

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I got the honor to know LILIIA STEPCHENKO as participant of the Peace Messengers online courses, organized by Peace Messengers Network of Service Civil International. From the beginning she was very keen to learn more about peace and during the course she got engaged into lively discussions and exchange with other participants. After the basic course she directly applied for the advanced course and successfully finished it.

Due to her experience with SCI Germany project work, Liliia has already the skills how to facilitate groups online and after the advanced course she initiated, prepared and implemented two international online Peace Messenger projects, as a follow up of our course, where she worked with the participants on the topic of non-violent communication. During the first workshop Liliia came with the idea to find a strong connection between inner peace, non-violent communication and peace with others. The project was conducted in the format of a two-day evening online workshop. Ten participants from different countries took part. Most participants admitted that the workshop was very useful and full of food for thought. Some of them were inspired to co-facilitate in the second project to continue developing inner peace and practising non-violent communication. Liliia, with the help and support of active and creative facilitators, organisations such as Service Civil International, SCI-Germany and the former National Socialist labour education camp (AEL Ohrbeck), successfully realized the second online peace project. Her participants explored together the concept of peace through different methods and activities like meditation, morning pages (writing exercise) and pair work to discuss the questions about peace and history. In an interactive way, participants learned to pay more attention to their own thoughts and shared their ways to achieve inner peace and serenity. Theoretical inputs on the iceberg model of communication, non-violent communication and anger management were presented with practical examples during these days. In addition, a guest speaker from the field of archaeology was invited by Liliia to let the historical findings from the former National Socialist labour education camp (AEL Ohrbeck) speak to the participants and convey lessons from the past.

Liliia Stepchenko has shown a strong dedication to the projects she initiated and realized. I warmly recommend Liliia Stepchenko as a creative, hard-working and responsible person for the projects, programs or study related to the topic Peace. She proved to be a real Peace Messenger uniting like-minded people around and engaging them into Peace Messenger Network.



Wilbert Helsloot
Coordinator of Peace Messengers Network of Service Civil International

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Zur Hügelschlucht 4 | D-49205 Hasbergen

16 April 2021

Letter of recommendation

To whom it may concern,

The non-profit association Gestapokeller and Augustaschacht memorial founded and runs two memorials in the Osnabrück region in Lower Saxony/Germany: The Augustaschacht memorial is located at the site of the former Labour Education Camp (AEL) Ohrbeck in Hasbergen. More than 2,000 men and boys were imprisoned in the AEL Ohrbeck under inhuman conditions. They came from 17 different countries. The Gestapokeller memorial includes three prison cells of the former Osnabrück Gestapo in the Osnabrück palace. During the Nazi era the Gestapo monitored the population. It persecuted political opponents and deported Jewish people to ghettos and extermination camps. During World War II, its most important task was to monitor people from other countries who were forced to work in Germany against their will.

The main aims of the memorials are to remember the victims of police brutality and forced labour in the Osnabrück region, e.g. victims of the Gestapo Osnabrück and the AEL Ohrbeck, to realize activities in the field of historical-political education which are committed to encouraging action against racism and raising awareness for democracy and to strengthen international mutual understanding by conducting international work camps for young people and carry out projects with former forced laborers, their families and pupils. The main target groups are children, youth and elderly people. Most of the activities are open to everyone. A staff of 6 professionals and up to 30 volunteers conduct the memorial work for an annual number of 7.000 to 8.000 regional, national and international visitors.

Liliia Stepchenko was a long-term volunteer of SCI Germany when I met and came to know her during our cooperation concerning two International work and study camps from August 2020 until March 2021.

Liliia Stepchenko took an active part in development of the schedule and helped developing the methodology for the first online work and study camp held from 23 October- 7 November 2020. She was the only camp coordinator from SCI Germany who (together with our memorial) was responsible for the positive group dynamic which was successfully achieved through different team building activities and additional social activities and events. On her initiate we introduced the task for our participants to create social media posts about the work and study camp and she successfully implemented this idea and supported our participants with this task. As a result, we were able to successfully communicate the camp's outcomes to a wider public. For the second online work and study camp, held from 26 February- 12 March 2021, Liliia Stepchenko supported and coached new camp coordinators. She provided technical support, coordinated digital logistics with the participants and was our Ukrainian interpreter during a contemporary witness talk with a former forced labourer. In addition, she wrote dissemination articles and shared them on different social media platforms.

Liliia Stepchenko was a very dependable person throughout the creation and implementation of the project. Her input was characterized by a high degree of reflection and insight, that contributed to the development of the cooperation in a remarkable way. I was especially impressed by her proven ability to empower participants. With her friendliness and openness, she very much contributed to the constructive and productive cooperation within the international project group and the cohesion between the participants.

I can without reservations recommend to work with Liliia Stepchenko as I would be pleased to work on future projects with her.

Yours sincerely,

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CERTIFICATE

We hereby confirm that Liliia Stepchenko, born on 9th March 1990, has been working in the office of Service Civil International – German Branch in Bonn from 7th March 2020 to 7th April 2021 as a volunteer, funded by the European Commission's programme *European Solidarity Corps* (ESC).

The aim of her voluntary service was to experience the working environment of an international voluntary organisation in Germany, to support the implementation of its projects by her abilities and skills, to support the co-operation between SCI Germany and its partners in Ukraine and other partners in Eastern Europe and to gain new knowledge of promoting European citizenship. Moreover, she was able to strengthen her skills set by improving her language ability and intercultural competences.

Mitglied im

Coordinating Committee
for International Voluntary
Service (CCIVS) bei der
UNESCO

Deutschen Paritätischen
Wohlfahrtsverband (DPWV)
Landesverband NW e.V.

Arbeitskreis
Lernen und Helfen
in Übersee e.V.

Konsultativer Status
beim Europarat

Service Civil International (SCI) is an international peace and voluntary organisation with partners in about 100 countries all over the world. It has consultative status at European Council and UNESCO. SCI aims to promote peace, solidarity and international understanding through short term and long term voluntary projects, educational programmes and trainings.

In about 50 short term projects, so-called "workcamps", organised every year in Germany and in more than 1.000 workcamps organised abroad, volunteers from different countries come together to support social, environmental or cultural projects by practical work. For the duration of about two or three weeks they live and work together, discuss the mission and the background of the project with local experts and inhabitants and exchange experience from their home countries.

During her voluntary service in our organisation Liliia Stepchenko carried out the following tasks and activities:

- placement of international volunteers into workcamps in Germany and from Germany into workcamps abroad, which included extensive telephone and e-communication with partners, volunteers, camp coordinators and representatives of local projects in Germany;
- updating of the workcamp database with relevant information for volunteers, partners and staff members;
- reporting regularly the placement situation in our workcamps to staff members in the office, to local projects and camp coordinators;
- evaluation of the placement activities in cooperation with staff members for national and international bodies;
- developing and administrating the Instagram account of SCI Germany;
- creating own projects like preparation and implementation of our first international online workcamp on Sustainable Lifestyle in Lockdown or a Social Tea event for local people under contact restrictions during corona pandemic;
- preparing a funding application within a EU budget line for an international project on *Social Entrepreneurship* for youth workers and NGOs and
- mundane office work.

Moreover she participated in

- an international work and study camp at *Buchenwald concentration camp memorial site*;
- an online training for camp coordinators' giving a workshop on sustainability in workcamps;
- an online workcamp on *Contemporary Witnesses on Forced Labour in WWII* as one of the coordinators responsible for timetable and group dynamics;
- an online workcamp on *Female Perspectives on Police Brutality and Forced Labour in WWII*, responsible for online logistics, technical support and interpreter
- and others.

Apart from this, Liliia participated in an on-arrival training and a mid-term evaluation for ESC-volunteers in Germany, run by the National Agency of the European Commission, both held as online-seminars and lasting ten days.

The overall voluntary service of Liliia was strongly affected by the corona pandemic which caused many uncertainties, changes and restrictions. Thanks to her energy, her personal motivation and her attitude to accept challenges Liliia dealt excellent with the situation. She has gained a deep insight into the preparation, financing and evaluation of international and youth voluntary projects, international cooperation and exchange. Due to her good knowledge of English she was able to communicate very well with volunteers, project partners and with colleagues of our office and of the international SCI network. During her service she improved her German language skills immensely.


We got to know Liliia as a very responsible person, working reliably and autonomously, but also as an active part of our team. She was strongly committed to her work, proved excellent in time management and showed the ability to clearly and effectively prioritise aims and tasks. We appreciated very much her initiative and sense of accountability. Furthermore, she always worked with a clear purpose in mind. All of us liked to work with Liliia and we were highly satisfied with his work.

We sincerely hope that the experience Liliia gained during her voluntary service in our organisation will be useful for her further professional career and will motivate her to support voluntary activities and European citizenship also in the future.

We wish her all the best for her professional future and for her private life.

Bonn, 31st of March 2021

Ulrich Hauke
National Secretary



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