

What Should the Japanese Government Do to Stop the War in Ukraine as Quickly as Possible?

—An Appeal from Concerned Japanese Historians—

Three weeks have passed since the war in Ukraine began due to the invasion of Russian troops. Russian forces have surrounded Kiev and are about to launch an all-out attack on the city. The continuation of this war will threaten the lives of Ukrainians and Russians and deal an irreparable blow to the future of Ukraine and Russia. That is not all. The continuation of the war in Ukraine will bring about a decisive deepening of the crisis in Europe and the crisis in the world.

We therefore believe that this war must be ended immediately. Russian and Ukrainian forces must cease hostilities at their current positions and initiate formal ceasefire talks. It is desirable that Russia's Asian neighbors, Japan, China, and India, should call on the two sides to cease hostilities and mediate the cease-fire negotiations.

Japan is an ally of the United States, voted in favor of the UN General Assembly resolution, and has imposed sanctions on Russia. However, while Japan has had four serious wars with Russia in the past 130 years, our country has reached a reconciliation with Russia each time. In the last war, as Japan accepted the Potsdam Declaration issued by the United States, Britain, China, and the Soviet Union and surrendered, we were able to dissolve our armed forces and become a country that renounced war. Nevertheless, territorial issues remained and the two countries have been engaged in long negotiations since 1956, which are expected to lead to the conclusion of a Japan-Russia peace treaty. Japan is therefore the appropriate country to act as mediator in this war.

China has successfully negotiated the demarcation of its borders with Russia, maintains stable neighboring bilateral relations with Russia, and abstained at the time of the UN General Assembly resolution. China also opposed the imposition of sanctions on Russia. India has traditionally proposed cease-fires and intervened diplomatically in wars in the region. India and Russia have maintained stable relations and India also abstained at the time of the UN General Assembly resolution.

Therefore, as Russia's eastern and southern neighbors, it should be possible for Japan to propose to China and India that the three countries cooperate in calling for an immediate cease-fire, assist in cease-fire negotiations, and mediate a speedy agreement to bring this war to an end as quickly as possible.

We call upon the governments of Japan, China, and India to act as impartial arbiters of the war in Ukraine.

The Russian and Ukrainian forces must immediately cease hostilities and initiate formal ceasefire talks.

The Russian forces must halt their all-out assault on Kiev, which is also a Russian religious holy site.

We would like to make a final appeal. Everyone must make every possible effort to stop the war in

Ukraine. We must not stand idly by on the sidelines.

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