

Bio: Mariko Bando



Mariko Bando, 67, is president and chancellor of Showa Women's University. She is prolific author of more than 40 books, including "Toward a Gender-Equal Society," the "Dignity of a Woman," which has sold more than 3 million copies and was Japan's #1 best seller in 2007. She is a pioneering role-model, and highly sought-after speaker and leading advocate for women's rights. She was director of the Japan National Committee of UNIFEM (United National Development Fund for Women). After graduating from the University of Tokyo in 1969, she embarked on a path-breaking career that began as the first woman to be employed at the Japanese prime minister's office as a career bureaucrat. She chose to continue working even after marriage and children and served the Japanese

government in various capacities for 34 years. In 1995, she was appointed vice governor of Saitama prefecture and in 1998 served as Japanese consul general in Brisbane, Australia, the first woman to hold such a post. From 2001-03, she served as a cabinet member and was director-general of the Bureau for Gender Equality under Junichiro Koizumi.

She was a visiting research fellow at Harvard University's Bunting Institute and the Kennedy School of Government, where she conducted a comparative study of women executives in the US and Japan. She joined Showa Women's University in 2004, became vice president in 2005, and president in 2007. She is married and proud mother of two children.
