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Upon Celebrating Constitution Memorial Day

IMASAKI Yukihiro

Chief Justice of the Supreme Court

This year marks the 79th anniversary of the enforcement of the Constitution of Japan and the 80th anniversary of its promulgation. Throughout this period, the courts have endeavored to uphold the rule of law and support the development of our country and the stability of its people's lives by resolving a wide range of societal disputes and conflicts in an appropriate and timely manner.

Japan's socioeconomic structure has undergone a drastic transformation, and people's values have also become more diversified as the country has transitioned through the Showa, Heisei, and Reiwa eras (1926–1989, 1989–2019, and 2019 to present, respectively). Against the backdrop of these changes, both the domestic and global situations are rapidly becoming more fluid and unstable, and the existing social order is beginning to waver in many aspects. Amid growing uncertainty about the future, there seems to be an increasing need to maintain stable social functions.

Although it is not easy to predict how this situation will impact societal disputes and conflicts, we should be prepared for the possibility that it may emerge as an issue that requires significant effort to resolve. To this end, the courts are first expected to reform the litigation process to make it more rational and efficient to meet the demands of the times, so that the courts can effectively respond to the growing need for judicial services.

The amended Code of Civil Procedure will come into full effect on May 21, when the

online filing of applications and other documents, as well as the digitalization of case records, will start. Subsequently, laws related to the digitalization of various areas of court proceedings will also come into effect in phases. The digitalization of court proceedings plays an important role in enhancing public access to justice and improving the courts' dispute resolution function through streamlining court proceedings and making them more efficient.

The wider use of the Internet, as typified by social media, has significantly transformed people's everyday lives and the fabric of society, and there is no doubt that AI is set to bring about more changes in the future. It is likely that an era of further transformation will await us beyond the digitalization of court proceedings. I believe it is important that, as a first step, we steadily implement the series of initiatives I have mentioned, while establishing a new judicial model that is capable of adapting to the ongoing structural changes in Japanese society. We are responsible for providing judicial services to the public and are committed to making every effort to fulfill this task.

As our country observes Constitution Memorial Day, I am keenly aware of the vital mission entrusted to the courts by the people under the Constitution of Japan. I remain committed to making every effort for the courts to fulfill their role to the best of my ability.