

Italy-Japan Business Group
XXII General Assembly
Rome, 28-29 October 2010

“Europe, Italy and Japan together towards the Future”

Joint Communiqué

1. INTRODUCTION

The 22nd General Assembly of the Italy-Japan Business Group (JIBG) returned to Rome after many years in the unique scenario of the Capitol Hill, hosted by the Municipality of Rome.

Over the last three years the activities of JIBG have been focused on identifying industrial cooperation between Italian and Japanese business communities with special attention to the areas of high technology and innovation.

Industrial cooperation is a key factor to overcome the world's financial crisis arisen in the second half of 2008 and still affecting the world's economy.

This year the strengthening and integration of Japan/European Union economic relationship was the headline of the General Assembly

JIBG members shared the importance of EU-Japan economic relationship to facilitate bilateral business activities and the belief that strengthening Italy-Japan economic relationship would lead to enhance EU-Japan economic relationship.

On 28th and 29th of October in Rome, business leaders from Italy and Japan met during their General Assembly of JIBG, co-chaired by Mr. Giorgio ZAPPA, COO of Finmeccanica, and for the first time after his appointment, Mr. Kazuo Tsukuda, Chairman of Mitsubishi Heavy Industries.

On October 28, JIBG members visited the following companies in Rome industrial areas: Thales Alenia Space (space activity), Elettronica SpA (defence electronics) and Sigma-Tau (pharmaceutics). In the afternoon the four working groups, established in 2009, met at Italian Institute for Foreign Trade - ICE to exchange proposals and identify common activities.

On October 29, at the presence of Japan and Italy government representatives, the following topics have been illustrated to the audience:

- Economic scenario and exchange relations among Europe, Italy and Japan
- Economic and industrial partnership between Japan and European Union
- Finance, research and technology as drivers for the improvement of bilateral relations

The four working-groups illustrated their activities and aims on: Renewable Energy, Rescue Robotics, Ocean Observation System, Pharmaceuticals, Nano Technologies, Social Security, Protection of Intellectual Property and SME cooperation. Successful common case studies have also been illustrated.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROPOSALS

2.1 EU-JAPAN Economic Agreement

IJBG recommends the authorities to accelerate the works for enhancing Japan-EU economic relationship, addressing all issues of interest to both sides including, for instance, all tariffs and non-tariff measures, services, investment in services and non-services sectors, Intellectual Property Rights and government procurement. IJBG supports further deepening of Japan-EU economic relationship and expresses the hope that the existing Joint High Level Group will foster the creation of the proper conditions for possible negotiations aimed at establishing an Economic Agreement. The IJBG encourages the Government of Japan and the European Union to identify all possible options and decide on any appropriate next steps in order to eliminate in the meantime existing obstacles to trade, investments and economic cooperation between Japan and the European Union and further strengthen of Japan-EU economic relations. IJBG agrees to follow up the development that will be done by the joint High Level Group on an Economic Agreement and continue to focus and come back on the issues, as appropriate.

2.2 Collaborations on research and technology innovation

Research activities are a pillar of industrial development in sectors characterized by a high innovative and technological content, such as aerospace, advanced robotics, energy, nanotechnologies, biotech and life sciences, ICT, etc., all sectors in which both Italy and Japan can boast excellent expertise, acknowledged worldwide.

IJBG Working Groups activities are focused on:

- the strengthening of the dialogue with important industrial partners for cooperation initiatives and the development of innovative projects through exhibitions, missions, seminars, bilateral meetings.
- promoting the development of human resources by promoting exchanges of students, lecturers and researchers between Italian and Japanese universities and research institutes.

2.3

Working Group "Energy"

The WG has focused the activity on renewable and nuclear energy. In particular on renewable energy Mitsubishi Heavy Industries has presented his activities and future projects, called "Smart Community" development. This type of business can be an effective way to reduce CO2 emissions globally. Participants from both Italy and Japan have recognized that it is economically more viable to implement in the developing countries than developed countries. Enel Green Power, Sharp, and ST Microelectronics have partnered together to build a photovoltaic factory based in Catania (Sicily). The plant will use the Sharp's proprietary thin film technology, and is expected to employ approx. 250 people in the initial phase. This represents a concrete example of bilateral collaboration between Italy and Japan in a high-tech sector, key in the area of green economy.

2.4

Working Group "Natural Disaster Management"

Rescue Robotics

Università La Sapienza of Rome and International Rescue System Institute (IRSI) cooperate in a project for the organization of the "Rescue Robotic Camp", an annual event for the development of robotics technologies in the sphere of safety and emergency situations. Moreover, La Sapienza University is also a key player in research projects calling for exchanges of scientists with several Japanese universities.

Ocean Observation Systems

The topic has been discussed between NEC, Istituto Nazionale di Vulcanologia e Geofisica and Selex Sistemi Integrati. In particular NEC's experience in Japan in submarine cable based seismometers/tsunami observation systems and technical architectures used in ocean bottom observation systems has been shared with Istituto Nazionale di Vulcanologia e Geofisica.

2.5 WG "Improvement of the Business Environment -Rules & Regulations"

Social Security Agreement

The Agreement between Japan and Italy provides that the workers in two countries shall be subject only to the legislation of one country in terms of social security and therefore will enable them to avoid "double imposition".

The Agreement was ratified by Japanese Parliament in 2009, and is in process of ratification by Italian Parliament. JBG recommends the early implementation of The Agreement which is believed to accelerate further business partnership between Italy and Japan.

Protection of IPR

Due to growth of internet and commercial globalization, infringement of Intellectual Property Right is becoming serious problem.

JBG participants analyzed several cases of IPR infringement and recognized the necessity to provide effective and appropriate means to protect intellectual rights to sustain development through R&D, and eliminate significant losses for right holders.

2.6 WG "Interchange among Small and Mid-Size Enterprises "

To promote and boost the interchange among small and medium size enterprises common initiatives have been presented between Miyagi Prefecture and Piedmont Region, Nagano Prefecture and Veneto Region. In addition to these projects this year's Assembly explores opportunities for new collaboration between Toyama and Italy in the pharmaceutical industry. With the impressive technological strength of SMEs in both Japan and Italy, JBG expects this working group session to promote further expansion of industrial exchanges in technology and innovation and to create successful model in SME collaboration. The session also confirmed the importance of further cooperation in promoting trade and investment among the business communities in both countries as well as between JETRO and ICE.