

Africans: World Bank Prez Picked 'In Smoke-filled Rooms'

Written by Trice Edney Newswire
Thursday, 10 May 2012 09:54

Untitled document



Nigeria's candidate for the presidency of the World Bank, Ms. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, enjoyed the support of the African Union, Brazil, and South Africa but it was not enough to defeat the U.S. pick - Jim Yong Kim – for the powerful global finance position.

Kim's selection was announced this week, ending a tight race between the developing world candidate with years of World Bank experience and a candidate endorsed by Washington, Europe and Japan.

For over half a century, the selection of World Bank chief was made by the U.S. but some believe those privileges of power should expire. Ms. Okonjo-Iweala was even more blunt.

"You know this thing is not decided on merit... It is voting with political weight and shares, and therefore the U.S. will get it," she told a group of Nigerian journalists before the decision was announced this week.

South African Finance Minister Pravin Gordhan said he had "serious concerns" about decisions made in "smoke-filled rooms" - a reference to the political carve-ups of the past. Poorer countries should have a greater say in shaping policy, he said.

"If the World Bank doesn't reform it runs the risk of becoming irrelevant," Kusemi Dlamini from the Institute of International Affairs in South Africa told the BBC.

Africans: World Bank Prez Picked 'In Smoke-filled Rooms'

Written by Trice Edney Newswire
Thursday, 10 May 2012 09:54

Elizabeth Stuart, head of the development agency Oxfam shared Ms. Okonjo-Iweala's views. "Dr. Kim is an excellent choice for World Bank president and a true development hero," she said to a reporter. "But we'll never know if he was the best candidate for the job, because there was no true and fair competition. This sham process has damaged the institution and sullied Dr. Kim's appointment.

"A third candidate, former U.N. under-secretary general Jose Antonio Ocampo, a Colombian, withdrew from the race in favor of Ms. Okonjo-Iweala.

Jim Yong Kim, past president of Dartmouth College, is a global health expert and co-founder of Partners in Health, a group highly praised for its work in Haiti and other developing nations. He worked for three decades as a physician and medical anthropologist and with the World Health Organization combating the spread of HIV/AIDS

Source: Trice Edney News Wire from GIN{jcomments on}