



Peace Boat and Global Article 9 Campaign Statement
2014 Nobel Peace Prize Nomination Raises Global Awareness of Article 9 as Peace Mechanism
October 10, 2014

Peace Boat and the Global Article 9 Campaign congratulate Kailash Satyarthi and Malala Yousafzay for being awarded the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize for their struggle against the suppression of children and young people and for the right of all children to education. The recognition of their common struggle for education and against extremism is a boost to civil society workers for peace everywhere.

Although not selected as the Laureate, the nomination of the Japanese people who conserve Article 9 of the Constitution for the Nobel Peace Prize has attracted international attention to the existence of the war-renouncing clause.

Article 9 renounces war and the threat or use of force as a means of settling international disputes. Further, it prohibits the maintenance of armed forces and other war potential.

Adopted following World War II and the nuclear bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Article 9 is a pledge to Japan itself and to the world, particularly to neighboring countries that suffered under Japanese invasions and colonial rule, to never repeat its mistakes. Since then, Article 9 – and the Japanese people's commitment to its pacific principles – has played an important role in keeping peace in Japan and in the region, preventing Japan from participating in war and forcing the government to maintain peace policies.

Thus, Article 9 has been widely recognized as a regional and international peace mechanism that has acted as the foundation of peace and stability in East Asia, and served as a legal framework to promote non-military solutions to disputes, disarmament and a culture of peace.

It is indeed the people of Japan who express pride in Japan's constitution as a peace ideal and have come in support of preserving war-renouncing Article 9 against repeated attempts to curtail its scope and overstep its restrictions.

Today, Article 9 is under threat as never before. On July 1, 2014, Prime Minister Abe Shinzo reinterpreted Article 9 to loosen restraints on the use of force and allow the exercise of the right of collective self-defense, eviscerating the peace clause of its core principles – notably the renouncement of the right of belligerency and rejection of the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes. Claimed to be a component of a new doctrine of “pro-active pacifism”, the decision is the latest of a long series of initiatives that overstep Article 9 and some of the country's longstanding peace policies. In the current context of tensions, rising nationalism and militarism in East Asia, the decision threatens to further destabilize the fragile peace in the region, trigger an arms race and lead to military confrontation.

Article 9's nomination for the Nobel Peace Prize has sent a strong signal to the people of Japan, encouraging them to remain mobilized to preserve their peace clause and to demand their government to realize and strengthen the country's peace commitments, rather than weaken them. It should also encourage the use of Article 9 as a tool for peace and stability in East Asia.

The broad international support for Article 9's nomination reflects the recognition of the war-renouncing clause as an international mechanism for peace. Article 9 has an important role to play, as a tool to promote conflict prevention, disarmament, nuclear abolition, human security, reduction of military spending and the right to peace. It is an international oath declaring No to War, a shared property of all the world's citizens who wish for peace.

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Contact – Peace Boat Director and Co-initiator of the Global Article 9 Campaign:
*YOSHIOKA Tatsuya available for direct comment on +81 (0)90 2310 0789 **
International Coordinator: Meri JOYCE: meri@peaceboat.gr.jp +81-(0)80-3457-9714