

**Statement by Mutsuo Iwai, Senior Vice Chairperson of Keizai Doyukai
on Start of Presidential Race of Ruling LDP**

1. Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) has officially announced today the start of its presidential race, kicking off policy debates in earnest by five candidates. Throughout the campaign speeches and debates, we expect them to clearly present the direction of their reform plans that are forward-looking and effective for the public.
2. We are facing pressing issues, such as high prices, labor shortages, sustainability of social security system, policies promoting social integration of foreigners, and energy/economic security. We are seeking, above all, constructive and open exchange of visions, followed by voting based on a state-level perspective.
3. We hope that the result of the upcoming presidential election will lead to better public understanding and consensus over the structural reform responsible for the future generations, rather than complacency for the status quo.
4. Keizai Doyukai will continue to make proposals that aim for sustainability of wage increase momentum, revitalization of regional economies, disaster prevention and mitigation, and establishment of economic security.

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