



## **A message from Professor Gilbert Declerck, BJA President**

Dear Members,

This unprecedented crisis turned our lives upside down. The impact on our countries, our societies, our citizens, our families and friends, our hospitals, our companies and colleagues - it touches all of us on multiple dimensions.

Although many things are crumbling down, we can also see our people rising up to face the immense challenges. They show flexibility, a drive to keep going and a tremendous team spirit. Just as our Japanese friends have shown over and over again during natural disasters, we witness the resilience of people. We are creative and capable in adopting to the situation. I believe and I know that we will surmount this crisis to come out stronger and wiser.

Together.

As the President of the BJA and Board member of imec International I witness an intense cooperation inside of our multinational companies to work together. I am confident this will lead to more innovative waves of industrial work, connecting people more than ever with an accelerating trend of adopting new digital ways of work. Belgium has an open economy, located in the heart of Europe. The solidarity among all people in Belgium has proven amazing, and I am touched by it.

I am equally touched by the work delivered by our BJA Office and BJA Committees and Chairs, to remain in control and make constant adjustments. As a membership organization we thrive by bringing people together and serving them. Postponing events has been heartbreaking, but necessary. We cannot wait to welcome you all again once this crisis situation is over and meetings are allowed again in a safe environment.

Our tasks in the months ahead will adapt to the reality: we would like to continue serving our members and the broader Belgium-Japan relations to the best of our capabilities in these difficult times and beyond - even when physical meetings are and will be restricted for the foreseeable future. We will start organizing virtual events such as webinars, workshops and talks, etc.

We are also committed to communicate whenever and wherever necessary. The BJA Office invites you to contact them and have a BJA Virtual Tea Time Talk with all your questions for them or for the BJA experts in the different committees - or to just share your stories.

I can tell you they miss seeing each and all of you.

So do I.

Until we meet again, on- or off-line, please stay safe and healthy.

Gilbert Declerck

BJA President



*Beautiful momiji (Japanese maple) trees  
in the garden of Professor Declerck*