

February 21, 2013
Tokyo, Japan

Sr. Patricia Chappell
Executive
Director
Pax Christi USA

Dear friends of Pax Christi USA,

On the occasion of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe meeting President Obama in Washington, D.C., on February 22, 2013, I would like to invite you to join us in our efforts to protect Article 9 of Japan's peace constitution.

With the general election held in December, 2012, the government of the Liberal Democratic Party with Mr. Shinzo Abe returned to power. Prime Minister Abe believes that his commitment to revise the Constitution gained the people's support for the reelection of his party. His government is steadily preparing the process to change Article 9 to permit Japan to become "a state that can wage a war" from being "a state that collaborates and supports a war".

Article 9 of Japan's Constitution upholds the sublime ideal as follows:

Aspiring sincerely to an international peace based on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes. (2) To accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained. The right of [belligerency](#) of the state will not be recognized

We believe that the present move of the Japanese government is directly related to the review of the global defense posture of the United States of America. Japan collaborates to consolidate the defense strategy of "the Arc of Instability" that covers East Europe, India and East Asia.

The U.S. military posture in the Asian-Pacific Region has been undergoing a major change, one often described as the most drastic since the Korean War. Japan's involvement now includes full participation in ballistic missile defense, counter-terrorism, search and destroy operations, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance operations, through response to attacks by weapons of mass destruction and joint use of bases and facilities in Japan such as seaport and airport facilities, roads, water spaces, airspaces, and frequency bands with the Self Defense Forces of Japan and the U.S. Forces in Japan.

We would like to ask you to support and work with us to make a strong appeal to your government. We believe that Peace cannot be achieved by military force. We believe that only through patient dialogue which is open to diversity, justice, equality and mutual respect is peace made possible.

We ask the Administration of President Obama to make an appeal to the government of Prime Minister Abe that:

1. Without Article 9, there will be a danger of increasing military tension in Asia especially in China the consequence of which will be further militarization of China, South and North Korea and the countries of the Pacific Rim.

2. Without Article 9, Japan could become another nuclear power, regress to the efforts made for the abolition of nuclear weapons in the world.

The government of the United States played an important role in the compilation of the present constitution of Japan which is characterized as a Peace Constitution because of Article 9. The majority of people in this country support constitutional non-violence, which Article 9 articulates.

We are informed of an action in front of the White House organized by Pax Christi USA which we appreciate deeply. Our heart-felt gratitude to you for your commitment for non-violence and the meaningful gesture of solidarity.

Lenten blessings,

Bishop Marcellinus Daiji Tani

Bishop of Saitama

Chairman, Japan Catholic Council for Justice and Peace