

## Diet Members Pay Respects and Pray for Peace at Yasukuni Jinja

Today, 159 members of the nonpartisan group of *Diet Members who Visit Yasukuni Jinja Together* paid homage and prayed for peace at the Yasukuni Jinja on the second day of its Annual Autumn Festival. Among the group were representatives of the *Young Diet Members Who Wish Peace, Seek the True National Interest and Support Visiting Yasukuni Jinja*, who issued the statement below.

“We decided to issue this statement because we are deeply concerned about the misportrayal of Yasukuni Jinja by overseas media and others. Built in 1869, Yasukuni Jinja is where more than 2,466,000 souls who devoted their lives to their country since 1853 are enshrined and rest in peace. Yasukuni Jinja is also where Japanese visitors go to pray for peace.”

“Our prayers are offered today because of our deeply heartfelt desire for peace for Japan and the world. It is a 150-year old custom for Japanese citizens to visit Yasukuni Jinja to express their appreciation for those who sacrificed their precious life during times of national crisis since 1853, the end of the Tokugawa Shogunate.”

“Honoring those who gave their lives for their country is part of every nation’s foundation. How the war dead are commemorated is determined according to each country’s own culture and traditions. The souls of Japanese war-dead since 1853 are enshrined at Yasukuni, regardless of their merit, social stature, gender or ethnic background. This long tradition of homage and commemoration is a matter of national sovereignty and should not be subjected to distortion by outside interference and propaganda.”

“In visiting Yasukuni Jinja we do not praise militarism in any form. On the contrary, it is deeply in the hearts of Japanese people to wish for peace and respect the souls of those who preceded us. Your understanding and consideration of this Japanese peace-loving posture would be greatly appreciated.”

xxx

October 18, 2013

*Young Diet Members Who Wish Peace,  
Seek the True National Interest and Support Visiting Yasukuni Jinja*  
【Original text is in Japanese】