

**Statement by Takeshi Niinami, Chairperson of Keizai Doyukai
on Start of Lower House Official Election Campaign**

1. Japan is confronted with essential policy issues inside and outside the country, such as of economy, social security, and diplomacy/national security. The official campaign of the House of Representatives general election has kicked off today against such a backdrop. Although LDP President Ishiba showed a stance during the party's presidential race to emphasize parliamentary debate over the issues the party faces, the extremely quick dissolution of the Lower House has given no time for active and tangible policy debate that should have been promoted. We hope that each party's future vision of Japan, as well as concrete policies to achieve it, will be clearly presented during the campaign period, so that it becomes more policy oriented.
2. Especially when we see our economy shifting from deflation to moderate inflation, it is of particular importance to present specific alternatives of policies that lead to drastic transformation aimed at a paradigm shift in the economic structure. The issues to be clarified include (1) constant wage hikes and measures for labor shortages in the age of globalization, (2) energy supply that incorporates nuclear power generation, (3) sustainable benefit and contribution in the social security system, and (4) regional revitalization and fiscal consolidation viable amid the shrinking population. We need debates that enable voters to choose the best government.
3. To ensure the implementation of relevant measures for these key issues, it is a prerequisite for the ruling LDP to present to the public its full-fledged solution for the political funding scandal in a comprehensible manner. This is how to voice its determination to solve the issue. Only this could put an end to it. Meanwhile, the ruling and opposition parties must have essential deliberation on the Diet reform and the political party act, adding more momentum to a diverse political reform.
4. The upcoming general election possibly might have an epoch-making significance. The result will depend on whether sufficient policy alternatives are presented, leading to the expectation of the public to politics facing the mounting economic and social challenges head-on. Each party's commitment to policy-oriented solution, proposed in its policy measures addressing daily life issues and in forward-looking comprehensive strategy, will also determine the result.