



Newsletter January 2009

European Business Council
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EBC Secretariat News

Welcome back for a new year—2009

The EBC hopes that you all had time to rest and recharge the batteries over the holiday season to face the challenges that await ahead. We are also hoping that this year will be a little brighter than 2008 with the hope that the dark headlines of the financial crisis are largely behind us.

Public Policy Committee

The EBC will investigate the interest shown by some of its members in setting up a public policy committee. The plan at the moment is for this committee to work with general public policy issues not covered by our existing sector committees to give the EBC a voice in areas such as corporate social responsibility, energy security, sustainability, and similar cross-cutting issues. Interested parties are invited to contact the secretariat.

Executive Training Programme

We are pleased to announce that all four of the EBC's recruited candidates were selected to join the 2009-2010 ETP Programme. This shows the importance of recruiting, not only from Europe, but also directly from Japan. The EBC wishes the four selected candidates the best of luck. There will no recruiting this year for ETP since the European Commission will evaluate the programme during 2009, hence no programme will start in 2010.

MOU with Eurochambres

In late 2008, the EBC signed a memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Eurochambres (the European Association of Chambers of Commerce & Industry) to provide a formal basis for ongoing cooperation. Joint press releases, endorsement by Eurochambres of the EBC white paper and EIA proposal, and EBC participation in Eurochambres' "European Chambers Abroad" strategy, are just some examples of benefits to the EBC.

Event Calendar

Please see the relevant chamber websites for information and registration

January 15:

BCCJ: BCCJ 51 Night

January 16:

DCCJ: Luncheon with Danske Bank

January 22:

FCCJ: Luncheon meeting

January 23:

GCCJ: A visit to METRO Cash & Carry Japan

January 23:

SCCIJ: Luncheon with Mr Hiromichi Shirakawa, Credit Suisse Securities Japan

January 28:

BCCJ: "Know your territory—and survive!" luncheon and workshop

January 29:

ICCJ: Annual General Meeting

January 29:

SCCJ: Annual Bowling Competition at the Port Bowl

January 29:

BCCJ: Capturing Growth in Adverse Markets—seminar

February 5:

GCCJ: Emotional Intelligence - Managing in a Tough Emotional Climate

February 10:

BCCJ: HR Strategies in Trying Times

February 11:

GCCJ: Working in Germany and Japan—what happens to my German pension (in German)

February 13:

BCCJ: Are you prepared for HR challenges in a downturn

February 19:

SCCJ: Successful marketing in Japan

February 24:

BCCJ: Microsoft—more than just a package software company

EBC to offer regulatory expertise for European companies

As many foreign companies trading or doing business in Japan often encounter company-specific difficulties in dealing with standards and regulations that are not addressed among relevant committee priority issues, the EBC is offering its expertise and services on a fee-charging basis to both members and non-members. So as not to intrude on the competence of the committees and the chambers, the EBC only works on tasks that are directly related to regulatory and related issues that are specific to a particular company's product or products. Regulatory and other problems that are faced by many companies are included among the various committee priority issues.

EBC has long experience in the area of Japan's technical regulations and an extensive network with politicians and officials at the Japanese ministries and can assist with crisis management in areas such as approval procedures, standards, specific lobbying, and setting up of meetings with governmental officials.

New ECB chairman

As most of you already know, the EBC elected a new chairman for 2009 — 2011, Mr Tommy Kullberg. Tommy has a long and successful career in Japan spanning more than 20 years, managing a vast variety of businesses. Most notably, Tommy was the founder and served as President & CEO of IKEA Japan KK (2002 – 2006) and was responsible for the overall IKEA market entry, build-up and operation in Japan. Although new to the post as Chairman of the EBC, Mr. Kullberg has had deep involvement in the Chamber world, both as President of the Swedish Chamber of Commerce in Japan, as well as having served as Vice Chairman of the European Business Council.

"I am honoured to have been elected and chosen to represent European industry in Japan at this crucial point in time. With the global economy in turmoil and Japan eagerly seeking a new model for growth, this is an ideal time to strengthen and redefine EU-Japan relations. The outgoing chairman, Richard Collasse has made an outstanding contribution to raising the profile of the EBC. Moreover, his efforts have ensured that the EU and Japanese authorities better understand business concerns, and are more aware of the need for crucial reforms and for a new paradigm for EU-Japan relations. I am looking forward to working with all EBC members and stakeholders to see these changes through."

Committees

EBC members are reminded that the EBC constitution requires the committees to meet a minimum of 4 times per year. The Secretariat diary is starting to fill up with bookings from committees for the meeting room and we are looking forward to seeing you all here soon. The Secretariat stands ready as always to work with the committees in preparing position papers, press releases, and other materials as well as visiting the relevant authorities.