



Newsletter June 2008

European Business Council
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EBC Secretariat News

On April 11, the EBC hosted the bimonthly Investment group lunch. The meeting was attended by representatives from METI, MOFA, Somusho, DBJ, Keidanren, EC Delegation to discuss current trends in markets that impact European industry and the economy in Japan.

The visit of EU Trade Commissioner Mandelson to Japan was a key opportunity for trade issues to be addressed in a high-level dialogue with Japanese authorities. In support of this visit, the EBC met with the Commissioner to provide an overview of current barriers and challenges to boosting European investment and business in Japan.

On April 8, the EBC secretariat hosted an informational seminar for a delegation of executives from Areva. The visit included meetings with government officials and briefing sessions on M&As, competition policy, and market access.

Europe Day Special in Japan times

The Japan Times special issue on Europe to celebrate the anniversary of the signing of the Schuman Declaration featured a series of articles by the EBC. Chairman Collasse called for closer integration between Japan and the EU to bring about the reforms necessary to boost investment. The food committee discussed the regulatory challenges faced by food importers, and the EBC secretariat's article highlighted the history of successes and achievements of the ETP program.

**The EBC Help Desk for the Executive Training Programme in Japan, is accepting applications for the 2009 program. For more information and assistance with your application please contact Alison Murray at ebcam@gol.com
Deadline for applications: September 30 2008**

EBC Committee News

New: Organic Committee

The demand for organic products in Japan, including food, cosmetics, and home care products has been steadily rising. As European companies are leading providers of organic goods on the Japanese market, the EBC established the committee to assist companies in maneuvering the host of regulations and challenges in meeting organic JAS requirements.

Insurance Committee

In response to the call for public comments on the proposals for reviewing the solvency margin ratio, the committee submitted comments calling for a scheme aligned with solvency II.

Food Committee

The committee submitted public comments on MHLW's proposed changes to label regulations and guidelines for sanitation inspections. The EBC policy position paper on food labels is available to the public on the EBC website.

2008 Business Dialogue Roundtable (BDRT)

The 2008 BDRT will be held in Tokyo on July 3-4. The annual Business Dialogue Roundtable is the annual high-level bilateral industry talks and brings together the Japanese and European business communities to discuss new policy initiatives to boost trade and investment.

The joint policy recommendations will be submitted respectively to President Barroso of the European Commission and Prime Minister Fukuda after the meeting. EBC Chairman, Richard Collasse, is the European Co-Chair of Working Party I which will focus on "Creating an Open Environment for Trade and Investment."

New: Chemical Committee

EBC is considering the formation of a Chemical committee. Tariffs and import duties on chemical materials, the lack of mutual recognized standards, and differences in the list of accepted ingredients are all significant cost factors hampering trade for the chemical industry. If interested in joining the committee, please contact Policy Director Jakob Edberg. (edberg@ebc-jp.com).

Banking Committee

The Financial Services Agency (FSA) presented to the committee its new plan for the revitalization of Tokyo as a financial center. The plan focuses on firewalls and addresses the need for management to be able to share responsibility between banking, brokerage and insurance operations and requirements to counter conflict of interest. This is a positive development that could translate into real improvement in one of the EBC's long-standing demands.

Freight and Logistics Committee

The committee made a presentation to the Postal Privatization Committee in the Cabinet Office on an application by Japan Post to engage in international freight business.

Event Calendar

June 4

DCCJ: European perspective on M&A in Japan

June 4:

NCCJ: Midsummer Shrimp Party

June 6

SCCIJ: Event in Kyoto

June 10

BCCJ: The Auto Industry and the Environmental Challenge

June 13

GICCJ: Workshop on the Silver Market Phenomenon Business Opportunities in an Ageing Society

June 14

BCCJ: 3rd Annual Weekender Golf Competition

June 25

BCCJ: Japan Labor & Employment Law Seminar Summer Serenade

For details on these events refer to the Event Calendar on the EBC website :
<http://www.ebc-jp.com/>