

# A Japanese Initiative for Peace in the Russia-Ukraine War

## The Group of Concerned Japanese Historians Introduction by Gavan McCormack and Mark Selden



Source: *The Washington Post*

### Introduction

24 February is a date destined to be long remembered, the day on which Russia launched war on its neighbor Ukraine in the name of a “Special Military Operation.” Just over a week later the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted by overwhelming majority a special, emergency resolution (ES-11/1) deploring the Russian act as aggression and demanding it desist and withdraw. The invasion and the response by Ukrainian forces under President Zelenskyy, backed by US and NATO support in the form of advanced weaponry, economic, financial and diplomatic backing, has brought the world itself to the brink of World War Three.

In addition to exacerbating the combined economic and covid-19 crises, the Ukraine war

now raises the specter of nuclear catastrophe. The future of humanity itself may hinge on moving expeditiously toward a peace agreement. But talks between Russia and Ukraine have collapsed. Huge quantities of war materiel are flowing into Ukraine from the United States, NATO and others. Sanctions, themselves a form of warfare albeit economic, and in possible breach of the international humanitarian law principle forbidding general or indiscriminate collective punishment, disrupt trade flows and threaten poverty or even famine not only to Ukraine but to others including Russia. Countless lives are lost and millions are driven from their homes and forced to become refugees. The consequences are global. As Ramzy Baroud observes, *some of the poorest countries of Asia and Africa, including Tunisia, Sri Lanka and Ghana, and numerous others dependent on Russian and Ukrainian grain, face critical wheat and energy shortages as global supply chains are disrupted.*

The following peace initiative by Japanese citizens is addressed primarily to Japan, China and India, but its implications are global. It recognizes that the war can only end with a peace agreement guaranteed by major powers and seeks to involve Asian nations bordering on the conflict in the process. In this it evokes earlier attempts in the six-party (South Korea, North Korea, Japan, China, Russia, and the U.S.) talks to address issues of ending the Korean War and dealing with nuclear weapons in the region. That effort, which extended from 2003 to 2009, brought the parties together for

substantive negotiations to resolve conflict although it ultimately failed. It showed both the potential for multilateral peace efforts and their difficulty.

Whether India, China and Japan can cooperate to help bring together the two warring parties for meaningful negotiations to end the war is far from clear. Both India and Japan have geopolitical conflicts with China. Yet both are major trade and investment partners with China: As major Asian nations with a heavy geopolitical and economic stake in the outcome of the conflict, and, in contrast to the US and NATO nations with their increasing military commitments to bring about Russian defeat in the war, both individually and collectively these nations could help set the stage for a settlement.

Whether the issue is resolving the longstanding Russia-Ukraine conflict intensified by NATO's expansion towards Russian borders or wider global problems of war and peace, prosperity, global warming and eco-crisis, the only fruitful path surely will be one of negotiated agreements that bring the war to an end and address the conflicts among the parties.

The attached Statement was drawn up in Japan by prominent intellectuals, headed by Tokyo University historian of Russia and Korea, Wada Haruki, in an ad hoc grouping called "The Group of Concerned Japanese Historians," for publication on 8 May 2022.<sup>1</sup>

Related Japanese analysis of the Ukraine crisis appeared in a special (*Rinji zokan*) issue of the monthly journal *Sekai*, ("Ukuraina shinryaku senso - Sekai chitsujo no kiki," on 14 April, and several, including Wada, published their analyses of the crisis in the regular (May) issue of *Sekai* ("Heiwa e no dohyo to kadai," *Sekai*, May 2022 pp. 31-92). For Wada's article, "Ukuraina senso o tomeru tame no teigen," *ibid*, pp. 74-79. (Related articles in this issue of the journal are by Shiokawa Nobuaki, Kanehira Shigenori, Higashi Daisaku, Umabayashi

Hiromichi, and Nishitani Osamu.) Members of the "Concerned Historians" group visited the Japanese Foreign Ministry and Indian and Russian embassies in Tokyo in April to discuss their proposal but as of 8 May they had not scheduled a meeting with the Chinese embassy or received a formal response to their proposal. The online symposium they conducted on 29 April is accessible (in Japanese only) on YouTube.

The Japanese initiative is reproduced here in the Japanese original and in English, Russian and Korean translations with an initial list of supporters.

Signatures supporting or commenting on the Statement may be sent (in Japanese) to addresses given in <https://peace-between.jimdosite.com/>, or (in English) by email to: [Gavan.McCormack@anu.edu.au](mailto:Gavan.McCormack@anu.edu.au)】

The Group of Concerned Japanese Historians  
 "A Japanese Initiative for Peace in the Russia-Ukraine War,"  
 Introduction by [Gavan McCormack](#) and [Mark Selden](#)

<https://peace-between.jimdosite.com/> (in Japanese only)  
<https://apjif.org/2022/10/McCormack-Selden.html>, (in English only)

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## Concerned Citizens of Japan, South Korea, and the World Call for an Immediate Halt to the Ukraine War

Two months have passed since the Ukraine war began with the Russian invasion. The Russian forces have now concentrated in the Donbass eastern region. There was an optimistic mood over the ceasefire talks in Istanbul as ceasefire conditions were tabled, but once the bodies of citizens of the town of Bucha near Kyiv were found, calls rose criticizing the Russian military for war crimes. The Ukrainian army, seething with rage, redoubled its war effort. Member states in the Ukrainian support group, including especially the United States, vied with each other to supply large advanced weaponry to Ukraine. General Mark A. Milley, Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, said the Ukraine war might go on for years.

Some countries appear to want the war to go on until Ukraine is victorious and the Putin government surrenders. However, the more the fighting goes on, the more lives of Ukrainians and Russians will be lost and deep, irreparable damage inflicted on the future of Ukraine and Russia.

Not only this but if the flow of weapons to Ukraine continues to grow, the war might expand beyond Ukraine, escalating and threatening Europe and beyond. Nuclear war becomes a real possibility and sanctions on Russia could bring on famine on a global scale, especially for the poorest countries of Africa.

When war breaks out, the iron rule for restoration of peace is to limit the battle area, accomplish clear cease-fire lines and negotiate to end the war. We call upon the Russian and Ukrainian forces to stop fighting at their

present positions and to proceed sincerely to cease-fire negotiations. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, after visiting the presidents of Russia and Ukraine, called for a cease fire. We urge the United Nations to continue its sincere efforts to accomplish a cease-fire. From March, Turkey's efforts to serve as go-between for ceasefire talks bore fruit and also earned respect.

At this critical juncture of European war, the countries of Asia and Africa should take action. We earnestly call on China and India, and neutral large countries such as the Republic of South Africa, Indonesia, Vietnam, and the ASEAN countries to call upon the two forces to cease fire and to act as go-betweens in negotiations towards stopping the war.

War must not be allowed to go on. We plead with the Russian government of President Putin and the Ukrainian government of President Zelenskyy to announce to the people of the world their intention of immediate cease fire, to make preparations for cease-fire talks and to turn towards actual cease fire.

Wherever they may be, whatever their status, and in whatever way they are able, the people of the world must raise their voices and call for an immediate cease-fire.

Nothing is more precious than human life. Let there be no more killing or being killed in Ukraine. That is our plea.

Tokyo, May 8 2022

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## 日本、韓国、そして世界の憂慮する市民はウクライナ戦争即時停戦をよびかける

2022年5月

ロシア軍の侵攻によりウクライナ戦争がはじまってからすでに2か月がすぎた。ロシア軍は現在ドンバス東部に兵力を集中させている。イスタンブールでの停戦会談ではウクライナの停戦の条件が示され、楽観的な空気があらわれた。ところが、キエフ近郊の町ブチャでの市民の遺体が発見されるや、ロシア軍の戦争犯罪を非難する声が上がリ、ウクライナ軍は怒りに燃えて、さらなる戦闘に向かっている。米国をはじめとする支援国グループは競って、大型兵器、新鋭兵器をますます大量にウクライナに送り込んでおり、米国の統合参謀本部議長ミリー将軍はウクライナ戦争は数年つづくだろうと言いだめた。

一部の国々はこの戦争をウクライナの勝利まで、プーチン政府が降伏するまで続けることを願っているようだ。しかし、戦争が続けばつづくほど、ウクライナ人、ロシア人の生命がうばわれ、ウクライナ、ロシアの将来に回復不能な深い傷をあたえることになる。

それだけではない。多くの国がロシアに制裁を加え、ウクライナに武器の援助を増大させつづければ、戦争がウクライナの外に拡大し、エスカレートし、ヨーロッパと世界の危機を招来する。核戦争の可能性が現実のものになり、制裁の影響はアフリカの最貧国において世界的規模の飢餓をひきおこしかねない。

戦争がおこれば、戦場を限定し、すみやかに停戦させて、停戦交渉を真剣にさせることが平和回復のための鉄則である。われわれはあらため

て、ロシア軍とウクライナ軍は現在地で戦闘行動を停止し、真剣に停戦会談を進めるように呼び掛けたい。国連のグテーレス事務総長が、ロシアとウクライナの大統領を相次いで訪ね停戦を働きかけた。国連はさらに停戦のための真剣な努力を継続してほしい。3月以来、トルコが停戦会談の仲介者として敬服に値する努力を果たしている。ヨーロッパの戦争の決定的な現段階においては、アジア、アフリカの諸国も行動をおこすべきだ。中国やインド、南ア連邦などの中立的な大国、インドネシア、ベトナムなどアセアン諸国が戦闘停止を両軍に呼びかけ、停戦交渉を仲介するのに参加してくれることを願ってやまない。

これ以上戦争を続けることは許されない。プーチン大統領のロシア政府とゼレンスキー大統領のウクライナ政府は即時停戦する意思を世界の人々の前に明らかにし、停戦会談をまとめあげ、実際に停戦に向かうようお願いする。

世界中の人々がそれぞれの場で、それぞれの仕方で、それぞれの能力に応じて、「即時停戦」の声をあげ、行動をおこすべきときである。

もっとも大切な価値は命である。ウクライナにおいて、これ以上、人間を殺すな、人間は殺されるな、と私たちは訴える。

2022年5月9日

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**일본, 한국, 그리고 세계의 우려하는 시민은  
우크라이나전쟁의 즉시 정전을 호소한다.**

2022년 5월 9일

러시아군의 침공으로 우크라이나전쟁이 발발한 지 이미 2개월이 지났다. 러시아군은 목적을 달성했다고 하여, 병력을 수도 키예프 방면에서 철수하여 돈바스 동부에 집중시키고 있다. 이스탄불 정전회담에서는 우크라이나 정전의 조건이 제시되어 낙관적인 분위기가 조성되었다. 그러나 키예프 근교 마을 부차에서 시민의 시신들이 발견되자 러시아군의 전쟁범죄를 비난하는 목소리가 커졌고, 우크라이나군은 분노로 가득 차 다시 새로운 전투에 나서고 있다. 미국을 비롯해 우크라이나 지원에 나선 국가들은 대형 무기와 신예 무기를 경쟁이라도 하듯 대량으로 우크라이나에 보내고 있고, 마크 밀리 미합동참모본부 의장은 우크라이나전쟁이 앞으로 수 년 동안 계속될 수 있다고 언급하기 시작했다.

일부 국가들은 우크라이나가 승리할 때까지, 푸틴 정부가 항복할 때까지 이 전쟁을 계속하기를 바라는 듯하다. 그러나 전쟁이 길어지면 길어질수록, 더 많은 우크라이나인과 러시아인이 죽게 될 것이며, 우크라이나와 러시아의 장래에 그만큼 회복 불가능한 깊은 상처를 입히게 될 것이다.

그뿐 만이 아니다. 많은 국가들이 러시아에 대한 제재를 지속하고 우크라이나에 대한 무기 원조를 지속적으로 증대시킬 경우, 전쟁이 우크라이나 밖으로 확대되고 악화되어 유럽과 세계의 위기를 초래할 것이다. 나아가 핵전쟁 가능성이 현실화될 것이며, 제재의 영향으로 아프리카 최빈국들은 세계적 규모의 기아를 겪게 될 것이다.

전쟁이 일어나면 전장을 한정하고 신속히 전투를 멈추게 하여 정전교섭에 진지하게 임하게 하는 것이 평화회복의 첩칙이다. 우리는 러시아군과 우크라이나군이 현재 상태에서 즉시 전투행위를 중지하고, 정전을 위한 진지한 회담에 나서 줄 것을 거듭 호소한다. 구테레스 유엔 사무총장이 러시아와 우크라이나 대통령을 차례로 만나 정전을 촉구한 바 있다. 유엔은 정전을 위해 앞으로 더욱 진지한

노력을 기울여 주기 바란다. 3월 이후 터키가 정전회담의 중개자로서 보여준 노력은 경탄할 만 하다. 유럽의 전쟁이 결정적인 국면에 이른 현재, 아시아와 아프리카 국가들도 행동에 나서야 할 것이다. 중국과 인도, 남아프리카 연방 등의 중립적 대국, 인도네시아와 베트남 등 아세안 국가들이 전투 중지를 양쪽 군대에 호소하여 정전 교섭을 중개하는 데 참가해 줄 것을 간절히 희망한다.

더 이상의 전쟁 계속은 용납될 수 없다. 푸틴 대통령의 러시아 정부와 젤렌스키 대통령의 우크라이나 정부는 즉시 정전 의사를 세계 시민들 앞에서 분명히 밝히고, 정전회담을 마무리 지어 정전을 실현해 주기를 희망한다.

세계 시민들이 각자 자기 자리에서 저마다의 방법과 능력에 따라, ‘즉시정전’의 목소리를 내어 행동으로 일어날 때가 되었다.

가장 중요한 가치는 생명이다. 우리는 호소한다. 우크라이나에서 더 이상 사람을 죽이지 말라, 죽임을 당하지 말라.

2022년 5월 9일, 도쿄

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### **Обеспокоенные граждане Японии, Южной Кореи и других стран мира призывают к немедленному прекращению войны в Украине**

Прошло два месяца с тех пор, как с российского вторжения началась война в Украине. Посчитав свои цели достигнутыми, российская армия вывела свои подразделения из окрестностей столицы, Киева, и сосредоточилась в восточном регионе Донбасса. Были оптимистичные настроения относительно переговоров о прекращении огня в Стамбуле, поскольку там были выдвинуты условия прекращения огня. Но как только были найдены тела жителей города Буча и других пригородов Киева, поднялась волна критики российских военных за военные преступления. Украинская армия, кипя от ярости, готовится к новым сражениям. Государства-члены группы поддержки Украины, включая, прежде всего, Соединенные Штаты, соперничают друг с другом за поставку

Украине всё большего количества тяжёлого и современного оружия. Генерал Марк А. Милли, председатель Объединенного комитета начальников штабов США, заявил, что война в Украине может продолжаться годами.

Некоторые страны, похоже, хотят, чтобы война продолжалась до тех пор, пока Украина не одержит победу и правительство Путина капитулирует. Однако, чем дольше будут продолжаться боевые действия, тем больше жизней украинцев и россиян будет утрачено, и тем более глубокий и непоправимый ущерб будет нанесён будущему Украины и России.

Однако этим дело не ограничится. Если многие страны вдобавок к санкциям против России увеличат поставки вооружения в Украину, война может выйти за её пределы и перерасти в европейский и глобальный кризис. Ядерная война становится реальной возможностью, а влияние санкций может привести к голоду мирового масштаба в беднейших странах Африки.

Когда началась война, железным правилом для восстановления мира является ограничение зоны боевых действий, достижение четких линий прекращения огня и проведение переговоров о прекращении вооружённых столкновений. Мы вновь призываем российские и украинские силы прекратить боевые действия на нынешних позициях и по-настоящему перейти к переговорам о прекращении огня. Генеральный секретарь ООН Антониу Гутерриш, нанеся визиты президентам России и Украины, призвал их к прекращению огня. Мы призываем Организацию Объединенных Наций продолжать искренние усилия по достижению прекращения огня.

Начиная с марта, Турция прилагает достойные уважения усилия в качестве посредника на переговорах о прекращении

огня. В этот критический момент войны в Европе страны Азии и Африки также должны принять меры. Мы искренне надеемся, что такие нейтральные державы, как Китай, Индия и Южно-Африканская Республика, а также государства АСЕАН, такие как Индонезия и Вьетнам и другие страны, присоединятся к посредничеству в переговорах о прекращении огня и призовут обе воюющие стороны прекратить боевые действия.

Нельзя допустить продолжения войны. Мы призываем российское правительство президента Путина и украинское правительство президента Зеленского объявить народам мира о намерении немедленно остановить военные действия, начать переговоры о перемирии и на деле прекратить огонь.

Настало время для людей во всём мире, где бы они ни находились, найти силы и способ, чтобы поднять свой голос и призвать к немедленному прекращению огня.

Нет ничего более ценного, чем человеческая жизнь. Пусть в Украине больше не убиваются люди и не убивают людей. Это наш призыв и наша мольба.

9 мая 2022 г.

*Подписавшие*

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> For an earlier Statement (in French, Russian, Spanish as well as English and Japanese) by the newly-formed “Association of Concerned Japanese Historians,” see “[What should Japan do to stop the war in Ukraine as quickly as possible?](#)” 15 March 2022.