



## Department of Social Development and World Peace

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March 26, 2007

The Honorable Condoleezza Rice  
Secretary of State  
U. S. Department of State  
2201 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Rice,

I write as Chairman of the Committee on International Policy of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops to share with you a concern expressed to us by the Catholic Bishops of Japan. Archbishop Joseph Takami of Nagasaki recently visited our Conference to seek support in the efforts of the Japanese Bishops' Conference to oppose a revision of the Japanese Constitution that would eliminate or alter Article 9.

As you know, the Japanese Constitution adopted shortly after the Second World War contains Article 9 that reads:

*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.*

*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 rights of belligerency of the state will not be recognized.*

In 2005, on the sixtieth anniversary of the end of the war, the bishops issued a Peace Message that voiced their concern about changing Article 9. I wish to share with you that message, which I enclose, and express the hope that our government will take the concerns of the Japanese bishops into consideration and that the expressed will of the Japanese people in the matter of Article 9 of their Constitution be respected.

With gratitude for your kind attention to these concerns, I remain

Sincerely yours,

Most Reverend Thomas G. Wenski  
Bishop of Orlando  
Chairman  
Committee on International Policy