High Level Event

The role of Responsible Business Conduct in building resilience
Perspectives from Japan

Date: 21 January 2021
Venue: Virtual event (ZOOM with simultaneous translation)

Background

The COVID-19 crisis has exerted a substantial toll on economies and societies. The crisis is creating challenges for large and small businesses and the long-term livelihoods and wellbeing of millions of workers are under threat. International instruments on Responsible Business Conduct and International Labour Standards can help governments and business with ensuring that COVID 19 recovery measures build longer term resilience of supply chains, support future disaster and shock preparedness, and promote sustainable open trade and investment.

In parallel, the Trade and Sustainable Development chapter of the recently entered into force EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement calls on parties to recognise the importance of relevant internationally recognised principles and guidelines and in particular, recognises the OECD Guidelines for MNEs and the ILO Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy.

Working towards the common objectives, shared by both the implementation of the provisions of the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement related to trade and investment favouring sustainable development and building resilience in the context of the COVID recovery, a number of efforts in the EU and Japan look to strengthen the integration of Corporate Social Responsibility/ Responsible Business Conduct into policy and business-led initiatives – including, for example, the recently launched Japanese National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights (NAP) and the recent commitment from the EU to develop mandatory due diligence legislation.

Objective

Recognising the synergies between the role of Corporate Social Responsibility/ Responsible Business Conduct instruments in building resilience in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and efforts to implement provisions of the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement related to trade and investment favouring sustainable development, this event will bring together a broad range of stakeholders to discuss practical actions with a view to contributing to driving both agendas forward.

Speakers will draw on efforts already underway, including the Japan NAP, and share opportunities to strengthen implementation of Corporate Social Responsibility/ Responsible Business Conduct aligned with OECD and ILO instruments and through concrete actions for the immediate and longer term.

This event is being held under the Responsible Supply Chains in Asia Programme (RSCA). Opportunities to take the outcomes of this event forward in the context of engagement in Japan under the RSCA Programme will be considered by the Programme partners.

The event will be facilitated via zoom with simultaneous translation and is targeted to Japanese government officials, representatives of the European Union, business community, workers, civil society and concerned stakeholders including key experts.
## Tentative Agenda

### TIME (JST)\(^1\)

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<th>TIME</th>
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| 16:00 | **Opening remarks** | Mr. Hiroshi Tajima, Deputy Assistant Minister, Economic Affairs Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan  
Ms Ewa Synowiec, Director, Africa, Caribbean and Pacific, Asia (II), Trade and Sustainable Development, Green Deal, DG TRADE, European Commission |
| 16:15 | **Setting the scene** | Ms. Chihoko Asada, Assistant Director-General and Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific, ILO  
Mr. Masamichi Kono, Deputy Secretary-General, OECD |
| 16:30 | **Roundtable discussion: Reflections from key stakeholders** | Co-moderated by:  
Ms. Yumiko Murakami, Head, OECD Tokyo Centre  
Mr. Shinichi Takasaki, Director, ILO Office for Japan |
|      | **Key points to be addressed by speakers:** | Speakers:  
Mr. Naoto Ohmi, Executive Deputy President, Rengo  
Mr. Akihiro Ichimura, Chair, Sub-Committee on International Labor on Labor Legislation Committee, Keidanren  
Ms. Miwa Yamada, Director, Law and Institution Studies Group, Inter-disciplinary Studies Center, IDE-JETRO  
Ms. Yukiko Furuya, Board Chair, CSO Network Japan  
Ms. Yukako Kinoshita, CSR Committee Chair, Japan Business Council in Europe  
Mr. Daisuke Takahashi, Attorney at Law (Japan), Partner, Shinwa Sohgoh Law Offices  
Ms. Aiko Hirose, Director, OECD Division, MOFA  
Mr. Mikito Tomiyama, Director, Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs Division, MOFA  
Mr. Masakuni Hirashima, Deputy Assistant Minister for International Policy Planning, Minister’s Secretariat, Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare  
Ms. Naomi Sugo, Deputy Director Environment and Economy Division, Minister’s Secretariat, Ministry of the Environment |
| 17:50 | **Closing remarks** | Ms Madelaine Tuininga, Head of Unit, Multilateral Trade and Sustainable Development Policy, Green Deal, Conflict Minerals, DG TRADE, European Commission |

### Promoting responsible supply chains in Asia

*The Responsible Supply Chains in Asia (RCSA) programme\(^2\) is being implemented by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) with funding from the European Union. The RCSA programme aims to promote respect for human rights, including labour rights, and responsible business standards in global supply chains. This programme is carried out in partnership with Japan (an OECD member) and five partner economies, namely China, Thailand, Viet Nam, Philippines, and Myanmar.*

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\(^1\) 8 hour time difference between Brussels/Paris and Tokyo.  
\(^2\) [http://mneguidelines.oecd.org/globalpartnerships/responsible-supply-chains-asia](http://mneguidelines.oecd.org/globalpartnerships/responsible-supply-chains-asia)