

**Statement of Daini Tokyo Bar Association Chairman
on the Occasion of Japan's 68th Constitution Day**

Today we are celebrating Japan's 68th Constitution Day.

We the people of Japan who long persevered through World War II, most notably, the Manchurian Incident and ensuing Asia-Pacific War, established the Constitution of Japan in which we "determined to preserve our security and existence, trusting in the justice and faith of the peace-loving peoples of the world." Under our Constitution, we proclaimed to people both inside and beyond our country that Japan would never again engage in a war of aggression as we firmly upheld the sacred principle of peace for all time that renounces war, as enshrined in The Preamble and Article 9 of the post-War II Constitution.

Indeed, Japan is known to be the only nation where not a single citizen has either killed or been killed on a battlefield since World War II. It is for that reason that Japan has been accepted as a peace-loving nation that has miraculously never been involved in a war in the last 70 years. We have thus been building our nation as a globally admired, peace-loving nation that will henceforward never wage war.

To my great regret, however, as recently evinced by the abolition of Japan's Reform Bill for the Information Disclosure Law and by the steamrolling enactment of the Act on the Protection of Specially Designated Secrets, we are witnessing today an unfortunate turn of events that could turn our country back into a nation emboldened to join forces with other countries in war, which would totally exceed the limits of our right to individual self-defense.

All post-war administrations have consistently upheld that the conditions set forth in Article 9 prohibit Japan from ever again exercising the right of collective self-defense. Regrettably, this interpretation of Article 9 was altered by the Cabinet's decision on July 1 of last year. Moreover, there is another turn of events that seeks to modify security-related legislation, as evinced by the recent Revision of Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation. These ominous actions go totally against the spirit of the times. They would reverse the painstakingly long and steady process that has established the Constitution as an instrument of "supreme law that binds the national power", a process by which we have changed the rule by man to the rule of law based on our bitter historical experience of war. Sadly, any nation that lacks respect for its Constitution will certainly lose the trust of other countries.

Our lofty mission as lawyers is to protect and defend basic human rights and to realize social justice, as stipulated in Article 1 of Japan's Attorney Act. During World War II, all lawyers suffered the experience of being compelled to be party to the all-out war system by being forced to form and join the All Japan Lawyers Patriotic Association.

**Statement of Daini Tokyo Bar Association Chairman
on the Occasion of Japan's 68th Constitution Day**

It goes without saying that waging war is the greatest of all violations of human rights. If we allow our nation to engage in war, we will be unable to pursue the noble aims espoused in Article 1 of Japan's Attorney Act. We the members of Daini Tokyo Bar Association are resolutely determined to make an all-out effort to oppose and overcome those two ominous legislative actions.

It is said that the Constitution of Japan is a cry from the soul of the Japanese people and is comparable to America's Declaration of Independence, France's Declaration of Human Rights, and South Korea's Declaration of Independence (March 1, 1919). Some people say that the translated text of The Preamble of the Constitution is quite similar to Haruki Murakami's writing style and is easy for people all over the world to understand and accept.

On this auspicious day of Japan's 68th Constitution Day, let us ponder our Constitution and deeply reflect on how we might renew to the foundation of our peace-loving nation!