

**"Overcoming Today's Pandemic and Creating a Better Tomorrow:  
The Role of Parliament"**

**Mr. SHINDO Kanehiko**

**Deputy Leader of the Japanese delegation and member of the House of Councillors**

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the agricultural, forestry and fishery industries and food-related industries in Japan. In terms of the international situation, the pandemic has thrown into sharp relief food security challenges, such as the imposition of export restrictions by some food-exporting countries and the stagnancy of production and distribution of goods caused by the spread of infection.

It is also essential that each country acts calmly in a time of pandemic and advances concrete policies to ensure stability of domestic food supplies, thereby to guard against future emergencies.

As an example, I would like to cite the achievements of the late Doctor NAKAMURA Tetsu, who was gunned down by an armed group in Afghanistan in 2019. Dr. Nakamura, who was engaging in medical service in Afghanistan, assumed that food shortages and malnutrition were the causes of epidemics of diseases there. Based on the idea that the important thing to do was "one irrigation canal will do more good than 100 clinics," he devoted himself to canal construction and helped to restore green to deserts, making it possible for 650,000 people to achieve food self-sufficiency. I believe that this case indicates that in order to resolve the challenges confronting us at the moment, it is important to identify their fundamental causes and take actions from a medium to long-term perspective.

To overcome the current pandemic and strengthen international food security, we need to resolve the fundamental causes, rather than merely dealing with symptoms of the underlying problems, as Dr. Nakamura showed through his actions. As a parliamentarian, I am resolved to perform our responsibilities for implementing necessary legislative measures and ensuring appropriate oversight of administration in order to enhance the sustainability of the agricultural and food sectors and maintain stable food supply and the functions of food supply chains from a long-term perspective.