

THE BURMA CAMPAIGN SOCIETY

In cooperation with the **Japan Research Centre, SOAS** warmly invite you to a

Discussion Meeting (admission free)

THE JAPAN RED CROSS BEFORE AND DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR

Speaker: Nobuko Kosuge
Associate Professor of Politics and Public Administration
Yamanashi Gakuin University

Monday 21 July 2003, 4 – 6pm

at

**The School of Oriental and African Studies, London University,
Room B102, Brunei Gallery,
Thornhaugh Street, London WC1**

(The nearest underground stations are Russell Square, Goodge Street and Tottenham Court Road.)

Japan formally committed itself to the Red Cross Convention in 1884, accepting the obligations and the red emblem on a non-religious basis with enthusiasm under the leadership of the Imperial Family. It was greatly hoped by the Japanese this would raise Japan's international status from an "uncivilized" to a "civilised" nation. The Japan Red Cross Society (JRCS), formed some two years later, helped bring people of all social levels together as a national organization with a membership of several millions by 1930 to fulfil the international and universal tasks of trying to free any human being regardless of nationality from unnecessary suffering in war. By contrast, from the beginning of the 1930s, Japan's Imperial Army regarded captured Chinese soldiers more as bandits to be executed. The Senjinkun Battle Code issued to the Japanese Army in 1941 required it to fight to the death, discouraging the taking of prisoners during WW2.

The speaker has made an outstandingly perceptive and comprehensive study of this period and will discuss how members of JRCS continued during WW2 to act patriotically and with humanity in face of the almost total disregard of the Red Cross Convention by Japanese armed forces.

For further details please contact Phillida Purvis
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If possible please let us know if you will join us