

June 24, 2022

Inaugural Address

TOKURA Saburo
Chief Justice
Supreme Court

I was recently appointed Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. I deeply recognize anew the gravity of the responsibility of this post.

Needless to say, the mission of courts is to protect the rights of citizens and maintain law and order, which constitute the foundation of society, by bringing about fair and appropriate solutions to individual cases. Seventy-five years have passed since the existing court system was inaugurated in conjunction with the Constitution of Japan coming into effect, and during this period, we, at courts, have continued to make efforts to properly exercise the judicial power entrusted to us by citizens and fulfill our mission.

Also during this period, the social and economic situations and people's values in Japan have continued to change, and courts have responded to these changes by making various arrangements for the operations of proceedings and having the achievements of the Justice System Reform take root, including the Saiban-in system, according to the details of individual disputes that arise from time to time as well as to the needs in society. In view of the rapid progress in digitalization of society in recent years, I think that we in the judicial branch

should also promote digitalization robustly to meet the needs of the times, and should work on improving the quality of proceedings and decisions, with an awareness of and in line with the ideal operation of proceedings.

While the COVID-19 pandemic has not yet come to an end, other events that shake the conventional international order have occurred. Therefore, it is difficult to make future forecasts under the current social and economic circumstances. I believe that in such situation, it will become more important than before for courts to fulfill their mission and responsibility with absolute certainty, thereby realizing the rule of law unshakably, and to maintain constant efforts to adequately address the needs of court users.

Upon assuming the office of the Chief Justice, I will carry on and develop further the good tradition of the judiciary that has been built up so far, and exert myself to the utmost to realize a justice system trusted by the public.

I would be grateful for the People's further understanding of and cooperation with the judiciary.