



October 10, 2017

**Statement by Yoshimitsu Kobayashi, Chairman of Keizai Doyukai
On Start of Lower House Official Election Campaign**

1. This month's House of Representatives election features a tripolar political battlefield with the ruling coalition on one side, the conservative opposition parties on the second, and the liberal opposition parties on the third. Such a political landscape has provided a basis for more policy debates. Meanwhile, the dramatic change we saw—the abrupt Lower House dissolution determined by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and the following reshuffle in the opposition party power balance—has not given enough time for voters' decision. The fact that the Kibō no Tō, or the Party of Hope, has not appointed prime minister-designate for this regime selection voting has made their decision even tougher.
2. From the eyes of the Liberal Democratic Party, it is an election to evaluate the Abe administration's overall performance of almost five years. Nevertheless, the campaign pledge of the LDP, that of other parties as well, lacks the backing of its realization and sustainability, and the election issues are not well focused. We request the candidates to compete during the campaign period for concrete measures that realize their own rational, clear vision of Japan's future.
3. The policy debates should focus on the issues as follows: First, a growth strategy that involves regulatory/structural reform toward the robust economy. Second, full-fledged measures to address a shrinking population and a scenario for restructuring the social security system. Third, a timetable to achieve primary balance surplus, reflecting each party's stance toward the consumption tax (e.g.: changing the tax revenue use, maintaining 8% tax rate, or others). Fourth, an energy policy consistent with the anti-global warming measures in terms of the nuclear power dependency and the renewable energy prices. Finally, the constitutional amendment that requires discussions from the perspectives of Japan in a global environment with a

development of globalization, digitization, and socialization.

4. This is the first national election for the young voters aged eighteen and nineteen to face the regime selection. That said, the concerns are complex policy debates that could deprive young voters of their interest in the election. Thus, all parties are strongly requested to make utmost efforts so that all voters are encouraged to participate in the election with a better understanding of the policy differences among the parties.

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