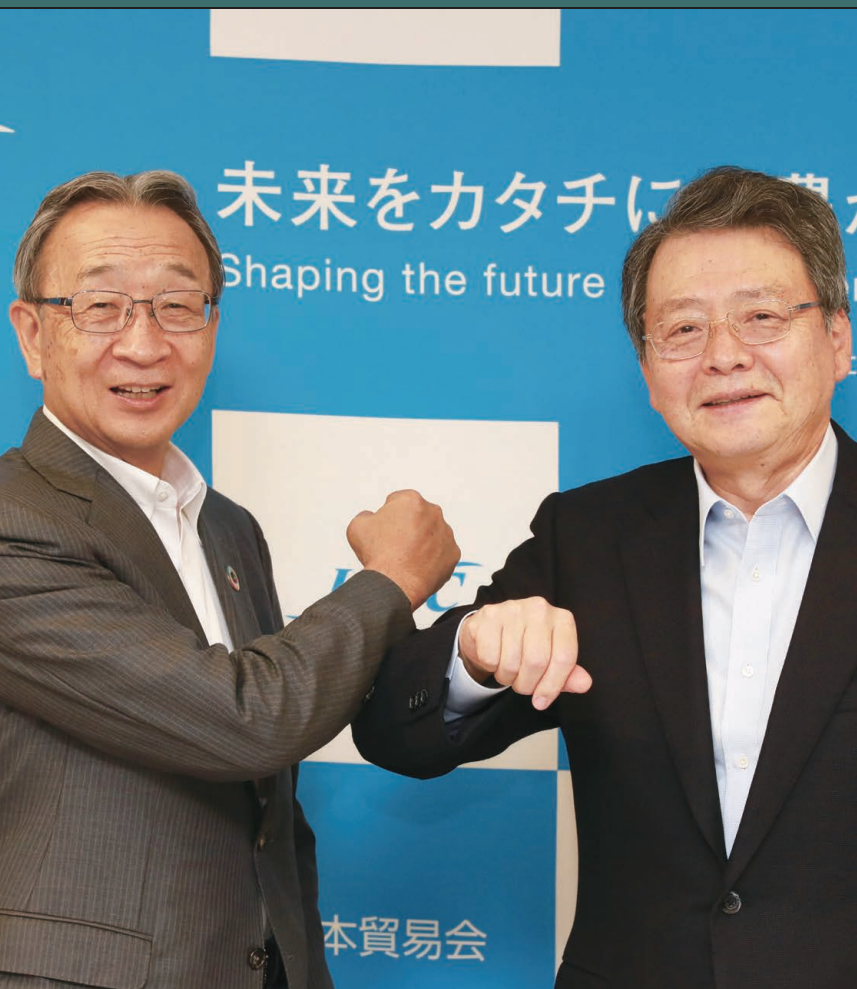


## JFTC News

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Left: Honorary Chairman NAKAMURA Kuniharu  
Right: New Chairman KOBAYASHI Ken

### Interview with the New Chairman Kobayashi

At its annual meeting held on May 29, 2020, the Japan Foreign Trade Council, Inc. (JFTC) appointed as its new chairman KOBAYASHI Ken, who currently serves as Chairman of Mitsubishi Corporation (MC). JFTC Executive Managing Director KAWAZU Tsukasa asked Chairman Kobayashi about his aspirations to become "pioneers of a new era."

**– What are your ambitions as the 13th chairman of the JFTC?**

Before I answer that, please let me express my deepest sympathies to those affected by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, as well as my heartfelt respect and gratitude to all healthcare professionals who are working so tirelessly to keep us safe.

As for the JFTC, it is my great honor to be appointed its chairman. Founded in 1947, this organization has dedicated itself to enhancing Japan's presence in international trade for more than 70 years. I am determined to do my part to ensure that it continues to grow and prosper, and to that end, I will be counting on your support and that of our other esteemed JFTC members.

Throughout its history, the JFTC has been an integral part of Japan's economic development, a fact that is clearly evident from how the organization has been structured and who its members have been over the



decades. It has played a role in promoting free trade and investment, and in bridging our country with the rest of the world. We know that access to a wide range of industries is one of the strengths of the *Shosha*. I aim to leverage that strength as we work with other economic associations to undertake new initiatives and make policy proposals to the government.

**– JFTC chairmen have all adopted simple catch phrases that encapsulate their policies. Yours is “pioneers of a new era.” Can you explain what you mean by that?**

Strangely enough, that phrase was partly born of our current crisis. COVID-19 is just one of many unknowns that we must successfully navigate if we hope to succeed in a new, rapidly changing era. For more than a decade now, our world has been evolving at a dizzying pace. Digitalization has had major influences on social frameworks and lifestyles, while populist and nationalist agendas have reshaped international partnerships. Furthermore, my feeling is that the current pandemic is strengthening the international community’s shared values of protecting lives and prioritizing health and safety. In these new and unprecedented times, it is the JFTC that must lead the way in creating a better and brighter future. With our society and economy bracing for even more changes ahead, we must continue to adapt and come up with

unique, sustainable ideas that are in tune with those changes. I think that “pioneers of a new era” captures the essence of that mission quite effectively, and that is why I adopted it as our next catch phrase.

**– We are mired in the worst economic recession since the Great Depression, and unfortunately, we are going to have to live with this virus for some time yet. The world’s political and economic landscapes will no doubt look very different once this pandemic is behind us, but I would like to hear your thoughts on how things will change.**

My guess is that the impacts of COVID-19 are going to be felt for a long time. There is still so much that governments, administrators and businesses need to do to help prevent a second wave and breakdowns of our healthcare systems, so I can only speculate on how our world will change when we are finally free and clear of this virus.

Right now, countries are making it their priority to save lives at home. I believe that in the future, we could see more political and economic nationalism taking root around the world. The US-China power struggle will likely drag on, and with no end to this pandemic in sight, the world needs to brace itself for sustained geopolitical tensions. In fact, I think that we are already in the midst of a new great depression, one defined more by geopolitics than economics, and it is only going to continue.

We have witnessed how this virus is helping to break down globalism, something that is predicated on international friendship and collaboration, and we could see governments completely reassess their supply chains in the interests of national security. My fear is that this will greatly impede the free, cross-border movement of goods, labor and capital. Global cooperation has never been more important than it is today. All of us, including politicians, health care professionals and those of us in the business community, must work together to address all manner of global challenges, including the COVID-19 crisis.

There are a number of changes that were already underway before the crisis began. In addition to the rapidly evolving digital space, telecommuting has become increasingly commonplace and diversifying views on work-life-balance have dramatically transformed working styles. Those changes were accelerated with the onset of this pandemic and will

probably gain even more momentum in the months and years ahead.

Japan has committed an enormous amount of public funds to fighting COVID-19 and is progressing towards a new era of big government, which means the burden of this pandemic and its aftermath will ultimately fall on the shoulders of taxpayers. There is a mountain of challenges that must be addressed if we hope to minimize the period of hardship that awaits our citizens, including advancing digitalization, creating jobs, providing for online education and decentralizing government. To narrow inequality and bolster its economy and industry, Japan must be a leader in international free trade, something that it has long excelled at. I am convinced that it must get back to those roots and solidify itself as a nation that is both trusted and relied on all over the world.

#### – What role do you think the *Shosha* should play?

As I mentioned, the *Shosha* are engaged in many sectors. Among their strengths are their holistic view of the Japanese economy and ability to think dynamically. They have always played vital roles in balancing supply and demand and securing food and other resources, and I believe that they will continue to be relied on for those reasons. But they will likely play an additional role in the future, namely to consider Japan's economic security and work hand in hand with the rest of its business community to review supply chains and identify value in the structure of its industry.

#### – Could you share your views on what the JFTC can do for its members?

I think that our first priority is to prevent further spread of this virus, which has to be a united effort by industry. The JFTC must also support work undertaken by the *Shosha* to secure goods that are essential to our quality of life. Broadly speaking, Japan will play a significant role in building new frameworks for free trade and international cooperation, so our organization must be proactive in approaching the government with ideas.

#### – What kind of activities should the JFTC focus on, both during the remainder of this pandemic and in our post-COVID world?

Action for a Better International Community (ABIC) is a non-profit organization established by

the JFTC. Its roughly 3,000 registered members are chiefly *Shosha* retirees who have extensive global business experience. From what I understand, ABIC is collaborating with other organizations, dispatching skilled personnel and otherwise helping to meet needs that cut across many sectors, both here in Japan and around the world. There are commonalities there with the shared mission of the *Shosha*, which is to generate not only economic value, but also societal value and environmental value. I would like the JFTC to help build the foundations of a next-generation society, one that is invested in the idea of humans living active, comfortable lives for up to a century or longer. A good way to start will be to take full advantage of the rich networks, know-how and experience of ABIC's members.

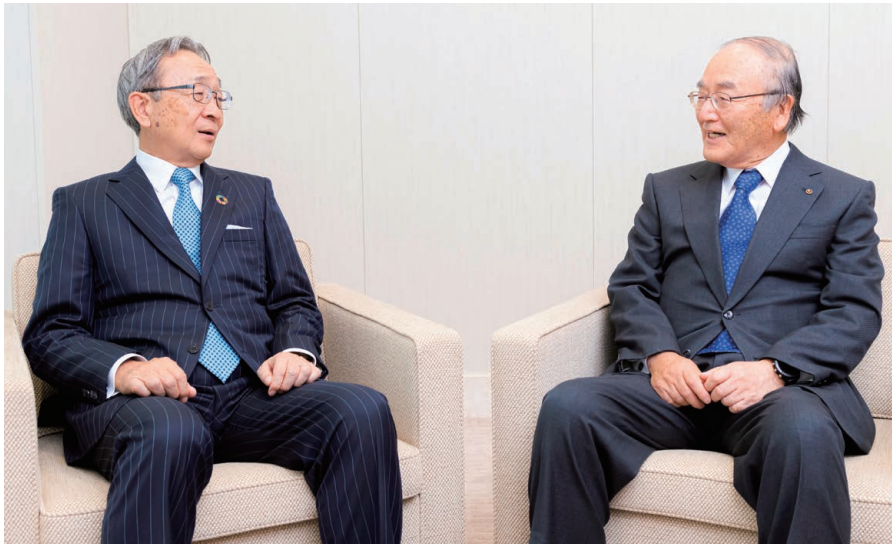
### Action for a Better International Community (ABIC) 20th Anniversary Special Conversation

**Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (JCCI) Chairman MIMURA Akio and Japan Foreign Trade Council, Inc. (JFTC) Honorary chairman NAKAMURA Kuniharu discuss utilization of retired employees and ABIC**

This spring was the 20th anniversary of ABIC since its establishment as an NPO by the JFTC. On February 26, 2020, JFTC Chairman (at the time) NAKAMURA Kuniharu visited JCCI Chairman MIMURA Akio to commemorate the event with a special conversation to discuss ABIC and its social contribution activities. Some of what they discussed was published in the article advertisement titled "Addressing Labor Shortages and Promoting Regional Economic Revitalization by Hiring Retired Employees" which appeared in the morning edition of the Nikkei daily newspaper on March 27, but here we bring you parts of their discussion focused on ABIC, including exchanges that were not published in the article.

**Nakamura :** JFTC contributes to society in a wide variety of ways, and ABIC plays a central role in these efforts. ABIC currently has





nearly 3,000 registered members who mostly come from careers at *Shosha* and are using the expertise and skills gained over the course of their careers to contribute to society. In this age in which life expectancy is reaching 100 years, senior employees beyond the retirement age of 60 and re-employment age limit of 65 still have long life ahead of them. With so many of them looking for ways to stay connected with society and wanting to contribute, ABIC was founded 20 years ago with determination to find ways to put their capabilities to use for the good of society.

### Labor Shortages at SMEs Require Urgent Action

**Mimura** : I am the Chairman of the JCCI which has 515 member chambers of commerce throughout Japan, which in turn have a total of around 1.24 million member companies. 99.7% of these companies are small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The biggest problem these SMEs face is labor shortages. Labor shortages are reaching gravely severe levels, as evidenced by the survey results in 2019 which showed that 66.4% of companies claim to be struggling with labor shortages that keep their business performance from improving. This

number is also growing by about 5% per year. That is fairly obvious if you think about it, as the aging of Japan's population continues and the working population between the ages of 15 and 65 is now decreasing by upwards of 500,000 per year. As the practice of mid-career hiring becomes more commonplace, there is also an increasing flow of employees between SMEs and large companies, with an overall net of around 500,000 employees shifting to the larger companies. It is worrisome

that all the related factors are gaining in severity each year. Women's increase in the workplace is one possible solution for these labor shortages, but utilization of retired employees also offers similar potential.

**Nakamura** : I also have opportunities to talk with people at local SMEs, and labor shortages really are a serious problem. Progress is also being made in hiring foreign employees but finding people with the skills to handle key management roles is still a struggle. As you just mentioned, even when making serious efforts to hire people mid-career, the reality is that the compensation offered is often too low. To that end, ABIC started with the concept that it would make perfect sense to utilize retired employees who are more interested in helping people than chasing higher salaries.

**Mimura** : Matching function is really important. Large companies have many senior employees with plenty of energy even at retirement age. In that sense, the needs in society overall are quite high. On the other hand, SMEs only have an export ratio of 4%. Even when including large companies the ratio only reaches 14%. Companies in Japan have grown along

with growth of the domestic market, but that will not be the case going forward. Entering foreign markets is the only way to grow, but many SMEs have no experience in this at all.

### ABIC Offers HR Matching Services

**Nakamura** : Retired employees from *Shosha* each have their own areas of expertise, they possess a wealth of experience in specific regions of the world and business fields. Some have worked in domestic sales, and some have experience in management fields such as accounting, law, and so on. ABIC is a group of such human resources.

**Mimura** : ABIC has been in this matching services for 20 years. Over this time it has registered more and more personnel, matched them up, and they have been active contributors at SMEs and local government agencies. I want this to be publicized more widely. Hopefully we can make more progress in matching the supply and demand for these professionals in the society. In addition to those from *Shosha*, we also have plenty of retired employees with backgrounds in other industries. There is also abundant need for working professionals in a variety of fields. For example, there are local government agencies who are wondering how they can lure inbound tourists on their own. I think they need to consider what is appealing about their local areas from the perspective of foreigners, not from their own local perspective. That's why there is so much demand. How to go about matching that demand has been my struggle and my passion over the years as chairman of the JCCI.

**Nakamura** : To spread awareness about ABIC to more people, we are partnering with local government agencies and

organizations, and traveling there to provide explanations at various types of gatherings. In doing so, we have recently been providing an increasing amount of support for foreign workers who live in those communities. Since they can't understand Japanese, they are struggling to register their residence and carry out various other such tasks in their daily lives. We are helping these people to learn Japanese. One recent example is a request we received to teach Japanese to workers from foreign countries in the city of Kesennuma, Miyagi Prefecture, because a JFTC member company was providing earthquake recovery support for the local marine product processing industry in the same city. As a result of discussions with Kesennuma City Hall, it appears that ABIC will be dispatching personnel to operate a Japanese language school there, starting around May (Note: Planned opening of the school has been postponed to July due to the spread of the novel coronavirus). As we can see from this example, if we steadily spread public awareness of ABIC, I think we will uncover even more needs.

**Mimura** : Aren't there also competitors in staffing services?

**Nakamura** : ABIC itself has a fee-charging employment agency license, so while there may be some areas where we overlap, in many cases we actually receive requests to cooperate on staffing from the staffing services companies themselves. When local government agencies and SMEs hear that our staff come from backgrounds at *Shosha* or large companies they often say that compensation will be too high, but that's not the case. If their situation is "two days per week or five days per month is all we need," or "this is all we can afford to pay," we ask them to just tell us all

about it. They don't have to force them to meet our needs. What ABIC does is listen to their needs and the cost level they are comfortable with, and then find the right match. That's what sets ABIC apart.

**Mimura** : I have heard there are seven or eight people who handle the matching. This is also a lot of work. It's almost like they're doing volunteer work. ABIC would not have been able to operate smoothly for 20 years without backup from its sponsor companies.

**Nakamura** : JFTC is paying the necessary costs, so it means our member companies cover these costs.

**Mimura** : There are various agencies that perform this matching function, but I don't hear about any other matching functions like that of ABIC to leverage the knowledge and expertise that retired employees have accumulated in life for the benefit of society. Why is that?

**Nakamura** : You can call it temporary staffing, but I don't think there are other services that assist with only the necessary work at the necessary time. Full-time employment has always been the norm in Japan, so there are SMEs which have given up on the idea of using these services from the beginning, especially in local areas.

**Mimura** : Indeed. I have heard about a local company that recruited people from the city for side jobs as opposed to full-time, and they got a huge number of applicants.

#### Satisfaction for Both the Client and ABIC Staff

**Nakamura** : ABIC also gets lots of requests from the education-related field. For elementary school education in international understanding, we get requests to teach

how things are in specific countries such as Myanmar and Indonesia. For these requests we send retired employees who have experience being stationed in that country in the past, and they also thoroughly prepare for each one-hour lesson. Some of these members even go back to that country to learn the latest about it. Costs can be much higher than rewards.

**Mimura** : If the student were a business person I don't think they would try to make special preparations, but it's a lot more responsibility when teaching elementary school and junior high school students.

**Nakamura** : Correct, it is really challenging. However, according to the members it is also quite rewarding. In addition to the joy of teaching they also help educate children who are our future, so they find great satisfaction in teaching these lessons.

**Mimura** : These activities couldn't have continued for 20 years if both the clients and the ABIC members on the job weren't highly satisfied.

**Nakamura** : The coordinators are the ones who arrange situations that are satisfying for both sides. They have an idea of members' specialties and past achievements, and match each of them up with the jobs they're likely to do well. In some cases the clients also realize that their assigned member is capable of helping them with other work and reorder their services.

**Mimura** : That's how it is in business too, isn't it? The possibilities grow from there.

**Nakamura** : Correct but if they get even more jobs, they might not be able to handle everything. Thus, we are thinking about making our system a little more sophisticated.

**Mimura** : If needs in local areas are communicated even more, there will definitely be even more jobs.

#### Broadening the Scope of ABIC Activities

**Nakamura** : It is hard for us to have direct interactions in local areas, so the key is to have SMEs support agencies of local governments to be our contact points. To that end, the possibilities will grow even more if we can have the JCCI's 515 chambers of commerce throughout Japan serve as contact points, so I would like to also make some success stories somewhere with this.

**Mimura** : When you talk about *Shosha*, people might think of them as a bit unapproachable. However, according to the material, it seems that just over 60% of 3,000 registered ABIC members are from *Shosha*, aren't they?

**Nakamura** : 60% to 70% are from *Shosha*. Some also came from financial institutions and from manufacturers. As for seeming unapproachable, it's true that when people think about big corporations and then among them *Shosha*, they seem to have an impression of constantly traveling to one country after another. They probably doubt these *Shosha* professionals would do the work they need. However, some members from *Shosha* backgrounds also have sales and marketing experience in Japan. They can handle requests from clients who want to perhaps sell local specialties throughout the country or look over their company's accounting.

**Mimura** : It baffles me that only the *Shosha* industry has been able to continue this matching function for 20 years, and that other industries cannot imitate the ability to carry out projects that meet the needs of times such as these. I think that

people from *Shosha* backgrounds are not the only ones who still want to be useful to society. There are likely plenty of people from other industries who similarly want to do what they can for Japan and for society after working until retirement age, and who would be happy if they could just be paid a little for doing so. I wonder why that model doesn't grow.

**Nakamura** : We also want more people from industry types other than *Shosha* to register for ABIC. However, in many cases companies actually have their own social contribution organizations, and they do not go beyond that to purposely seek out ABIC.

**Mimura** : I hope ABIC can boost its appeal for the sake of Japan as a whole.

**Nakamura** : To do that, we need to have more understanders like you. Let's work on those partnerships with local JCCI offices which I mentioned earlier.

**Mimura** : Let's make a lot of success stories. I wish the Nikkei to feature ABIC's activities not only in advertisements but also in articles.(laugh)

**Nakamura** : Absolutely. Thank you very much for your time today.

### Developing a Long-term Vision for Climate Change Measures

(March 25, 2020)

In recent years, the impact of climate change has caused enormous damage around the world, the scale and frequency of which has exceeded anything previously imagined. This trend is predicted to escalate year by year. Assuming that 20th-century

social systems will be incapable of responding to this challenge, there is a pressing need for governments and businesses to take the initiative in mitigating and adapting to climate change.

In June 2019, the Government of Japan approved a Long-term Strategy under the Paris Agreement, which set out a long-term vision for 2050 and the ultimate aim of achieving a “decarbonized society.” Climate change countermeasures are also picking up pace in the business community, and Keidanren has urged its members to look beyond existing medium-term measures aimed at addressing global warming by 2030 and develop long-term visions for 2050.

Private companies need to bear in mind achievement of UN SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) in their business activities, and amid an expansion in ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) investment, there has been a rapid increase in companies disclosing information in line with Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) recommendations and setting SBT (Science-Based Targets). These efforts show that this is an era when corporate value will be directly affected by companies’ success or failure in swiftly switching to business activities aimed at achieving a decarbonized society. Japan Foreign Trade Council, Inc. (JFTC) declared its support for the TCFD recommendations in May 2019, and has worked with its member companies to further enhance governance relating to climate change and awareness-raising activities for wider information disclosure. Member companies are recognizing risks and opportunities stemming from climate change across a broad range of business fields, and working to expand and reinforce their responses to such challenges.

To date, JFTC and its member companies have made efforts to create a low-carbon society under the Shosha’s Corporate Code of Conduct and the Shosha’s Corporate Environmental Code of Conduct, but we have now developed a new Long-term Vision for Climate Change Measures with a view to creating a carbon-neutral society by 2050.

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#### **Long-term Vision for Climate Change Measures**

To create a carbon-neutral society, the JFTC aims to effectively utilize its links with other industries and organizations, cooperate in implementing their long-

term visions, and contribute to achieving the long-term goals for 2050 set out in the Paris Agreement. Based on this vision, JFTC member companies will position the investigation and implementation of measures to mitigate and adapt to climate change as key business issues and strive to generate new businesses and solutions.

We have flexibly evolved our businesses according to changing times and diverse needs. *Shosha*, which operate worldwide and conduct business in cooperation with various players in a wide range of industries, are able to fully exercise their capabilities in contributing to solutions for the global challenge of climate change.

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## **Chairman’s Comments**

### **Chairman Nakamura’s Comments on Postponement of the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games and Measures to Tackle the Coronavirus Pandemic**

March 26, 2020

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The decision has been taken to postpone the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games by about a year.

I sympathize with the disappointment of everyone involved, including the athletes who have trained so hard with their sights set on reaching the pinnacles of their disciplines and organizing committee members and staff who have steadily prepared for the event. However, with no resolution to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in sight, this decision was inevitable if Japan wishes to host the event in its entirety.

The JFTC has also made various preparations for the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games in collaboration with a range of partners, and we will continue to work with all those involved to ensure the success of this historic event next year, which will show the world that COVID-19 has been defeated.

In the face of COVID-19, the JFTC is also doing its utmost to prevent the spread of infection within



and outside Japan with top priority given to ensuring safety and security, and to minimize economic and social impacts. Our member companies and the JFTC Secretariat are responding to the state of emergency declared in Tokyo yesterday by Governor Koike with further efforts to encourage working from home, and we will continue to take enhanced measures in close cooperation with the government, local public bodies, and other relevant agencies.

### **Chairman Nakamura's Comments on the State of Emergency Declaration for the Coronavirus Pandemic and the Emergency Economic Package**

April 7, 2020

A state of emergency has been declared pursuant to the amended Act on Special Measures for Pandemic Influenza and New Infectious Diseases Preparedness and Response. The decision is appropriate as more rigorous measures are essential given Japan's current situation where the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) infection remains unchecked and the risk of an explosive spike in infections grows daily.

We would like to convey our heartfelt gratitude to all those battling day and night to combat COVID-19, including medical and nursing staff and government officials. At the same time, we urge everyone in Japan to treat COVID-19 as a serious problem with implications for each of us and comply fully with requests and instructions issued by governors.

The third emergency economic package approved by the Cabinet today is the largest ever. It is a comprehensive set of measures, containing not only those designed to support individuals, SMEs, and others severely affected by the economic impact of the pandemic, but also those aimed at stimulating demand once normality is restored. This is expected to provide a powerful boost to households and sectors facing uncertain outlooks, and we strongly urge the government to monitor trends and move with speed and agility to take additional or supplementary measures as required.

JFTC member companies and the JFTC Secretariat will further reinforce measures to prevent the spread of infection in cooperation with the government, local public bodies, and other relevant agencies, while simultaneously striving to minimize impact on economic activity.

### **Chairman Nakamura's Comments on Expansion in Scope of the State of Emergency Declaration for the Coronavirus Pandemic**

April 17, 2020

The scope of the state of emergency declaration for the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has been expanded to encompass all of Japan in response to more widespread infection. This is an appropriate step in light of the current situation, where infection is spreading beyond the seven prefectures originally covered by the declaration.

While the impacts of the state of emergency are encroaching on all aspects of economic activity, economic recovery will not be possible unless the spread of infection is controlled, and now is the time for the public, business operators, the government, and local public bodies to act together with a single purpose.

We would like to convey our heartfelt gratitude to all those battling every day in the medical and government sectors, as well as in such industries as essential infrastructure and the distribution of daily necessities. As the response to COVID-19 extends, many problems are becoming more severe, including economic pain resulting from shutdowns and job losses, and impacts on parents' and guardians' work associated with temporary closures of schools, kindergartens, and day nurseries.

The *Shosha* industry is also facing various issues in areas such as trade and logistics, and I urge all those involved in the industry to cooperate and share the pain as they act quickly to implement bold measures unfettered by conventional concepts and rules.

At the same time, the world is looking ahead to the post-COVID-19 era and starting to search for a new global economic order. In Japan, too, it is vital for the public and private sectors to cooperate in examining new systems based on international collaboration and free trade. Together with all our member companies, the JFTC will collaborate with industries and do our utmost to prevent the spread of infection and maintain economic activity. At the same, we are determined to proactively rebuild supply chains in pandemic-resilient forms.

### **Chairman Nakamura's Comments on Extension of the State of Emergency Declaration for the Coronavirus Pandemic**

May 4, 2020

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The decision has been taken to extend the state of emergency declaration to May 31. Although the number of new infections is on a downward trend, as the expert panel has pointed out, continual measures are required, and this is an appropriate step.

We would like to reiterate our gratitude to all those battling every day in fields such as medicine, government, social infrastructure, and logistics, as well as business operators cooperating in shutdowns by voluntarily suspending their operations. In cooperation with our member companies, the JFTC continues to promote teleworking and other measures to prevent the spread of infection, as well as urge all those we deal with to reduce instances of individual contact, for example by refraining from going out.

At the same time, the impacts of the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic are becoming increasingly severe in all aspects of economic activity. As well as rigorous infection prevention measures, swift and extensive economic measures will be crucial in conjunction with extension of the state of emergency. Now that the supplementary budget for FY2020 has been passed, support measures based on the emergency economic package have begun. Adequate assistance needs to be delivered to people and businesses that require it as quickly as possible, and I urge the government and local public bodies to act flexibly and boldly without being bound by precedent, including in the medical field. I would also like them to consider further additional measures as required.

At the global level, export restrictions on medical and agricultural goods have become conspicuous and there are fears that the spread of COVID-19 will give impetus to protectionism. Conversely, some countries have agreed on adhering to free trade principles including maintenance of supply networks and enhancement of mutual accommodation for necessary goods, and moves to endorse this view are becoming more widespread. I sincerely hope that the Japanese government, which has greatly contributed to the expansion of economic partnership agreements such as the CPTPP, will proactively take the initiative

in shaping a post-COVID-19 economic order based on international harmony and free trade. The JFTC is committed to collaborating with all those involved in trade to resolve the various trade issues that have arisen due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and will do everything in our power to ensure availability of goods essential to people's lives.

### **Chairman Nakamura's Comments on Partial Lifting of the State of Emergency Declaration for the Coronavirus Pandemic**

May 14, 2020

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The state of emergency declaration has been partially lifted. This results from the cooperation of many people over an exceptionally long period to prevent the spread of infection, and is evidence of progress in Japan's efforts to free itself from the effects of the COVID-19 crisis. In regions where the state of emergency has been lifted, local public bodies and companies now need to prevent a resurgence of infection while hastening to restore economic activity, and will need to gather a wide range of knowledge to simultaneously resolve these two conflicting challenges. To this end, it will be vital to clarify criteria for lifting or re-imposing restrictions and refine monitoring of infection status.

By working hand-in-hand with our member companies and their business partners to ensure availability of goods essential to people's lives, the JFTC will help to restore economic activity and rebuild supply chains in pandemic-resilient forms. Through such efforts, we are determined to do our utmost to create post-COVID-19 economic systems.

### **Chairman Nakamura's Comments on the Lifting of the State of Emergency Declaration for the Coronavirus Pandemic in All Prefectures**

May 25, 2020

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The state of emergency has now been lifted across all of Japan, including in Hokkaido and the Tokyo metropolitan region's four prefectures, where emergency measures had remained in place after they were lifted in the rest of country. Japan's success in suppressing the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) infection to the present level is a credit to the devotion and sacrifice of medical workers, the hard work of national and local government officials, and the readiness of businesses

and private citizens to work together to contain the virus by restricting their business activities and other aspects of their daily lives. I share in the sense of satisfaction at what we have achieved so far.

However, it is important to remember that the lifting of the state of emergency today is merely one stage in our long battle against COVID-19. With experts predicting that a second wave of infections is likely in the autumn and beyond, we must continue to take all necessary steps to prevent another spike in infections as we work to revive economic activities.

The road ahead of us will be steep and challenging. It is essential that we stay united and walk it together, following the national government's Basic Policies for

an incremental reopening of the economy, guidelines published by local governments, and other directives. We look for the national and local governments to implement promptly the assistance policies they have promised for businesses and individual citizens, and we hope that funds for necessary additional measures will be speedily secured as part of the government's second supplementary budget plan.

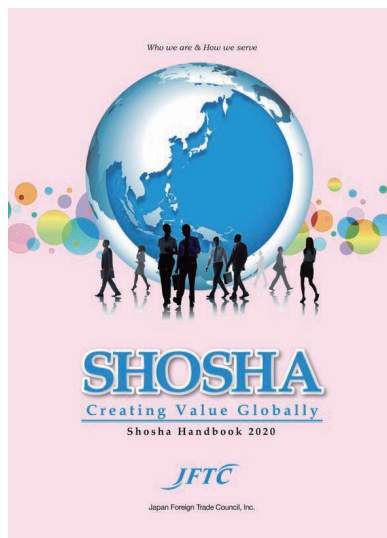
Together with our member companies, the JFTC will continue to take all necessary measures to prevent further spreading of COVID-19 as we work closely with the national and local governments, related bodies, and business partners to carry out the policies we need to restore and revive economic activities.

## "SHOSHA: Creating Value Globally" Shosha Handbook 2020

JFTC publishes "Shosha Handbook" annually to foster greater understanding of the activities of *Shosha*.

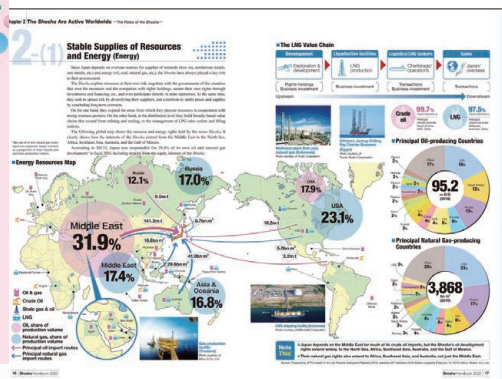
2020 edition will be published in July 31. The contents are identical to the Japanese version of "Shosha Handbook 2020," published in March 2020, abundant with figures and photos. We hope that it serves of widespread use.

A4 format. English. Price: 500 yen (tax excluded). Free of charge for JFTC members.



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The World Economy and Trade
- *Shosha*'s Corporate Code of Conduct



"Shosha Handbook 2020" (¥500 excluding tax) is available for purchase at large book stores and government book centers. Any inquiries concerning this book should be addressed to [chosha@jftc.or.jp](mailto:chosha@jftc.or.jp) (Research Group).

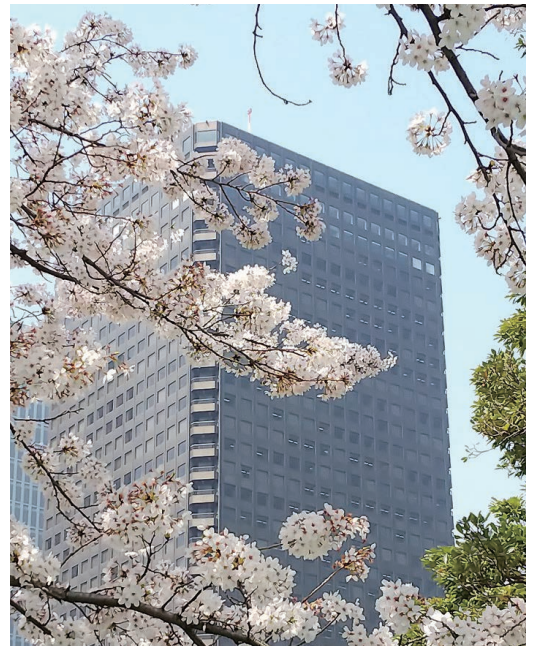
## What is JFTC?

### About Japan Foreign Trade Council, Inc. (JFTC)

Japan Foreign Trade Council, Inc. (JFTC) was founded in 1947 as a core economic organization of private sector companies engaged in international trade. In 1986, it was reorganized to become what it is, a trade-industry association consisting of trading companies and trade organizations.

JFTC aims to contribute to the prosperity of the Japanese economy and the development of the international community through trade and investment, and is engaged in a wide range of activities. Most importantly, the JFTC develops a consensus within the industry on various trade issues and submits policy recommendations and proposals to the government and related authorities in order to help resolve those issues. Such role and functions of the JFTC have been highly regarded by those concerned.

In addition to promoting and expanding investment and trade as we have done to date, the Shosha sector needs to come up with bold new approaches that go beyond conventional thinking, including by creating new businesses that make full use of the digital transformation. Reestablishing close connections in a fracturing world, reinvigorating the stagnant economy, and working to bring about a more prosperous world: these too are part of our mission. As an industry association representing the Japanese Shosha sector, the JFTC will work to fulfill its role in helping to pioneer the full potential of this new era, working in close cooperation with the Japanese government and with trade bodies worldwide to make increasingly proactive policy proposals. Our continuing mandate will be to maintain and develop the free trade system and to work toward putting in place comprehensive systems and a business environment conducive to free corporate activities.



### Principal Officers of JFTC

#### Chairman

KOBAYASHI Ken (Chairman, Mitsubishi Corporation)

#### Vice Chairmen

YASUNAGA Tatsuo (President and CEO, MITSUI & CO., LTD.)  
FUJIMOTO Masayoshi (President and CEO, Sojitz Corporation)  
SUZUKI Yoshihisa (President and COO, ITOCHU Corporation)  
KASHITANI Ichiro (President and CEO, Toyota Tsusho Corporation)  
KAKINOKI Masumi (President and CEO, Marubeni Corporation)  
HYODO Masayuki (President and CEO, Sumitomo Corporation)  
(in order of assumption)

#### Executive Managing Director

KAWAZU Tsukasa

#### Managing Director

IWAKI Hiroto

#### Regular Members of JFTC

Companies (Total 42)  
Associations (Total 20)

### Japan Foreign Trade Council, Inc.

World Trade Center Bldg. 6th Floor, 4-1, Hamamatsu-cho 2-chome, Minato-ku, Tokyo 105-6106, Japan  
Tel. +81-3-3435-6323 Fax. +81-3-3435-5979

Please let us know about "JFTC News No.151".

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