

Resolution

Call for a complete Investigation of illegal financial activities of UNIC-Tokyo, for the introduction of a system to enable citizens to participate in overseeing the proper use of monetary contributions to the United Nations, and for the introduction of a UN Freedom of Information Policy.

The illegal financial activities of the United Nations Information Centre, Tokyo (UNIC-Tokyo) that were uncovered earlier in 2008 can be said to be of the exact same structure as the illegal financial activities of 12 prefectural governments of Japan exposed by the investigation of the Board of Audit of Japan. These are illegal financial activities in which unused money at the end of the budgetary fiscal year were bank transferred and pooled with the vendors by placing fictitious orders to the vendors, a fraudulent practice known as “azuke”.

This is collusive relationship between bureaucrats and vendors, that is none other than the breeding ground of various forms of corruption. How can one say that procurement without wasteful spending of tax payers’ money is guaranteed in such a situation?

What is serious in the case of UNIC-Tokyo is that there was an attempt to cover up the problem by the organization which applied pressure on the UNIC Director, Ms. Charmine Koda, infringing on her human rights, when Ms. Koda tried to seek the investigation of the Centre’s unlawful financial activities. The internal audit that was conducted under the request of Director Koda also changed the real issue to be investigated, made only perfunctory inspections, and trivialized the illegal financial activities.

These illegal financial activities happen in the current system where each step of remittance and use of Japan’s financial contributions to the United Nations which come from citizen’s taxes amounting to several ten billion yen (several hundred million dollars) annually are hidden behind a veil of secrecy, and are not checked by the people. It is a surprising fact that the United Nations still does not have a freedom of information policy.

We have made a resolution calling for a complete investigation of UNIC-Tokyo’s illegal financial activities, introduction of a system which will enable citizens to participate in overseeing how Japan’s annual financial contributions to the United Nations are being used, and the introduction of a Freedom of Information policy at the United Nations.

18 November 2008

Resolution adopted by all the Participants of the Meeting of Citizens Gathered to Pursue the Allegation of Illegal Financial Activities of United Nations Information Centre, Tokyo.