



Concept Paper

A year after the Global Article 9 Conference to Abolish War that was held in May 2008 in Japan, an international follow-up event will take place in July this year in Puntarenas, Costa Rica onboard Peace Boat's ship, the SS Oceanic.

The 2008 Global Article 9 Conference highlighted the growing international movement of support for the principles enshrined in the pacific clause of the Japanese Constitution as an international peace mechanism. It emphasized linkages with many global issues, such as conflict prevention, disarmament, nuclear weapons abolition, development, peacebuilding and the environment.

ARTICLE 9: 1) *Aspiring sincerely to an international peace based on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes. 2) In order to accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained. The right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized.*

On the basis of last year's achievements, the upcoming conference will explore the value of Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution and of Article 12 of the Costa Rican Constitution in their historical perspective and contemporary contexts, as well as their regional significance. Indeed, Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution has been considered as the foundation for Northeast Asian security, while Article 12 inspired Ecuador, Bolivia, and the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) to adopt peace clauses, creating a growing momentum in the region. As the Peace Constitutions of Japan and Costa Rica have prevented both countries from experiencing war since their adoption, ways of preserving them locally and promoting them globally will be discussed.

ARTICLE 12: 1) *The Army as a permanent institution is abolished. There shall be the necessary police forces for surveillance and the preservation of the public order. 2) Military forces may only be organized under a continental agreement or for the national defense; in either case, they shall always be subordinate to the civil power: they may not deliberate or make statements or representations individually or collectively.*

Furthermore, in light of the current financial and food crises, as well as violent conflicts and massive poverty that ravage the world today, the conference will look at the links between these peace clauses and Article 26 of the United Nations Charter, which calls for the establishment of a system for the regulation of armaments with the least diversion of the world's human and economic resources for armaments in order to promote the establishment and maintenance of international peace and security.

Building upon its history of using military budget for education after disbanding its army, Costa Rica initiated a debate in the UN Security Council on collective security and armament regulation in November 2008.

Welcoming the Costa Rican initiative, the conference will discuss its significance and explore how to develop and synergize national, regional and global efforts towards shifting priorities by which resources are allocated. It will advocate for a decrease in military expenditures to invest in financing sustainable development and human security. Participants will conclude by adopting a declaration, possibly proposing a UN resolution acknowledging the role Peace Constitutions play in promoting global disarmament.

The event is being co-sponsored by Peace Boat, International Association of Lawyers Against Nuclear Arms (IALANA)-Latin America Branch, the Faculty of Law of the University of Costa Rica, Japanese Lawyers International Solidarity Association (JALISA), and the Global Article 9 Campaign to Abolish War.