

OPPOSITION LEADER HON. SHINZŌ ABE

With Japanese present Prime Minister Hon. Shinzo Abe When he was the Opposition Leader

Shinzo Abe (born 21 September 1954) is a Japanese politician who served as [Prime Minister of Japan](#) and [President of the Liberal Democratic Party](#) (LDP) from 2006 to 2007 and again from 2012 to 2020. He is the [longest-serving prime minister](#) in Japanese history. Abe also served as [Chief Cabinet Secretary](#) from 2005 to 2006 and was [Leader of the Opposition](#) in 2012.

Abe was elected to the [House of Representatives](#) in the [1993 election](#). He was appointed Chief Cabinet Secretary by Prime Minister [Junichiro Koizumi](#) in September 2005, before going on to replace Koizumi as LDP president in September 2006. He was subsequently confirmed as prime minister by a special session of the [National Diet](#), becoming, aged 52, Japan's youngest post-war prime minister, and the first to have been born after [World War II](#). Abe resigned as prime minister after one year in office, citing medical complications from [ulcerative colitis](#), shortly after his party lost that year's [House of Councillors election](#). He was replaced by [Yasuo Fukuda](#), who became the first in a series of five prime ministers who each failed to retain office for more than sixteen months.

After recovering from his illness, Abe staged an unexpected political comeback, defeating former [Defense Minister Shigeru Ishiba](#) in a ballot to become LDP President for the second time in September 2012. Following the LDP's landslide victory in the [general election](#) that December, he became the first former prime minister to return to the office since [Shigeru Yoshida](#) in 1948. He led the LDP to two further landslides in the [2014](#) and [2017 elections](#), becoming Japan's longest-serving prime minister as a result. In August 2020, Abe announced his second resignation as Prime Minister, citing a significant resurgence of his [ulcerative colitis](#).^[3] He tendered his resignation on 16 September, upon the [Diet](#) electing Chief Cabinet Secretary [Yoshihide Suga](#) as his successor.^[4]

Abe is a [conservative](#) whom political commentators have widely described as a [right-wing nationalist](#).^{[5][6][7][8][9]} He is a member of [Nippon Kaigi](#) and holds [negationist](#) views on Japanese history,^[10] including denying the role of government coercion in the recruitment of [comfort women during World War II](#),^[11] a position which has created tension with neighboring [South Korea](#).^{[12][13]} He is considered a [hard-liner](#) with respect to [North Korea](#), and advocates revising [Article 9 of the pacifist constitution](#) to permit Japan to maintain military forces.^{[5][14][15]} Abe's prime ministership was known internationally for his government's economic policies, nicknamed [Abenomics](#), which pursued [monetary easing](#), [fiscal stimulus](#), and [structural reforms](#).^{[16][5]}