



<<NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE>>

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A very happy 2019 to all of you.

Last year, a spate of natural disasters such as earthquakes, heavy rains, and typhoons devastated various parts of Japan.



However, the nation's economy maintained its moderate growth thanks to solid production, exports, and capital investments. Still, the global economy saw an emergence of destabilizing elements, such as trade frictions between the U.S. and China, and stalled negotiations over the U.K.'s exit from the EU.

Against this backdrop, the most welcoming development for the Osaka-Kansai region was the selection of Osaka as the site for the 2025 World Expo. We are extremely delighted that the Osaka-

Kansai area can dream big and pursue a goal of launching into a new era in this concluding year of Heisei.

The 2025 World Expo will be a wonderful opportunity for the younger generation, who will play a leading role in future society, to take the center stage in disseminating to the rest of the world solutions to various global social challenges and raise people's hopes and expectations. In order to maximize this great opportunity, it is necessary that the Osaka-Kansai area continues to attract people and investments over the



next six-plus years running up to the Expo. We must accelerate innovation creation and business exchanges to demonstrate to people both inside and outside Japan that the Osaka-Kansai area has grown to the point where it can serve as an “experimental ground for future society,” the theme of the Expo. The central government, Osaka Prefecture, Osaka City, and economic organizations will work in unison to prepare for the Expo, with the 2025 Japan World Expo Committee taking the lead.

The central government will soon begin discussions on the details of the Expo. The Osaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI), for its part, will actively make proposals regarding various experimental projects. For example, we will propose the establishment of a hospital that would showcase Japan’s cutting-edge medical technology; the launch of Mobility-as-a-Service (MaaS), a one-stop information platform to provide a variety of transport services; and the creation of a digital economic zone to collect and utilize personal data from the distribution sector. We will seek ideas from start-ups and small- and medium-sized enterprises both in Japan and overseas and establish a mechanism to implement these ideas and technologies for the Expo.

We will promote the Japanese government’s Super City proposal, which embodies the Fourth Industrial Revolution, as a part of government-business collaboration initiatives.

Already, the OCCI has been pursuing various projects as primary initiatives of our medium-term project, OCCI Action Program “Tanto” Business Osaka, ahead of these above plans. Leveraging over 15 years of experience operating a government-business collaboration platform for the development of pharmaceuticals and medical equipment, we are promoting, as a viable business, efforts to prevent dementia and help people maintain their motor function. We regard wide-ranging areas, such as health care, sports, and food, as part of the “wellness industry.”

Our other projects include Xport (pronounced “cross port”), an urban open innovation facility operated jointly with the Osaka Institute of Technology. We also operate “Machi Kojo Network” (Town Factory Network) to provide opportunities for various companies—from major corporations to start-ups—to interact with one another, jointly establish operations, and build an innovation ecosystem. We actively support the creation of business models through such endeavors by providing a venue for experimenting these models in cooperation with Osaka Prefecture and Osaka City.

As for Osaka’s foods, we will cooperate with the Osaka Convention & Tourism Bureau to further refine

the diverse and high-quality foods unique to Osaka and make them even more attractive as we reach out to people in Japan and elsewhere to promote the region as the nation's food capital.

We must certainly achieve these future-focused goals, but there are also challenges that require more immediate attention. These include labor shortages and succession problems among small- and medium-sized enterprises. As a total support action for securing and cultivating human resources, the OCCI in fiscal 2018 began to assist small- and medium-sized enterprises as they seek to hire employees, promote information technology to improve productivity, and call for policy measures to accept more foreign workers.

Succession issues could inhibit company growth. Thus, we have created a three-year program to assist as many as 10,000 companies starting in fiscal 2018. We are providing meticulous support through our headquarters and branches by holding seminars and individual consultation sessions. We will continue to deal with labor shortages and succession issues as priority concerns.

The Heisei Era, which lasted for 30 years, will come to an end this year. For this reason, this year is the dawn of a new era. (The change of the imperial era will take place on May 1). This year will see the culmination of our OCCI Action Program "Tanto" Business Osaka, and we will begin to take concrete steps toward the designing of a future society. We will strive to achieve the big Osaka-Kansai dream as we take on further challenges. We would be grateful if you could provide us with further support and cooperation this year.



O-BIC as one-stop service center for creating a foothold in Osaka

<http://o-bic.net/>

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As your one-stop service center for business investing, O-BIC provides a comprehensive yet detailed support system. International companies, foreign government offices and economic organizations as well as foreign-capitalized companies located in Japan are welcome to use the center to obtain accurate

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For further information, please contact: o-bic@osaka.cci.or.jp



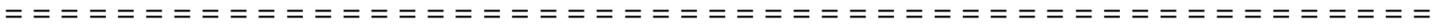
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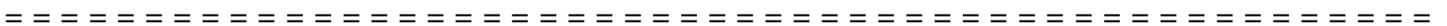
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