

## **Results of the 47th House of Representatives General Election (Statement)**

The 47th House of Representatives General Election was held yesterday.

In response to the surprise dissolution and general election seeking the voters' judgment on "Abenomics" and on delaying the consumption tax increase, the Social Democratic Party (SDP) positioned the election as questioning the politics of the Abe Administration, which has turned its back on the desires of Japanese citizens, chose the slogan "For Peace and Social Welfare, it must be the SDP" as the complete opposite to the policies of the Abe Administration, put up 25 candidates with 18 running for single-member constituencies and 7 for proportional representation seats, and made every effort to contest the election. As a result, the party retained its two present seats with Kantoku Teruya representing Okinawa District 2 and Hajime Yoshikawa elected as a proportional representative for the Kyushu bloc. While sincerely thanking those who supported and voted for the SDP, we apologize for failing to live up to the expectations of voters and those citizens who gave the party warm support and encouragement throughout the campaign.

Citizens' dissatisfaction with the past two years of the Abe Administration's politics was steadily rising with expanded income disparity from "there is no alternative" "Abenomics," changes in the interpretation of collective self-defense toward Japan becoming a country that can participate in war, a return to dependence on nuclear power by restarting plants and advancing exports, and the crisis of collapse in agriculture, forestry and fisheries and healthcare from participation in the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). The SDP, led by its candidates, noted the problems with the Abe Administration and called for reducing the consumption tax to 5%, rectifying income disparity, observing the Peace Constitution, realizing a nuclear-free society, and opposing Japanese participation in the TPP as main pillars to prevent unilateral control by the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). Candidates, party members and supporters made strenuous efforts to plead the positions of the SDP, and received the solid response that these represent the desires of many citizens.

With the extremely short campaign which did not allow sufficient time to

support candidates and the Abe Administration's efforts to hide the points of dispute, however, we were unable to spread the SDP's policies and positions. Nevertheless, the party retained its two present seats amid a harsh campaign, and successfully built new ties by featuring young candidates. With this as our foothold, we will work with all our might to advance in the unified municipal elections next spring, and use this force to rebuild and revive the party.

Voter participation in the last election was a post-war record low. The Lower House dissolution and general election—which was like a “reset” by the LDP to its forced consumption tax increases in a listless recovery, resignation of Cabinet members over connections between politics and money, and defeat in the Okinawa gubernatorial election—intensified distrust in politics itself. The low turnout must be understood as silent resistance by the electorate. The election also highlighted the problems with the current single-member constituency system with disparities in the value of individual votes, a large number of “wasted votes,” and divergences between the number of votes received and the number of seats won by each party.

The reckless Abe Administration, which claims the election results as a vote of confidence, seeks to revise Japan's security legislation to permit exercise of the right to collective self-defense, and is even considering proposals to revise the constitution. The Constitution of Japan, which renounces war, may become the crucial battle. The spiral of consumption tax increases and recession will accelerate, inevitably with growing momentum toward further abandoning the life and livelihood of average citizens. Each public opinion poll shows that many Japanese citizens have no sense of economic recovery, are opposed to exercising the right of collective self-defense, opposed to restarting nuclear power plants, opposed to participation in the TPP, and opposed to the construction of a new military base in Henoko, Okinawa. The important issues which divide public opinion were not entrusted to the government. Together with the many citizens who feel a sense of crisis over the current political situation, the Social Democratic Party is determined to make every effort to stop the Abe Administration's politics inside and outside the Diet which slight the will of Japanese citizens.