Dear Koike-san,

Having studied the history and current status of Japan's trade in elephant ivory*, I was greatly encouraged by your establishment of an Advisory Committee to examine Tokyo's ivory trade and to provide recommendations for further measures to prevent illegal ivory trade and export.

As you are aware, the 2019 Geneva conference of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) called on countries (including Japan) that have not closed their domestic markets for commercial trade in raw and worked ivory, to report by October 2020 on measures they are taking to ensure that their domestic markets will not contribute to poaching or illegal international trade.

In light of the continuing threat to the survival of the remaining African elephant populations, and continuing evidence of illegal ivory trade apparently originating in Japan, I urge you to close all ivory trading in Tokyo prior to the 2021 Olympics, and to call on the Government of Japan generally to close Japan's domestic ivory market, subject to the exemptions allowed under CITES Resolution 10.10 (Rev.CoP17).

Yours respectfully,

Peter H. Sand

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