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会見

INTERVIEW

## Miho Habel is elected President of the Japan Club of Geneva

Elected in January 2016, Miho Habel took office as President of the Japan Club of Geneva (JCG) in April. She succeeds to Hiromi Yano (President from 2012 to 2016). Ms. Habel has been previously President of the JCG from 2010 to 2011.

Miho Habel is also the Country Manager of Switzerland of All Nippon Airways (ANA), located in Geneva (See interview in issue 66, October 2014). She started her career as ANA's cabin attendant in 1985 and opened the Geneva's office in 1997.

### *JCG's various activities*

Miho Habel outlines the various activities proposed by the Japan Club of Geneva to its members.

In the Wine Club, JCG's members can discover Swiss and French wines, visit caves and learn about wine backgrounds and regions. In the Mountain Club, they can hike, visit some places (for example, visit Zermatt or see the Narcisse's blooming in Vevey), go to pick up blueberries... In the Tennis Club, they can participate in tournaments (for instance, a tournament was organized with the International Labor Organization). JCG's members can also participate in



Miho Habel, President of the Japan Club of Geneva

the Golf Club, Ski Club and Go Club (Go is a strategic board game played in Japan and in other East Asian countries).

In addition, JCG organizes some events, such as the Sakura project (planting of 29 trees in Ariana Park), the sightseeing tour at the Geneva firework in August, the "Japanese festival" (Nihon Matsuri) in autumn, and the New Year's party of the Japanese community.

The JCG also includes a business committee of Japanese firms located in Geneva and surrounding cities (Shoko Bukai).

### *Open to non-Japanese people*

"The Japan Club of Geneva is not

only for Japanese people, it is also open to the non-Japanese people (Swiss, French...). But all our communication is in Japanese. Other associations, such as the Swiss-Japanese Chamber of Commerce, Association Suisse-Japon or Genève-Shinagawa have their communication in German or French. If a member accepts that the communication is in Japanese, it is not a problem. He can benefit from our communication, exchange and be part of our activities", said Miho Habel.

"The JCG is very unique in terms of members. Our members are from the Japanese government, international organizations, private sector, but also from the local society (Japanese long-term residents). Normally, these people would not have a chance to meet. Through the activities I have mentioned they can meet", Miho Habel said.

The JCG's President would like to develop exchanges (to learn more about Swiss culture) and network. "We need to build a network in the private life. For instance, we will collaborate with the Consulate of Japan to be able to provide information to our members in case of emergency, for example if there is a terrorist attack", she further said.

## 会見

INTERVIEW

# Miho Habel is elected President of the Japan Club of Geneva

## “Fête japonaise” in Carouge

Organized by the JCG, the Fête japonaise in Carouge has now become the biggest Japanese festival in Switzerland. In 2015, JCG received 13,000 visitors. Fête japonaise is organized by 25 committee members and supported by 300 volunteers.

Its first edition gathered about 1,000 visitors in 2009 at Geneva Frank-Martin Concert Hall. At the time of the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011, the festival moved to Carouge. Thanks to the cooperation of Carouge city, it gathered 6,000 visitors; more than CHF 60,000 were collected in favor of the Japanese Red Cross.

The 2016 edition will take place on October 2<sup>nd</sup>. “Visitors are interested in Japanese culture and food, which we appreciate very much. With 25 committee members, we have started to prepare the festival for sharing a good time with the visitors. This year, we have some ideas for new things”, Miho Habel said.

## 動向

SITUATION

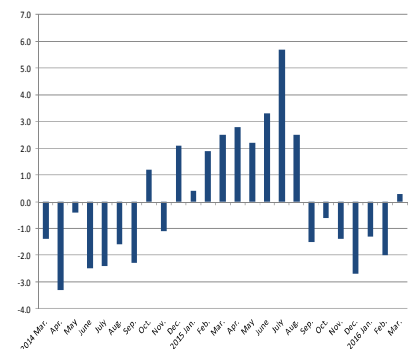
# Japan’s current economic situation

According to the Cabinet Office, “Concerning short-term prospects, the economy is expected toward recovery, supported by the effects of the policies, while employment and income situation is improving” (Monthly Economic Report, May issue).

Japan’s exports declined by 10.1% in April 2016 compared to the same month in the preceding year, show-

ing a decrease by 6.0% in Western Europe, 18.7% in North America and 19.2% in Asia.

The average of monthly income per household stood at 450,698 yen, up 0.3% in real terms from the previous year (see graph). The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 3.2% in March 2016 (against 3.4% in March 2015).



Workers' households—incomes  
Change over the year in percentage  
Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications

# Sales of Swissôtel Nankai Osaka doubled over the last three years

Hotel chain Swissôtel Hotels & Resorts opened the “Swissôtel Nankai Osaka” in 2003.

Located in Osaka (Minami district), Japan, its sales have doubled over the last three years. Interviewed by JETRO, Christian Schaufelbühl, CEO of Swissôtel Nankai Osaka said: “The hotel managed to raise average rate compared to its counterparts and our sales doubled in the past three years”.

The ratio of foreign guests increased from 50% in 2003 to 80-

85% in 2016.

Osaka appears to be the second popular tourist destination in Japan, with a record number of 9 million nights stayed by foreign tour-

ists in 2015, showing an increase by 50% from the previous year (see

Number of nights stayed by foreign tourists — Top ten prefectures  
Japan Tourism Agency

Prefecture	2014	2015	Increase from the previous year (%)
	Total	Total	
National	44,824,600	66,372,660	48.1
Tokyo	13,195,260	17,779,970	34.7
Osaka	6,200,160	9,338,480	50.6
Hokkaido	3,890,590	5,480,580	40.9
Kyoto	3,291,010	4,811,200	46.2
Okinawa	2,388,550	3,918,010	64
Chiba	2,667,200	3,478,190	30.4
Fukuoka	1,357,300	2,378,210	75.2
Aichi	1,489,680	2,245,450	50.7
Kanagawa	1,432,500	2,172,550	51.7
Shizuoka	786,310	1,759,730	123.8

## 観

TOURISM

## Newly appointed advisor for trade and investment

Dr. Tsutomu Takahashi has joined JETRO Geneva as Advisor for Trade and Investment, taking over from Mr. Kiyoshi Imai.

### *Experience in international trade and Intellectual Property (IP) disputes*

After the completion of his doctorate at University of Edinburgh in 1999, Dr. Takahashi moved to Geneva for his work at the World Trade Organization (WTO). He then worked for the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) in the area of IP related disputes, in particular, domain name.

From 2004, as independent consultant, he became external advisor of JETRO, advising Swiss companies on investments in the Japanese market as well as researches on international trade.



Tsutomu Takahashi, Advisor Trade and Investment, JETRO Geneva

### *Knowledge of both Switzerland and Japan*

He also provided training and consultancy for executives of multinational companies. “Almost half of my professional life has been in Europe working with colleagues with multicultural background. I therefore am quite familiar with the

business mentalities of various nationalities including Swiss, European and Japanese. I believe this familiarity facilitates dealing with Swiss potential investors”, Dr. Takahashi said. At JETRO Geneva, he is now in charge of, both inbound and outbound, trade and investment promotion.

### *What message would you convey to Swiss companies?*

“It takes time to get to know each other, but once you have established confidence, the relationship with Japan will stay for a long time. If you have interest, there is nothing to be afraid of! Especially in business, Switzerland and Japan share rather similar ethics, mentalities and values”, he further added.

I indeed look forward to meeting you!

活動

ACTIVITY

## Invest Japan Seminar in Brussels with Prime Minister Abe

On May 4, 2016, JETRO held an Invest Japan Seminar in Brussels, marking the first large-scale seminar of this kind in Belgium. Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Belgian Deputy Prime Minister Kris Peeters took to the podium to encourage greater investment in Japan by Belgian companies.

PM Abe explained how the Japanese business environment had

improved through his economic policy, Abenomics, citing how the corporate tax rate was reduced to the 20% level. He also emphasized his commitment, stating “I will push reforms forward from the perspective of companies to make Japan the most business-friendly country in the world.”

JETRO Chairman & CEO Hiroyuki Ishige gave the keynote speech. He mentioned advantages that the Jap-

anese market offers to businesses, such as its size and business infrastructure. He also touted the largely improved business environment, giving details on lowered business costs and deregulations brought by Abenomics.

The Mayors of Kobe and Tsukuba delivered speeches on the investment environment of their respective cities.

活動

ACTIVITY

革新

INNOVATION

## Hitachi's strategy on Internet of Things business

Tokyo-based group Hitachi has unveiled on May 10, 2016 its strategy with respect to Internet of Things.

### *Hitachi Insight Group*

Hitachi has announced the setting up of Hitachi Insight Group. Headquartered in the United States (Santa Clara, California), it will lead Hitachi's business related to Internet of Things (IoT) business and strategy worldwide.

"Few companies possess the expertise and breadth of resources required to deliver IoT solutions and services, and drive real business value at scale. With today's an-

nouncements, Hitachi is making good progress toward positioning itself to be one of the few likely IoT powerhouses as the market shakes out", said Vernon Turner, senior vice president, enterprise systems and IoT research fellow at IDC (press release).

With a total revenue of USD 5.4 billion in IoT solutions and services, Hitachi already has a leading portfolio in IoT, including solutions and services for public safety, smart cities, renewable energy, transportation, agriculture, manufacturing, water treatment, urban development, construction, mining, etc.

### *Lumada*

On the same day Hitachi also announced the creation of "Lumada", an IoT core platform.

"IoT platforms unquestionably have an important role to play in the development and deployment of IoT solutions. However, they can introduce new layers of complexities, which can hinder the implementation and benefits of the solutions themselves," said Christian Renaud, research director, IoT, at 451 Research (press release).

*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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