

**Statement by Kengo Sakurada, Chairman of Keizai Doyukai
on Start of Upper House Official Election Campaign**

1. The upcoming Upper House election provides important opportunities to debate a right trajectory Japan must follow, amid the drastically changing international situations and economic environment. Addressing the current challenges such as soaring inflation and the plummeting yen is not easy. As such, we now expect, during the campaign period, lively policy debate on how to crystallize Japan's desired future as well as growth and distribution strategy to realize it.
2. The fact confronting us now is that Japan, in comparison with its major peers abroad, has been a laggard over the past thirty years in economic growth in nominal GDP growth rate, average wage increase, and key sectors that enhance its national strength, such as making digitalization and innovation a reality. We request each political party to present an effective proposal on how to address the fundamental causes that made Japan the laggard and on solutions to enhance its national power. The proposal must demonstrate an outlook that enables each citizen to be ambitious for the future, while it should be responsible for the solutions to the challenges such as fiscal consolidation and social security reform. We cannot escape these challenges when creating a sustainable country.
3. Our serious concern is the low voter turnout that has continued in the national elections in recent years. Each one of us should vote, being aware of responsibility to play an active role in democracy. Doyukai has been requesting its members to develop an environment that promotes voting, which includes arranging working conditions that facilitate advance and absentee voting. This time again, the members are requested to cooperate in raising voter turnout.