

2009 Global Compact China-Japan-Korea Roundtable Conference

Opening Statement

**Mr. Toshio Arima
Chairman, Global Compact Board Japan
UNGC Board**

Thank you

- **First of all, I would like to celebrate with you all, the launch of the 1st Three Party “East Asia Round Table”. And, I would like to express sincere thanks to GCKN, who made this Round Table happen.**
- **I would also like to sincerely thank MR Kell for his participation, travelling a long way from NY during his extremely busy schedules.**
- **Also, I would like to express my sincere thanks to all the participants attending today.**

Severe economic situation

- **As we all know, world economy is in extremely difficult situation, some say once in one hundred years. Companies are cutting costs and expenses as much as possible, reducing head counts and R&D's and postponing investments. CSR-related investment is not an exception.**
- **But the real remedy is long-term strategy where CSR or ESG plays key roles. Business without integrating societal considerations and human resource investments into economic values is not sustainable in a longer term. But unless people are convinced, this will not happen. Our challenge is to convince people and have them change the mindset and the behavior.**

COP15

- **As we all know, COP 15 in Copenhagen will be a pivotal point to set the base for the next decade for all the human kind across the globe. And December is coming really soon. But there is very little visibility toward the Post-Kyoto Agreement.**
- **It was very good and encouraging that Japan's Prime Minister Hatoyama committed to 25% CO2 reduction by 2020 at the UN gathering in September. However business community in Japan is not fully supporting this but rather against it. Situations must be more or less the same in most of the advanced countries.**
- **Again our challenge is to convince people that ESG investment for CO2 reduction and other societal concerns is mandatory and at the same time, good for business.**

Round Table

- **We need mechanisms to gather our voices and amplify them. We need mechanisms to take actions in collaborative ways. I strongly believe that Global Compact has a lot to offer in this regard.**
- **It is really a good timing to have this Three Party Round Table to discuss the current situations and the future directions of the Global Compact and its Local Networks.**

Japan Network

- **If I may talk very quickly about the Japanese GCNW, it was created in 2002 having a strong support from the UNIC Tokyo.**
- **However, since GC-JN was too heavily relying upon UNIC Tokyo, there had been very little involvement and commitment by the top management of the corporations and other categories of organizations. As a result, network activities were low levels and increase of the participant number was slow, only 60 in 6 years.**

- **However, the Leaders Summit held in 2007 in Geneva made GC Japan Network aware of tremendous possibility of the GC and grave responsibility of the public sectors.**
- **This lead to a basic change of the GC-JN. In short, the members changed it to self-sustaining and self-driving organization in April 2008.**
- **Mr. Okumura, head of GCJN Office will talk about this in more detail in the next session.**

Issues of GC

- **Despite these steps forward, the biggest issue is still a short list of participants. We are only about 100 now, which is not enough to sustain the network financially or to demonstrate social presence. We are planning to increase the number to 150 or more, in the next year or two.**
- **However, we need to look reality in the face, that the basic issue behind and therefore our real challenge is to create and establish attractiveness of GC Networks as an organization to attract many more participants.**

Expectations

- **I talked about my sense of issues from GC-JN and some part from UNGC Board member. In order to resolve those issues and to make the GC a real value, I would like to work together with you all and create “Sense of Community” among Global Compact Local Networks in the East Asia.**
- **Now, I would like to close my statement wishing this first Round Table a big success and enjoyable. Thank you again to you all.**