

Japan: Development of a Nike Park Threatens Local Community

Request for Solidarity and Support in the Case of Miyashita Park Eviction

We, volunteers from varying backgrounds, have come together to protect Miyashita Park from a plan that would turn it into a Nike park. Miyashita Park is a public park in the center of Tokyo (Shibuya Ward), serving both the community and many homeless persons that live there.

Currently, the city is moving ahead with plans to fully renovate Miyashita Park and make it Nike Park. Local residents and park frequenters have neither been notified nor consulted on these plans. Moreover, 34 homeless persons who are currently living in tents in the park will be forcibly evicted as a result. Once the park has been converted by the Nike Corporation, a fee will be charged for the use of the facilities in order to cover maintenance costs. The Nike Corporation is both funding the entire 450 million yen for the project and paying a naming right fee, approximately 150 million yen per year, to the city of Shibuya-ku over the next five years. This case represents the first time such a corporation has tried to appropriate a public park.

We oppose the plan to make our park Nike Park for the following reasons:

(1) According to the renovation plan, Miyashita Park will be converted to a park expressly for sports enthusiasts. This means that a highly public space which people have been able to freely and actively utilize up until now will be turned into a commercial space for the profit of one business. Persons who do not pay for using the park as a service, will be unable to even rest at the park. This will surely have a negative impact on society at large and generally the way in which people come together.

(2) For many years, Miyashita Park has been known as a space where many citizens' groups hold gatherings, or as a starting and ending point for local marches and events. Also, it has stood as a life-saving place where many persons forced to live on the streets can stay. This plan would unquestionably deprive groups and individuals of a space for their freedom of expression, and for their daily lives.

(3) This project has been forced onto the ward by Shibuya's mayor and a number of assemblypersons in a top-down manner. Neither the ward assembly nor the city planning council has been consulted, and almost no information can be found in materials that have been made available to the public.

Please speak out with us. Please add your name to our statement to show your support.

Persons wishing to add their names to our statement should send fax or email (given below) as soon as possible with: your individual name or the name of your organization, and whether you wish to remain anonymous or not. Please understand that names that are not anonymous may be publicly viewable when the petition is distributed or posted to the internet. Persons opting for anonymity will be represented in documentation only by their total number.

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Please speak out against Nike Corporation and Shibuya Ward.

(1) Nike Japan
Tel+81 3 5463-3300
Fax: +81 3 5463-3295

(2) Nike Corporation (World Headquarters, USA)
Tel: +1 (503) 671-6453
Web : <http://swoosh.custhelp.com/cgi-bin/swoosh.cfg/php/enduser/ask.php>

(3) Shibuya Ward:
Fax +81 3 5458-4900
E-mail: mayor@city.shibuya.tokyo.jp