

Opening Remarks of First Annual Conference Japan Forum of Business and Society

Japan Forum of Business and Society (JFBS) has been launched on May 2011 as a colloquium which aims to conduct interdisciplinary research and discussion with encouraging cooperative relationship among academia, industry, government, labor and NPO/NGO in close association with related institutions inside/outside Japan.

We are delighted to have you here to participate and share in the 1st annual conference. Our appreciation for our members and all those involved.

The JFBS first annual conference's theme is "Sustainable Development and Multi-Stakeholders". Following is a briefing on what we consider in this conference.

Now is the time when sustainable development must be achieved, and global governance itself has been changing. Here, a certain single player does not have a huge power, but Multi-Stakeholder Process (MSP) should be built, that is, all stakeholders (Government, business, NGO, labor, consumer group and academia, e.g.) are involved in solving economic, environmental and social issues from their own standpoint with responsibility. Since 1990s, global discussion on sustainable development has been growing within the framework of MSP, cooperation among stakeholders has become essential to create standards and criteria of corporate code of conduct. On the other hand, in Japan, it cannot be said yet that MSP has been in progress. The discussions on framework of MSP have not been conducted seriously either from theoretical or practical aspect.

Based on the premise of the current status, we are honored to have Professor Juliet Roper of the University of Waikato, and Mr. Jeremy Prepscius, Managing Director of BSR Asia, as keynote speakers to the conference.

In the Plenary Session "Possibility of Multi-stakeholder Round-Table in Japan", challenges and possibilities of MSP in Japanese national/regional governance will be considered by multi-stakeholder members. For two years from 2009 to 2010, multi-stakeholders participated in "Multi-stakeholder Forum on Social Responsibility for a Sustainable Future" which was led by Cabinet Office. Given the growing demand for this kind of platform where we should discuss future vision and policy, we will have a discussion on the possibilities of Multi-Stakeholder Round-Table in Japan based on our past experiences.

In Breakout Session A-1 "ISO26000 (international guidance standard on social responsibility): the meaning of its international guidance standard and challenges" decided by MSP, we will discuss the understanding and tasks of ISO26000 with multi-stakeholder's members. Here, the discussions will be focused on not an introduction or explanation of the guidance standard but the meaning of this international guidance standard which was created under new global governance. Impact on Japanese socioeconomic society and corporate management will be also discussed.

In Breakout Session A-2 "Disaster and Business", we will examine the role of business and its challenges to contribute to local economy and society via core business and philanthropic activities throughout six months after the Great East Japan Earthquake which caused a huge catastrophe in

Japan. We will continue to discuss on this theme at the workshops following this conference. (Session A-2 is aligned with an activity “Academic Association: Disaster Relief Project” <http://gakkai-renkei.jp/>)

In Breakout Session B-1, we will discuss business strategy of social business which aims to solve social issues in the relationship of consumers and community.

The Breakout Session B-2 will focus on organizational strategy which creates cooperative relationship among stakeholders including businesses and NPOs, and incorporate it into its strategy when corporations conduct social business.

JFBS prepares time as much as possible in the session for your interaction between speakers/panelists and attendances during the conference. We hope your active participation in discussion of each session.