

April 3, 2015

**Statement by Yasuchika Hasegawa, Chairman of Keizai Doyukai**  
**On the Cabinet Approval of Amendment Drafts of Agricultural Co-operatives Act and**  
**National Strategic Special Zone Act**

1. Today, the Cabinet approved amendment drafts of Agricultural Co-operatives Act and National Strategic Special Zone Act. We request an early enactment of the bills as both cover fields that are important pillars of the government's growth strategy.
  
2. The amendment of Agricultural Co-operatives Act is the first step of the reform toward the goal of converting agriculture into a growth industry and the strengthening of its international competitiveness. The agricultural co-operatives reform intends to change the old structure that has not changed during the post-war sixty-year-long period. Under the new structure, regional agricultural co-operatives and leaders can play important roles so that they contribute to the development of the local agriculture by exercising their initiatives of autonomy and originality. This will create a system that brings fruits in partnership with institutions such as farming corporations and private companies. Thus, we hope that a new agricultural co-operatives model will be formed as the current organizational structure of Central Union of Agricultural Cooperatives (JA-Zenchu), its auditing power on regional agricultural cooperatives, and the status of associate members are steadily reformed in line with the proposal of the Council for Regulatory Reform.

**Key points to the recent JA reforms**



3. On the other hand, the amendment draft of National Strategic Special Zone Act contains regulatory reform measures to cover broad areas such as the establishment of nursery teachers available for specific regions for the purpose of eliminating the shortage of nursery teachers as well as enabling the private sector to run public schools. We hope that each special zone swiftly utilizes the facilities enough, leading to the regional rebirth.