



Speech: Yasunori Tokumasu President JBCE

Vice president of European commission, Mr. Verheugen,
Ambassador Mr. Kawamura,
Mr. Chairman,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honor for me to give an opening speech for this first JBCE symposium. The “JBCE” is the abbreviation of Japan Business Council in Europe. It was established in 1999 as the representative organization for Japanese companies operating in the European Union. Since then the JBCE actively contributes to public policy issues of the EU in a positive way, using the expertise developed especially in the fields of environmental protection and scientific/technical innovation.

In 2004 Directorate-General “Enlargement” under the commissioner at that time, Mr. Verheugen, opened the EU to Middle and East Europe - this was the biggest and most complex enlargement for EU. And as a consequence, now the EU consists of 27 member countries. The integration of the EU made the European market much more attractive for Japanese industries. In any modern business, however, you should not think only of your own profit. To be successful in your business in the long run you have to think of appropriate profits for all parties, and modern economy provides theories and strategies how to do that, for example the game theory. Japanese industries who operate in the EU not only profit from the simplified EU market, but also should contribute to this market. Therefore, we, the Japanese industries and the EU businesses need more mutual understanding and cooperation.

Now one of the most important policies in the EU is the environment-related policy – for example, the waste management like WEEE, restriction of the use of hazardous substances, the Chemical law, actions against global warming and so on. And the European environmental policy ultimately is becoming the dominating policy on a global scale. Therefore, it is important to ask the questions: what are our contributions in this field? In order to find answers we have chosen the theme of this symposium to be

“Making the EU Economy More Environmental Friendly
- What are the contributions of Japanese business in the EU society”.

I am happy that today the vice-president of the European commission and, at the same time, Commissioner of the Directorate-General "Enterprise and Industry", Mr. Verheugen as well as the Japanese Ambassador to the European Union, Mr Kawamura, are present here to start our discussion. I think that their presence is of high symbolic value for a mutual understanding and collaboration between businesses from Japan and from the EU. I am sure that we will have fruitful discussions this evening.

And I really hope that there will be a second, a third and even more symposia in the future. For both parties it will be helpful and profitable if we have regular meetings to exchange our opinions. This symposium is the beginning of our new relationship. Everybody here, I hope, will enjoy it.

Thank you very much.