

## 4<sup>th</sup> EU-Japan CSR Business Dialogue



The on-going EU-Japan CSR Business Dialogue established in 2016 could provide a unique platform to incubate such collaborations that will not only drive global competitiveness from Japanese and European companies but also become a significant contributor to the SDGs. This year, on November 18, the 4<sup>th</sup> EU-Japan CSR Business Dialogue was co-organised by the Japan Business Council in Europe (JBCE) and Business Policy Forum (BPF), Japan at the occasion of Japan-EU Industrial Policy Dialogue 6<sup>th</sup> Working Group on Corporate Social Responsibility.

The business dialogue had two sessions, the first session was led by JBCE on review of the past business dialogue and the second session was on 'challenges in the future' led by BPF. The European Commission's Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (DG GROW), and the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan (METI) stayed during the business dialogue and gave their feedback on the dialogue.

### **SUMMARY**

#### **Review of 3<sup>rd</sup> EU-Japan CSR Business Dialogue, held in November 2018 in Brussel (session led by JBCE)**

- Ms. Yukako Kinoshita, Chair of CSR committee, JBCE, reported the history of EU-Japan CSR Business Dialogue and introduced the result of 3<sup>rd</sup> EU-Japan CSR business dialogue held in November 2018 in Brussels.
- Ms. Kinoshita also introduced the expectation of partners (Amfori, CSR Europe, Business Europe) in Europe on the CSR business dialogue, which are positive to continue the CSR business dialogue, but it should be more action oriented and need more support from both governments.
- Mr. Toyokazu Nagamune, Secretary General, JBCE, pointed out the gap in the needs/priorities on CSR between EU and Japan. Concrete issues were not discussed at the dialogue, but we shared the recognitions that the approaching style is different; EU is action oriented, whereas Japan is best practice learning oriented.
- Suggestion was made to create mid-term plan rather than taking an annual approach between European and Japanese business, and to coordinate among various similar events held between EU and Japan.
- In order to enhance the concrete cooperation, it is necessary to communicate more frequently and to receive continuous support from both governments in the area. JBCE showed the willingness to be a bridge between EU and Japan business sectors, as well as between the government and the business sector.



### JBCE observation on the past 3 years

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- Someone should take a responsibility for leading and following up after the annual meeting
- Much more frequent communications between both B&B and B&G are needed
- It was also found that there is a difference in needs/priorities on CSR among business in Japan and the EU



<Next step>

- **JBCE would like to take an initiative in making a bridge of the communication between Japan and EU business sectors** in order to narrow their difference or gap through knowing each other and understanding each priorities.

#### **Challenges in the future (session led by Business Policy Forum (BPF))**

- Business and Human rights are focused in the session. Mr. Hidemi Tomita from Lloyd's Register Japan introduced the survey result on Business and Human rights among Japanese companies and Mr. Youzou Nakao, AJINOMOTO CO., INC, explained their activity related with business and human rights in supply chains. Lastly, Mr. Sakon Kuramoto, Orrick Tokyo Law Offices, introduced Engagement and Remedy Guidelines.
- Points of Interests were shared from Japanese business representatives to discuss further including;
  - Collaboration with NGOs on the ground
  - How to implement effective grievance mechanism and how to collaborate locally
  - How to speak about business and human rights with investors
  - Discuss and collaborate on the future EU policy between business
  - Reducing burden of different auditing and questionnaires on the ground

#### **Conclusion**

- There was a common recognition on the importance of continuous discussion and necessity for concrete follow-up on what discussed at the business dialogue.
- Fostering the discussions among investors, business, government is necessary.

#### **Feedback from the government side**

- DG Grow stated that CSR should be widened to 'sustainability' and sustainable finance would be included in the next year's key topics with inviting related government entities.
- JBCE's proposal to take an initiative to make a bridge of communication is welcomed by both EU and Japan governments.

#### **About JBCE**

Created in 1999, the Japan Business Council in Europe (JBCE) is a leading European organisation representing the interests of 88 multinational companies of Japanese parentage active in Europe.

Our members operate across a wide range of sectors including information and communication technology, electronics, chemicals, automotive, machinery, wholesale trade, precision instruments, pharmaceutical, railway, textiles and glass products.

Building a new era of cooperation between the European Union (EU) and Japan is at the core of our activities, organised under several committees focusing on: Corporate Policy, Corporate Social Responsibility, Digital Innovation, Environment & Energy, Standards and Conformity, and Trade.