

Outline of DPJ President Katsuya Okada's Opening Remarks at a Press Conference for Foreign Media (Draft)

Katsuya Okada, President, the Democratic Party of Japan
16:00- 17:00, Thurs September 3, 2015
DPJ Headquarters B1 Hall

Basic Understanding

- Post-war Japan has experienced 70 years of peace and prosperity, due to the combination of the pacifism of Article 9 of the Constitution and the deterrent power of the Japan-U.S. alliance. We should maintain this basic stance.
- We share the perception that the security environment surrounding Japan is changing. We should deepen the Japan-U.S. alliance, strengthen our response to incidents occurring in areas surrounding Japan and grey zone incidents, as well as contribute to the peace and security of the international community.
- Public support and trust is the foundation for our national security. The government's proposed security legislation is a huge reversal of Japan's postwar security policy. Thorough discussion in the Diet and public understanding are essential.

Main Problems with the Government's Proposed Security Legislation

Too numerous to list them all, but here are a few of the main issues:

- Questions regarding the government's and ruling parties' basic stance, and procedural issues. Last year's Cabinet decision on July 1, which infringed against constitutionalism, the way in which 11 separate pieces of legislation (10 of which were bundled together into one legislative proposal) were submitted to the Diet simultaneously, and the government side's careless and ambiguous responses during the Diet debate. The ruling parties have dismissed and ignored the Japanese people and the Diet.
- Right to collective self-defense. The "three new conditions" are ambiguous, and the concept of "situations where an armed attack against a foreign country results in a threat to Japan's survival" is not even clearly defined. The so-called "limited exercise of the right to collective self-defense" is not in fact "limited".
- Breakdown of legislative facts. The government has cited various legislative facts such as mine-sweeping operations in the Strait of Hormuz and protecting Japanese nationals being transported by U.S. ships in support of their decision to allow the exercise of the right to collective self-defense. During the course of the Diet debate the weaknesses of these legislative facts have been revealed.

●*Law to Ensure Security for Situations that will have an Important Influence on Japan's Peace and Security (Bill for revising Act on Measures to Ensure the Peace and Security of Japan in Perilous Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan)* omits references to “situations in areas surrounding Japan, and makes it possible for the SDF to engage in operations together with the U.S. anywhere in the world.

The DPJ's Position

●The DPJ approved its basic position *Views Concerning Security Legislation* in April 2015. We espouse a security policy that is “realistic in Japan's vicinity, restrictive in far-off regions and active in humanitarian assistance.”

About so-called “counter-proposals” by the DPJ:

●Regarding the right to collective self-defense, there is no need for us to submit a counter-proposal to government's legislation that infringes the Constitution. Japan can respond by using the individual right to self-defense.

●*Territorial Security Act* jointly submitted by DPJ and Japan Innovation Party. Strengthens response to the pressing issue of grey-zone incidents such as those occurring in Japan's remote islands.

●The DPJ is preparing revisions to *Law Concerning Measures to Ensure the Peace and Security of Japan in Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan* and the *International Peace Cooperation Law (PKO Law)* which will enhance their content and scope. We will ensure that Japan is fully equipped to deal with both domestic incidents and incidents in areas surrounding Japan, and contribute to the peace and prosperity of the international community.

●Importance of opposition parties taking a united stance: It is essential for us to cooperate with the Japan Innovation Party and other opposition parties in order to oppose the giant ruling party bloc.

Towards Security Policies Underpinned by Public Support and Trust

●Public opinion. According to opinion polls, more than 50% of the public are opposed to the legislation, 60% are opposed to it being passed by the Diet in the current session, and 80% believe government explanations are inadequate.

●Increased public opposition. Protest rallies took place around the nation on August 30, including a demonstration of 120,000 near the Diet. Powerful upsurge among ordinary people who have been described as having little interest in politics, such as students and housewives.

- Opposition from experts and intellectuals. Former Directors-General of the Cabinet Legislation Bureau, intellectuals, including especially experts on the Constitution, and some former LDP lawmakers have expressed their opposition to the legislation.

In Conclusion: Japan Now Stands at a Crossroads, with Two Paths Before Us

- The LDP aims to revise the Constitution, and make Japan a country that can exercise the right to collective self-defense fully without any restrictions. The DPJ will utilize the pacifist spirit of the Constitution, and aim for a Japan that restricts its use of force overseas.
- We will work to force the government to abandon the security legislation and to communicate our vision for Japan to the Japanese public and the international community.