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March 1st, 2022

Ms. Yuriko Koike, Governor of Tokyo

## Opinion against the appointment of a Pfizer Japan Executive Officer as a member of the Tokyo Metropolitan Board of Education

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### Purpose of the Opinion

We oppose the appointment of a Pfizer Japan Executive Officer as a member of the Tokyo Metropolitan Board of Education.

### Reasons for the Opinion

1. On February 25th, 2022, the Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly agreed to appoint Ms. Kyoko Miyahara, Director and Operating Officer, General Manager of Inflammation and Immunology Unit at Pfizer Japan Inc. as a member of the Tokyo Metropolitan Board of Education<sup>1</sup>.

According to media reports, since Pfizer manufactures a COVID-19 vaccine, this appointment was made in the hope of using Ms. Miyahara's knowledge to help take safety measures against COVID-19 infections at schools<sup>2</sup>.

2. However, if an executive officer of a vaccine manufacturer becomes a member of the Board of Education, it cannot be denied that the member may express an opinion that overestimates the effectiveness of vaccination with regard to measures to prevent infectious diseases in children, students, and teachers.

In particular, Pfizer manufactures and sells a COVID-19 vaccine. Ms. Miyahara, an

executive officer of Pfizer, is in a position that could cause a conflict of interest in relation to measures against COVID-19 infection. It is extremely insensitive that such an appointment was made with a disregard to this conflict of interest, in the midst of controversy over the Covid-19 vaccination of children between 5 and 11 years old.

Furthermore, Ms. Miyahara has consistently been responsible for Pfizer's sales division: she joined the company in June 2010, and until her appointment as executive officer in 2017, she held positions such as General Manager of Primary Care Marketing Division, General Manager of Innovative Pharmaceutical Marketing Division, and General Manager of Internal Medicine Sales and Marketing Division<sup>3</sup>. It must be said that there are circumstances that raise even greater concern about a conflict of interest.

It is clearly inappropriate to appoint someone to a position that could raise suspicion of such a significant conflict of interest as a member of the Board of Education, which can have a strong influence on school education in Tokyo. It seriously undermines the neutrality and fairness of Tokyo's educational administration.

3. Based on the above, we oppose the appointment of Ms. Miyahara as a member of the Tokyo Metropolitan Board of Education.

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<sup>1</sup> On consent of the Assembly for the appointment of a member of the Tokyo Metropolitan Board of Education, dated February 25, 2022.  
[https://www.kyoiku.metro.tokyo.lg.jp/press/press\\_release/2022/release20220225\\_03.html](https://www.kyoiku.metro.tokyo.lg.jp/press/press_release/2022/release20220225_03.html)

<sup>2</sup> Yomiuri Shimbun article dated February 6, 2022.  
<https://www.yomiuri.co.jp/national/20220205-OYT1T50114/>

<sup>3</sup> Biographical data in Note 1 above.