

Rep. Taro Kono Policy Vision — “Amid Crisis, Now is the Time for Kono Taro”

Amending the Constitution

- Based on the party’s position, accelerate Diet discussions toward the speedy submission of amendment draft
- Insert the JSDF, which is tasked with national defense during crises, into the Constitution (resolve the “unconstitutionality of the JSDF theory”)
- Reinforce the Diet and Cabinet’s response to emergency situations and insert a framework maintaining Diet functions during emergencies (failing that a provision temporarily reinforcing the Cabinet’s authority)
- Dissolve the at-large districts in the Upper House and select at least one person from every prefecture to focus on the value of “regions” in elections regardless of rural or urban region
- Position the importance of education as a national principle and change the expression of private school subsidies to meet the needs of the current situation and enabling all citizens to pursue education

Foreign Policy/Security

- Move away from one-country pacifism, thoroughly implement deterrence against threat like China by deepening coordination with countries that share common values
- Lead UN Charter reform like UN Security Council reform that meets the needs of the times
- On strategic commodities, improve Japan’s autonomy and indispensability and deepen coordination with like-minded countries to reduce supply chain dependence on certain countries
- Deepen political involvement in the Global South, especially the Middle East
- Deepen discussions and explanation on security strategy and necessary equipment system to gain the understanding of citizens
- Pursue exports to reinforce the defense industrial base by securing the stable supply of JSDF equipment for mobile deployment capabilities and cost cuts
- Pursue a development and deployment structure for weapons appropriate for a “post-Ukraine” world
- Pursue the efficient deployment of the three services, as well as the space and cyber units
- Deepen human capital investment toward securing and developing talent necessary for the JSDF
- Pursue legislation toward active cyber defense and upgrading the cyber unit

Economy/Fiscal Policy, Regional Revitalization

- Labor market reform
 - Create a dynamic labor market for individuals and corporations
 - Create a labor environment where salaries structurally rise by combining membership-type and job-type employment toward a new Japanese-style employment system
 - Create a labor environment where jobs can be flexibly selected
 - Develop a societal environment where reskilling is easy
 - Thoroughly implement equal pay for equal work by redressing the wage gap between genders and between full-time and part-time workers
 - Gradually shrink and abolish deductions, allowances, and insurance fees that create the “income barrier,” which is the cause of labor hour adjustments, to increase household income
- Developing an environment to enable investment expansion
 - Proceed with regulatory reform and create a positive cycle of private sector-led investment keeping in mind the key word “resolving social challenges” (autonomous driving, smartgrid, GX, waste/circular economy)
 - Thoroughly implement the abolition of personal guarantees by business owners to support business ventures
 - Create industry with corporations that vitalize regions by facilitating data-driven investments through the process of making regional service descriptions into open data (rideshare, medical/elderly care, education, retail)
 - Create a framework for investment in human capital (technologies for traditional arts and crafts, lathe and other advanced technologies, advanced programming, regional coordinators, etc.)
 - Export cultural content and support expansion abroad
 - Develop a system which creates a positive cycle of growth being returned to households by promoting the shift from “savings to investment” and creating growth through investments
- Fiscal policy
 - Economic and fiscal management based on the idea of “reform during times of normalcy, spending during crises”
 - Bring back restrained fiscal policy while keeping in mind the need for fiscal strength during crises and the new normal of a world with interest
 - Establish an “Independent Fiscal Policy Institute” toward the appropriate designing and revision of economic, fiscal, and social security policy
 - Zero-base revision of ineffective projects by thoroughly implementing evidence-based policy making (EBPM) utilizing administrative project reviews
- Energy
 - Maximize the promotion of renewable energy and proceed with the restart of safe nuclear power plants to respond to the expected increase in electricity demand

- Given expected supply shortages, marshal all existing energy technologies toward creating a system in which necessary electricity can be supplied and the country can realize carbon neutrality by 2050
- Sustainable agriculture, forestry, and fisheries
 - Develop talent and protect/develop farmland, forests, and shoreline areas toward securing a sustainable agriculture, forestry, and fisheries industry
 - Promote a logical price mechanism that takes into account production costs
 - Promote agriculture utilizing new technologies like smart ag technology and AI
 - Improve convenience of online administrative services (eMAFF) and the integrated system for agricultural land information (eMAFF map) to improve convenience for locals including farmers
 - Promote the enhanced production of rice and aim to expand rice exports in times of normalcy as well as shift wheat to rice wheat in order to prepare for domestic distribution in a crisis
 - Expand exports of domestic agricultural produce/fishery products, processed foods, and the restaurant industry

Social Security

- Revise the social insurance fee, which has turned into a “tax on wages for the working-age population”
 - Consider the transfer of burden across generations considering the huge burden placed on the working-age population for “early elderly benefits” and “financial assistance for the late-stage elderly”
- Create a digital safety net
 - Provide push-style support for those in need of support
 - Create a framework in which digital payment of salaries can be shared as data through a streamlined hub, enabling targeted handouts and other support
 - Following a transition period, abolish the year-end tax adjustment and streamline into an automated tax return to reduce the administrative burden on businesses (proceed with digitalization to reduce the burden on tax authorities)
- Create a support mechanism for firms hiring single mothers as full-time employees
- Consider a labor income tax deduction to encourage employment
- Divide the “health and welfare” and “labor” portions from the overburdened Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare and create separate ministerial positions for these issues
- Realize a vibrant long lifespan society despite labor shortages by moving forward with medical/elderly care DX in areas like promoting digital medical records and prescriptions, as well as the efficient operations of welfare facilities
- Ensure medical attention can be received anywhere in the country by deepening the plan to secure doctors, securing and developing doctors, and implementing effective placement of doctors

- Utilize private medical insurance to respond to improving medical care while maintaining insurance for all
- Increase organ transplants from cardiac death

Digital

- Realize “digitalization that does not leave anyone behind and is friendly to people”
- Make it easier for the childcare generation to work by enhancing “childcare DX,” in which information collection and service requests can be made online throughout the country
- Support the elderly by utilizing digital technologies, such as by enhancing online check-ups for the elderly in remote locations or those that cannot move easily
- Lead AI governance and digital diplomacy in light of the global challenge of dis-/misinformation and cyberbullying in the AI society
- Proactively coordinate public-private innovation toward efficient digitalization

Education/Research

- Promote evidence-based, tailor-made education
- Secure the time and environment for teachers to engage with students by utilizing school support staff and school administrative DX
- Expand tuition support enabling students to repay loans after receiving a certain amount of income following graduation from university (promotion payment)
- Diversify education by approving schools introducing internationally recognized curriculum or advanced curriculum as Tier One schools under the School Education Law
- Proactively bring to Japan advanced higher education institutions from abroad
- Provide short-term funding through the university management expense grant like individual subsidies so that universities can continue research in a stable manner
- Create a scholarship program for PhD and postdoctoral students

Disaster Prevention

- Create a society resilient to disaster through “Disaster Prevention 4.0” (an approach in which each individual, not just the government, thinks about disaster risks)
- Increase staff in the government with experience in disaster response
 - Ensure cadres at each ministry and agency receive disaster response training under the disaster prevention specialist
- Realize disaster prevention DX that is useful for recovery/reconstruction efforts by implementing measures like visualizing risks before disaster strikes to enable evacuation site management that fits the needs of the evacuees
- Support disaster prevention/reduction and evacuation site management from women’s perspective to take into consideration diverse needs

- Support the activities of fire departments as the main actors in regional disaster prevention

Crisis Management

- Preserve the 3 “ryo’s”: food self-sufficiency, fuel self-sufficiency, and medical (drugs/vaccines)
- Develop a backup system for metropolitan functions
- Strengthen logistical infrastructure in the Nansei Islands
- Develop a system to prepare for contingencies around Japan

Political Reform

- Lower the eligibility requirements to run for elected office to 18 years of age
- Enable online voting for Japanese nationals abroad and expand it to domestic elections if no problems arise
- Recommend tablet voting approved for local elections under existing legislation and expand it to national elections if no problems arise
- Allow for voting without party restrictions on vote for ethical challenges
- On top of fostering an environment for female lawmakers to succeed, make progress on the acceptance of more female candidates and nurturing female candidates by ensuring no local legislature has zero women in elected office

Workstyle Reform

- Push for workstyle reform that aims for “human-centric” reform that enables all people who desire to work — on the premise that their lives and health are secured — can work to the fullest of their abilities. In addition, work to abolish black companies and undesired long work hours
- In order to push forth workstyle reform for bureaucrats further, abolish the Cabinet Legislation Bureau’s screening of Q&A responses and effectively distribute limited administrative resources to where they are truly needed