



TRADE FLOWS & CULTURAL NEWS

Number 88 - September 2010

EDITORIAL

Teamwork and rainbows

By Mr Hiroyuki Ochiai, Executive Vice-President of Toyota Motor Europe, BJA Vice-President and Nihonjinkai President

So it has finally ended, the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa, even though it was a long way away, it felt so close because there was no time difference. I have to admit, I was very excited by the endeavours of the Japanese team, and was sorry for fans of the Belgian team who could not participate.

As the evaluation of the team in the warm-up matches was quite low, and as the team was expected to lose in the group stage, it was hugely uplifting to see the team progress to the knockout stages.

Big teams with many superstars vanished one by one through the tournament, until just two remained, Spain and the Netherlands. Both teams from Europe, and both had progressed thanks to the strength of the team.

Soccer leagues in Europe have teams that are made up of players from across the world. Those players have different backgrounds, languages, cultures, customs and ways of thinking, but they are all settled into one team, and as you can imagine, it's the team that succeeds.

Each of the players in a match has a role, but it basically means, defend my goal and score in the other goal. There are always 21 other people in play, and there's a continuous matching of friend and foe. But in the end, we have a common goal, being part of our team and cooperating together, while also respecting what the opposition is there to do. But this is not just the mantra of the sports team, it's also what we do in daily life, and our economic wellbeing also depends on this mentality.

BJA is an association that works to deepen and strengthen the relations between Belgium and Ja-

pan through the shared experience of cultural and business activities. This idea is really recognised by the Japanese School in Brussels, that has a song which says "Build a rainbow between Belgium and Japan", a fantastic sentiment to share between our countries. It is a great honour to be the Vice-Chairman of the BJA at this time, and I very much feel the weight of this responsibility. In particular, I want to ensure that I am "Building the rainbow".

Coming back to soccer, I think about Kawashima-san, the goalkeeper of the Japanese team in South Africa, who has just joined Lierse S.K. in the Belgian Jupiler League. While the goalkeeper is the last line of defence against the opponent, he also needs to provide the right instruction to the team as to what is happening on the pitch. There is an expectation that Kawashima-san does his part through "being part of a team, and cooperating together" which will be challenging as there is some assumption that a Japanese team member cannot communicate so easily.

So, I would like to demonstrate my sincere wish, like Kawashima-san, to be "building the rainbow" and not to be defeated by that challenge.



Mr Hiroyuki Ochiai

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VIP Visit to Les Carrières de la Pierre Bleue Belge Les Carrières de la Pierre Bleue Belge 社見学

Thursday 17 June 2010 - Neufvilles



The participants gathering for a group photo before the visit.



The participants eagerly listen to the explanation giving by Mrs Julie Abraham, Managing Director of Les Carrières de la Pierre Bleue Belge.



The site of "Clypot" in Neufvilles, one of their three quarries in the Soignies region of Belgium.



A huge block of blue stone being sawed.

Thanks to the generous support by Mrs Julie Abraham, Managing Director of Les Carrières de la Pierre Bleue Belge, the Belgium-Japan Association & Chamber of Commerce took pleasure in inviting its company members to a private visit of the production site quarry of Clypot in Neufvilles, one of the most important quarries for Petit Granit-Belgian Blue Stone.

At the site, Mrs Abraham together with Mr Olivier Scaillet, PR Manager, kindly greeted the participants upon arrival with refreshments and gave a thorough but personal presentation of the company, which is among the leaders in quarrying, sawing and crafting blue stone in Europe.

During the guided visit, the members were impressed on one hand by the immensity of the site, and on the other hand by all the processes that unveil the history of the earth - ending up with top notch quality products with various finishes and uses.

The visit adjourned with a very nice cocktail with participants continuing to exchange comments on this exclusive experience and some others listened to the practical advice how to make their own blue stone at home even more beautiful.



The 6th BJA Golf Cup and Golf Initiation 第6回BJAゴルフコンペとゴルフイニシエーション

Saturday 3 July 2010 - Golf Château de la Bawette



Participants for Golf Initiation concentrating in taking a long shot.



Some of the participants wishing this cool Lexus RX450h to be among the many splendid prizes.



(left) Mr Yoshikazu Matsumoto, Managing Director of Cast Inc, receiving the winning prizes from Mr Eric Van Hoof of Ernst & Young and Mr Arie Vos of Acerta Consult.



HE Ambassador Jun Yokota of Embassy of Japan to Belgium receives the winning team trophy for his Japan team from Mrs Anja Oto-Kellens, Executive Director of BJA.

On Saturday 3 July, the Cultural Committee of the Belgium-Japan Association & Chamber of Commerce took pleasure in inviting members and partners to the 6th BJA Golf Cup and Golf Initiation held at the Golf Château de la Bawette.

Over 25 golfers took a challenge to play on the hilly but beautiful course of Bawette with the thrilling sound of thunder in the background. For the Golf Initiation, another 20 members and partners gathered for a fun and sometime frustrating experience to take a proper hit on small golf balls.

Under the great support by the BJA member companies mentioned here below, the BJA welcomed



all participants with a tasty lunch packet, provided them with refreshments during and after the game, and delivered a number of fantastic prizes for both Golf Cup and Golf Initiation group. The team competition so called 'EU vs Japan' Cup was headed by H.E. Ambassador Yokota of the Japanese Embassy of Belgium, for the Japan team and Mr Robert Lievemont for the EU team. Out of 6 consecutive years of The BJA Cup, the Japan team won for the 6th time victory and H.E. Yokota received the winning replica.

Thanks wholeheartedly to the generous sponsorships and the enthusiastic participation by the members and partners, the BJA could successfully realize this sporting event so exceptional and so unforgettable.



The pictures are by courtesy of Mrs Françoise Demeter of E. & H. De Beukelaer.



INTERVIEW

A Japanese View of Belgium - Ted (Tomoyuki) Watanabe, President Eval Europe

By Mr Kris Sierens, Managing Partner BeforeTheHype and Editorial Committee Member



Once a researcher, always a researcher. That is what Ted Watanabe certainly believes, even though he is now in an executive leadership position rather than pure research. He is constantly looking for better ways to improve a product, better ways to compare results. Sometimes this even includes comparing countries. In his experience, Belgium is not only a comfortable temporarily home with friendly people with a strong work ethic, it is also an example of excellent co-existence of many nationalities and cultures. This is something he admires very much. It constitutes a genuine value and reason to build a future for his company here in Belgium. It is something that creates many positive opportunities and experiences.

Mr Watanabe is the president of Eval Europe. They produce plastic film barriers for the food industry. These films keep air out, enabling the preservation of food for much longer periods. The company was started in 1997 and choose Antwerp as its location. In the early 1990's, Mr Watanabe was in Dusseldorf to research market opportunities for their products in Europe. They chose Antwerp for the Ineos site location, the fact that Belgium is at the heart of Europe, and the reasonable good climate to produce their products. The decisive factor however was that people in Belgium work hard and most speak several different languages.

After an early career in Japan, Mr Watanabe came to Germany for seven years, followed by three years in the United States. When he arrived in Belgium in June 2009, he discovered a very internationally oriented country and one with an extraordinary degree of globalization. He also noted that Belgians are more independent while Japanese put more emphasis on the group and society. He quickly discovered that the key to successfully working together is to always try to listen and to find the right solution together. The staff is therefore mixed. There are six Japanese employees working together with 100 Belgians.

Mr Watanabe has a background as a chemical engineer. Before he came here, he was the head of the Eval R&D Department at Kurashiki. Being the president means that research is done by other people. However, he can't resist the chance to pass through the R&D laboratory whenever possible to discuss ongoing projects with the

researchers. Because of his extensive experience in living abroad, he finds the Belgian and European way of doing business to be a good middle way. It fits somewhere between the Japanese and the American approach.

Ted Watanabe lives in Antwerp, but his family has remained in Japan. How he spends his leisure time depends upon the season. In winter, he likes to ski, but in summer, he loves to work in the garden. Having a house with a garden is a great advantage when living in the city. He also likes Tai Chi, surfing, playing golf, and visiting museums, especially those with outstanding collections or exhibitions of paintings. Mr Watanabe is very fond of classical music, which runs in the family. His wife is an opera singer in Japan. On the gastronomical level, Belgium is unquestionably a paradise, but he still prefers the Japanese approach to service.

For a Belgian business to be successful in Japan, Mr Watanabe stresses focus on building solid relationships and strong commitment. Japanese business people will appreciate that, even if you have to try many times without success. It is crucial to observe as much as possible, but most important of all, be a friend.

YES VII Program (Young Executive Stay) Commercial export mission to Japan

13-21 November 2010

The selected candidates from Belgium

This year, the YES program, a commercial export project under the auspices of H.R.H. Prince Philippe of Belgium will be held for the 14th year (the so called 7th edition YES VII).

The YES program aims to train young executives from Belgium and Luxembourg in successful Japanese business practices, at moderate costs, and in a short amount of time. For this purpose, the Belgium-Japan Association & Chamber of Commerce, in cooperation with the Belgian-Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce in Japan will organize a one-week training program in Japan, beginning with two briefing sessions in Belgium.

The training in Japan will consist of 1 day of intensive seminar training and company visits and the remaining days of introducing each participant to the potential partners and custom-

ers in his/her business area. Each participant will enjoy the support of a 'business coach', an experienced business person residing in Japan. In addition, students of Sophia University will help the participants with market studies and preparation.

We hereby would like to thank the organizations that support the preparation and the briefing sessions: The Embassies, the FPS Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade, Cooperation & Development, the regional export agencies and FujiFilm Europe.

The co-organizers hereby proudly present the selected YES VI participants from Belgium:

BEAUNEN

Sector: Maternity Lingerie - Innovative and unique breastfeeding bra

Candidates:

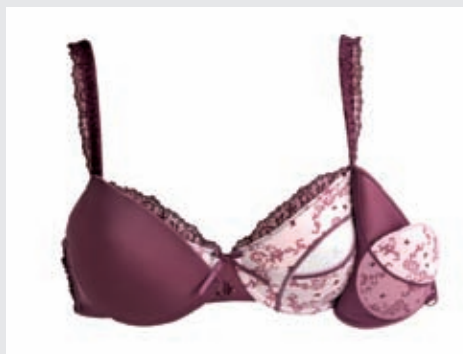
Mrs Martine Boonen, Owner and Managing Director (36 years old)

Mrs Eva Boonen, Owner and Managing Director (35 years old)

Target: "We are hoping to find a distributor that can be a perfect fit for our company. Our ideal distribution partner understands the segment of maternity and breastfeeding, and the importance of endorsers such as midwives. We target 5% share of breastfeeding lingerie."

More at: www.mammae.be

beau
nen



mammae

VANPARYS-CANDI HOLD

Sector: Confectionery - Manufacturer

Candidate: Nicolas De Greef, Manager (40 years old)

Target: "To enter into business with Japanese import firms."

More at: www.vanparys-candihold.be



MODERNA PRODUCTS

Sector: Plastic injection moulding - Pet industry

Candidate: Mr Bart Bonte, Owner (39 years old)

Target: "To find a maximum of 2 distributors who could represent our range of products (with/without their private label) in Japan. From then build a long term relationship with them, as we do with our other customers (partners). The target is to obtain a fair part of market share within our business."

More at: www.modernaproducts.be



VAL-SAINT-LAMBERT

Sector: Crystal manufacturer

Candidate: Mr Philippe Onclin, Administrator (26 years old)

Target: "Our main objective is to develop the Japanese market. Our aim, in turnover is; First year: 15.000 euro; Second year: 30.000 euro; Third year: 45.000 euro; Fourth and fifth year: 75.000 euro."

Our objective is to have a few direct contacts with customers but mostly to develop relations with a Japanese distributor."

More at: www.val-saint-lambert.com



DINGENS BG

Sector: Production of barometers and clocks

Candidate: Mr Paul Dingens, Owner (45 years old)

Target: “Dingens produces high end, innovative barometers and clocks with a (mainly) contemporary design. Our latest development of a patented precision barometer is presented at the World Expo 2010 Shanghai, China, as an example of a sustainable and ecological innovation. The new barometer is an ecological alternative for the mercury barometer, which has been the standard worldwide for precision pressure measurements for 4 centuries. The product does not only give a useful weather forecast, it also belongs to the rich scientific

and cultural heritage of the Belgian region and has a fascinating historical background.

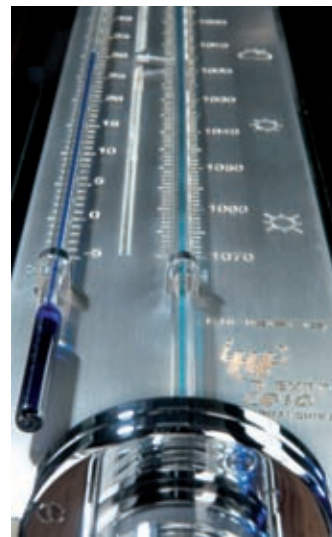
We wish to market these high end products in Japan through an importer or local agents. We want to obtain a distribution both for the consumer as for the professional user.

We offer a wide range of products and work with famous Belgian designers to obtain a maximum chance to enter the Japanese (design) market.”

More at:

www.innovacelli-barometer.com

www.barometers.com



MANAU

Sector: Jewellery and fashion accessories

Candidate: Luc Willems, owner and business manager (47 years old)

Target: “To meet agents, wholesalers, resellers, in our domain in order to set up a distribution of our collection in Japan.

Our goal is to increase our annual turnover with 30%, building a strong distribution of our brand into the Japanese market.”

More at: www.helgaverlinden.be



DIRECTORY 2010 年度會員名簿

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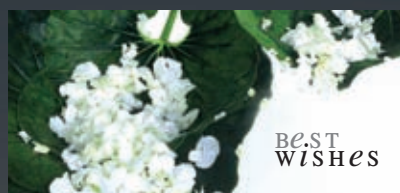
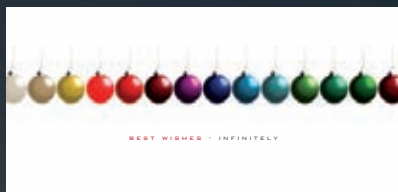
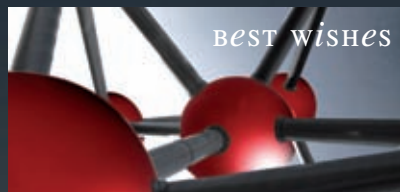
The Belgium-Japan Association & Chamber of Commerce is happy to present you our seventh issue of the BJA Directory. The BJA Directory has the objective to be a comprehensive source of information on the BJA-members. In addition, a list of the data of 260 Japanese companies in Belgium is added as well. The directory is a handy reference on Belgian-Japanese business performance.

By introducing the members, it has the aim to be a powerful resource for building, managing and expanding networking and business opportunities, cultural exchange, finding jobs, evaluating goods and services, and

researching trends or publications. Our directory puts our members in direct contact with other members, and interested parties can easily locate and contact our members. It assists business expansion on a local, regional, national and/or international level, as well as it enhances the opportunities for fostering cultural and friendship relations between the citizens of the two nations. It offers an excellent view on the importance of the network of the Belgian and Japanese companies in Belgium, and therefore is a unique resource publication to identify "who is who" in Belgium with regard to Japanese business and vice versa.

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The committees of the BJA & Chamber of Commerce - would you like to be active in one of them?

日白協会兼商工会議所(以下、BJA)におけるビジネス関連の設置委員会より 委員会への参入にご興味ありますか?

BJA では日本とベルギー間の交流に豊富な知識と経験を持つ企業の代表や専門家の方々の支援の下、イベント各種、ロビー活動や定期的な委員会の会合を通じて両国間の様々なレベルの交流関係を深めることはもとより、BJA 会員の皆様のビジネスの更なる発展に貢献できるよう取り組んでいます。

下記に記載の BJA ビジネス関連の設置委員会では新たな委員会会員を歓迎しております。企業会員の方ならどなたでもご応募頂けます。是非、ご検討下さい。

The BJA has the pleasure and honor to work with professionals who bring a wealth of skills, experience and diversity of Belgium-Japan relations to the BJA through the activities, lobbying, events and committees.

We are open to welcome new committee members into some designated committees keeping in mind the balance of Japan-Belgium, at the following committees:

Investment Committee

The objective of the BJA Investment Committee is to promote investment from Japan to Belgium on the one hand and investment from Belgium to Japan on the other hand.

To realise the objective, this committee:

- › creates a network of people and information through regular and ad hoc meetings,
- › carries out research, makes recommendations and prepares publications, and
- › acts as a partner to governmental and non-governmental organisations that are willing to promote, facilitate or realise investment.

The Committee is composed of more or less equal number of Belgian and Japanese members. The committee members represent the main actors in the promotion of investment such as governmental organisations, investment agencies, financial institutions, investment advisors and investors themselves. Apart from its members, specialists and investors may be invited to meetings. Meetings are held four times a year.

BJA 投資委員会は、日本からベルギーへの投資とベルギーから日本への投資を促進することを目的としています。この目的を達成するため、委員会の会合を通じて人と情報のネットワークを創り、調査を行い勧告や出版物を作成します。また投資を促進するために、政府、非政府機関と共同で活動を行うこともあります。投資委員会は、投資促進に関係している政府機関、投資公社、金融機関、アドバイザーならびに投資を行っている企業の代表によって構成されています。会合は年 4 回開催され、通常のメンバーに加え、専門家、投資企業などが参加することもあります。

EU Committee

The EU Committee is focusing at finding ways to bridge the gap between EU activities and the member's business interest. The goals of this committee are, therefore, to continue to listen to the members, to try to identify their needs, and to organize meetings with EU Representatives and inform members on European issues accordingly. In order to increase its visibility towards the EU institutions, the EU Committee will continue to "coordinate" more and more different initiatives together with other European sister organizations.

EU 委員会は、2002 年 12 月に発足、2003 年より活動を開始しました。会員各位のビジネスに広範な影響を及ぼす EU の政策と法令について注視し、会員各位が事前に必要な措置を取ることができるよう助力しています。

会員各位のニーズを鋭意把握し、それに応じた EU 政策担当者との会合の企画や EU に関する情報の提供を行っており、また EU に対する会員各位へのプレゼンスを向上させるため、他の関連団体と連携し、EU に対する様々な働きかけを継続しています。

Membership Committee

The goals of the Membership Committee are to develop and sustain membership. The committee strives to respond to the needs of the members, and is constantly searching ways to expand membership and to offer more qualitative networking opportunities to the members. The committee develops tools such as the Annual Directory, organise seminars on specific subjects, and prepare some recommendations and proposals to the Executive Committee to develop the scope of the BJA for the benefits of all stake holders. Members of the committee are businessmen and women from well-known Belgian and Japanese companies from a variety of sectors.

BJA 会員管理委員会は会員の発展と維持管理を目的に活動しております。皆様の満足を目指して、各種会員の方のニーズにお答えするべく日夜努力を重ねております。会員管理委員会では質の高いビジネスチャンスを提供する為に、様々なトピックのセミナー、年間会員名簿をはじめ、会員全ての利益となる様々なイベントの提案をエグゼクティブ・コミッティーにしております。同委員会のメンバーは、ベルギー及び日本の企業人で構成されております。

Legal & Tax Committee

The Legal and Tax Committee has a two-fold purpose: to provide legal and tax support and assistance to the BJA and its various committees and, in collaboration with the other rel-

evant committees (especially the Investment and the EU Committees), to review legal and tax issues that may affect Japanese investment in Belgium and Belgian investment in Japan. The Legal and Tax Committee members meet on a regular basis.

法務税務委員会の目的は主に二つに絞られます。まず法律上の問題につき、BJA 及び諸委員会をサポートすること、そして他の関係委員会、特に投資委員会及び EU 委員会と協力して、日本企業による対ベルギー投資及びベルギー企業による対日投資に影響を与えるような法的問題を検討していくことです。

Editorial Committee

This committee is responsible for drafting and editing the quarterly newsletter Trade Flows & Cultural News (March, June, September, December), as well as for most other BJA publications.

The Trade Flows & Cultural News focuses on the following columns: Facts & Figures on Japan, EU-Japan relations, Focus on Belgium, Success Story, Cultural News, Actions/Events/Fairs, Friendship Committee flash info, Agenda, Personalia, ...

This newsletter has a run of 2.500 copies. The Editorial Committee meets four times a year.

出版委員会は、“Trade Flows and Cultural News” という英字ニュースレター（四半期毎、発行部数 2500）を編集しています。この出版物にはベルギー、欧州及び日本の商業・経済の動向のレポートや文化、イベント情報、友好委員会等のコラムなどが掲載されています。その他、出版委員会では貿易・投資に関する調査報告書なども手掛けています。

BJA 設置委員会に関する詳しい情報は BJA のホームページ www.bja.be/about_organisation をご参照下さい。また、入会ご希望や設置委員会に関するご質問は BJA 事務局までお問い合わせ下さい。

BJA 専務理事、アニャ・大藤・ケレンス

Tel: 02-644 13 33, oto-kellens@bja.be

If you are interested or would like more information, please do not hesitate to have a further look into the committees at: www.bja.be/about_organisation

or to contact us at:

Anja Oto-Kellens, BJA Executive Director

Tel: 02-644 13 33, oto-kellens@bja.be

NEW EU INVESTMENT PACKAGE SET TO BOOST TRADE AND UNDERPIN INVESTOR RIGHTS

The European Commission took the first step towards a comprehensive European international investment policy with two initiatives. A policy paper lays out how the new EU competence on foreign direct investment can be used to boost competitiveness and trade resulting in growth and jobs. At the same time a draft regulation sets up transitional arrangements offering guarantees on existing or pending bilateral investment treaties concluded between EU and Non-EU countries. Under the Lisbon Treaty, investment policy will be developed and managed at the European level giving the EU a strengthened negotiating hand to deliver better investment protection for all European businesses.

For further information: A Question and Answer sheet can be found at: <http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/press/index.cfm?id=590>

Source: <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/907&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

THE EUROPEAN UNION AND JAPAN SIGN MUTUAL RECOGNITION OF AUTHORISED ECONOMIC OPERATORS

European Commission

Taxation and Customs Union

24 June 2010 - Brussels

Director-General Walter Deffaa of Taxation and Customs Union of the European Commission and Director-General Toshiyuki Ohto of Customs and Tariff Bureau of the Ministry of Finance, Japan signed today the Decision establishing mutual recognition of Authorised Economic Operators (AEOs) between the EU and Japan.

This mutual recognition offers enhanced trade facilitation opportunities provided by customs to certified trustworthy traders on both sides who have invested in securing their supply chains. In this way customs can also concentrate on high risks.

The signature took place in the presence of EU Commissioner for Taxation and Customs Union, Audit and Anti-fraud, Algirdas Šemeta and the Ambassador of Japan to the European Union, Nobutake Odano.

ASIA-EUROPE MEETING 8 (ASEM8) IN BRUSSELS

Since the inception of the ASEM process in 1996, Asia and Europe have kept their biennial appointment with remarkable regularity. It must be taken as a sign of the depth of commonality between them. Indeed, both regions have grown out of a long and turbulent history, both pride themselves of age old traditions and both present a wealth in cultural diversity. They have a common predilection for organized and structured relationships between nations which by experience foster security and stability. They both strive for an economic model that is balanced between consumption, saving and investment and that can prove sustainable over the long term. They similarly place human development at the center of their policies. They both favor multilateral and equitable governance of the world rather than zones of influence and relationships based on power.

The ASEM 8 Summit in Brussels on 4 and 5 October this year will be the eighth privileged occasion to give expression to the common views of Asia and Europe. Representing 58 % of global population, 50 % of global GDP and over 60% of global trade, this gathering will hopefully inspire the world community. Indeed, a month later, the first G-20 meeting to take place in a non G-8 country will gather in Seoul, Republic of Korea, to shape the policies that are required in the face of the financial and economic crisis. A few weeks thereafter, the 16th Conference of the Parties of the Climate Change Convention will meet in Cancun, Mexico, to pursue the efforts started at the Copenhagen Summit of December last year.

ASEM Leaders will address these and other global challenges but they will naturally also focus on the relationship between the two regions. They will seek to strengthen their political dialogue, enhance their trade and investment relationship,

expand people to people and cultural exchanges and further develop ASEM as their common strategic asset. The agenda is being established collectively, in all transparency and through an inclusive process of consultation involving every ASEM partner. That process will continue until the very day of the Summit. ASEM 8 is truly the Summit of each European and each Asian partner.

In addition, it will be the summit of the other constituent parts of the ASEM process. A People's Forum, a Business Forum and a Parliamentary Forum will be held in parallel to the gathering of the Heads of State and of Government. Also ASEM's only institution, the Asia Europe Foundation, will organize a 'Connecting Civil Societies' Conference in the margin of the Summit.

In the run up, preparations will be intensive. Under the principle of 'issue-based leadership', one of the most dynamic features of ASEM, Asian and European partners will organize a dozen of events of high relevance to the evolving Summit agenda. Independent centers and institutions alike will program discussions on the issues at stake. Host country Belgium will certainly play its part. Actually, it is enthusiastic about all these initiatives. They are evidence of the spirit of dialogue and of cooperation that makes ASEM so worthwhile.

Finally, as a testimony of ASEM's unrelenting success, the upcoming ASEM Summit of Brussels will also admit new members. Russia, Australia and New Zealand will join in the proceedings for the first time.

For more information on ASEM and more, please visit:
www.asem8.be



Signing ceremony of the EU-Japan mutual recognition decision © European Union, 2010 | Brussels | p-017270-00-06 | 24/06/2010

With this decision, two major trading partners, the EU and Japan, establish the equivalence of their AEOs programmes and provide for recognition of each other's security certified operators. Japanese AEOs will receive benefits by European customs that are comparable to those received by EU AEOs; Japan will apply the same for EU AEOs in Japan.

"This Decision on mutual recognition of AEOs is an important milestone both in trade facilitation and in securing the global supply chain" said Commissioner Šemeta at the signing ceremony at the World Customs Organization (WCO) headquarters in Brussels. He also "reaffirmed the EU's continued commitment to the work of the WCO, in particular in strategic areas

such as IPR enforcement, supply chain security, risk management, capacity building, coordinated border management and Globally Networked Customs"

Ambassador Odano highlighted that "at the last EU-Japan Summit meeting, leaders called for more action oriented partnerships." He emphasised that "the signing of AEO mutual recognition is a good example of a very active and action-oriented cooperation between the Customs authorities of Japan and the EU."

Source: Delegation of the European Union to Japan

EU-Japan news

EU-JAPAN BUSINESS ROUND TABLE

"EU-Japan business: gearing up for the next decade", 28 April 2010 - Tokyo



Messrs. Tadashi Okamura (Advisor to the Board, Toshiba Co., Ltd.) and Jean-Yves Le Gall (Chairman & CEO, Arianespace), handed over a set of recommendations from EU and Japanese business to Japan Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama, European Council President Herman Van Rompuy and European Commission President José Manuel Barroso, at the official residence of the Prime Minister of Japan in Tokyo. The three leaders were meeting on the occasion of the annual EU-Japan Summit, held in Tokyo.

Business leaders request a new start for EU-Japan economic relations

Messrs. Okamura and Le Gall are co-chairing the EU-Japan Business Round Table, a forum of some 50 Japanese and European business leaders, which had met in Tokyo on 19 and 20 April and had agreed recommendations to public authorities. The recommendations address the future of the EU-Japan economic relationship after the "2001-2011 EU-Japan Action Plan" elapses next year and focus on three priorities:

1. Trade and investment barriers.

The Round Table recommends that, if they conclude that sufficient progress has been made towards effective solution and implementation of specific non-tariff issues identified by Summit leaders when they met last year, the EU and Japanese Authorities should discuss with all stakeholders whether a binding trade and investment agreement would be able to deliver where current dialogues have not.

More specifically, the Round Table recommends that both authorities start negotiations on a balanced and mutually beneficial bilateral agreement, as soon as the EU and Japanese Authorities agree that the right conditions are met, in order to promote an ambitious expansion of trade and investment between the EU and Japan.

2. Climate change and fast-growing demand for energy, raw material and food products.

Business leaders urge the EU and Japan to reinforce their co-operation in addressing these common challenges resulting in harmful supply shortages.

3. EU-Japan R&D cooperation.

The Round Table underlined the importance of developing EU-Japan R&D cooperation in sectors such as space/defence/aeronautics, biotechnology, e-Health, green ITC, supercomputer, substituting key raw materials, carbon capture and storage, power storage, photovoltaic.

Mr Okamura indicated that Mr Hiromasa Yonekura, Chairman of Sumitomo Chemical Co., Ltd., had been chosen to succeed him as Co-Chair of the EU-Japan Business Round Table from now on. Mr Le Gall added: "This year's EU-Japan Summit is launching a complete rethink of our bilateral relations. Business leaders urge leaders of both sides to take advantage of this opportunity to set a new framework able to significantly reduce the regulatory barriers that hinder the development of trade and investment between the EU and Japan."

Source: Delegation of the European Union to Japan
www.deljpn.ec.europa.eu/modules/media/news/2010/100429c.html



BRT Photos by T. Aizawa, © EU, 2010

LAUNCH OF WWW.EUCIRCLE.JP A WEBSITE FOR UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN JAPAN AND THE EU

This site is designed for Japanese college students, with the purpose of encouraging cultural exchange and deepening mutual understanding between Japan and the EU. It allows viewers to experience the diversity of the EU through blogs written by EU citizens studying in Japan and messages from Japanese students living in EU Member States. The site gives readers a firsthand experience of life in the EU, via articles describing the experiences of EU citizens living and working in Japan, a corner introducing European lifestyles, and information on upcoming EU-related events.

www.eucircle.jp

Source : Delegation of the European Union to Japan E-mail Bulletin Thu 20/05/2010

19TH JAPAN-EU SUMMIT

28 April 2010 - Tokyo

Mr Yukio Hatoyama, Prime Minister of Japan, Mr Herman Van Rompuy, President of the European Council, and Mr José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission, met in Tokyo on 28 April 2010 for the 19th Summit between Japan and the European Union (EU). Mr Katsuya Okada, Foreign Minister of Japan, Mr Masayuki Naoshima, Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan, Baroness Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, and Mr Karel De Gucht, European Commissioner for Trade, also attended the Summit to assist their leaders.

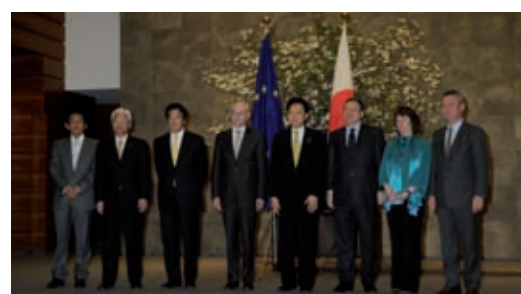
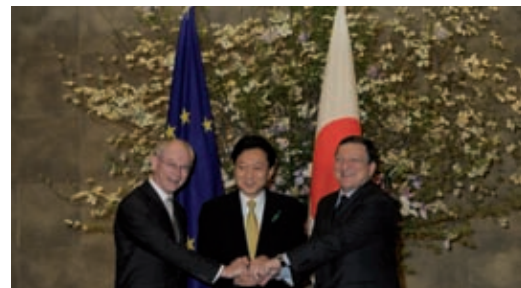
As well as discussing Japan-EU bilateral relations, Summit leaders exchanged views on a number of key international questions. At the conclusion of the Summit, the leaders concurred that the discussions had been useful for charting a path for the future strengthening of the relationship. Summit leaders noted with satisfaction that they had been able to firm up Japan-EU common positions on important global and regional challenges facing the international community.

In a number of areas, they were able to identify concrete short-term cooperation priorities.

The main points emerging from the Summit are summarised below.

- › Year of renewal: towards a more action-oriented partnership
- › Other concrete Japan-EU initiatives identified at the Summit
- › Japan – EU cooperation in Afghanistan
- › Japan's contribution to the EU Common Security and Defence Policy
- › Joint efforts on counter-piracy
- › Japan-EU consultation mechanisms
- › Japan – EU cooperation on key global issues
- › Climate change and environment
- › Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)
- › Promoting Peace and Security
- › Regional Issues
- › Global economy, finance and trade

Source: Delegation of the European Union to Japan
www.deljpn.ec.europa.eu/modules/media/2010/100429.html



Photos by N. Aizawa, © EU, 2010



news from the members

BUSINESS MEETS GASTRONOMY

Belgium is without doubt a strong brand. It exhibits a vast variety of proven strengths. But how best to get that message across? In the recently published book “Belgian chefs”, two main features are not only proposed, but also very artfully combined with each other.

The book highlights twenty-five areas of Belgian competency. Each is represented by a company and its CEO. Strong leadership combined with creativity and committed working spirit and highly skilled personal traits characterizes Belgian business leaders. The huge number of established competencies is to be found in both its large corporations as well as international SMEs. Taken together, these effectively reflect the true nature and extent of Belgian business and innovation.

However, Belgium is also at the world's very top echelon when it comes to gastronomy. A knowledge base without equal is combined with a level of creativity that makes it unique among all countries and not just those in Europe. Where else will you find so many top restaurants in a small



quiet region? A master chef is introduced in each chapter.

In the book, both ‘chefs’ (CEOs and Chefs) are brought together with the mission to create a dish, related to the company. While cooking together, they share their common visions and ideas, discovering their mutual drive to be the best. The book is a collection of twenty-five stories about inspiring people who learned a great deal from each other and who clearly illustrate the genuine Belgian brand to the world.

The book is conceived and published by BeforeTheHype. Images are by Mike Van Cleven and Wim Robberechts. A foreword has also been written by BJA President Thomas Leysen.

The following companies are included in the book

AppliTek, Belgian Post International, Bister, Desobry, Durobor, Ecuphar, Enfinity, Eurogentec, Extremis, Natale, Global Gas Solutions, Harbour of Zeebruges, Ice Watch, Imec, Kinepolis, Le Pain Quotidien, LS Bedding, Melotte, Modular, P&V Group, Pinto & Co, Spadel, The Sniffers, Van de Velde, UZ Brussel.

The following restaurants are represented

Bon Bon - *Christophe Hardiquet*, C-Jean - *Jason Blanckaert*, Clandestino - *Wouter Van der Vieren*, De Godevaart - *Dave De Belder*, Den Gouden Harynck - *Philippe Serruys*, Hertog Jan - *Gert De Mangeleer*, Het Gebaar - *Roger van Damme*, Hof van Cleve - *Peter Goossens*, In de Wulf - *Kobe Desramaults*,



KANEKA AND EUROGENTEC S.A. JOIN FORCES

15 June 2010

Eurogentec is pleased to announce that its majority shareholders have entered into an agreement with Kaneka by which the latter will acquire a majority stake in Eurogentec S.A. The Delwart Family remains on the Board of Directors as an important minority shareholder.

Through this agreement, Eurogentec becomes the spearhead of Kaneka in the field of genomics, proteomics, and biologics, joining R&D forces within those fields in Japan, Belgium and the United States.

"Thanks to a strong technical and scientific expertise as well as a customer oriented culture, Eurogentec has become a recognized leading solution provider for the Life Science Research, the Diagnostics and the Biologics Contract Manu-

facturing markets. It is essential that we leverage on our strengths and further reinforce our presence as a supplier of innovative products and services. Joining forces with Kaneka will enable us to accelerate our research and developments in the Life Science sector. This partnership will allow us to reinforce our production capacity in the Biopharmaceuticals contract manufacturing unit as well as our capacity to develop and launch highly technical products that respond to the needs of the Life Science community, including the fast growing molecular Diagnostic market" explains Jean-Pierre Delwart, CEO of Eurogentec. Dr Lieven Janssens from Kaneka says : "we are looking to maintain and develop all activities of Eurogentec, and po-

sition this company as our bridgehead in the field of Life Sciences. Our immediate intention is to make a significant investment within Eurogentec in order to increase their capacity in Biopharmaceuticals contract manufacturing unit." Jean-Pierre Delwart Eurogentec's CEO will remain aboard the Company in a leading role in continuing to grow Eurogentec's business and facilitating integration with Kaneka. Kaneka intends to maintain and further develop the 5 state-of-the-art facilities of Eurogentec, in Liège (Belgium) (2), in San Diego and Fremont (California), in Toyama (Japan), together with their valued employees.

Source: www.eurogentec.com

Jacques Marit - Dimitri Marit, La Paix - David Martin, La Plage d'Amée - Pierre-Antoine Langhendries, l'Air du Temps - Sang-Hoon, l'Eau Vive - Pierre Résimont, l'Essentiel - Raphaël Adam, Le Chalet de la Forêt - Pascal Devalkeneer, Le Pain Quotidien - Alain Coumont, Le Prieuré Saint-Géry - Vincent Gardinal, Li

Cwerneu - Arabelle Meirlaen, Luzine - Jeroen Meus, Magis - Dimitry Lysens, Rock Fort - Hermes Vanliefde, De Schone van Boskoop - Wouter Keersmaekers, 't Zilte - Viki Geunes, The Chocolate Line - Dominique Persoone.

Source: www.beforethehype.com



news from the members

AWARD OF THE “ORDER OF THE RISING SUN, GOLD AND SILVER STAR” TO MR RENÉ PEETERS



On 29 April 2010, the Government of Japan has decided to award the “Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Star” to Mr René Peeters for his contributions for the promotion of the bilateral relation and the strengthening of the friendship between Japan and Belgium. Mr René Peeters was decorated by H.E. Mr Yukio Hatoyama, Prime Minister of Japan and was received in audience by His Majesty the Emperor, Akihito on May 7th 2010 at the Imperial Palace in Tokyo.

The Belgium-Japan Association & Chamber of Commerce would like to congratulate BJA member, Mr Peeters, with this great honor bestowed upon him.

Mr René Peeters has served as Honorary Consul General of Japan in the Flemish Region since July 2000, and has devoted himself to promoting of the Japan-Belgium relations, through providing consular assistances to Japanese nationals, supporting the activities of Japanese companies in the Flemish Re-

gion as well as responding to inquiries about Japan.

Mr Peeters’ link with Japan started even before he was appointed as the Japanese Honorary Consul General. When he was working for Agfa-Gevaert N.V., he had the occasion to work together with the Japanese during the many visits he made at that time. Through this experience, he was enchanted by the rich culture of Japan and its polite and gentle people.

Mr Peeters was board member of Agfa-Gevaert from 1988 until 1999 and was also CEO of Agfa-Gevaert N.V. between 1994 and 1997.

In addition to many board memberships of other council memberships, Mr Peeters was Chairman of the Belgian Federation of Chemical Industries and board member of the Federation of Enterprises in Belgium (FEB) between 1996 and 1999.

NYK OPENS NEW CROSS-DOCK WAREHOUSE IN HERENTALS

As from May 2010, the Night Distribution division of NYK Logistics North Continent has performed cross-dock operations out of a new warehouse in Herentals, located in the Flanders region of Belgium.

With a surface area of 6,000 m², the available space in the Herentals facility is almost twice that of the previous warehouse, which was destroyed by a fire during the night of 2nd/3rd February 2010. Inside the new warehouse, docks and a loading bay are planned for the unloading of shuttle trucks and the loading of distribution trucks.

“Herentals is the ideal location for the new cross-dock centre because, not only is it centrally located for a Benelux operation, but it is also close to the parts warehouses of several customers that distribute large volumes of spare parts”, states Eric Derbaix, business unit manager of NYK’s Night Distribution services.

With its extensive network of hubs and platforms, NYK’s Night Distribution service offers possibilities for the distribution of automotive parts and accessories all over the Benelux region and France.

Source: www.nyklogistics.com/media-centre/news

JAPAN TO PROVIDE CULTURAL ASSETS FOR DISPLAY AT “A PASSAGE TO ASIA” ART EXHIBITION TO BE HELD AS A PARALLEL EVENT FOR THE EIGHTH ASIA-EUROPE MEETING SUMMIT (ASEM 8)

On the sidelines of the Eighth Asia-Europe Meeting Summit (ASEM 8) to be held in Brussels, Belgium in October, an art exhibition titled “A Passage to Asia” will be staged from June 25 (Friday) to October 10 (Sunday). The exhibition is designed to introduce 2,500 years of history of cultural exchanges actively conducted between Asia, including Japan, and Europe through the Silk Road and other routes by displaying artworks depicting symbolic exchanges in each era. Cultural exchanges between Asia and Europe are important as one of ASEM’s three main pillars together with politics and the economy. For this reason, Japan has decided to send 36 cultural assets, including two Important Cultural Properties, to the exhibition under the cooperation of the Japanese Agency for Cultural Affairs.

It is expected that the display of the Japanese cultural assets at the exhibition will provide an opportunity for European people to deepen their understanding of and interest in Asia including Japan.

Source: Embassy of Japan in Belgium
www.mofa.go.jp/announce/event/2010/6/0610_01.html

news for the members

EIJII KAWASHIMA IS OFF TO BELGIUM

7 July 2010



After a few decent displays in goal at the World Cup Eiji Kawashima left for Belgium for Belgian club Lierse SK. This won't be Kawashima's first European jaunt, having trained in Italy during the Japanese off season a couple of times.

Lierse SK is from a small town near Antwerp, and has just been promoted back to the top division having finished the last season as Division 2 Champions. They have won the Belgian league as recently as 1997, also competing in the Champions League twice.

Eiji Kawashima is quoted on the Lierse website as saying...

"I heard that Lierse has a rich history. Now that they're playing back in first division, it is more advantageous, and I heard that their ambitions lie still higher. Personally I have a great hunger and ambition, I want to get into the team. I don't know the Belgian competition very well, although I heard very positive things about the country and people from an ex club mate of mine, Marek Spilar, who played at Bruges."

Source: <http://japan.worldcupblog.org/world-cup-2010/eiji-kawashima-is-off-to-belgium.html>

A BRUEGEL OPEN AIR MUSEUM IN DILBEEK

Recently H.E. Jun Yokota, Ambassador of Japan, attended a "Bruegelday" in Sint-Anna-Pede and received the first copy of a DVD "Bruegel in the Pajottenland".

This DVD was an idea of Prof. Yoko Mori, a world-renowned expert of the Bruegel family. She convinced the non-profit organisation "Dilbeeks Erfgoed" (heritage of Dilbeek) to have a DVD made, to prove that Pieter Bruegel the Elder found a lot of inspiration, in and around

Dilbeek, for some of his paintings include elements that are still existing and recognisable although modified in the meantime.

The DVD highlights on the 19 reproductions of the most beautiful works of Bruegel which are on display in Dilbeek in a unique setting i.e. within the landscapes of the so-called "Pajottenland" that inspired and impressed Bruegel so much. The little church of Sint-Anna-Pede was made world famous as it is represented in the background of "The parable of the blind".

"Hunters in the snow" is considered by connoisseurs as the most beautiful winter landscape ever painted, anywhere.

The originals of these paintings are in the possession of 11 musea all over the world. A visit to all of them would take several weeks whereas a visit to the museum in Dilbeek takes a few hours only.

The 19 large-scale and weatherproof reproductions are accessible by foot or bicycle (and also by car with some difficulty). Both routes start from the church of Sint-Anna-Pede, a hamlet of Itterbeek, which can be reached from Brussels South Station by "De Lijn" bus number 118.

Maps of the walk (free) and of the cycle route (€1,75), as well as a brochure in English (€3) and the DVD in English (€5) can be picked up at Dilbeek Tourism Office, Gemeenteplein 1, 1702 Groot-Bijgaarden, Tel. 02/467.60.20, toerisme@dilbeek.be.

A guided tour can be provided by Culturama, which also offers guided art and historical tours in and around Brussels. Tel. 02/569.27.74, culturama@telenet.be

Prof. Mori helped to make Bruegel the most popular European painter in Japan, nowadays. "To the Japanese, his paintings embody the essence of the European heart" she says.

This interest in Japan has led to an increasing number of Japanese tourists visiting Flanders. In less than 9 months 3 Japanese groups of media-specialists visited the Bruegel museum in Dilbeek.

Source: Mr Albrecht de Schrijver



news for the members

MATSUKAZE AT THÉÂTRE ROYAL LA MONNAIE



© Kaz Ishikawa

On 4 May 2011, the "Théâtre Royal La Monnaie" will stage the world creation of a new opera, Matsukaze. Matsukaze is a classical piece of noh theatre, written by Kan'ami Kiyotsugu, a fourteenth century author. The play was reviewed by Zeami Motokiyo, himself actor and author, who lived in the fifteenth century.

Two sisters, Matsukaze and Murasame, are smitten with a noble exile. They live at the bay of Suma, collecting sea salt. Soon after he leaves, they receive notice of his death and both die of sadness. Years later, their souls continue to wander as their desire for this lost love remains unanswered. Matsukaze dances like a lunatic, wearing the hat and coat of her lover, believing that she recognizes him in the silhouette of a pine tree. The play deals with human desire and the consequences when desire is not satisfied.

Following Hanjo in 2004, Mr Hosokawa returns once again to the tradition of noh theatre for this new opera in which he has adopted the same intimist approach and dreamlike atmosphere. Matsukaze stages four characters and a small chorus, accompanied by approximately fifteen musicians.

La Monnaie is a trendsetter in the creation of new contemporary opera and Mr Hosokawa has been selected for the second time to create one of his operas. La Monnaie will also present Hanjo again in April 2011, preceding the world premiere of Matsukaze, thus showing two of Japanese opera's within the space of two months and both in productions by internationally renowned choreographers.

The creation of a world premiere entails major expenses, and La Monnaie would like to welcome any company to finance the composition and libretto. Donations to artistic projects of La Monnaie are tax deductible in Belgium.

If interested, please do not hesitate to contact, Mrs Monique Famaey at: +32 2 210 84 23, m.famaey@demunt.be

BELGIAN BEER WEEKEND IN TOKYO - SEPTEMBER 2010

Already more than 10 years, in the first weekend of September, the beautiful "Grand Place" of Brussels serves as the setting for the BELGIAN BEER WEEKEND. More than 40 Belgian breweries present their best selection of beers, making it a true beer paradise.

Following the success in Brussels, the BELGIAN BEER WEEKEND will be organized in the center of Tokyo for the first time in 2010 at Roppongi Hills Arena.

The BELGIAN BEER WEEKEND Tokyo is an outdoor event open to the general public and will offer about 40 different Belgian beers and some typical Belgian dishes in a great setting. The objective of the BELGIAN BEER WEEKEND is to increase in Japan the awareness and recognition of Belgian beer and its culture in particular, and Belgium in general.

The BELGIAN BEER WEEKEND Tokyo has the patronage of the Belgian Embassy in Japan and is organized by a steering committee in which the major Belgian beer importers in Japan are represented.

The BELGIAN BEER WEEKEND Tokyo is an initiative of the Belgian Beer Information Center in Tokyo and is supported by the Union of Belgian Brewers.

Beer selection:

Achel, Belle-Vue, Boon, Brugse Zot, Cantillon, Chimay, De Koninck, Duchesse de Bourgogne, Duvel, Echt Kriekenbier, Gouden Carolus, Gouyasse, Hoegaarden, La Chouffe, Leffe, Liefmans, Maredsous, Mc Chouffe, Mystic, Orval, Palm, Poperings Hommelbier, Rochefort, Rodenbach, Saison Regal, Steenbrugge Trippel, Stella Artois, St-Feuillien, Vedett Extra White, Westmalle

Timing: 10(Fri) - 12(Sun) September 2010

Venue: Roppongi Hills Arena

www.belgianbeerweekend.jp



news for the members

NEW ISSUES OF PRIVACY AND
PERSONAL INFORMATION
PROTECTION

Professor Masao Horibe, one of the speakers of the BJA Business Conference of 23 April 2009, gave an outline of the Conference in his book "New Issues of Privacy and Personal Information Protection" (Shojihome, April 2010).

If you are a BJA member and interested, we can provide you with a copy of that section. Please be aware that the book and the text is written in Japanese only.

Please do not hesitate to contact the BJA Office;
Mrs Oto-Kellens, oto-kellens@bja.be

プライバシー・個人情報
保護の新課題

編著 堀部 政男

プライバシー・個人情報保護を巡る
わが国および世界の
喫緊の最新動向を紹介する

時事法苑

INNOGENETICS INTO JAPANESE HANDS

Fujirebio, a Japanese pharma company, has bought the Ghent based biotechnology company Innogenetics from the American Pharmaceutical giant Abbott Technologies. Innogenetics had been for sale quite some time, as the European Commission demanded that Abbott would sell at least some parts of the Belgian biotechnology company because of its dominant position on the European market. As a result Abbott decided to sell its complete Belgian daughter company.

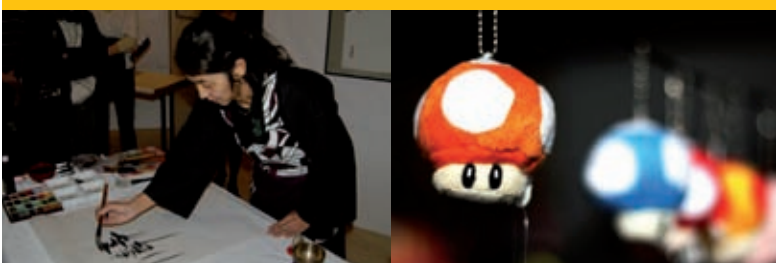
Innogenetics is a biotechnology company that focuses on the diagnosis of infectious diseases, genetic testing and on oncology. The company was founded in 1985, employs 330 people and sells its products in 90 countries.

Until a little over a year and a half ago the company was still an independent entity, and it was one of the few technological growth companies listed on Euronext Brussels. But that all changed 19 months ago when, in the wake of the financial crisis, Innogenetics fell into the hands of Solvay, which delisted the company. But in September last year Solvay sold its pharmaceutical division to Abbott Technologies, with Innogenetics part of the deal.

However, the EC competition authorities were only willing to approve the deal between Solvay and the Americans if Abbott disposed of a part of Innogenetics's production line. If they did not do so, the Commission argued, Abbott would threaten to become overly dominant on the European market.

Fujirebio is now paying 86 million Euros for the Flemish biotech company. According to the press release the acquisition will grant the company access to a successful sales machine and a strong marketing structure on the European continent, as well as in the United States, Brazil, South-East Asia and China. The takeover still has to be approved by the European Commission, but Fujirebio hopes to get the go-ahead by the end of August.

Source: Flanders Today

JAPAN EXPO BELGIUM - THE FIRST FESTIVAL AT TOUR & TAXIS BRUSSELS ABOUT JAPANESE
CULTURE AND MANGA FROM APRIL 22 TO 24, 2011

Japan Expo Paris is the biggest festival of Japanese culture and leisure in Europe. The 10th edition attracted 165.000 visitors and 500 exhibitors on 100.000 m². The objective of this event is to open a window on Japanese culture in Europe, guided by a simple objective: to combine knowledge and entertainment. Japan Expo Belgium - For this first Belgian edition we are expecting 16.000 visitors. They are mostly between 15 and 35, fan of Japan and curious to discover more about it. We will offer

an extensive range of content: concerts, screening in preview, conference, signing sessions, fashion shows, quiz games ...

The festival is organized on three main themes:

- > The traditional culture (2000 m² ideally placed at the entrance): cooking, bonsai, ikebana, sumie ...
- > The pop culture: cinema, music, video games and fashion ...
- > The manga culture: manga, anime, toys and merchandising ...

We want the festival to be the reflection of the links between Belgium and Japan. We are looking for Japanese artists living in Belgium who would be interested to share their art or Japanese companies that would be interested to promote their products to some potential customers that have an extremely positive perception of Japan.

Contact: Morsomme Denis, Project manager
+32 474 58.30.10, D.Morsomme@japan-expo.be

ARTICLE

In Memoriam - Baron Jean-Charles Velge, Honorary BJA President 9 January 1930 - 29 May 2010

By Baron Jean-Albert Moorkens, Honorary BJA Vice-President



listened carefully and invited them to bring a solution to the next meeting.

Respected boss, wise thinker about the decisions to ensure the future, we remember him as a gentleman in his personal life as well as in his professional and community life.

When he was president, the Belgium-Japan Association and Chamber of Commerce (BJA) had the unique opportunity to organize at the Conrad Hotel a reception in the honor of Prince Naruhito and Princess Masako who came to Belgium to attend the wedding of Prince Philippe and Princess Mathilde.

It was with great sadness that we were informed of the unexpected passing away of our first President of the Belgium-Japan Association & Chamber of Commerce (after the merger of the Belgium-Japan Association (1963) with the Belgian Japan Trade Federation (Bejat 1988)).

When I was the founding president of the latter, I quickly noticed the necessity to unify the 2 associations. As Soichiro Honda (the first Japanese investor in Belgium) was the president of the Japan-Belgium Association in Tokyo, we had to find a Belgian industrial who did investments in Japan to chair our association. Then I got to know Baron Jean-Charles Velge, first Belgian investor, who realized a joint-venture with Bridgestone in order to produce steel wires needed to manufacture radial tires.

During a first meeting in 1990, Baron Velge confessed that it was not the right moment for him as he just requested a full commitment from his executives so as to help the company to pass difficult times. Man of duty, he preached by being an example.

End 1991, our second attempt was crowned with success. In his inaugural speech, he justified his decision by saying that as a president he could promote more his ideas. He was deeply convinced that the world could not live in peace and prosperity without the freedom of fair-trade and investments. The Board of Directors meetings he always chaired with acuteness and authority, were all in a cordial atmosphere. If there was a difference of opinions between two participants, he

To his wife, Marie-Louise, and his children, the Belgium-Japan Association and Chamber of Commerce would like to extend its sincerest condolences.

Old soldiers never die, they fade away.

Man passes, the message remains.



Why Japan likes robots.

By Mr Piet Van Tieghem, Application Development Engineer, Yamagata Europe

“The difference between Tetsuwan Atomu and the Terminator shows the differences between how Japanese and Westerners view robots. Westerners tend to experience a sense of alarm or wariness, whereas the Japanese are unique in the world for their love of robots and their affinity with them.”

(Yoshikazu Suematsu, Toyota National College of Technology)

If we compare the Western perception of robots with that of the Japanese, the two couldn't be further apart. In the West, robots are seen as objects to be feared and not to be trusted. This negative view of robots is portrayed in big blockbuster movies, novels and other media. In Japan, robots are alive; they are cute, and most importantly, they are seen to exist to help people. The Japanese have high expectations of the future for robots, where so-called service robots will be working in hospitals to help the increasing number of elderly among the population.

This difference in perception is also reflected in investments in robotics. In the West, investments mainly relate to robotics for military use. In Japan on the other hand, there is also a lot of investment in the development of leisure robots. These robots, like Sony's Aibo, don't have a specific industrial purpose, they merely exist to be enjoyed by humans.

So why is this Western view of “man makes robot, robot kills man” so different from the Japanese view of “man makes robot, robot helps man”?

Animism

In both of Japan's major religions, there is a strong presence of animism; the idea that spirits exist, not only in humans, but also in objects. Especially in the indigenous religion, Shinto, animism has a strong presence through kami (spirits) that live in trees, rocks, mountains, rivers, etc. Kami can also be present in swords, tools or other objects. Among the industrial countries, Japan is without doubt the country where animism is the strongest. So, for the Japanese, a robot can become more than a machine; it can have a soul, a spirit, and is more than the sum of its parts. In the Western world, which has been strongly influenced by Christianity, only humans can have a soul. Objects and robots are considered to be without a soul. Only God can create a being that has a soul, and for humans to create a robot that looks human would be considered blasphemy.

From a religious perspective, therefore, this already explains a difference in perception with regard to Robots in Japan and the West.

Karakuri ningyo

One of the first robot-like objects created in Japan that were believed to have a soul, were the karakuri ningyo. Karakuri ningyo were a kind of automated doll that was created to amuse people. They first appeared in the Tokugawa pe-

riod (1600 – 1868). During this period in Japanese history, the Shogunate held all political and military power. It was a period of stability, sustained by a strict regime that did not allow people to get in and out of the country. To maintain this stability, the leaders also forbade the use of new technologies, such as firearms and machinery, but with one exception: new technology could be used for festivities and religious festivals. This gave birth to some amazing karakuri ningyo. For the time, they thought to be so lifelike that people thought they had a soul, and for that reason, some were even buried in cemeteries. This had a big influence on how the Japanese relate to technology: in Japan, technology and amusement go hand in hand. Technology or science does not need to be all serious business.

The Industrial Revolution

Another important aspect that explains the difference in perceptions of robots can be seen in the post-war period. During the post-war period, Japan began to realize how much more technologically advanced the West was, and how important technology and science was for Japan to become a world economic power. After the 1970's, as the country went through rapid change, and with an increasing use of robotics in the industry (especially the car industry), the quality of life improved exponentially. The Japanese witnessed first hand the remarkable power of technology and science.

Japanese people embraced robotics from the very beginning. It was difficult not to love robotics. Firstly, nobody was fired because of the prevailing lifetime employment system at the time; there was even a shortage in workers. Secondly, since Japanese companies use a bonus system, the better the company performed, the bigger a bonus employees received, and as the use of robotics increased, so did the bonuses. For the West, which couldn't compete with the dumping prices of Japanese cars, industrial robots were nothing but bad news, causing a lot of people to lose their jobs.

Manga

Popular culture, most importantly manga, also played a major role in determining how the Japanese view robots. It is no coincidence that the first kawaii (cute) robots started appearing in

manga between 1945 and 1970, the period during which the Japanese celebrated technology, and the masses started reading manga.

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A lot of these robots, like Tetsuwan Atomu and Doraemon, are among the most well known and loved characters, even today. They all share the same characteristics and were created with one sole purpose in mind: to help people. In the west at the time, robots were often portrayed as pure evil (for example HAL from 2001: a space odyssey), not cute at all!

To summarize, the love for robots in Japan can be traced back to animism and the affection for science and technology, rep-

resented in popular manga by cute robots. However, investments in leisure robots have recently declined (Asimo) or completely disappeared (Aibo). Still, the belief in Japan amongst scientists and economists that robots will eventually lead to a competitive advantage, is very strong. However, whether they will ever succeed in building an autonomous robot like Tetsuwan Atomu, remains to be seen.

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