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The YWCA, undaunted by the Abe cabinet's state politics, resolves to live out and disseminate throughout the world the Peace Constitution.

On May 14, 2007 the Abe Cabinet railroaded the National Referendum Law through the National Diet. Through a deceptive but cleverly devised plan to change the Constitution, Diet members, bound to uphold the Constitution, ignored the voices of the people, with whom sovereignty rests, and pushed through the act. We, the YWCA, strongly protest to the Abe cabinet and the Diet members who approved the bill.

The Government and ruling parties are also intent on passing legislation in the present Diet to extend the special measures law on the dispatch of Self-Defense Force troops to Iraq, three education-related laws and changes in the Juvenile Law, as well as bills on the crime of "conspiracy" and to promote the realignment of U.S. forces in Japan. We are adamantly opposed to this series of steps to build a war state subservient to the U.S. military and at the same time are newly resolved to live out our Peace Constitution and to continue proclaiming to the world the message embodied in its Preamble and in Article 9.

In contrast to these anachronistic moves by the Japanese Government, the lofty spirit of the Peace Constitution which, vowing never to repeat the mistake of our past war, seeks lasting peace, is today being disseminated over national borders and irrespective of race and religion. Active as an international NGO building peace with women in 122 countries throughout the world, we of the YWCA realize that Article 9 is a beacon of hope, not only for Japan, but for the people of the world.

A woman from the YWCA of Israeli-occupied Palestine told us that "if we had Article 9 here, we would not have this great lost of life or be deprived of our dignity as human

beings.” And women from the YWCAs of South Korea and China said that “It is precisely by carrying out Article 9 that peace can be built in East Asia. Let the women of the young generation meet, talk together, work together, and create a new history!” The YWCA of Japan considers the Peace Constitution as a prayer and a vow on the part of Japan to repent its past wars.

We aspire to a world in which each person is valued and can realize her or his unique potential. This can never be achieved by war. We will not resign ourselves to the moves by the Japanese Government to restrict freedom of speech, to destroy democracy through manipulation of information, and entrap us in a war system. We firmly resolve to continue building peace with other women of the world and, with a vision of the structure of peace, act forthrightly and buoyantly.



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