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Appeal for the doping check of urinary cotinine & CO of expired breath to make Olympic Games tobacco-free

It is a great pleasure for us Japanese that the 2020 Olympic games will be held in Tokyo. On 21st July 2010, WHO and the IOC signed an agreement to improve healthy lifestyles including physical activity, sports for all, Tobacco-Free Olympic Games, and the prevention of childhood obesity. In this agreement, WHO Director-General, Dr. Margaret Chan declared “Tackling these diseases is a major challenge for sustainable development in the twenty first century”. According to WHO estimation, tobacco’s toll is 6 million deaths each year including 600 thousand deaths in nonsmokers from exposure to secondhand smoke. <http://www.who.int/tobacco/en/>

At the moment, nicotine in the tobacco is not included as a target material for anti-doping screening at Olympic Games. However, it is desirable to check the urinary cotinine(a metabolite of nicotine) and carbon monoxide level of expired breath of the athletes for anti-doping purpose, because tobacco use is classified as a psychoactive substance use F17 in the ICD-10 of WHO, and the addiction of nicotine is strong in comparison with other drugs such as heroin.

<http://www.icd10data.com/ICD10CM/Codes/F01-F99/F10-F19/F17-#F17.2>

<http://www.tfy.drugsense.org/tfy/addictvn.htm>

Anti-doping check of the tobacco use of all athletes is important from the view point of the role model these athletes play for young people. For example, a famous Japanese gold medalist of gymnastics, Mr. Kohei Uchimura is a heavy smoker and very popular especially among young people. He plays a major role for the advertisement of TV-CM of Japan Tobacco affiliated Table Mark company. Without anti-doping testing for tobacco at Olympic Games, he will continue smoking and has an over 60% chance of dying from a tobacco-caused disease.

With regard to tobacco control, Japan is lagging behind many developed countries although Japan ratified the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control of WHO.

<http://www.who.int/fctc/en/>

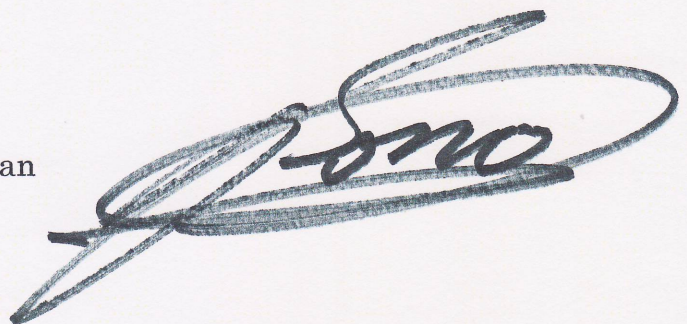
Regrettably there currently is no law eliminating smoking in public places to protect people from secondhand smoke in Japan. Therefore, athletes & tourists from all over the world will be exposed to this toxic environmental hazard in restaurants and other public venues in Japan during the Tokyo Olympic Games of 2020. Even the Tokyo metropolitan governor, Mr. Yoichi Masuzoe, the former minister of Health, Labor & Welfare, is reluctant to bring forth a local smokefree ordinance to protect people from secondhand smoke.

We need international pressure, especially authoritative organizations like IOC & WADA to help because the Tokyo Olympic Games 2020 provides a unique opportunity to help move Japan toward being smoke-free. Please promote healthy Tobacco-free Athletes with anti-doping check by WADA and help Japan by advocacy of smoke-free public places

We are very grateful, if you could kindly respond to this message soon.

Yours faithfully,

Jun SONO M.D.
Chairman, Tobacco-Free Advocacy Japan

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jun Sono', is written over a large, stylized blue scribble or signature line.