

STATEMENT

NJWA Strongly Protests against the Cabinet Decision to Drastically Change Japan into a “War-Waging Country” and Demands the Decision Be Retracted

July 2, 2014

The Central Executive Committee of New Japan Women’s Association

On July 1, 2014, in complete disregard for the will of the sovereign people, the majority of whom express their opposition in every opinion poll, the Abe Cabinet enforced a decision to permit Japan’s exercise of the right to collective defense. The decision reverses the traditional government position that under Article 9 of the Constitution clearly stating "renunciation of war", "non-possession of force", and "denial of belligerent rights", the use of such right is impermissible. It is a historically outrageous act intended to transforming Japan into a “country waging war abroad” and “willing to kill and to be killed”. The New Japan Women’s Association protests against the Cabinet decision with strong indignation, and calls for its immediate retraction.

To make such constitutional reinterpretation after a single cabinet decision through closed-door meetings of the ruling coalition of the Liberal Democratic Party of Japan and Komei Party, without listening to people’s opinion or holding Diet discussions is a coup d’état that infringes upon constitutionalism, which is totally unacceptable. One of the reasons why the Abe Cabinet rushed through the decision can be clearly seen in the U.S. announcement to welcome the decision saying that the new Self-Defense policy “will enable Japan’s Self-Defense Forces to engage in a wider range of operations and make the U.S.-Japan alliance even more effective”.

Prime Minister Abe Shinzo said in a press interview that Japan would never engage in war, but it is an outright lie misrepresenting the fact. The Cabinet decision this time reversed the long-held official view of Article 9, allowing Japan to use armed force not only in case of armed attack against Japan, but also in the event of an attack on another country with which Japan has close ties. The ruling coalition insists that they will permit the use of the right to collective self-defense only to a “limited extent”. But since who determines if there is an “obvious danger or not” is the government of the time, so that there is no brake on the use of armed force. Moreover, the decision expands “the areas of SDF’s supply and other logistic support” activities, which has been limited to “non-combat” areas to combat areas. It also removes restrictions on the uses of weapons by SDF. Once two brakes put on support activities, “ban on the use of armed force” and “limited to non-combat zone”, are removed from the previous armed SDF troops will become the target of attacks, and will be dragged into combat. This is as clear as day.

The Cabinet decision cannot be implemented on its own before revising laws. Our real struggle for peace has just begun. The Abe Cabinet intends to introduce bills for revising the Self-Defense Forces Law, Peace Keeping Operation Act, and other relevant laws for the worse to the extraordinary session of the Diet this autumn, so that necessary legislation will be completed in time for the re-revision of “the Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation” before the end of this year. However, many women and people in Japan do not want it. More than 100,000 people protested outside PM Abe’s office, publicity campaigns, rallies and demonstration, are being carried out nationwide, and over 200 local assemblies have passed resolutions, opposing or demanding careful considerations to the Cabinet decision. Clearly, it is Abe Cabinet and warmongers who are backed into a corner.

The New Japan Women’s Association, upholding the opposition to adverse revision of the Constitution for the resurgence of militarism as one of the founding objectives, expresses its determination to do its utmost to stop the attempt to make Japan a war-waging nation. For this, we will further expert our power of organizing grass-root movements all over Japan voicing “Never to send our children and grandchildren to battlefield”. Together with a wide-range of women and people, we demand a retraction of the Cabinet decision and mobilize massive actions to block the move to revise the relevant laws for the use of collective self-defense.