

EU-Japan Industrial Policy Dialogue  
Working Group on Corporate Social Responsibility  
3rd meeting

On November 7 and 8, 2016, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) and the Directorate General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (DG GROW) jointly held the third EU-Japan Working Group on Corporate Social Responsibility (EU-Japan CSR WG) in Brussels and discussed Japan-EU cooperation in the field of corporate social responsibility (CSR).

1. Outline of Proceedings

Government session (November 8)

- ✧ The Government-to-Government session, co-chaired by DG GROW and METI included the morning presentation of recent developments related to CSR policy.
- ✧ METI presented the major efforts related to CSR policy initiatives, focusing on stakeholder engagement and value creation, such as the study group on long-term investment, the promotion of diversity and women's empowerment, the enhancement of health and productivity management. METI also mentioned the activities of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Promotion Headquarters and the CSR Forum Japan. The attendee from the Institute of Developing Economies from the Japan External Trade Organization (IDE-JETRO) then explained the research project on Business and Human Rights.
- ✧ DG GROW explained the need for the EU CSR policy, its definition and relation to international guidelines and principles, the main elements of the 2011-2014 Strategy, including activities such as the issuing of guidance material for enterprises and the support to EU Member States for the setting up of National Action Plans on CSR and on Business and Human Rights. It also included CSR-related regulatory activities, such as the Directive on Non-Financial Information Reporting, new Public Procurement rules and the Regulation on Conflict Minerals. DG GROW finally highlighted possible next steps.

- ✧ The government session in the afternoon brought together stakeholders from the Japan Business Council in Europe (JBCE), CSR Europe and Council for Better Corporate Citizenship (CBCC), in addition to officials from DG GROW, Directorate General for Trade (DG TRADE), Directorate General for Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union (DG FISMA) and METI, and people from IDE-JETRO. Officials from the GDs and such stakeholders introduced their respective efforts and participants exchanged views on related issues.
- ✧ The EU and Japan showed great openness, willingness and support for strengthening cooperation on matters governing CSR/responsible business conduct in the framework of the global agendas, such as implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), etc.
- ✧ The EU and Japan share common goals and challenges relating to CSR/responsible business conduct, such as the issues of sustainable investment, business and human rights. Sustainability was increasingly highlighted as a key component of long term competitiveness.

#### Business session (November 7)

- ✧ Under the framework of the EU-Japan CSR WG, JBCE, CSR Europe, and CBCC jointly held an EU-Japan Business Dialogue, bringing together around 70 people, including personnel in charge of CSR from companies in Japan and the EU that are members of the JBCE, CSR Europe and CBCC, officials in charge from DG GROW, and officials in charge from METI.
- ✧ At the dialogue, participants had discussions focusing on the subject of “contributing to global sustainability through collaboration and innovation.” Nine companies in Japan and the EU that have been deploying business worldwide made presentations about best practices of their contribution to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and general activities in the field of CSR. Participants exchanged views on expected necessary efforts and related challenges.
- ✧ It was pointed out by participants: the importance of promoting collaboration between governments, companies and industries for

the maximization of innovation, the need to create a dialogue platform composed of multi-stakeholders, the significance of convening business dialogues under the framework of the EU-Japan CSR WG on a continual basis, and other issues.

(Reference 1) About the Japan Business Council in Europe (JBCE):

Created in 1999, the Japan Business Council in Europe (JBCE) is a leading European organisation representing the interests of almost 80 multinational companies of Japanese parentage active in Europe. Our members operate across a wide range of sectors, including information and communication technology, electronics, chemicals, automotive, machinery, wholesale trade, precision instruments, pharmaceutical, railway, textiles and glass products. Together, our member companies represented in 2013 global sales of 1.4 trillion euros. Building a new era of cooperation between the European Union (EU) and Japan is the core of our activities.

(Reference 2) About CSR Europe:

CSR Europe is the leading European business network for Corporate Social Responsibility. Through its network of around 53 corporate members and 45 National CSR organisations, it gathers over 10,000 companies, and acts as a platform for those businesses looking to enhance sustainable growth and positively contribute to society. In its mission to bring the CSR agenda forward, CSR Europe goes beyond European borders and cooperates with CSR organisations in other regions across the world.

(Reference 3) About the Council for Better Corporate Citizenship (CBCC):

The Council for Better Corporate Citizenship (CBCC) was established in 1989 by Keidanren (Japan Business Federation) as an incorporated association and in June 2010 was certified as a public interest incorporated association. Since its foundation, the CBCC devoted its full efforts to supporting activities to help Japanese companies operating overseas to be "good corporate citizens" among their local communities. Entering 21st century, Japanese companies have worked to further enhance their own CSR initiatives, leading the CBCC to expand its activities to include promotion and support for implementation of CSR.

## 2. Outline of the EU-Japan CSR WG

As the globalization of business activities advances, both establishing international cooperative relationships and enhancing mutual understanding between countries are essential in operating CSR policies. Based on this awareness, Japan and the EU agreed to

the establishment of the EU-Japan CSR WG at the 16th EU-Japan Industrial Policy Dialogue in January 2013, and both sides officially inaugurated the WG in October 2013. Since the first dialogue held in Brussels in July 2014, the dialogues have alternately been held in Japan and Europe on an annual basis. This is the third dialogue, hosted by DG GROW.

3. Division in Charge

Industrial Finance Division, Ministry of Economy Trade and Industry, Japan