

A Big Change of Politics in Japan

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1 The political system of Japan

- Constitutional monarchy democracy
- Separation of the three powers
 - Administration
 - Legislation
 - Judicature
- The two chamber system
 - The House of Councilors
 - The House of Representatives

- **I. Election**
- The House of Representatives
 - Election through the dissolution of the House exercised by the Prime Minister
 - Election when the representatives have served out their term of 4 years
- The House of Councilors
 - Election every three years for half of members of the House, each term being 6 years
- **II. Function**
- The House of Representatives (480 members)
 - to elect the Prime Minister
 - to pass a no confidence vote in the Cabinet.
 - to be superior to the House of Councilors in decision/approval of budget and treaties
 - possible dissolution anytime
- The House of Councilors (250 members)
 - to have authority basically equal to the House of Representatives in decision of laws
 - to have a rather more political neutrality
 - no dissolution possible

2 The result of the House of Representatives election in August

- The election system for the House of Representatives :480 members
 - A single-seat constituency system: 300 members
 - A proportional representation system: 180 members
- Public support rate for the Cabinet and parties
- Reasons for the result of the election

Parties	Total	Single-seat members	Proportional members	Total before the vote
DPJ	308	221	87	115
LDP	119	64	55	300
NKP	21	0	21	31
CPJ	9	0	9	9
SDP	7	3	4	7
PNP	3	3	0	4
Others	13	9	4	12

3 Expected Changes of Japanese Politics

- **DPJ's Platform for Government**
- (www.dpf.or.jp)
- From bureaucracy to politician-led government
- Regional sovereignty
- The end of wasteful spending
- Introduce a child allowance and free public high school tuition
- Pension reform & renewal of medical care
- Individual income support for agriculture
- Abolition of provisional tax rates on gasoline, etc
- Elimination of highway tolls
- Employment measures

- (Foreign relations)
- Build a close and equal Japan-US relationship
- Strengthen Japan's foreign relations in Asia with the aim of building an East Asian community
- North Korea must not be permitted to possess nuclear weapons
- Realize world peace and prosperity
- Take the lead in working for the elimination of nuclear weapons, and remove the threat of terrorism

4 Foreign Relations

- **Japan-US relations**

- A close and equal alliance
- Re-examination the realignment of the US military forces in Japan
- Propose the revision of the Japan-US Status of Forces Agreement
- (Refueling activity by JMSDF in Indian Ocean)
- Japan's diplomacy possibly shifting to Asia

- **Asia and East Asian Community**

- Develop relations of mutual trust with China, South Korea and other Asian countries
- Promote EPAs and FTAs with countries of the Asia-Pacific region
- Establish intra-regional cooperative mechanisms in the Asia-Pacific region
- Historical issues

5 Other factors to be considered

- Agreement among DPJ, SDP and PNP to form a coalition government
 - Re-reform of Postal Service/Climate Change/Japan-US relations/Afghanistan/Constitution
- Hatoyama's political vision
 - Fraternity/against Globalism/East Asian community/Regional sovereignty
- Ozawa's political vision
 - Japan-US relations/the UN/ Politician-led government/Two Big Party System

6 Key Words for DPJ's Foreign Policy

(Mainly citing words from a report*)

- Independent diplomacy – Japan-US Alliance
- Member of Asia – East Asian community
- The United Nations – Japan Self-Defense Forces
- Nuclear disarmament – Japan's nuclear policy
- Citizen rights – Futenma Air Station
- CO² reduction – Post Kyoto Protocol

- * Electing a New Japanese Security Policy? Examining Foreign Policy Visions within the Democratic Party of Japan, Leif-Eric Easley, Tetsuo Kotani, & Aki Mori, The National Bureau of Asian Research, Seattle, Washington, <http://www.nbr.org/publications/element.aspx?id=394>