

New Japan Women's  
Association

Address: 5-10-20, Koishikawa, Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo JAPAN  
Phone: +81-3-3814-9141, Fax: +81-3-3814-9441  
E-mail: s-intl@shinfujin.gr.jp http://www.shinfujin.gr.jp

*For a Peaceful, Just and Sustainable Society Free of Nuclear Weapons, Military Bases and War*  
**Women Stand against Attempt to Make Japan a “War-Waging Nation”  
With War-Renouncing Article 9, Japan Should Take Initiative for  
Peace and Nuclear Abolition**

### Majority of People Voice against Japan’s Use of Collective Self-Defense Right

In defiance of the protests from the majority of the public, the Cabinet of Prime Minister Abe Shinzo forced through a decision to enable Japan to exercise the right to collective self-defense. We denounce this as an outrageous act to destroy the Constitution’s war-renouncing Article 9 and strongly demand its immediate retraction. (See the NJWA statement on page 2).

The Cabinet decision this time has provoked opposition and criticism even among party members, advocates of constitutional amendment, and conservative scholars, who regard it as a brutal denial of constitutionalism, something totally unacceptable.

On June 30 and July 1, tens of thousands of people gathered voicing their opposition to the attempt to remake Japan a “war-waging nation” and the protests are continuing nationwide. It is encouraging to see young people joining the movement and taking actions with their own creativity, being aware that they are the first and hardest hit in war. Young parents are also involved fearing that their children will be dragged into war, and they think they have the responsibility to defend the Peace Constitution. The elderly with first-hand experience of war are committed to block the move to militarism, so that no one will suffer from the tragedy war brings about.

Lifting ban on arms export, allowing the US military to fly Ospreys all over Japan, forcing the construction of a new base in Henoko, Okinawa, restarting nuclear power plants, cutting taxes on big corporations while imposing on the public the increase of consumption tax rate and reduced social welfare... Every step PM Abe takes to promote his warmongering policy and anti-people Abenomics, will fuel people’s anger and resistance.



NJWA Kyoto Chapter members appealing to Tourists



NJWA Yamaguchi Chapter members appealing to drivers



Kids against War-Waging Nation, NJWA Shimane Chapter



NJWA president and members at the June 17 People’s Rally to Block the Cabinet Decision! (Photo from Asahi Shimbun Article of June 18)



July 1, before the Diet building



## 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.

*NJWA Tokyo Chapter members*



## Towards 2015 – a Year of Opportunities

2015 has a great significance to both peace and women's movements for making a big step forward to a peaceful, just and sustainable world free of fear, discrimination, war and nuclear weapons, where everyone can enjoy fundamental human rights.

At home, 2015 is the 70th anniversary of women's acquisition of suffrage and 70th year of the Atomic Bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The Japanese government will be in the process of the review of its 7th periodical report to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, and of elaborating the 4th Basic Plan for Gender Equality.

At the United Nations, 2015 is the year for the Beijing +20 (20 years from the 4th World Conference on Women in Beijing," for the Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference in New York in May, and for shaping the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

NJWA will make the best use of all these opportunities to have voices of women on the ground be reflected both in national policies and international effort so that human rights and gender perspectives are in the center of all discussions, planning and decisions.

### For a Total Ban on Nuclear Weapons

Towards the NPT Review Conference in May 2015, the Japan Council against A & H Bombs (Gensuikyo) launched in February 2011 a signature campaign for an Appeal for a Total Ban on Nuclear Weapons calling on all governments to start negotiating immediately on a convention banning nuclear weapons. Prominent public figures including the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and Mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki have endorsed the petition. NJWA, member organization of Gensuikyo, has set the goal of collecting 2 million signatures and bring them to the UN as a collective will of civil society.

NJWA, a women's NGO upholding a world without nuclear weapons as its founding principle, is organizing grassroots activities all over the country, with particular focus on educating younger members through meetings with Hibakusha (A-bomb survivors), seminars on NJWA 52-year history of peace work including what we did for the previous NPT Review Conference in 2010, and film show and other learning activities. We are encouraging as many young members as possible, along with the experienced ones, to take part in Peace March starting from May heading toward Hiroshima from different parts of the country, as well as in the World Conference against A & H Bombs where NJWA with other women's groups organizes No Nukes! Women's Forum. Those young members who have decided to go to NY next May are taking initiatives in collecting signatures and they are giving great encouragement and hope to the senior members.



A-bomb photo exhibition by NJWA members. Iwate



Exhibition at Barber Shop, Kyoto

In the discussions at the NPT preparatory committee meetings and other international conferences, as well as at the UN General Assembly, a focus has been given to the "humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons." It is becoming a shared understanding that as long as nuclear weapons exist, there is a risk of nuclear explosion, deliberate or accidental, and no country or no international institution can deal with the consequences of such detonation, so that the only way to avoid human annihilation is to abolish nuclear weapons. The idea was first proposed in the joint statement by the 16 countries at the First NPT PrepCom held in Vienna in April, 2012, and the same statement has been presented four times so far with the number of signatories increasing up to 125 at the UNGA First Committee in October 2013.

The Hibakusha are the ones who know the "humanitarian consequences" caused by the use of nuclear weapons. It is a duty of the Japanese people to urge all the governments to work out an international convention banning these weapons. Above all, the government of Japan with the nation's experience of atomic bombing and with the war-renouncing Constitution, should take the lead in the international community in making the vision of nuclear-weapon-free world a reality.

Since 1964, NJWA Hiroshima Chapter has published a collection of Hibakusha's stories, "Burnt Like Fallen Leaves," and this year, it publishes the English version along with the 48th edition. As Hibakushas are aging, it is crucial to preserve their memories and to make them known to the public both at home and internationally.

NJWA members are gearing up their effort to collect signatures. They visit for example, municipal offices, schools, kindergartens, temples, churches, shops, barbers, clinics, co-op stores, and residents' associations asking for their support. They also organize A-bomb photo exhibitions and dialogue sessions with Hibakusha in their communities, providing local people including children and young students to learn about the A-bombing.



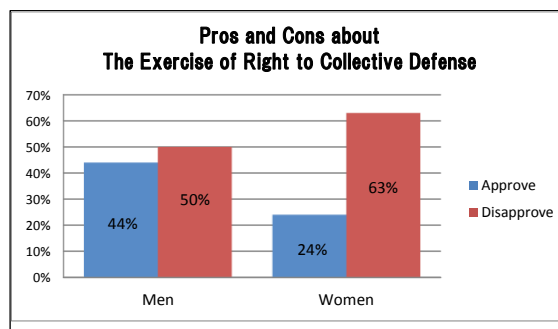
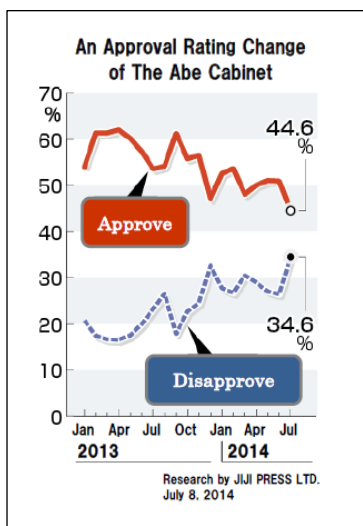
NJWA Hiroshima Chapter members holding a press conference on the publication of the new edition of "Burnt Like Fallen Leaves"

## Abe's Womanomics Goes Counter to Women's Wish

It is true that Japan faces labor shortfall and needs more women in workplaces. PM Abe, not only because of this necessity but also as one of the ways to sustain his declining support rate, is selling the idea of giving the biggest importance to the “use” of unutilized women’s potential in his growth strategy “Abenomics”, which is nothing more than an old, failed “trickle down” policy. He speaks a lot about making Japan a society where women “shine”. However, many women are aware that he is not for promoting women’s rights and de facto gender equality, from his abusive remarks totally against women’s rights and gender equality, discrediting the victims of the sexual slavery by the Japanese military, and disrespecting the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

Moreover, the Abe Cabinet’s labor policy clearly shows that Abenomics, which they’d like to call it “Womanomics”, does not address the harsh realities facing women. While talking about building more childcare centers and encouraging corporations to hire or to promote more women to higher positions, PM seeks to repeal protective measures for workers stipulated in the labor laws. The Abe Cabinet wants to lift regulations on temps, in the name of respecting workers’ diverse demands for way of work. It also intends to ease working hour rules saying that workers should get paid for their achievements regardless of how long they work. These policies, if implemented, will give companies free hand to hire more non-regular workers with little protection and low payments, without having to pay overtime work. What will then become of women, who are already in difficult situation, especially 60% of working women are in non-regular employment, and poverty among single mothers and elderly women is growing?

The recent government research shows that Japan’s poverty rate, proportion of people earning less than half of the country’s median income, has grown from 12.0% in 1975 to 16.1% in 2012. Among children, the increase is from 10.9% to a record high of 16.3%, and the rate for working single parent household, usually headed by women, is 54.6%. One in six Japanese or 20 million people live in poverty, with less than \$100 a month. Japan. The world’s



## Court Ruled No Restart of Nuclear Power Plant

The Fukui District Court on May 21 issued a ruling in favor of 189 plaintiffs, ordering Kansai Electric Power Company not to reactivate offline reactors at its Oi nuclear power plant. This is the first court ruling of this kind after the Fukushima accident in 2011.

The Nuclear Regulation Authority is now examining whether the reactors fulfill the new safety requirements for restart set by the authority.

In the ruling, presiding judge Higuchi Hideaki stated that the Fukushima nuclear disaster has clearly exposed the dangerous nature of nuclear power generation and how seriously a nuclear accident affects the entire society, and that a nuclear accident could violate constitutional personal rights based on the right to live. The judge stated that it is a matter of course to give the utility an injunction to stop resumption of operations of its nuclear power stations if a risk of causing an accident is detected.

Regarding KEPCO’s argument that no earthquakes stronger than the utility’s own projections will hit the Oi station, the ruling cited five cases of unexpectedly strong quakes affecting nuclear power plants in the past decade, and criticized the argument as groundless and overly optimistic. The court regarded KEPCO’s preventive measures as insufficient, and stated that reactivation could create risks of infringing personal rights of residents living within a 250 km-radius from the plant.

fourth largest economic power ranks sixth worst among 34 OECD countries, and is the only country where poverty rate grows among working people. After the unreasoned increase of consumption tax rate from 5% to 8% last April, the family spending has continued to drop. As of June 2014, unemployment rate marked 3.7%, the first down in the past ten months, and the number of non-regular workers rose to 19.4million, 360,000 up from May. With the government plan to further increase the consumption tax rate to 10% along with more cuts in social spending, poverty is likely to spread further.

NJWA urges the government to stop all those anti-people economic and labor policies only to benefit big corporations, and to adopt human rights-based policies placing top priorities to improve living and working conditions for all people. Particularly, we demand that the government demonstrate its political will to implement the obligation under the CEDAW and all other human rights conventions, as well as recommendations from their monitoring bodies.

The abusive, sexist remarks by the Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly members have provoked severe criticism both at home and globally, making it visible once again how deeply gender-based stereotypes are rooted in the Japanese society. Under PM Abe, who seeks to build a “strong Japan” or militarized state where corporations flourish at the sacrifice of people, there is no space for women to “shine”. Together with people in all walks of life who want to block the path to a “dark society”, NJWA will gather women’s voices and act for peace and justice.