

Concerned Citizens of Japan, South Korea, and the World, Call for an Immediate Halt to the Ukraine War

Two months have passed since the Ukraine War began with the Russian invasion. Considering its goal to have been accomplished, the Russian forces then withdrew from the vicinity of the capital, Kyiv and concentrated in the Donbass eastern region. There was an optimistic mood over the ceasefire talks in Istanbul as ceasefire conditions were tabled, but once the bodies of citizens of the town of Bucha near Kyiv were found, calls rose criticizing the Russian military for war crimes. The Ukrainian army, seething with rage, redoubled its war effort. Member states in the Ukrainian support group, including especially the United States, vied with each other to supply large advanced weaponry to Ukraine. General Mark A. Milley, Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, said the Ukraine war might go on for years.

Some countries appear to want the war to go on until Ukraine is victorious and the Putin government surrenders. However, the more the fighting goes on, the more lives of Ukrainians and Russians will be lost and deep, irreparable damage inflicted on the future of Ukraine and Russia.

Not only this but if the flow of weapons to Ukraine continues to grow, the war might expand beyond Ukraine, escalating and threatening Europe and beyond. Nuclear war becomes a real possibility and sanctions on Russia could bring on famine on a global scale, especially for the poorest countries of Africa.

When war breaks out, the iron rule for restoration of peace is to limit the battle area, accomplish clear cease-fire lines and negotiate to end the war. We call upon the Russian and Ukrainian forces to stop fighting at their present positions and to proceed sincerely to cease-fire negotiations. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, after visiting the presidents of Russia and Ukraine, called for a cease fire. We urge the United Nations to continue its sincere efforts to accomplish a cease-fire. From March, Turkey's efforts to serve as go-between for ceasefire talks bore fruit and also earned respect.

At this critical juncture of European war, the countries of Asia and Africa should take action. We earnestly call on China and India, and neutral large countries such as Republic of South Africa, Indonesia, Vietnam, and the ASEAN countries to call upon

the two forces to cease fire and to act as go-betweens in negotiations towards stopping the war.

War must not be allowed to go on. We plead with the Russian government of President Putin and the Ukrainian government of President Zelenskyy to announce to the people of the world their intention of immediate cease fire, to make preparations for cease-fire talks and to turn towards actual cease fire.

Wherever they may be, whatever their status, and in whatever way they are able, the people of the world must raise their voices and call for an immediate cease-fire.

Nothing is more precious than human life. Let there be no more killing or being killed in Ukraine. That is our plea.

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Japan

Asada Jiro, Novelist

Ishizaka Koichi, Ex. Professor, Rikkyo University

Isezaki Kenji, Professor, Tokyo Institute of Foreign Studies, former Japanese government's
special representative for demilitarization in Afganistan

Ito Takayuki, Emeritus Professor, Waseda University

Ueno Chizuko, Professor emeritus, University of Tokyo

Uchida Tsukuru, Professor emeritus, Kobe Jogakuin University

Uchida Masatoshi, Lawyer

Utsumi Aiko, Professor emeritus, Keisen Jogakuen University

Umebayashi Hiromichi, Special Advisor, Peace Depot

Okamoto Atsushi, Former editor-in-chief of *Sekai* Magazine, Former President of Iwanami
Publishing company

Kato Shiro, Emeritus Professor, Aichi Kenritsu University

Kano Tadashi, Ex. Professor, Hosei University

Kirino Natsuo, Novelist, President, Pen Club Japan

Suzuki Kunio Co-Representative, Coalition Tokyo of Citizens and Oppositional Parties

Jae-Jong, Suh, Professor, International Christian University

Tanaka Hiroshi, Professor emeritus, Hitotsubashi University

Tanaka Yuko, Former Rector, Hosei University

Togo Kazuhiko, Visiting Professor, Shizuoka Kenritsu University, former Ambassador
to the Netherlands

Tomita Takeshi, Emeritus Professor, Seikei University

Toyokawa Koichi, Professor, Meiji University

Nagayo Susumu, Emeritus Professor, Waseda University

Nishi Masahiko, Emeritus Professor, Ritsumeikan University

Nishitani Osamu, Professor emeritus, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies

Haba Kumiko, Emeritus Professor, Aoyama Gakuin University

Hirayama Shigeru, Social activist

Fujimoto Wakio, Professor emeritus, Osaka University, President of Osaka Society of
Friendship between Japan and Russia

Mori Kazuko, Professor emeritus, Waseda University

Yano Hideki, National Network of Movement for Decralation of Non-defensive Region

Yoshioka Shinobu, Non-fiction writer, former President of Pen Club, Japan

Yoshida Hiroshi, Associate Professor, Okayama University

Yi Yong-chaе, Professor, Keisen Jogakuen University

Wada Haruki, Chair, Group of Concerned Japanese Historians, Emeritus Professor, University of
Tokyo

South Korea

Kwangheon Ko, former CEO of The Hankyoreh Newspaper, Seoul Sinmun Newspaper, poet

Sekyun Kim, Professor Emeritus, Seoul National University

Joon Hyung Kim, Professor, Handong Global University, former Director of Korea National
Diplomatic Academy

Ki Jeong Nam, Professor, Seoul National University

Myeongjin, Buddhist Monk

Sang Kyu Park, Pastor, Chairman of Board of Trustees, Hanshin University

Nak-chung Paik, Professor Emeritus, Seoul National University

Il Baik, Professor, Ulsan College

Hae Sung Suh, Writer

Jaemyung Shim, CEO of Myungfilms

Hee-Jong Woo, Professor, Seoul National University

Dae Keun Yi, Professor, Woosuk University, former Editor-in-Chief of Kyunghwang Newspaper

Doheum Lee, Professor, Hanyang University

Hae-Young Lee, Professor, Hanshin University, former Vice-president

Jiyoung Chung, Movie director

Taecheon Joung, Singer

Father Se-woong Ham, Chairman of Ahn Jung-guen Memorial Association

Ham Jong-suk, Professor, Seoul National University

Saihwa Hong, Writer, Social Activist

World

Mark Selden, Emeritus Professor of Sociology, State University of New York at Binghamton;

Editor, Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus

Gavan McCormack, Emeritus Professor, Australian National University, Fellow of Australian

Academy of Humanities