

**Statement by Takeshi Niinami, Chairperson of Keizai Doyukai
on Start of Presidential Race of Largest Opposition Party in Japan**

1. The Constitutional Democratic Party of Japan (CDP) has officially announced today the start of its presidential race for voting on September 23. The foundation of the parliamentary democracy is the constructive policy debate between the ruling and opposition parties. Thus, the role played by the president of CDP—the largest opposition party in Japan—is crucial. We hope that an individual, who contributes to the development of Japan, will be elected as Party’s new president through active policy debates that are open to the public.
2. An opposition party able to take office gives politics more sense of urgency, while providing the public with an opportunity to learn what is going on in the political scene. Today, thirty years from the drastic electoral reform in 1994, raison d'être of opposition party is revisited. We expect each candidate to take part in the debates based on tangible and viable policy agenda.
3. Above all, we request the candidates to initiate a down-to-earth policy debate on crucial issues, such as labor market and social security system reforms, economic security in response to higher geopolitical risks, and stable energy supply with an eye on further digitalization.

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