

Statement by the President of the Science Council of Japan
On the Enactment of the Science Council of Japan Bill

The bill submitted by the government to incorporate the Science Council of Japan as a legal entity, independent from the Government of Japan, was passed by the House of Councilors on June 11 and thereby enacted. Throughout the deliberations in the National Diet, the SCJ expressed its views on various critical matters. The SCJ based its opinions on its statement entitled, *“Toward the Continuity and Development of the Science Council of Japan for Future Generations – On the Submission of the Government’s SCJ Bill to the Diet”*, and on its resolution, *“On the Amendment of the SCJ Bill”*, both adopted at the General Assembly held on April 15, 2025. These views encompassed the intent of the resolution, the Council’s independence, the role of the evaluation committee, the framework for the selection of members both at the time of incorporation and three years thereafter, and the financial foundation of the SCJ.

In the Diet, extended deliberations took place, involving both ruling and opposition parties, with particular focus on the concerns raised by the SCJ. In the House of Councilors, the proposed amendment reflecting the SCJ’s concerns was submitted and discussed. The SCJ wishes to express our profound respect for the Diet members who earnestly engaged in deliberations, reflecting on the history and past activities of the SCJ while also considering its future. We also extend our sincere gratitude to academic societies, Associate Members, and numerous individuals and organizations who expressed support for the SCJ, including their articulation of apprehensions about the bill.

Ideally, the present organizational reform should have been pursued through a process of thorough dialogue between the government and the SCJ, in a manner that appropriately reflected the views of the SCJ as the representative body of the scientific community. However, the discussions began amid a damaged relationship of trust, triggered by the Prime Minister’s refusal to appoint six nominees as new SCJ Council members in 2020. Consequently, the bill was submitted to the Diet without dispelling the concerns that it may undermine the SCJ’s independence. It is imperative to reiterate the problematic nature of this process.

Ultimately, the bill was enacted in its original form, without any revisions sought by the SCJ. As an institution that adopted a resolution calling for amendments, the SCJ views this outcome with deep regret, especially in light of the substantial Diet deliberations that addressed our expressed concerns. Nevertheless, both the House of Representatives’ and House of Councilors’ Cabinet Committees adopted supplementary resolutions based on these deliberations. These resolutions clearly articulated the will of the Diet to respect the independence, autonomy, and self-governance of the SCJ in the selection of its members and its provision of scientific advice, as well as to ensure necessary financial support and respect for the SCJ’s scientific advice such as Recommendations to the Government and Findings Reports. We regard these resolutions as crucial, being of the utmost importance not only for

future institutional design but also for shaping the relationship between the government and the SCJ. The SCJ will take seriously the observations directed toward it and will respond with humility and sincerity.

We strongly urge the government, in implementing the bill, to adhere strictly to the issues raised in the supplementary resolutions. It must fully uphold the SCJ's independence, autonomy, and self-governance in its operations and activities, including the selection of members and the provision of scientific advice; ensure sufficient financial support; and respect the SCJ's recommendations and reports. We also call upon the government to fulfill its responsibility to explain the refusal to appoint the six Council members in 2020, as clearly stipulated in both Houses' supplementary resolutions. Furthermore, it must make earnest efforts to rebuild trust with the SCJ. This can be effected by means of thorough dialogue when drafting and implementing relevant legislation and policies.

Now that the bill has been enacted, the SCJ must redouble its efforts to fulfill its role as the national academy at the same time safeguarding its independence, autonomy, and self-governance. In the aforementioned statement, we asserted the need for the scientific community itself to reaffirm and pledge to the public that the inherited values and mission that the SCJ has developed throughout its 76-year history will continue unchanged: its significant contribution to academic advancement in cooperation with the global scientific community. Moreover, we hereby renew our commitment to contributing to the enrichment of culture, the realization of a peaceful and prosperous society, and the enhancement of a secure, fulfilling, healthy, and culturally rich life for the people, through the promotion of science.

To this end, the SCJ will commence preparations and deliberations toward its further development under the new legal framework. By taking the initiative in this process, the SCJ will work to ensure its institutional continuity and to meet the expectations of the public and society at large. In so doing, we will also endeavor to maintain effective communication with the government.

Finally, drawing upon the lessons of the recent discussions concerning the future of the SCJ, we reaffirm our resolve to advance organizational reform, to contribute to the resolution of societal challenges both in Japan and globally, and to further the progress of science. We shall proceed in accordance with our declaration to strive *"Toward a Better Role of the SCJ"* and the *Action Plan for the SCJ during the 26th Term (October 2023-September 2026)*, press forward with our own reforms and pass on a strengthened institution to future generations.

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