

Kobe University Emergency Rally in Opposition to the Proposed Security Laws 2015.7.30 (Thursday) 12:20~13:00

**In front of Idemitsu Memorial Rokko Auditorium
(Go up the stairs and to the left from the main gate)**



To the Kobe University Community:

You are no doubt aware that a group of bills making it possible for Japan to exercise the right to collective self-defense was passed by a Special Committee of the House of Representatives on 15 July and steamrolled through the lower House the next day, 16 July. We (see the reverse side of this paper), the supporters of this Kobe University Emergency Rally in Opposition to the Proposed Security Laws, feel strong indignation and anger.

The implication of this legislation is that if the government decides a situation is 'seriously impacting Japan's survival', the use of force will be possible. This applies even in cases where another country is being attacked, but Japan is not. The legislation also allows for the Self Defense Force (SDF) to engage in 'cooperative assistance activities' in the vicinity of front line action by the US and/or other militaries. In addition, it eases restrictions on use of weapons by the Self Defense Force. In other words, this means that Japan will of its own accord deny the trust it has gained as a peaceful state and instead become a 'country that engages in war'.

This legislation rests on the acceptance of Japan's use of the right to collective self-defense and is in clear violation of Article 9 of Japan's Constitution. On 4 June, 3 scholars of constitutional law including one appointed by the ruling party told the Special Constitutional Review Committee that the legislation is unconstitutional. Until now, governments have repeatedly claimed that, 'The SDF engages only in self-defense, so it in itself is not in violation of Article 9, but of course it cannot engage in collective self-defense'. The actions of the Abe administration disregard this stance and erode the principles of constitutionalism under which state power is constrained by the constitution.

After the steamrolling of the bills through the Lower House, the media is reporting that their adoption is now a foregone conclusion. But that is not true. The government and Diet are not discussing and deciding in private. Various surveys have shown that there are many people who are opposed to the bills. If this opposition grows, it will definitely affect politics.

Japanese universities have a bitter history of cooperating with war as they succumbed to suppression of academic freedom by the state and sent many young people to off to fight. For this reason too, academics have an important role to play. Recently, many universities have held rallies in opposition to the security bills.

We have therefore decided to hold this 'Kobe University Emergency Rally in Opposition to the Proposed Security Laws'. We hope that many people will participate and express their thoughts and anger at the content of the security bills and the way they have been handled, as well as discussing the direction in which Japan should move. We strongly urge all Kobe University faculty, staff, students, graduate students, and other members of the university community who oppose and/or question the security laws to join us.

For more information please contact:

**IWASA Takuya: iwasa@kobe-u.ac.jp or INOKUCHI Takuro: inokuchi@rabbit.kobe-u.ac.jp
(Both are on the faculty of the Graduate School of Human Development and Environment)**