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## 1. REPORT ON THE DISPATCH OF AN ECONOMIC MISSION TO MYANMAR

The Osaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI), in its three-year plan “Tanto Business



Osaka,” promotes strengthening exchanges with Asian countries, and this economic mission was dispatched as part of the plan. Mission members learned in practical ways the actual situation of Myanmar, a country with great potential where the condition of its infrastructure, once said to be insufficient, has improved year by year with an increasing number of companies making entry.

On the first day, mission members visited the Thilawa Special Economic Zone. This is the country’s first economic zone, in

which Japanese companies took part from the initial stages of development. After receiving a general overview, mission members went on study tours at Showa Glove and the Kubota plant. Furthermore, mission members deepened their interactions at a dinner party with the Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Myanmar (JCCM), welcoming Chairman Mano and Vice Chairman of the JCCM.

In addition to Yangon, mission members also visited Myanmar’s second largest city of Mandalay, and went on a study tour at a plant that was jointly established by Kirin Brewery Company with local firms, and at an airport’s physical distribution facility. On the final day, in addition to an IT enterprise that continues to expand its business, they visited a company that introduces human resources from Myanmar to Japan, held a luncheon meeting with students of a Japanese school operated by the company, and learned about the know-how for Japanese small- and medium-size enterprises to make good use of foreign human resources.

During their stay, Mission Leader Tomita and President Tsutomu Miyagi of the OCCI visited the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI), which was marking its 100th anniversary this year, and handed OCCI Chairman Hiroshi Ozaki’s personal letter to UMFCCI Chairman U Zaw Min Win. Three years ago the OCCI concluded an MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) with this Federation, and were able to reaffirm in this recent visit that both parties will continue their close cooperation in order to help revitalize economic exchanges between the two countries.

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## 2. “GO GLOBAL! BOOT CAMP,” WAS HELD TO SUPPORT STARTUPS FOR GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT

From December 9 to 11, OCCI held a “Boot Camp” for startups in Kansai aiming for overseas development, inviting Mr. Alfred Coppola and Ms. Gail Gannon as mentors from USMAC (US Market Access Center), an accelerator in Silicon Valley, California.

Seven startups from fields such as the chemical products development, digital health fields, IoT, etc. in Kansai that are

considering overseas development participated in this program. The startups listened to lectures on differences



in business environment between Silicon Valley and Japan, value proposition, and matters to be noted in collaboration with large companies, as well as guidance on how to make an impressive pitch to investors and VCs. On the final day, each participant gave a four-minute pitch to the mentors. The best presenter was awarded with an opportunity to have an interview with a local VC in Silicon Valley.

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### 3. MEMORANDUM FOR MUTUAL COOPERATION (MOU) CONCLUDED WITH THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY OF ROMANIA



On November 15, the OCCI concluded a Memorandum for Mutual Cooperation (MOU) with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Romania (CCIR). This was to renew the cooperation clause of the agreement for the promotion of exchanges signed by both Chambers of Commerce and Industry on October 27, 1994 with the aim of developing further business relationships between them. OCCI Vice Chairman Furukawa, Secretary General Karamanian of the

CCIR and other members from both chambers were present at the signing ceremony.

Vice Chairman Furukawa said, “When I visited your country in 2014, I was impressed by the diligent and affluent young labor force. Your country is located far east of the EU, as the nearest gateway to the EU. With the Japan-EU Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) coming into effect, your country’s presence in the world has increasingly become greater.”

Chairman Ozaki said, “After the Japan-EU EPA went into effect, the size of business between Japan and Romania has tended to expand. After conclusion of the MOU this time, I hope to deepen cooperation between the two Chambers of Commerce and Industry, and to promote development of business among companies of both countries.”

CCIR President Daraban said, “Romania has long had a friendly connection with Japan. Many of our country’s commercial vessels and tankers were manufactured in Japan in the seventies. In Romania, where

the automobile industry is currently vigorous, as many as 378 Japanese companies, including automotive parts manufacturers, have entered. Above all, since there is a possibility that these companies will develop into Russia and CIS countries as well, using the Port of Constant?a of this country as a hub, after the Japan-EU EPA, I expect further expansion of investments in this country and promotion of trade.”

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#### **4. THE PRESIDENT OF THE ITALIAN TRADE AGENCY PAID A COURTESY CALL TO VICE CHAIRMAN FURUKAWA AND OPENED THE OSAKA DESK**

On November 13, Mr. Carlo Ferro, President of the Italian Trade Agency, paid a courtesy call to OCCI Vice Chairman Furukawa together with Consul General Luigi Diodati of the Consulate-General of Italy in Osaka.



President Ferro said, “I visited Osaka for the first time together with 54 Food and apparel companies of the Confederazione Generale dell' Industria Italiana, and held an exhibition at a hotel in the city. Although Italy’s traditional crafts have earned a solid reputation in the Japanese markets, export of Italian food to Japan has more room left for growth. I would appreciate it if you could provide support for us.”

Vice Chairman Furukawa said, “In Japan, Italy’s food and apparel products have been popular for a long time. I wish for an expansion of business of these Italian industries after this event. Meanwhile, in October, OCCI held a “Global Innovation Forum” to which we invited startups from around the world. As Mr. Luigi Diodati, Italian Consul General attended the opening ceremony, I also look forward to the participation of Italian startups in this event next year.”

In response, Consul General Diodati said, “The Italian government would like to pay more attention to Kansai. Our country will participate in the Global Innovation Forum next year.”

The day after the event, the opening ceremony of the Osaka Desk of the Italian Trade Agency was held, with the attendance of Ivan Scalfarotto, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Italy, and Giorgio Starace, Italian Ambassador to Japan. From the OCCI, Vice Chairman Furukawa attended the ceremony.

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## 5. 2019 KANSAI INTERNATIONAL MEISHI EXCHANGE HELD

On November 13, the OCCI and the Kansai Branch of the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan (ACCI) held the “2019 Kansai International Meishi Exchange,” the largest-class business card exchange meeting in Kansai. This year marked its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and was attended by 203 business persons from various industries, such as foreign diplomatic offices & economic groups in Kansai from 17 countries as well as foreign-affiliated companies. At the start, Chairman Minoru Tomita of the OCCI’s International Business Committee gave the opening address, and Jay Biggs, Principal Commercial Officer at the U.S. Consulate General Osaka-Kobe. U.S. Commercial Service presented a toast. In the lottery, tickets for coworking space from WeWork were provided as a prize.

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## 6. Report on VIP visitors (11/13~12/27)

11/13 Mr. Carlo Ferro, President of ITA ? ICE Agency

Mr. Luigi Diodati, Consul General of Italy Osaka

11/27 His Excellency Mr.Santiago Pardo Salguero, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the .Republic of Colombia

12/10 His Excellency Mr. Gorgui Ciss, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Senegal

12/20 Her Excellency Mrs. Yaffa Ben-Ari, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the State of Israel to Japan

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