

Commending the Historic Step toward Accession to the Rome Statute

April 27, 2007

The Japanese Parliamentarians for the International Criminal Court (JPICC) commends the historic action taken by the National Diet to approve the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and pass the Laws Concerning Cooperation with the International Criminal Court, which were approved by the Cabinet on 27 February of this year for deliberation in the Diet.

Looking back, the International Criminal Court was born out of the need to reflect on the scourge of two world wars during the first half of the twentieth century. The international community contemplated for a mechanism to bring those individuals that commit serious international crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes to justice. To establish a fair and effective mechanism to address these individuals regardless of their positions, the international community came to a consensus to adopt the Rome Statute for the Establishment of the International Criminal Court in 1998.

The Court will be instrumental in promoting our national Human Security policy, one of Japan's fundamental foreign policies. The Court's institutions, such as the Trust Fund for Victims, would provide a meaningful reference in the search for a new criminal justice system in Japan that would incorporate the new practice of providing redress for victims in criminal proceedings.

We strongly expect our government to continue with its support in the development of the Court in spite of its accession through financial and human resource contributions. We also expect that our government would set an example to promote universal ratification in Asia so as to reinforce support for the Court in the Asian region, which is least represented in the Court's mechanism

Lastly, we urge the Japanese government to actively participate and contribute in the various dialogues concerning the Crimes of Aggression, which is to be discussed in the coming review conference on the Rome Statute. In doing so, the government shall seek consultation from the civil society so as to better facilitate its preparation for the coming years.

Masahiko Koumura
President, Japanese Parliamentarians for the ICC

About the JPICC

Established on 14 April 2006, the Japanese Parliamentarians for the International Criminal Court (JPICC) is an inner-parliamentary group consisting of majority party members in the Japanese National Diet. The group supports Japan's early accession to the ICC to help establish the rule of law by punishing and preventing the gravest crimes of international concern. The group is led by the former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Representative Masahiko Koumura.