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Decision of the National Public Safety Commission

Ensuring Propriety of Examination in Police Investigations

Recently there has been a succession of cases of acquittals which questions the very nature of police examination of suspects. The severe criticism from the people has greatly shaken the trust towards police investigations.

The police must take this situation seriously, reflect the deficiencies pointed out in such judgments deeply and thus work towards further propriety of examination.

Under the trial by jury system to be implemented by May 2009, jury members chosen from the general public will be involved in the judgment of criminal proceedings. Hence, efforts must be taken to allow jurors a full understanding of the processes of police investigation, especially the examination.

Examination of suspects has long played a key role in the criminal procedures in Japan as a means to reveal the truth of cases, but of course this must be done with full concern towards individual human rights.

Due to these circumstances, the National Public Safety Commission has recognized the urgency of ensuring the propriety of the examination and seeks for the nation-wide effort by the police.

Accordingly, the National Public Safety Commission urges the National Police Agency (NPA), while giving sufficient consideration to the actual state of investigations by the Prefectural Police Department as well as the compatibility with the coming jury system, to examine the following points and take a series of steps to restore public trust in police investigations:

- (1) Enhanced Supervision
- (2) Stricter Control of Examination Time
- (3) Other Steps for Ensuring Propriety of Examination
- (4) Raising Awareness for those involved in Investigations.

Under the security situation which remains serious, the National Public Safety Commission calls for the construction of environment in which diligent investigating officers can retain high morale to fight valiantly against crimes.