

Office / Executive Coordinator for Refor...
Japan

NOTE FOR THE FILE

Meeting between Mr. Maurice F. STRONG and Ambassador H. OWADA of Japan
14 February 1997

1. Ambassador Owada recalled that Japan had been enthusiastic about reforming the Secretariat since the mid-80s. The United Nations need to be re-created to cope with the new challenges the world faces. Reform, however, should be geared towards increasing the Organization's effectiveness and the focus should not be on downsizing for its own sake. Japan was concerned about the growing perception that the UN reform efforts were taking place as a direct result of U.S. pressure for downsizing.

2. Reform would have to take place as an integrated package and with the interest of all countries in mind. In Japan's view, development should become the number one interest of the United Nations in the 21st century. This aspect must be brought out as an integral part of reform, thus satisfying the aspirations of the Third World.

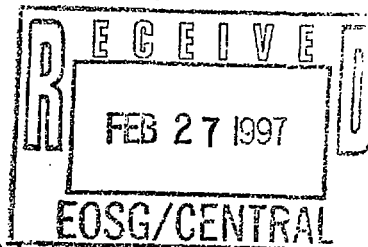
3. With regard to the scale of assessment, Japan favoured a drastic overhaul of the scale of and was prepared to increase its contribution. However, Japan would not be ready to simply assume responsibility for the points discarded by the U.S.

4. Mr. Strong welcomed Japan's reaffirmation of support for the development activities of the United Nations. In his view, the main purpose of reform should be to improve job performance, restore credibility and revitalize, not devitalize the Organization. Reform need to be looked at in all its parts and as an integral whole.

5. Ambassador Owada indicated that Japan was pleased with the organic approach to the reform of the Secretariat reflected in the Secretary-General's decision to establish a Policy Coordination Group and Executive Committees.

6. In conclusion, Ambassador Owada made available to Mr. Strong Japan's most recent position on reform issues (copy attached).


Miles Stoby
24 February 1997



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S. G.
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Japan's Position Paper
regarding reform of the United Nation's System

February, 1997

Japan believes it is essential that the functions of the United Nations be strengthened in order to enable it to fulfill its purposes as well as to cope with the challenges of the 21st century. Toward that end, Japan intends to continue to actively participate in the discussions on UN reforms at the various working groups set up under the General Assembly. The credibility of the Organization could be undermined unless its Member States seize the momentum generated by the fiftieth anniversary of the UN and make early progress toward reform. It is thus Japan's intention to make every effort to realize the reforms of the United Nations as a whole in a balanced manner in the fields of peace and security, finance and development.

There will be no progress in UN reform without constructive dialogue between developed and developing countries. And "Reform" should not be an euphemism for budget reduction. Thus, reinvesting part of the funds made available through reform in poverty alleviation in developing countries should be an important ingredient of reform.

1. What do we expect of the UN?

In examining UN reform, it is necessary to address the question of expectations towards the UN. In recent years, increasing number of issues need to be tackled on a global scale. The UN should be reformed to attain the necessary capacity to respond effectively and efficiently to these new