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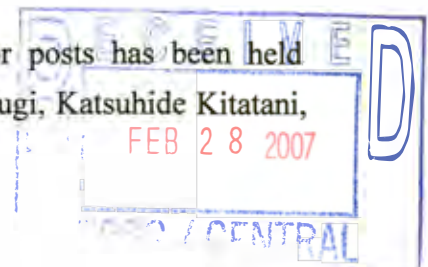
Excellency,

I have the honor to write to Your Excellency concerning the selection of a new Deputy Executive Director for Programmes of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

Since the late 1950s, when Nobusuke Kishi was prime minister of Japan, all the way through to the present day, when, as it happens, it is his grandson, Shinzo Abe, who holds the same post, my country has always given the strongest possible support to the UNFPA. Throughout the years, the core of the political backing for the Japanese position has been the Diet members who composed the Parliamentary Group on Population. Through them, and specifically through the Japanese Parliamentarians' Federation for Population (JPFP), whose chairman is former foreign minister Taro Nakayama, and the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD), chaired by former chief Cabinet minister Yasuo Fukuda, there has also been an ongoing effort to secure equally strong support for the Fund from the legislatures of the countries of Asia and other regions.

From 1988 through 1999, Japan's was the single largest core contribution to the UNFPA. From 2000 through 2004, Japan was the second biggest contributor, and while its ranking has fallen since then, it has consistently worked for and supported the Fund's activities. In 2006, its combined core and non-core contributions totaled roughly \$36 million. And despite what continues to be an extremely difficult domestic fiscal situation, it is doing everything possible to maintain the same level of support in fiscal year 2007.

Since 1988, one of the two Deputy Executive Director posts has been held without interruption by Japanese nationals, namely, Tatsuro Kunugi, Katsuhide Kitatani,



Kitatani, Hirofumi Ando, and Kunio Waki. All have contributed greatly to the development and strength of the UNFPA.

Thus when it came time to select a new Executive Director for Programmes, Japan, consistent with its continuing support for the Fund and after informal consultations with UNFPA officials at a number of levels, recommended a candidate it believed and continues to believe is by far the most appropriate choice for the post. In light of his experience and achievements, both in the field and in the senior management of UN agencies, and also in the breadth of his knowledge of subjects including HIV/AIDS, gender, and sustainable development, he is superbly qualified. My government was therefore quite surprised and disappointed when it was notified that Your Excellency had made the decision to select another candidate.

Having made some discussions with the UNFPA, my government has come to have certain doubts regarding the process that was followed to select the person who would fill this senior management position. That is to say, it now wonders whether the selection was made in an appropriate and objective manner. Inasmuch as it is Your Excellency who have final responsibility for this decision, I would like to request that you look into the matter, if necessary employing experts from outside the Organization, and then communicate your findings to my government.

Accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.



for

Kenzo Oshima
Permanent Representative of Japan
to the United Nations

Mr. Ban Ki-moon
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Questions regarding the Selection of the Deputy Executive Director for Programmes of the UNFPA

1. Who makes decisions about the methods used to select personnel for senior management positions (Assistant Secretary-General and above)?
What are the criteria on which such decisions are based?
Which senior management positions are filled using a selection panel?
2. Who determined the composition of the panel in the instance?
What criteria, such as the grade/rank of the officials appointed to the panel, their areas of expertise, and the resulting gender balance of the whole, were used in the selection of the panel members in this instance?
Was there any possibility that the selection of panel members was left to arbitrary decision by any individual?
What is the relationship between the panel and the Executive Director?
Was anyone on the panel replaced at any point? If so, what was the reason for that replacement?

(Although the names of the members of the panel were not released, four of the five members of the panel are said to have been women. If that is true, then clearly the panel lacked gender balance. It has also been said that none of the members of the panel except for the Executive Director were at the Under-Secretary-General level. If that is true, then we are concerned that the views of the Executive Director may have carried more weight than they should have. We are also concerned that the panel existed only to rubber-stamp the Executive Director's choice, and that indeed the entire selection process may have been a mere formality.)

3. What were the criteria the panel used in its interviews and evaluations of candidates?
Did each member of the panel independently conduct an evaluation that then constituted the basis for the final ranking? Or did the entire panel confer and arrive at agreement on a single candidate for the position?
(If the latter was the case, was there any member of the panel who may be said to have had an strong influence on the objective assessments of other panel

members?)

4. How are the results of selection panel's deliberations usually communicated to the Secretary-General? How does the Secretary-General proceed once he has received such communication?

In this instance, it is informed that in fact the Secretary-General was given only one name, in which case he would have been placed in a position in which it was extremely difficult to reject the choice of the panel. If this is true, then the approval of the Secretary-General, too, would have been only a formality. Is this a common practice? If so, this would call into question the very leadership of the Secretary-General.

5. The Executive Director of the UNFPA, Ms. Obaid, stressed to one Member State that her role in the deliberations of the panel, and in the process as a whole, would basically be that of an observer. The Executive Director also said that the decision as to the recommendation that would be submitted to the Secretary-General would depend, first and foremost, on the views of the panel membership. She also stressed that the final decision rested with the Secretary-General. And yet did Ms. Obaid play the kind of secondary role she said she would play? Even if she did, if the approval of the Secretary-General was only a formality, isn't it appropriate to personnel management by the Secretary-General which should be fully accountable to Member States?
6. It is the common understanding that in the selection of personnel for positions at the level of Assistant Secretary-General and above, there is no condition on age for any candidate.

Was age a factor, even perhaps an important factor, in this particular selection process? If so, what was the reason?

7. The UNFPA should formulate and implement policies based on the terms of its mandate, maintaining appropriate, gender balanced perspective.
What consideration did the panel give the fact that if it recommended a woman for the position of Deputy Executive Director, the top three officials of the Fund would then be women?