

## Message Regarding the Reform of the Civil Servant System

July 25, 2008

The reform of the civil servant system is a national project with implications for generations to come.

Japan's bureaucratic system used to play an important role in guiding the direction of the country. Unfortunately, however, public trust in the system has weakened and a sense of helplessness continues to grow among civil servants.

It is our responsibility to rebuild it and leave future generations with a superior bureaucratic system that deserves public trust.

Reforming the public sector will lead to changes in the private sector, thereby revitalizing Japanese society as a whole.

I would like to ask you, the staff of the headquarters for the reform of the civil servant system, to engage in daily work while bearing in mind the importance of this reform for the future of Japan.

In particular, I hope that young civil servants, who are expected to cultivate a long career in the public sector, will continue to ask themselves about reform — whether the status quo should be altered, how they would like to change their workplace in the future and what reforms should be carried out to achieve the change — and perform their duties with a reform-oriented mind.

I would like you to proceed with the reform with the above points in mind and under the following five principles:

### 1. Break with the traditional bureaucratic attitudes and ways of thinking

\*You should abandon the traditional attitudes and ways of thinking, such as working for the sake of your ministry, rather than for the sake of the country and the people, favoring seniority over performance, deferring to the government while showing contempt for the people and trying to have politics under the control of the bureaucracy.

### 2. Utilization of private-sector ideas and creativity

\*The staff members who come from the private sector should, rather than conforming to the practices of the bureaucracy, introduce the useful ideas and creativity of the private sector into the public sector. They should feel free to put forward bold proposals and participate in debate vigorously, without hesitating to defy the members selected from the public sector.

### 3. Proactive participation of young staff

\*Young staff members have the most at stake in this reform. Rather than merely doing a prescribed job, they should proactively present proposals and participate in debate.

### 4. Thorough pursuit of reform through exhaustive debate

\*You should not content yourself with merely executing the missions prescribed by the

basic act, but pursue reform thoroughly.

\*In order to prevent the reformed system from becoming ineffective in the operation stage, a specific incentive should be provided for civil servants to sincerely work for the people.

#### 5. Implementation of reform from the people's viewpoint

\*You should constantly listen to the people's voices (you should start collecting the people's opinions in the initial stage).

\*You should keep the process of deliberation transparent, constantly present options to the people and make a final decision from the people's viewpoint (various meetings should be fully open to the public).