

# Strongly protest against Russia's military invasion of Ukraine, and Appeal for immediate withdrawal of Russian troops.

On February 24, 2022, the Russian Military forces began an invasion of the Republic of Ukraine, and battles are still going on in eastern Ukraine and around the capital Kiev. The Ukraine government says more than 2,000 civilians, including children, are killed (as of March 2. According to the State Emergency Service of Ukraine). Not only the military facilities but also hospitals and civilian residences, which should not be military targets, have been destroyed. Clearly, this is a grave violation against the Geneva Conventions and constitutes in itself a war crime.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has stated emphatically that he is exercising the right of self-defense. But neither NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) nor Ukraine has committed an armed attack against Russian territory. Nor is there any basis for the claim that the attack was a counterattack against Ukraine's attack on the Luhansk People's Republic and the Donetsk People's Republic, which Russia has recently recognized as states and with which it has concluded a "Treaty of Friendship and Mutual Assistance," and that it constitutes an exercise of the Russian right of collective self-defense. Rather, Russia's use of force is a clear violation against the "principle of the prohibition on the use of force" under Article 2(4) of the UN Charter. This series of military actions constitutes a "crime of aggression" under the Rome Statute (the Statute of the International Criminal Court).

There is now growing public opinion around the world which calls for an immediate cease-fire and withdrawal of Russian troops from Ukraine. Many Russian citizens and prominent figures are also raising their voices in protest. We, the Japan Democratic Lawyer's Association, demand it in terms of the protection of peace and basic human rights.

At the same time, the Japanese government should not follow constitutional revisionism or military expansionism by taking advantage of the current situation, but should strive to resolve international disputes by peaceful means that are truly required from the standpoint of the principle of lasting pacifism in the preamble of the Japanese Constitution. We, the Japan Democratic Lawyer's Association, also strongly urge this.

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Japan Democratic Lawyer's Association

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