

Mostly, we would like to call on everyone to stay kind to one another. This situation will be a true test for not only our organisations and organisations like ours, but also our current society as a whole. Despite the challenges and fears that we are sure people are feeling, we hope that our core values will stay strong.



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SCI is discussing and considering how we can change and continue our activities considering the current measures in place. There is an opportunity for innovation and creativity during these times that we intend to take and explore. We will continuously share updates as we have them and promise to keep a continuous flow of information. We will also need to review our current activities, with the possibility of cancelling our planned volunteering, including workcamps, and the need to refrain from travel; more information on SCI's recommendations and decisions will be shared in the coming days.

Finally, we would like to show our profound appreciation for those working on forefront during this emergency and for those who are working to keep society functioning during these trying times. Thank you very much for your work and efforts. We, as individuals and civil society, will do our part and offer as much support as we are able.

The situation in each country is continuously changing and we will adapt accordingly, giving timely information where we are able. Official and accurate information is crucial in this situation, as many medically false claims are circulating online. We will do our best to collect information from trusted sources, starting from the WHO.

Let's stay united in these trying times and support where we can.

As always stay safe, stay healthy and stay kind.

With hope for the future,

SCI International