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会見

INTERVIEW

## Interview of Manabu Eto, Director General of JETRO Geneva

Manabu Eto took office of Director General of JETRO Geneva in July 2011.

*During your stay in Switzerland, you had the opportunity to learn a lot about Swiss economy. What do you think about Swiss economy? What are the main differences with the Japanese economy?*

The main difference is Swiss economy is focusing on high-value products only: luxury, high-price and high-quality goods. It has no interest in volume and cheap products. That is not a policy, it is a kind of spirit. And it is successful for all industries.

In addition, Switzerland can get the benefits of the EU, though it can refuse its bad effects.

Furthermore, Swiss government is focusing on the happiness of Swiss people only. Japan should learn from it.

*What have been the major Japanese acquisitions in Switzerland in 2012?*

Tokyo Electron acquired Oerlikon Solar; Mitsubishi Chemicals bought 6.7% in flexible solar panels in VHF Technologies; Citizen Watch acquired Prothor; machine tool manufacturer Amada invested in a distributor; UCC acquired United Coffee; and IHI Corporation purchased Ionbond.

Japanese firms invested a lot not only in Switzerland, but also all around the world, because of the high value of Japanese Yen. They search for technologies (innovations) and sales markets. In Switzerland, they focus on good technologies.

*What have been the major JETRO Geneva events in 2012?*

We organized a seminar on food culture in February in Zurich, and two seminars on corporate strategy in March, in Zurich and Geneva. Moreover, we held a seminar at the EPFL Campus in Lausanne, in November.

The seminars were very successful, with a large audience and strong interest. They are also great networking opportunities.

In addition, we participated in the Vaud's mission in Japan, in September.

*Does JETRO Geneva already plan to organize some events in 2013?*

We would like to hold an innovation seminar in Zurich. We plan to organize one or two additional seminars in Geneva and Zurich in February.

The role of JETRO Geneva is also to research information on Switzerland. We will focus more on research activities and will publish not only in Japan and Switzerland, but also in all

Europe.

*The Liberal-Democratic Party obtained a majority at the House of Representatives [Shūgiin] at December 16, 2012 election. What will be, in your opinion, the main changes for Japanese economy?*

This change should be better for governmental activities: it will be easier for the government to make decisions.

The new government also has a strong interest in trade and investments, which is good for JETRO.

*The 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Switzerland and Japan will be celebrated in 2014. What event will be organized to celebrate it?*

We are planning to have a special seminar or symposium in February 2014 about Swiss-Japanese relationship on trade and investment.

Before we conclude the interview, I would like to wish all our readers and partners in Switzerland a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year 2013. I look forward to continuing our collaborations. We, at JETRO Geneva, will do our best to meet your needs during the course of this New Year.

## 動向

SITUATION

### Japan's current economic situation

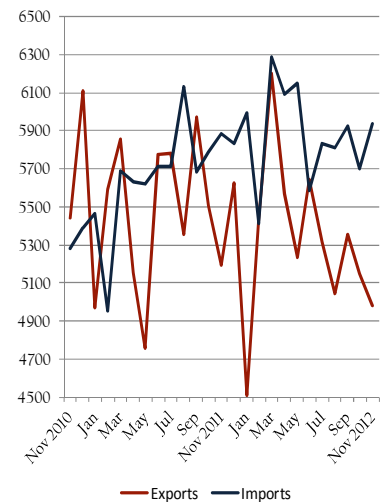
"Japan's economy is expected to remain relatively weak for the time being, and thereafter, it will return to a moderate recovery path as domestic demand remains resilient on the whole and overseas economies gradually emerge from the deceleration phase" (Bank of Japan, December report).

Exports decreased -4.1% in November over the year, due to the weak demand in overseas economies, especially in Western Europe (-21.2%), but also in Asia (-2.5%). As a result, business sentiment has become cautious: Tankan judg-

ment survey on forecast for business conditions declined from -10 in September to -15 in December.

Moreover, the index of industrial production decreased year-on-year 4.5% to 87.9 in October 2012 (2005=100).

However, the domestic demand (private consumption and public investment) remains strong. The consumer confidence index rose 2.9% to 39.4 in November. Furthermore, orders received for construction (value of contracts) increased 16.9% in October (prov.) from the previous year.



Value of Japan's exports and imports in billions of Yen  
Source: Ministry of Finance

## 動向

SITUATION

### Recovery situation in the Tohoku region

A 7.3 magnitude-quake struck again eastern coast of Japan on December 7. A one-meter wave hit Ishinomaki (Miyagi prefecture). Fortunately, there has been no report of casualties or serious damage.

This region had been devastated by the Great East Japan Earthquake, which occurred on March 11, 2011. The Cabinet Office has estimated damages to infrastructures at ¥ 2.2 trillion.

Sendai airport was completely

overflowed by the tsunami. It reopened six months after the tsunami. Today, the number of domestic flights into the Tohoku region (Sendai, Ibaraki, Fukushima and Hanamaki airports) has increased by 17% from pre-disaster situation from 186 to 218 per day.

The number of boats calling in at the 40 major ports of Tohoku region declined only 26% from the pre-disaster level.

The Tohoku, Akita and Yamagata Shinkansen railway lines were

restored six weeks after the disasters. Today, 68 of the 76 regular railway lines are fully or partially operational.

870 km of expressways and more than 700 of national and prefectural roads were closed after the disasters. Over 90% of damaged expressways reopened 21 days later. Today, all roads are operating, except some of them in coastal areas.

## 活動

ACTIVITY

### JETRO opened a Business Support Center in Yangon, Myanmar

JETRO opened a new Business Support Center (BSC) in Yangon, Myanmar, on August 31, located in the same building as JETRO Yangon.

Since the establishment of the new administration of Myanmar in

March 2011, Japanese companies have expressed strong interest in expanding in Myanmar.

Opening ceremony of BSC Yangon



## Traditional Japanese New Year's meal

Osechi-ryori is a Japanese meal cooked on the occasion of the New Year since the Heian Period (794-1185).

The variety of dishes has increased over time. As shown on the picture, osechi-ryori are traditionally prepared with sweet potatoes, eggs and lotus roots. It includes dishes, such as "daidai" (Japanese bitter orange), "datemaki" (sweet rolled omelette), "kamaboko" (broiled fish cake), "kazunoko" (herring roe).

But, now it can also have foreign Western-style and Chinese-style dishes.

Osechi-ryori was originally a dish that could be prepared in advance, so as to allow women not to cook in the New Year.

Today, Japanese can buy already made osechi-ryori at grocery stores and even convenience stores. They can also be found in many grocery stores in Switzerland.



Osechi-Ryori with sweet potatoes, eggs and lotus roots

Source: Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

文化

CULTURE

## Japanese comedy show in Geneva

The Japanese Month of Culture has ended with a wonderful show of "Rakugo" on December 13. Outstanding storyteller Master Sanyutei Kenko told a number of traditional stories and jokes, together with Onda Eri - a "yosebashi" instrument player.

The show was co-organized by the Japanese Consulate in Geneva, Swiss-Japanese Association and Japan Club of Geneva.

Rakugo is a Japanese traditional art of storytelling art originating from the 17<sup>th</sup> Century. The storyteller (called rakugoka) seats alone on a pillow, on the stage. As props, he is only allowed to use a fan and a



cloth handkerchief. And as there is a limited number of props and no scenery, audience is focused only on the acting of the storyteller.

Master Sanyutei Kenko told some funny and traditional stories, repre-

senting several characters. He has been able to capture all the public, and even spectators reading the subtitles laughed all the time.

Becoming a storyteller is not an easy task: applicant should ask a rakugoka to become his student. After eight to twenty years of lessons, he can reach the highest level of Master ("shin'uchi") - the rank of Sanyutei Kenko.

During the course of the show, Onda Eri played a traditional Japanese instrument: yose-bayashi. It is a kind of guitar with only three strings, which produces a strange and magic sound.

文化

CULTURE

## Kazuki Yamada invited by Swiss orchestra

Kazuki Yamada is the first invitee of the Swiss Romande orchestra (Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, OSR).

Kazuki Yamada is Associate Con-

ductor at the NHK Symphony Orchestra. He also collaborates with the Japan Philharmonic Orchestra, Tokyo Symphony Orchestra and Nagoya's and Sendai's symphony

orchestras.

Born in 1979, Kazuki Yamada lives today in Berlin. In 2011, he received the Idemitsu Award, the highest award for Japanese artists.

文化

CULTURE

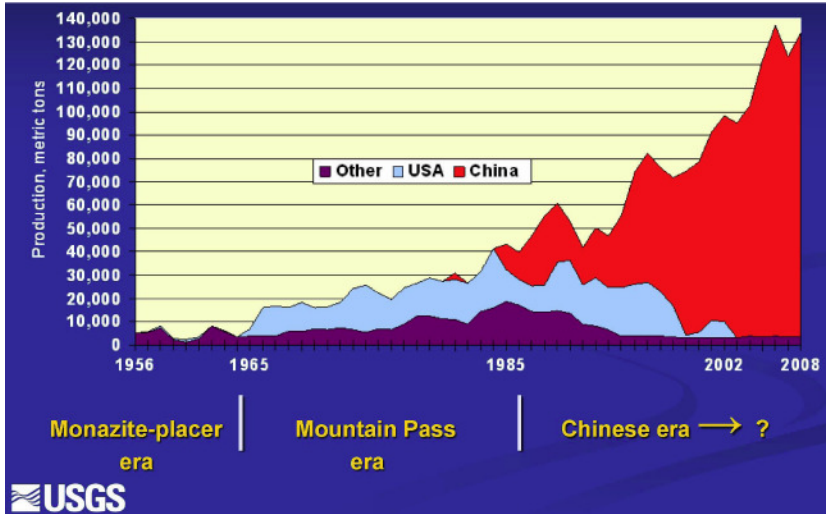
**革新**  
INNOVATION

## Kyushu University developed OLED material free of rare metals

The Kyushu University's Center for Organic Photonics and Electronics Research (OPERA) has developed third generation light emitting materials for use in Organic Light Emitting Diodes. They "have a unique molecular design that reduces the energy gap between triplet and singlet excited states, providing a novel efficient exciton formation mechanism, i.e., thermally activated delayed fluorescence".

It enables a light emission efficiency of almost all the conversion of electrons into photons under electrical excitation, leading thus to a significant increase of OLED's energy efficiency.

Moreover, the absence of molecular design led to the production of



Global rare-earth-oxide production trends

Graph from D.J. Cordier (U.S. Geological Survey, written commun., 2011), updated from Haxel and others (2002, fig. 1), and published in Tse, Pui-Kwan, 2011, China's rare-earth industry: U.S. Geological Survey Open-File Report 2011-1042, 11 p., available only online. Courtesy of the U.S. Geological Survey

an emitter free of rare metals.

The research has been published on December 13, 2012, in *Nature* under

the paper title "Highly efficient organic light-emitting diodes from delayed fluorescence"

**We wish you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year 2013!**



Cormorant chick, Leman lake

JETRO is a government-related organization that works to promote mutual trade and investment between Japan and the rest of the world. Originally established in 1958 to promote Japanese exports abroad, JETRO's core focus in the 21st century has shifted toward promoting foreign direct investment into Japan and helping small to medium size Japanese firms maximize their global export potential.

The JETRO Switzerland Newsletter can also be viewed and/or downloaded online: <http://www.jetro.go.jp/switzerland/newsletter>



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