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Male Speaker 1: Shigeru Ishiba

[O/V] : Overlapping Voices

[U/A] : Unintelligible audio

[START RECORDING [Ishiba Full Remarks and Moderator] DATE: [4/30/2014]]

00:00:00

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen.

It is not good if I speak my poor English, so please allow me to speak in Japanese. I am Shigeru Ishiba, the chief secretary of the Liberal Democratic Party of Japan. I sincerely appreciate that such an opportunity like this is given to me.

There are two reasons why I visit your country this time. By the way, I tell you that our party maintains very high approval rates in Japan. Sixty percent of Japanese citizens approve of the Abe administration. Firstly, I would like to establish trust for our Abe Administration and secondly, we would like to further promote communication between Japan and U.S. members of National Assembly. These are the two reasons I am here to visit the United States of America.

Currently there are different opinions on Abe administration in the United States. But I believe this administration receives that high score because the Abe administration is allowing the Japanese economy to recover. We have been deploying various kinds of measures in order to emerge from the prolonged deflation and further strengthen our economy.

On the other hand, we hear that there are concerns and uncertainty in the United States with regard to the Abe Administration. Namely, we have been informed that there are concerns that this administration is backed with nationalism. I want to delete this concern and make it at ease for the people of the United States, the very important and the only allied country for Japan.

Since Prime Minister Abe and I have different personalities, we have slight differences of

opinion. Prime Minister Abe has a high ideal and wishes for World Peace from the bottom of his heart. He is that kind of politician. I have an ideal as well but I am rather realistic and practical. Even though Prime Minister Abe understands well that we have differences in opinions, he allows me to manage the Liberal Democratic Party which is the largest ruling party in Japan. That is because each of us has our own role so that we are making our efforts continuously toward developing Japan and promoting peace and prosperity in Asia Pacific and the World. Those are the different roles we have.

In the Abe administration, the top priority is to put our economy back on track once again. After the Lehman Shock, Japanese economy has been continuously stagnating. Wages went down, unsteady employment persisted, and the revenue and profit of the corporations remained sluggish. Prime Minister Abe conducted a bold monetary relaxation policy, mobilized the economic task force, and there for the sluggish Japanese economy has been on the way to recovery. We hope that we will further develop our economy with the relaxation of our regulations as our party's policy in the future. Even though TPP faces a couple of issues; if Japan and the United States, the major constituent nations, make mutual concessions, it is quite possible to make TPP successful, and for that we will make our best effort. As a nation, Japan will come to face an unprecedented ageing society and we believe that a new business opportunity will be born in the process of overcoming the ageing society. Medical reform is at the core of this matter.

Additionally, our nation has a very huge potential in the industry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. Earlier, I was the minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and I believe that there is no other nation blessed with agriculture, forestry and fisheries like Japan. The weather is mild, the land is rich, blessed with the rain and water and blessed with rich consumers. We are surrounded by the ocean. Furthermore, we do own the abundant resource of forestry. I believe

Japanese Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries industry will grow very well depending upon the polity we place. But first we have to contemplate the renewal of our economy, otherwise the trust on the Abe administration will be lost and the reform of the security treaty may not be successful. Those are the things that I am thinking of.

Regarding the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty, we will make all of our effort to materialize the Prime Minister Abe's positive approach. For that reason, we will move forward either by revision of the law or changes of equipment and/or possible promotion of the U.S. Japan mutual operation.

The issue for the right to enter into a collective self-defense is also addressed. Japan is the only nation to take the stand that we cannot practice the right to enter into a collective self-defense in the United Nations. We are taking the stand that we cannot practice this right due to the restriction of our constitution.

Even though it is restrictive, we would like to revise the position that enables the practice of the right to enter into a collective self-defense. For this reason, we believe the revision of the constitution is not necessary. We believe the minimum required use of force is acceptable, either individually or collectively in order to protect the independence and peace of Japan or peace and stability of the international community. Regarding this subject, the view of our government has not yet been clarified but we will make efforts toward this realization along with much understanding by all.

However, prior to this subject, there are necessary preparations in the area of law to protect the individual defense right to protect the territory, territorial water and airspace. In the past, this area has been called gray zone and Japan would like to exert ourselves for this preparation.

Firstly we have to gain the understanding of our citizens before we practice the collective defense right. There are concerns among some of the Japanese citizens that we have to go too far

to practice our force along with the United States. That is not what we are thinking.

We believe to partially enable the practice for the collective defense right acting on the spirit of the United Nations Charter and its provisions in order to strengthen the deterrent in the Asia Pacific regions. We believe our thought matches with the strategy that the United States must take in the future.

In other word, we believe that the existing type of alliance the United States, the very powerful nation as a hub along with the spokes such as United States and South Korea, United States and Japan, and United States and Australia will be desirable to turn into the network type of alliance in which each of the alliance nation will cooperate with each other. For this reason, we believe it will be beneficial from the stand point of reinforcing the deterrence if Japan is enabled to practice the collective defense right.

Our nation may be able to build such relationships with many nations in the future. One of the models for this, I believe, is ANZUS treaty. However, for a time being we will put our effort towards obtaining the understanding of our citizen for the acceptance of the minimum required collective defense right.

1955, 59 years ago, the Foreign Minister of Japan, Mamoru Shigemitsu presented such a proposal to the Secretary of State, Dulles that Japan will practice the Collective Defense right, to protect United States of America including Guam, thus the United States of America should withdraw the armed forces from Japan. This happened 59 years ago and I was not born yet. This proposal was declined immediately by Secretary Dulles.

Now, even 59 years later, I think we must revisit this once again. I believe that the existence of United States Army is necessary for Japan. I believe that it is also necessary to reinforce the US-Japan alliance. In the place of taking the responsibility to defend the United States, Japan

allowed the United State to place its bases in Japan. Such a format cannot be found anywhere in the World but in Japan. This situation will not necessarily be advantageous for raising the moral of Japanese about the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty. We would like to think again about what kind of alliance Japan should build because Japan does not think only for Japan's benefit but what Japan can do for the region.

In the introduction of our Japanese constitution states; “Japan wishes to take the honorable position in the World Community.” Additionally, in the introduction of our constitution, it also states, “No nation should dedicate for the sake of only itself.” We believe that restrictively enabling the collective defense right will be suitable to the spirit of the preamble to the Japanese constitution.

Recently, President Obama visited our country. We understand that there was a big outcome resulting from both the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty and TPP discussions.

Upon the President Obama's visit, our citizens sincerely appreciated again lots of support coming from the United States for the Great East Japan earthquake, Tsunami and the Nuclear Power Plant accident happened three years ago.

President Obama declared that “Defense of the Senkaku Island is included under the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty” and that has also a significant meaning. We find it to be very meaningful and at the same time, we naturally have to do as much as we can to defend Senkaku Island under our authority. It is a mistake if you think that everything must be taken care of by the United States.

Okinawa Prefecture is located very close to Senkaku Island. 70% of US bases in Japan are concentrated in Okinawa Prefecture. There is Futenma Air Station in the middle of residential area. The burden for Okinawa Prefecture has to be reduced as much as possible. For solving this situation, We have to take the responsibility as a nation and all of us in Japan bears the

responsibility instead of leaving only for Okinawa Prefecture to take care of. We believe the installation of Osprey which has twice as fast speed, 3 times longer flying distance and 4 times cargo capacity it has than the existing aircraft, will bring the huge change for this matter.

Another point is if Japan can do, Japan should do it and we should not burden the United States. We would like to form the troops with both water and land capabilities. In the past, we have left such capabilities into the hands of the United States. We would like to correct this way of thinking.

Japan and China are facing very difficult situation. It is very difficult for China to rule her country. Such a huge nation with more than 50 different ethnic groups and the gap between poor and rich is getting wider. Additionally, China has many borders with many different nations. China has a great difficulty to rule. The government is ruled by communism and the only ruling party is communist and yet they say the economy is run by capitalism. No one knows how long the only system that exists will sustain.

We think China has to make an effort to steadily develop the country instead of rushing with adventurism. We think they should do everything to make that happen. The disorder in China does not render any benefit to the world. Both U.S. and Japan must analyze carefully what this expansion of China's arm forces means. Our country will also make efforts to maintain the balance of power in this region.

It is also an important topic to discuss how well the civilian control is functioning in China. We would like to maintain the relationships with China so that China will not rush with the adventurism nor will they turn change the order by power.

The Ukraine issue is quite important and serious. We have to start thinking about what kind of signal was sent to Russia when the United States did not exercise the armed force against Syria. I am not saying that U.S. should have practiced arm forces against Syria; however, we believe

that the action U.S. takes will define largely the condition of Ukraine. We have already supported Ukraine with 1,500 million dollars to keep peace and safety in Ukraine. Again we will line up with EU for putting the sanction on Russia. Additionally, it is important to pay attention what kind of arms Ukraine is exporting into the world or what kind of relationship Ukraine and Russia are developing.

Japan and the United States are entering into the new era. The idea that the World would be peaceful when the cold war ended was a mistake. The U.S. has been the only nation possessing the super power (or prominent power), it cannot be denied to say that being so selfish may have caused the world instability. We think that the various burdens and the responsibilities that the U.S. has been bearing for the world should be divided among many nations from now on. Whether it is about territory, ethnicity, religion or differences of political systems, the World has a plenty of causes for conflicts. After the cold war ended, not many of those conflicts did surface because of the two superpowers; namely America and the Soviet Union.

After the cold war ended, the United States took many responsibilities to maintain world peace but that in itself introduced the idea of “balance of power” shaky, only to cause conflicts here and there. Each nation has to take its own responsibilities. For that reason, each nation has to work for their economy, deepening the understanding of each other, and sharing the responsibilities. For this reason, Japan would like to carry out our role. Thank you for your kind attention!

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