

EBC E-NEWS BULLETINS

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This e-News Bulletin is available on the EBC website and printouts are displayed in the EBC office.

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2002 Finds EBC Working at Frenetic Pace

2002 has found the EBC working at a more frenetic pace than before with the level of activities and responsibilities having edged up several notches this year already. The EBC seems to have "come of age" as far as the Japanese government is concerned. Ministry of Foreign Affairs officials visited the EBC in March and frankly said to EBC Chairman, Richard Collasse, "We need you." As Richard likes to say, "No-one has ever said that to me before, not even my wife!", indicating that the EBC is playing a more significant role than ever before.

As a result of this exchange, the Chairman and the Executive Director have become part of a bi-monthly informal luncheon group consisting of MOFA, METI, JETRO, Development Bank of Japan and Keidanren representatives to discuss measures to improve the business and, in particular, the investment environment in the Japan. The discussion ranges from macro to micro measures and the close rapport developing between the EBC and these GOJ officials suggests that we might have a greater chance of influencing GOJ thinking than ever before. The EBC Secretariat and the EBC Chairman also have their hands full preparing for the EU-Japan Business Dialogue Roundtable (see article below). Already this year, there have been successful public Tax Committee and e-Commerce Committee seminars and we are holding a Construction Committee seminar and a JETRO Briefing this week (see respective articles below). Thanks to the kind cooperation of the EC Delegation, we are holding an exceptional high-profile breakfast event in July with EU Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy as the guest speaker (see article below). EBC members and the press will have the chance to make comments and to ask questions. The EBC Secretariat is receiving close to 100 non-spam e-mails a day from diverse sources indicating that more and more people are hearing about the EBC and making contact. The new EBC committee membership categories are now in force and without any related publicity we have acquired some non-European companies and European companies in the new Associate Member categories. Obviously, without any change in the EBC's infrastructure, this ever-growing attention and activity level has forced the secretariat to prioritise its efforts with the result that, regretfully, the EBC Internal e-News Bulletin can only be produced on an "if-time-permits" basis, with essential operating functions taking a higher place.

2002 White Paper Outreach

By now, you will have received an e-mail outreach from the EBC Secretariat requesting sponsorship of the Year 2002 EBC White Paper. Last year, the white paper ("**Supporting the Reform Process - The EBC Report on the Japanese Business Environment**") was funded entirely from member sponsorships and advance orders for copies. The same applies to this year's edition. However, three levels of sponsorship are being offered this year:

"Blue-Star Sponsors" whose company name will listed on a 2-name page in response to sponsorship of an amount of 150,000 yen.

"Special sponsors" whose company name will listed on a 10-name page in response to sponsorship of 100,000 yen.

"Sponsors" whose company name will listed on a 20-name page in response to sponsorship of 50,000 yen.

Companies will also be able to support the white paper by placing **advance orders - the English and Japanese editions will be sold this year as a set for 5,000 yen.**

Although we are managing to produce the English and Japanese versions of the white paper at extremely low cost, we need strong financial support as they cannot be produced unless these costs are recovered in full (before production) through this outreach. As soon as an adequate level of funding is confirmed, work on the white paper will begin with Casey Sedgman coordinating the project. We are assuming there will be sufficient good will within the organization to allow us to proceed and suggest that committees meet within the near future to consider their priority issues. This will enable Casey to work with the committees in a time-sensitive manner as our production deadlines will be tight, taking into account the summer hiatus.

Your prompt and generous response to the white paper outreach will be greatly appreciated.

Breakfast with EU's Top Trade Negotiator - Commissioner Lamy

This is a reminder that a rare opportunity is available to all EBC Committee members and National Chamber members. You are

invited to join an EBC breakfast meeting on July 9 at the Hotel Okura to hear the views of Mr. PASCAL LAMY, the EU's Commissioner for Trade, who will be visiting Japan for the EU-Japan Summit and the EU-Japan Business Dialogue Roundtable on July 8-9. Come and hear first-hand, what the EU's top trade negotiator has to say about EU-Japan relations and the multilateral trade agenda. There will be opportunities for members of the audience to make comments and ask questions.

Trade relations between the EU and Japan are developing rapidly. A mutual recognition agreement was signed last year and is now being implemented. A 10-year EU-Japan action plan was signed last December and work has already started on translating the rhetoric into reality. Interest in facilitating even closer, more practical ties between the EU and Japan is rapidly mounting in Japanese government and industry circles. You cannot afford to miss this chance to hear the EU Trade Commissioner's perspectives on these developments.

We strongly urge you to attend and help raise the EBC's profile through this event as we expect good press attendance.

Details are as follows:

Date: July 9, 2002.

Time: 8:30 a.m. to 9:45 a.m.

Venue: Continental Room, Hotel Okura

Entry Fee: 6,000 Yen (to be collected at the door)

If you would like to attend this meeting, please send an e-mail message to ebc@gol.com or return the previously distributed reply form by 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, July 3

EBC Participating in EUJBDRT in Japan

The EU-Japan Business Dialogue Roundtable (EUJBDRT) will be held on July 8 and 9 in Tokyo, coinciding with the EU-Japan Summit to be held at the same time. The EUJBDRT is a series of high-level annual meetings between business leaders from Europe and Japan. It was formed in October 1999 from the amalgamation of two separate Europe-Japan business dialogues that had existed up until that time - the EU Japan Industrialists Round Table and the EU Japan Business Forum. There are currently 24 European and 21 Japanese members of the EUJBDRT who make up 5 working groups. The EBC Chairman is now a standing member of the Roundtable and together with a Japanese counterpart, co-chairs Working Group 1, which focuses on the topic of "creating an open environment for trade and investment". Former EBC Chair, Ms. Isabelle Hupperts, initiated EBC's involvement in 1999, and Mr. Richard Collasse is developing the EBC's role in the Roundtable further. This month he has been working in Brussels with the EU co-chair of the Roundtable in producing the overall recommendations to be submitted to the GOJ. Casey Sedgman has produced the WG1 paper for the EU side of the bilateral talks and collaborated with the Japanese co-chair of Working Group 1, Mr. Numata of NEC, in combining the EU and Japanese WG1 papers into a joint submission. Issues cited in each working group's party must have common grounds for both sides - similar problems faced by Japanese companies in the EU as those being faced by EU companies in Japan. The EUJBDRT submission is taken seriously by the respective Japanese and EU governments, both of which issue long and detailed responses in due course.

Construction Committee Meeting, Wednesday, June 19, 2002

Two Japanese Government officials of the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and transport, Mr. Hiroaki Maruya, Director, Construction Market Access Office, Policy Bureau, and Mr. Hirohiko Machida, Director, International Office for Infrastructure and Economic Affairs, Policy Bureau, will hold a presentation on the construction sector. They will explain what the government is doing to improve market access to the construction industry, and describe the system of alternative financing of public works projects in Japan (PFI - private finance initiatives). The meeting is being organized by the EBC Construction Committee. If you would like to attend this meeting, please e-mail ebc@gol.com

JETRO Briefing, Thursday, June 20, 2002

JETRO Representatives will explain what their organization is doing to encourage more interest and foreign investment in Japan. JETRO's focus is undergoing a rapid shift from its conventional arena of facilitating product exports and imports and the scope and activity of its Investment Promotion Department are enlarging to cope with the change. Guest speakers are: Ms. Mio Kawada and Mr. Kazuya Nakajo of the Planning and Coordination Division of the Investment Promotion Department of JETRO. If you would like to attend this meeting, please send an e-mail to ebc@gol.com

Economist Conferences Holding Automotive Roundtable in July

- EBC to Receive One Free Seat -

Economist Conferences are holding their "Second International Japan Automotive Roundtable" on July 16 at the Four Seasons Hotel in Tokyo. Confirmed speakers include Mr. Lewis Booth, President of Mazda Corp., Thierry Moulouquet, CFO of Nissan Motor Company, Mr. Toyohiko Shimada, Vice-Chairman of the Japan Auto parts Industries Association and others. For more details, a separate e-mail with an attachment will be circulated subsequently, but for further information and registration, please visit <http://www.economistconferences.com/asia.html>

Under an agreement with Economist Conferences, one company nominated by the EBC can send a representative to this automotive roundtable free of charge.

Any company interested in attending as the EBC-nominated participant, please notify Alison Murray at ebcam@gol.com as soon as possible. A name will be "drawn out of a hat" by the EBC Chairman at the next Executive Operating Board meeting (July 4) from those submitted.

China and Asean: The perspective of European Business

On the 24th of April, Mr. Anthony Millington, Director General of the European Automobile Manufacturers Association and a member of the EBC's Automobile Committee, made a presentation on **China and ASEAN: The perspective of European Business** at a meeting of the Tokyo Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Millington is one of two EBC representatives in the International Affairs Committee of the Tokyo Chamber of Commerce.

"Thanks to its unprecedented development, China has become the EU's 4th largest trading partner, and European Businesses regards China as an opportunity, rather than a threat. If China is a story of rising expectations for European business, ASEAN is a tale of unfulfilled promise. However, growth in trade is still being held back by the aftermath of the Asian crisis of 1997/1998, and ASEAN markets are hard to penetrate." Mr. Millington spoke about the differences for the automobile industry in China and ASEAN countries. If you would like to know more about his conclusions, a copy of his speech is available from the EBC Secretariat.

EBC Chairman Wines and Dines with Prime Minister Koizumi and President Prodi

EBC Chairman, Mr. Richard Collasse, attended an official dinner for Mr. Romano Prodi, which was hosted by the Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi on the 26th of April. Mr. Collasse and the EBC were honoured by his place at the dinner table - directly next to Mr. Koizumi and at his right, a place normally reserved for dignitaries (not that we don't think Chairman RC is a dignitary!!).

Earlier on the same day at a lunch for President Prodi at the EC Delegation, to which the EBC Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Secretariat were invited, the EBC Chairman was given the honor of partnering President Prodi in the traditional sake cask opening ceremony. Both wore a Japanese "happy-coat" and obviously enjoyed this festive highlight of the lunch.

Photographs of the dinner with the Prime-Minister can be viewed at: <http://www.ebc-jp.com/> by clicking on the section "EVENT" at the bottom of the page, and then clicking on the link: "Prime Minister Koizumi's Dinner for President Prodi"

News Section of our Protected Website

As you already know, the EBC has launched a protected section of the EBC Website. This section contains general and sector-based News Articles of potential interest to EBC members. New articles are constantly being added to the files on a weekly basis and old articles archived (many translated from the Japanese media). To enter the protected site, go to our website, <http://www.ebc-jp.com/>, then click on the "NEWS AND VIEWS" section at the bottom of the page. When you attempt to enter either the news articles or statements section, an ID/password prompt box will appear. If you have lost the ID and password, please contact Alison Murray at ebcam@gol.com.

Seminar on JIL Project for Foreign Affiliated Companies in Japan

Ms. Hiroko Suzuki of the EBC Secretariat attended a seminar, which was organized by the Japan Institute of Labor (JIL) to provide labor information in Japan for foreign affiliated companies. Seven participants attended the session mostly from European, American and Asian Chambers of Commerce or similar associations. The seminar was designed to supply information on Japan's labor regulations, labor markets, labor conditions in Japan as well as brief the participants about the activities of JIL. A copy of the report on this seminar and relevant material can be obtained from the EBC Secretariat.

New Version of UNICE@News available

UNICE is the Union of Industrial and Employers Confederations of Europe and publishes a monthly Newsletter on a wide range of topics, such as: The European Business Summit, Economic and Financial Affairs, Legal Affairs, Social Affairs, External Relations and Industrial Affairs. The latest version of UNICE@News is available on the web, and can be viewed by visiting the following web page: <http://www.unice.org/unice/website.nsf/HTML+pages/JUNE2002-EN.htm>

June Edition of LOOK JAPAN Available Online

The June edition of the magazine, "Look Japan", is now available online at: <http://lookjapan.com/ThisMonthIssue1.html>
Articles include a market access report on auto parts, some Japanese companies prospering in the recession, new admission system for foreign students into Japanese universities and others.

A Touch of Humor

Not to be outdone by the Executive Director of the Finnish Chamber of Commerce in Japan, I have included a touch of humour at the end of this bulletin, just in case you have read this far!!! You may have heard this one before, but someone sent it to me recently and I thought it was an apt comment on our current obsession with seamless communication:

----- Could this happen to you? -----

I left Montreal on route 20 heading toward Quebec City, when I decided to stop at a comfort station. The first toilet stall was occupied, so I went into the second one.

I was no sooner seated than I heard a voice from the next stall: "Hi, how are you doing?"

Well, I am not the type to chat with strangers in highway comfort stations, and I really don't know quite what possessed me, but anyway, I answered, a little embarrassed: "Not bad."

And the stranger said: "And, what are you up to?" Talk about your dumb questions! I was really beginning to think this was too weird! So I said: "Well, just like you I am driving east?"

Then, I heard the stranger, all upset, say:

"Look, I'll call you right back. There's some idiot in the next stall answering every question I ask you."