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# Japan Should Hold and Secure “Potential Nuclear Capability”

By KATO Seiichi

On March 9, 2016, Otsu District Court made a provisional disposition to suspend operation of Units 3 and 4 of Kansai Electric Power Company's Takahama Nuclear Power Station. This order not only possibly deviates from the legal precedent on Ikata Nuclear Power Plant operated by Shikoku Electric Power Company but threatens to exert a severe impact on Japan's energy policy at large thereby profoundly undermining its national strength and interest.

Above all, given the threat of China venturing maritime activities with its military might and of North Korea trumpeting its “possession of hydrogen bomb,” it is especially vital for Japan's national security to resume operation of nuclear power plants with a view to holding and securing “potential nuclear capability,” let alone securing stable supply of electricity.

In this sense, transference of 331 kilograms of high-grade plutonium (equivalent to 40 atomic bombs) from Japan Atomic Energy Agency (JAEA) located in Tokai-mura, Ibaraki, to the U.S., according to the Japan-U.S. summit agreement reached in 2014, or Prime Minister Abe's firm commitment to the U.S. government on the occasion of “The Nuclear Security Summit” held in Washington D.C. on April 1, that Japan should remove high-enrichment uranium from Kyoto University's Research Reactor institute, located in Kumatori-cho, Sennan-gun, Osaka are both highly detrimental to Japan's maintenance and assurance of its “potential nuclear capability”

These moves would only please China and North Korea. In making decisions which would exert critical influences upon Japan's national security, the Japanese government should take an extremely judicious approach with extreme discretion, taking into account the threats posed by China and North Korea and prioritizing Japan's safety and national interest.

In view of the fact that the Republican candidate Donald Trump who is keeping a lead in the presidential primary election, has stressed, backed by the public opinion in the U.S, that it could pull out U.S. troops from Japan and approve Japan's nuclear armament”, it is all the more imperative for Japan to be prepared for autonomous national defense including consideration of “possessing self-defensive

nuclear capability,” instead of being totally dependent on U.S for its national security. In this regard, holding and securing “potential nuclear-capable” of Japan would be indispensable.

**(This is the English version of an article written by KATO Seiichi, former attorney-at-law, which originally appeared on the e-Forum “Giron-Hyakushutsu” of GFJ on April 5, 2016.)**