

**I**ntroduction  
to the Japan **A**ssociation  
of **S**ocial **S**ecurity **L**aw



## *Purpose for the Establishment of the Association*

Article 25 of the Constitution of Japan, enacted in 1946, provides, "All people shall have the right to maintain the minimum standards of wholesome and cultured living." It means that Japanese people have the right to keep these minimum standards as a basic human right. Section 2 of this Article provides, "In all spheres of life, the State shall use its endeavors for the promotion and extension of social welfare and security, and of public health." Article 25 of the Constitution provides a basis for the Japanese social security system. Medical insurance and pensions for all people were legalized in 1961. In the 1960's, each social security system, such as medical service, pension, workers' compensation insurance was reformed drastically. Consequently, the Japanese social security system improved substantially. However, the social security system showed signs of going backwards when the Japan entered a period of low economic growth during the oil shock of 1973. Faced with the coming aging society, review of the social security system became a matter of great social concern.

Given the above background, in 1977, mainly social security law scholars established a study group of social security law to reform the social security system to protect and assure the social security rights of people. This study group held its first inaugural meeting *Aging Society and Problems of Employment and Pensions* (in Kyoto) in October, 1977. Until the 9<sup>th</sup> congress (in Osaka) in October of 1981, congresses had been held along with the Japan Association of Labor Law.

In May, 1982, at the 10<sup>th</sup> Congress (in Ehime) on *Legal Problems of Aging Welfare and Healthcare*, the Japan Association of the Social Security Law was established. The rules of the Association including the election rule of the directors and auditors were proposed at that time. Until now, the congresses of the association have been held in spring and autumn, and the *Journal of Social Security Law* has been published annually. Many members of the association have also attended various international congresses.

In 2002, the International Exchange Committee was set up in order to expand the activities of the association to other countries, such as holding international symposiums and increasing foreign members.

In the beginning, there were only 100 association members. However, they have now increased to around 700. Members, whose backgrounds are diverse, include academics, lawyers, national and local government officials, employees of social welfare institutions and graduate students.

In October, 2001, to commemorate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the association, a special congress was held at Tokyo University on *Medical Treatment and Insurance Reform*. Also, the Association published a six volume Series on Social Security Law through Horitsu Bunkasha Ltd. This includes *Volume One: Social Security Law in the 21st Century*; *Volume Two: Income Security Law*; *Volume Three: Social Services Law*; *Volume Four: Medical Services Law/ Long-Term Care Services Law*; *Volume Five: Housing and Facilities Services Law/ Public Assistance Law*; and *Volume Six: Social Security and Law in Related Fields-Extension and Development*. Eighty-one association members contributed articles.



Mt. Fuji and Cherry Blossoms

## *Organization of the Association*

### *Membership:*

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- Honorary members shall be decided at the general meeting based on recommendation of the board of directors.
- New members shall be approved at the board of directors with a recommendation from two present members.

### *General Meeting:*

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- A general meeting consisting of the members of the association shall be the supreme council.
- Agendas shall be decided by more than half of attendants of the general meeting. Members who are not present at the general meeting can entrust other members with voting rights by proxy.

### *Board of Directors:*

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- The board of directors shall consist of twenty directors and two auditors all of whom are elected by the members. In addition, up to ten other directors are recommended by the board of directors based on the balance of the directors' study areas and residences. Recommended directors shall be approved at the general meeting.
- The representative director shall be nominated at the election of the board of directors.
- The board of directors appoints the members of the committees to support the affairs of the association.

The following committees should be established:

- Planning Committee
- International Exchanges Committee
- Encouragement Award for Young Scholars Selection Committee
- Journal Editorial Committee

### ***Directors:***

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- The term of directors and auditors should be two years. However, reelection is possible.
- The representative director shall represent the association.
- The representative director shall organize the board of directors and execute the affairs of the association.
- The representative director should convene an ordinary general meeting at least once a year.
- The representative director can convene an extraordinary general meeting anytime, if necessary. If more than one-fifth of all members request an extraordinary general meeting, indicating the meeting's agenda, the representative director should convene the meeting.

### ***Account:***

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- The expenses of the association shall be covered by membership fees, donations and other income.
- The fiscal year of the association shall start on April 1<sup>st</sup> and end on March 31<sup>st</sup> of the next year.
- The representative director shall make a financial report after the fiscal year. It shall be approved by the general meeting after the decision of the board of directors.
- The auditors shall audit the accounts of the association.

### ***Activities:***

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- Hold a congress biannually.
- Publish the *Journal of Social Security Law* and other books.
- Communicate and cooperate with other academic associations in Japan and other countries.
- Hold open lectures and other activities which are necessary to achieve the purposes of the association.