

**Comment by Mr. Hirofumi Nakasone, Minister for Foreign Affairs, on the passing of Ms. Fumiko Saiga, Judge of the International Criminal Court (ICC), dated 25 April 2009, Posted to Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan web Site at [http://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/announce/2009/4/1191168\\_1132.html](http://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/announce/2009/4/1191168_1132.html)**

1. I was overcome with sorrow upon receiving the news that Ms. Fumiko Saiga, Judge of the International Criminal Court (ICC), had passed away in the Netherlands. On behalf of the Government of Japan, I would like to express my deepest condolences to her bereaved family.
2. Ms. Saiga made significant contributions in many fields as a diplomat for Japan, especially in the fields of human rights and humanitarian affairs. As the first Japanese ICC judge, she also worked diligently toward the development of international criminal law and humanitarian law through the ICC.
3. In respect for Ms. Saiga's achievements, I would like to offer my heartfelt prayer that her soul rest in peace, and express my feelings of sincere mourning.

[Note]

1. Fumiko Saiga, Judge of the International Criminal Court (ICC)  
First Japanese to become an ICC judge, elected in a by-election held in November 2007 (re-elected in January 2009). At the ICC, she was assigned to Trial Chamber II and Pre-Trial Chamber II, and was in charge of crimes against humanity and war crimes in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, etc.

As Japan's leading figure in the field of human rights, she was a Member of the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) (2001-2007) and Japan's first Ambassador in charge of Human Rights (2005-2007) before her appointment to the ICC. After joining the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1966, she also served as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the Kingdom of Norway and the Republic of Iceland (2003-2007), Ambassador to the Permanent Mission of Japan to the UN (2002-2003), Vice Governor of Saitama Prefecture, Japan (1998-2002), and Consul-General of Japan in Seattle, USA (2000-2002), among others.

On April 24 (Friday) (local time) at a hospital in the Netherlands, she died at age 65 of heart failure.

2. International Criminal Court (ICC)  
The first permanent international criminal court was established in 2002 to prosecute and punish individuals who committed "the most serious crimes of concern to the international community" according to international law (Preamble

of the Rome Statute of the ICC). It is located in the Hague, Netherlands, and has 108 State Parties as of April 2009. Japan joined the ICC on October 1, 2007 as the 105th State Party.

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