

The Japan Federation of Bar Associations (JFBA) welcomes the positive approach that the Government of Japan took for the third Universal Periodic Review of Japan, by responding interactively to questions raised by each member State, and by including the officers of the relevant ministries in its delegations at the Working Group session.

The JFBA also commends that the Government of Japan proactively made recommendations to other member States during the 3rd cycle of the UPR, and thereby contributed to the development of the UPR system.

With regard to national consultation, there are rooms for improvement including that the Government's report did not reflect the results of the consultation with civil society, and that the Government's report was not disclosed until one month before the Working Group session.

Having said that, some development of the national dialogue was observed since the Working Group session. In February 2018, the JFBA convened a consultation forum on the recommendations made, in which 13 members of the Parliament (Diet) participated, both from ruling parties and opposition parties. On that occasion, substantive dialogue was held among the JFBA, members of the Diet, and the relevant ministries on the acceptance of recommendations and their implementation.

Japan will host Olympics and Paralympics as well as the United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in 2020. Thus, external expectations have been surging toward the improvement of human rights remedies, including through ratification of the Optional Protocols for providing an individual communications system, and the establishment of a national human rights institution. Concurring with business sectors' efforts toward responsible business conduct and investments, internal incentives have also been enhanced to demonstrate human rights developments toward the international community.

Against this backdrop, the JFBA asks the Government of Japan to implement diligently the recommendations accepted, in particular on discrimination, the area to which many recommendations were made, by enacting legislation and by strengthening policy measures. The JFBA will continue to monitor its progress in order to ensure the implementation, and to improve access to remedies.

Regrettably, the Government did not accept recommendations on some important issues including the introduction of the moratorium on death penalty, the abolition of daiyo-kangoku/substitute prison, or ratification of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

For these issues, with the cooperation of the embassies in Japan, and the Delegation of the European Union to Japan, the JFBA will continue to ask the Government to seriously consider the recommendations in a concrete and time bound manner.