

December 31, 2012

Ms. Masako Mori

Minister for State for Youth Affairs

Cabinet Office

Your Excellency,

I sincerely hope that this letter reaches you in good health and prosperity, I would first like to congratulate you on your party's success in the most recent elections in Japan, and to express the wishes of my countrymen and myself to Japan's continued success and welfare; we feel very close to the Japanese people and we hold dear bonds of friendship and camaraderie with them.

This, your Excellency, was a direct result of the United Arab Emirate's continued participation in the Ship for World Youth program, that has been very generously sponsored by the Japanese government. Through this program, the participants of UAE developed strong and long lasting bonds with their counterparts from Japan in particular; and all the other countries in general. This has caused a very high increase in interest in Japanese culture and a desire to further our bonds of friendship with the people of Japan; which, in turn, resulted in higher numbers of Emiratis going to Japan for tourism, education and trade. I believe that this program has significantly and positively affected both our peoples.

As such, I personally felt significantly dismayed when I heard that the SWY program was to be abolished. I feel that this will cause a negative impact on both our societies in particular and the global society in general; the results of this program on a global scale are phenomenal and I believe that it has caused significant positive change in every participant's life, view of the world and their paths forward afterwards. I urge you to please reconsider this decision and act in support of such an important and beneficial program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Rashid Al Mulla', with the date '31/12/12' written next to it.

Rashid Al Mulla

President

SWY Alumni Association of the UAE

To Her Excellency Ms. Masako Mori, Minister for State for Youth Affairs, Cabinet Office.

Subject: Continuing the Ship for World Youth program.

Dear Ms. Mori, I would like to use this chance to wish Your Excellency and all people of Japan a happy and prosperous new year.

Your Excellency, please allow me to explain some important points about the program of the Ship for World Youth (SWY).

The Ship for World Youth program is one of the most unique projects that are being supported by the Government of Japan every year since 1989. Since that time SWY has played a big role in the field of human development, every individual participant who participated in the program considers him or herself as one of the luckiest persons in his or her society. Every participant admits the big difference of life before and after the program. It is so difficult to express or summarize the benefits and advantages of SWY for all participants.

Your Excellency, another important point is the big effect of SWY for promoting understanding towards Japan.

A lot of people around the world know about Japan and its big role in the field of technology and industry. But only few people have the chance to know deep information about Japan. People who had the chance to visit Japan were amazed at the culture and traditions, people who had the opportunity to experience a home stay in Japan were so impressed by the kindness and generosity of the Japanese people. The SWY program was and still a main source for all participants to get all the information they needed about Japan.

Every participant is very thankful to the Government of Japan, because only the Government of Japan who gave him or her this exceptional chance to be involved in such a fabulous event, and every participant would absolutely admit that he or she would never be able to express the right gratitude in words or actions, the SWY program is a big prove of the generosity and care of the people of Japan about other countries in the world.

We believe that the Government of Japan is fully aware of the value of the SWY program and its effect on international relations now and in future, so we wish from our hearts that the SWY program would be recognized as an important project that should be continued and supported to keep Japan's effective and important position in the world as a country that supports mutual understanding and peace for humanity.

Your Excellency, at the end please accept my sincere respect and appreciation for your efforts and support.

Yousef Abu Taleb
President
SWYAA-Yemen
29/12/2012



Mr Masako Mori
Minister for State for Youth Affairs
Cabinet Office, Japan

Dear Mr Masako Mori,

I write on behalf of the Ship for World Youth (SWY) Alumni Association of Australia in regards to the potential abolition of the SWY Program by the Cabinet Office of Japan.

As a community of Australian SWY participants, we are immensely proud to have been a part of this unique initiative. As individuals who have benefited from the extraordinary generosity of the Japanese Government, we first express our extreme gratitude to the Government of Japan for the opportunity to participate in the SWY program since its beginning in 1989. Since that time, Australia has participated on 14 SWY voyages, with more than 162 members of the Australian SWY alumni.

While SWY is unparalleled in its outcomes and scale, we recognise that it is necessary to consider the efficiency and cost effectiveness of all government programs. We understand that the SWY Program may appear as a costly to continue in light of recent tragedies of the Fukushima Nuclear Disaster and Great East Japan Earthquake. Despite the current state of the global economy, we believe the benefits of the SWY program to the future of international cooperation and development of youth leaders is vital for the globalised world we live in.

We strongly support the continuation of the SWY Program, for the following reasons:

1. The SWY program is of direct benefit to its participants, many who have been Australian citizens. The lessons learnt during the Japanese family homestay, training in Tokyo and onboard the Nippon/Fuji Maru have resulted in SWY participants have contributing in areas such as philanthropy, research, and gained valuable international networks for professional development and friendship. Numerous members of the Japanese and Australian SWY alumni have pursued careers and excelled as leaders in areas such as government, international business and trade and international non-government organisations, as well as to become leading members of their local community and organisations.
2. The SWY program has contributed to an increased understanding and awareness of Japanese culture, history and links between Australia and Japan. The Japanese homestays, cultural tours and interaction with Japanese youth both during and after the SWY Program has proved to be invaluable insight into the Japanese way of life and socio-political perspectives. Following SWY, many participants have travelled to Japan, lived in Japan, studied the Japanese language and have promoted and shared their understanding of Japan in their home countries and overseas.
3. The post-program activities and networks that have resulted from the SWY program have served to enrich, educate and benefit members of local, national and international communities. For example, projects have included supporting children's education around the world, sharing knowledge and skills, promoting cultural exchanges, raising money for microfinancing the developing world and building schools.

We accept that the SWY program may not be sustainable in its current form and we offer our assistance to the Japanese Government to form part of the solution. We currently have a number of suggestions and feedback that could help reduce the overall costs of SWY while also increasing the value to participants to assist in developing a re-energised SWY program that is sustainable, cost effective, efficient to operate, whilst still achieving the goals of the Cabinet Office of Japan and the SWY Program.

Once again, we would like to express our sincere thankfulness to the Japanese Government for this unique and priceless opportunity.

Kind regards,



Narges Razavi
President SWY Australia Alumni Association
Email: narges.razavi1@gmail.com