

Candidate Statement

Please email this statement to SSSC_Election@armaninoLLP.com by midnight Pacific Time on Friday, August 26, 2022. Please include a recent photo of yourself to be displayed to voters.

Instructions

1. Please respond to each question individually in the boxes provided.
2. Please answer each individual question. A general narrative/essay/story/letter will not be accepted.
3. Armanino will review your statement. If your statement is found to contain incomplete and/or inappropriate content, you will be asked to remove, revise, or update the content. "Inappropriate content" includes, but is not limited to, derogatory and/or inflammatory statements.
4. Several of the questions are identical to those asked of Candidates in previous elections. If you also submitted a statement in a different election, it is permissible to reuse your previous answers to those particular questions.



Personal Information

Name:	Gurujot Kaur Khalsa
City & State/Country:	Leesburg, VA
Email:	gurujot@sikhdharma.org

Name of Spouse:	Satwant Singh Khalsa
Occupation:	Secretary General/CEO, Sikh Dharma International & International Khalsa Council
Length of Participation in 3HO/Sikh Dharma:	52 years (since 1970)
Length of time as an Ordained Minister of Sikh Dharma:	48 years (since 1974)
Are you a KRI certified teacher or trainer? If so, what is your certification level and when did you acquire your certification?	Yes. Level I, Grandfathered-in in 2003
Ashram Communities lived in:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buffalo, NY (1970 – 1971); • Washington DC/Herndon, VA – (1971 – Present)
3HO/Sikh Dharma Community Positions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trustee of Siri Singh Sahib Corp. Board of Directors: 2012 – Present • Member of the SSSC Governance and Communication Committees • Representative on the Compassionate Reconciliation Commission: 2021-2022 • Level I Kundalini Yoga Teacher – Grandfathered-in in 2003 • Chief Facilitator of Khalsa Council – 2000 – 2009 • Member of Board of Directors of 3HO of Virginia – 1975 – 2010 • Member of Board of Directors of Sikh Dharma of Virginia – 2003 - 2009 • Member of SD of Virginia Administrative Council – 2002 - Present • Director of Khalsa Women’s Training Camp – 1987 – 1994 • Ashram Co-director–1980 until Council system began in 2002 • Member of the Khalsa Council – 1978 - present • Ordained SDI Minister - 1974 - present • 3HO/SD Ashram/Regional Secretary – 1972 – 1979

Questionnaire

1. Why do you feel called to serve on the SSSC Board?

I have been serving on the SSSC Board for the past 10 years. Our global community is currently facing a period of great challenge and ethical crisis. At this pivotal moment, we have an opportunity to learn from our past, to be humble and acknowledge our mistakes and support those who have been harmed, and to be open and willing to embrace change and transformation. It is my hope and prayer that we are beginning our journey to be a more compassionate, kind and caring community that embraces truth as our touchstone, and that is honest and has integrity. I am deeply committed to our process of compassionate reconciliation and transformation, so that together we can nurture a loving, safe, and inclusive community that has its foundation in our yogic and dharmic practices and that is rooted in our values of Truth and seeing the Divine Light that shines in All.

For this reason, I feel called to serve on the SSSC board at this time, to support this type of future for our members, our communities and our organizations.

2. What relevant areas of experience and expertise qualify you for this position and will make you an asset to the board?

- 10 years serving on the SSSCC Board (2012-2022)
- 13 years serving as Secretary General of SDI and the Khalsa Council
- Trustworthiness - To me, the greatest quality that I look for in potential members of the SSSC board is trustworthiness. I hope that my service to SDI and to the Sangat over the past 50 years has proven my trustworthiness, integrity and commitment.
- Love of our spiritual practice and the Sangat
- Compassion and Caring – being willing to listen with compassion, being willing to learn from our past, and treating all with mutual respect.
- Organizational skills and administrative experience.
- Problem-solving, tackling difficult problems and finding solutions.
- Team building and community building –inclusion, building spirit and trust
- Communication and facilitation skills – Deep listening, finding the place of agreement within divergent perspectives.

3. Please summarize your prior and current service to the Dharma. If you have served in leadership positions please note them.

- Secretary General / CEO of Sikh Dharma International and the International Khalsa Council: 2009 – Present
- Trustee of Siri Singh Sahib Corp. Board of Directors: 2012 – Present
- Member of the SSSC Governance and Communication Committees
- Representative on the Compassionate Reconciliation Commission: 2021-2022
- Level I Kundalini Yoga Teacher – Grandfathered-in in 2003
- Chief Facilitator of Khalsa Council – 2000 – 2009
- Member of Board of Directors of 3HO of Virginia – 1975 – 2010
- Member of Board of Directors of Sikh Dharma of Virginia – 2003 - 2009
- Member of SD of Virginia Administrative Council – 2002 - Present
- Director of Khalsa Women’s Training Camp – 1987 – 1994
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4. Please describe your experience of the Siri Singh Sahib as a teacher and your experience of his teachings.

Like many in our Dharma, I deeply loved and honored the SSS as my teacher for almost 50 years of my life. I believed in him and I trusted him. I saw the impact he was making on the world and on people’s lives, and so, in serving him and his vision, I felt that I was serving the world also. I had a close personal relationship with him. He stayed at my home when he was in Washington or Virginia. I travelled with him. I had a trailer for many years on the Ranch where he lived. He was very involved with all decisions regarding my life and my family.

When the first allegations of sexual misconduct by the SSS came forward, I was appointed to serve on the Collaborative Response Team. It was one of the most challenging responsibilities I have ever held and one of the most unimaginable issues to deal with. I, along with the other members were very committed to seeking the Truth, and to pursuing a truthful and fair process with integrity and courage. We were committed to honesty, fairness and transparency regardless of the outcome.

As more reports came forward, a number of the staff members of the SSS, who served him for decades, shared their accounts of sexual relationships with him. They told of the inner core of secrecy that was required of them. These women are not anonymous. We know them. We watched them faithfully and selflessly serve

the SSS for decades. They are not liars. They are our sisters, friends and daughters. They deserve our belief, our support and our compassion.

I understand and acknowledge all the good that the SSS did. I understand that he brought thousands of people to the feet of the Guru, and gave us the extraordinary technology of Kundalini Yoga.

However, I cannot minimize or justify the tremendous harm he caused, not only to those women but to all of his loyal and trusting students and to the second generation who also put their trust in him. We are a community dealing with grief, disillusionment and betrayal and it is a time for kindness and compassion for ourselves and our entire global family.

In light of this, I now look to the sacred teachings of the Sikh Gurus for my inspiration and guidance. They are beautiful, they are rooted in Truth. They give me hope. And I believe the divine teacher lives within each of us, within every heart.

5. Please describe what the Siri Singh Sahib's saying means to you: "If you cannot see God in all, you cannot see God at all." In practical terms:

- a) How would you apply this saying in your day to day service on the board?
- b) How would apply this perspective to help our community and organizations move forward together?

I feel I can best answer this question by looking to the Mul Mantra from Jap Ji Sahib, written by Guru Nanak, and describing what it means to me:

The Creator of all is One
Truth is its Name
Doer of Everything
Fearless,
Without revenge,
Undying,
Unborn,
Self-illuminated
This is revealed through the Guru's Grace
Meditate
True in the beginning
True through all the ages
True even now

O Nanak it is forever true

The Mul mantra, or root mantra contains the core, essential truth of creation. From Truth, everything springs forth. Truth is fearless, does not seek revenge, neither dies nor is born. Truth was in the beginning. Truth exists through all the ages, Truth exists now and shall ever exist.

- a) Particularly over the past few years, I have had to lean on the Truth as my touchstone. In the stress and tension that sometimes is present on the SSSC board, I have clung to Truth to guide me. I also believe that we are all seeking the Truth, even in the midst of our differences. It is the Truth that unites us, and in every heart lives the Truth.
- b) This same awareness can be applied to help our community and organizations move forward together. We have to elevate above the differences to find that longing for Truth that connects us.

6. What do you understand the Role of the SSSC to be? How do you see the SSSC carrying out that role on a:

- a) Practical level
- b) Spiritual level

The SSSC has the responsibility of serving, protecting and preserving the values, teachings and assets of our Dharma and of nurturing and cultivating the growth of our global communities and constituents. It is responsible to support the non-profit and for-profit entities in fulfilling their mission of sharing our sacred teachings.

- a) On a practical level, the SSSC needs to keep a broad vision of our Dharma to insure that our non-profit entities are fulfilling their mission and that our communities around the globe are thriving, that our businesses are growing and expanding, and that as a united Dharmic family, we are serving and uplifting people.
- b) On a spiritual level, SSSC board is ideally a body of inspirational leadership, exemplifying the values and virtues of our Dharma, and promoting unity and support throughout our dharmic entities and our global Sangat.

7. As an SSSC Trustee you are accountable to the Sangat.

a) How would you build and enhance the relationship between the Sangat and the SSSC?

b) The SSSC is part of a close knit community. Given that board members are likely to have strong connections to that community, explain how you will be able to adhere to the SSSC confidentiality policies that apply to board members?

- a) Building and enhancing the relationship between the SSSC and the Sangat has a lot to do with listening and being open and responsive to the voices in our community. This is a very challenging time for many members in our Sangat. This is a time for compassion, honesty, openness and inclusion. This is a time for building bridges and finding common interests and purpose and for honoring and respecting our differences. Treating all with respect will start to rebuild trust and set a foundation for our future.
- b) Having served on the SSSC Board for the past 10 years, I am very aware of the need for confidentiality. While we also strive for transparency with the Sangat, there are simply many issues that the SSSC deals with that require strict confidentiality. It is something every board member must fully understand and agree to comply with.

8. The SSSC strives to practice diversity, equity, and inclusion.

1. What experience do you have incorporating these practices into your personal and professional life?

2. How would you incorporate them into our Organizations?

c) How will you advance the organizational goals of diversity, equity and inclusion?

a,b,c) Personally, I am in a learning stage to more deeply understand diversity, equity and inclusion issues. DEI has become an important issue in all organizations, businesses and industries across the country. It has become a priority to training employees to better understand and deal with issues of DEI in the workplace. Diverse and inclusive workplaces earn deeper trust and more commitment from their employees.

Early in 2021, the SSSC Board approved and adopted the IDEA Commission charter, which had the overarching goal of creating a collaborative effort between the SSSC Board, the Kundalini Yoga Diversity and Inclusion Committee and the for-profit and non-profit entities. Through their efforts,

we hired a consulting firm which has begun their work to assess our organizations and to offer guidance on how we can improve our policies and practices regarding Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. These efforts are continuing and it's very inspiring to see how our organizations can be part of the cultural transformation around these issues.

9. How do you see the 3HO/Sikh Dharma family of Nonprofit and For-profit organizations serving humanity in these times?

- a) What do you see as the three (3) greatest challenges facing the Sikh Dharma/3HO Community and the family of For-profit and Nonprofit entities?
- b) What would you do as a Trustee to overcome these challenges?
- c) What skills, tools, and techniques will you bring to the SSSC Board of Trustees to help it move toward the vision you described above?

9. We have amazing yogic and dharmic technology that can help people. It can improve their physical, mental and spiritual well-being. It can bring them hope and help reduce their stress. We have teachers and ministers throughout the world, serving, teaching, caring for and uplifting people everywhere! And we have our thriving East-West Tea Company which just celebrated their 50th anniversary, and which continues their vision of "We Exist to Inspire". There is a lot we are doing to serve humanity in these times.

a) Three greatest challenges:

1. Compassionate Reconciliation – Addressing the Harm

In addition to all the ways we have helped people, we also now understand that many in our sangat have experienced harm while within our community. The accounts of harm and abuse from women in our Sangat and from our second gen members have been heartbreaking. We have made some significant steps to acknowledge and address those harms, including counselling programs, acknowledgement letter and the current reparations program. There are additional healing actions that need to be taken as well as organizational steps to ensure that no further harm will happen.

2. Healing the Polarities in our community.

Over the past 2 ½ years a deepening division has formed in our community centered on the perspectives concerning Yogi Bhajan. If we don't take action to try to heal the division and work with the polarities, we may have a permanent split and no longer function as one unified community

3. Commitment to institutional integrity and institutional courage.

Among all of our organizations, having unified values, a unified message

and unified policies and procedures for addressing misconduct. Institutions that respond to the misconduct of their leadership with denial and avoidance undermine the credibility of the entire institution and ultimately all the leaders become implicitly untrustworthy and mistrusted. Restoring the trust and institutional integrity of all of our organizations.

- b) Support and participate with the Compassionate Reconciliation Program. Support training for our organizations, Ministry and Lead Teachers in becoming Trauma-informed. Support training and education in Institutional Integrity and Courage.
- c) I am very committed to this work so that our organizations have the foundation and core values of integrity and truth. I want to work with the Ministry to enhance their skills in this area. Khalsa Council will continue to be a forum for honest dialogue on difficult topics.

10. Board service regularly requires 20 to 40 hours per month (or more) in evening and weekend board and committee meetings. These meetings are generally held at 8:00 pm Eastern time (20:00 hours). In addition, there may be multiple Face-to-Face meetings per year.

- a. Can you fulfill these requirements?
- b. If so, how will you balance these requirements with your other personal and professional responsibilities?
- c. What do you anticipate being the most difficult part of serving as a Trustee on the SSSC Board?

- a) Yes, I can fulfill these requirements, and have been consistently doing so for the past 10 years. It is a big time commitment, to not only attend the full board meetings, but also to participate in multiple committees, but I deeply care about this community and so it is my priority to be fully engaged.
- b) I have been serving as the Secretary General/CEO of Sikh Dharma International since 2009, so I am very immersed in serving our global community. I believe this has been a complimentary relationship to my service on the SSSC board.
- c) I believe the most difficult part of serving on the SSSC board will be how to bridge the divisions in our community and to work together towards common interests and the common good of all.

11. Are you related by blood or marriage to an officer, director, employee, or paid contractor of any of the constituent organizations (nonprofit or for-profit) including all subsidiaries?

- a. If yes, to whom are you related, how are you related to them, and what is their position?

I am married to Satwant Singh Khalsa, who is serving as the Executive Director of the Siri Singh Sahib Corporation.