

From Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) San Francisco Office

June 2013

“Further invigoration of economic ties between California and Japan”

Dear Sir/Madam in the California Business Community,

I would like to start by explaining a bit about the activities of my organization, Japan External Trade Organization, JETRO.

JETRO is a non-profit government-affiliated body dedicated to promoting mutually beneficial trade and economic relationships between Japan and other countries or regions, such as the U.S. or the state of California. We enthusiastically help both US and Japanese companies seek opportunities for market expansion.

At my office, one of our priorities is to help US companies fully realize the potential that awaits them in Japan. That is to say, we help US companies find opportunities and partners in Japan, and establish Japanese subsidiaries. We provide a very broad range of services to help US companies and their products and services enter and thrive in the Japanese market. At the same time, we are very eager to help US companies establish their Asia headquarters and R&D facilities in Japan, in order to facilitate and enhance their Asia operations. As a trade and investment agency funded by the Japanese Government, we are able to offer all of these services at no cost to the US companies we serve.

Another one of our priorities is to encourage Japanese companies' innovative activities here in Silicon Valley and Bay Area. Entrepreneurship has always been, and will continue to be, the driving force of the economic evolution, and the most indispensable part of that is start-ups. We bring promising Japanese start-ups and small-to-medium enterprises to the U.S., and help them take advantage of the Eco-System for their globally oriented business development. At the same time, we try to help larger Japanese corporations to be more integrated into the Eco-System here to better position their business.

For these purposes, it is very important for us to explore and seek opportunities together and to grow our investment and trade activities for the sake of sustainable and mutually beneficial prosperity. While we occasionally experienced some serious issues between California and Japan during the last century, our mutual relationship has been relatively well-established and balanced in both trades and investments. In this century, we can build up even more mutually fruitful collaborations, because we have enormous possibilities to add a broader vision to our relationship for the future, reflecting recent economic and societal evolutions.

In this context, our mutual understanding through informative and personal interactions is critically important and indispensable. Reflecting on our organizational mission, I am willing to be the interactive bridge between California and Japan. From now on, I will continuously disseminate the most recent information on Japanese economy and society that is now trying to transform itself and JETRO's activities here in California and the United States.

As far as Japanese transformation is concerned, one of the most pressing needs involve the nation's electric grid. The shutdown of Japan's nuclear power plants following the 2011 earthquake has caused severe disruption across many parts of the country. Under this circumstance, as Japan's largest utility and owner of the stricken nuclear plant, Tokyo Electric Power Corporation, TEPCO, has reshuffled management and given more responsibility to innovators, in order to seek out more effective solutions on these issues.

Another example is UNIQLO, who opened their first retail store in San Francisco last fall. The CEO of UNIQLO is rapidly trying to nurture managerial skills within executives and expand operations all over the world, in order to position itself as a true global business such as H&M or ZARA. Here in San Francisco, they seem to be quite successful in expressing themselves so far.

Communications could be more fruitful by frequent interactions for the sake of mutual understanding. I would appreciate your feedback including questions, comments, suggestion and proposals.

Thank you very much for your attention.

I look forward to communicating with you soon again.

Best regards,



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