



NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations
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Dear Members of the Constitutional Council,

We are writing to you from Peace Boat, an international NGO based in Japan that works to promote peace, human rights, equal and sustainable development and respect for the environment.

We welcome the very democratic, public, inclusive and transparent process by which the new Icelandic Constitution is being drafted.

We commend the inclusion of a clause banning military service (Human Rights, Article 18 of Ráðsfundur 16) and welcome reference in the themes identified at the November 2010 National Assembly on the Constitution, as per the notes made public by Agora for the Parliament of Iceland that:

*Iceland does not participate in war against other nations
Iceland is an impartial country of peace
Iceland shall be without a military and impartial in warfare
Iceland shall be a leading nation promoting peace in the world
Iceland does not support other nations' warfare
A minister can not alone make decisions about war
Supporting warfare is subject to referendum
Iceland shall be without an army and free of nuclear arms*

We strongly encourage you to incorporate those principles in the new Constitution of the Republic of Iceland.

Among the major campaigns that Peace Boat is carrying out figures the Global Article 9 Campaign, named after Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution that renounces war as a means of settling international disputes and prohibits the maintenance of armed forces and other war potential.

In addition to proclaiming pacifism as one of the nation's fundamental principles and acting as a restraint on the militarization of Japan, the Japanese Constitution has served as an international peace mechanism. Recognized by the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC, 2005) as “the foundation for collective security for the entire Asia Pacific region”, the role played by Article 9 of Japan’s Constitution has also been recognized for its contribution at the global level, notably in regards to human rights, disarmament, nuclear weapons abolition, conflict prevention, development, the environment and other global issues.

Today, 104 states across the five continents have incorporated the value of peace in their constitutions. Like Japan’s, the constitutions of Bolivia and Colombia have explicitly recognized peace as a fundamental rights of peoples and individuals.

Indeed, the Preamble of the Constitution of Japan "recognize[s] that all the people of the world have the right to live in peace, free from fear and want”; Article 10.1 of the Constitution of the Multinational Republic of Bolivia states that “Bolivia is a pacifist State, which promotes the culture of peace and the right to peace...”; and Article 22 of the Constitution of Colombia establishes that “peace is a right and a duty whose compliance is mandatory”.

We would like to invite you to seek inspiration in other countries’ constitutions and to explicitly **include a peace clause in the new Constitution** of the Republic of Iceland.

We remain at your disposal for any further information or assistance we may provide in this process.

Sincerely Yours,

KAWASAKI Akira, Executive Committee Member, Peace Boat
Céline NAHORY, International Coordinator, Global Article 9 Campaign