

**Minutes of Cross-Party Group on Japan Meeting**  
**Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2020, at Scottish Parliament, Committee Room 5 at 19:00**

**Attendees:**

**MSP Attendees**

Dean Lockhart MSP (Convenor)  
Bill Bowman MSP  
Alexander Stewart MSP

**Speakers**

Neil Francis (Scottish Enterprise)  
Beatrice Morrice (Scotch Whisky Association)  
James Withers (Scotland Food and Drink)  
Dr Sarah Zipp (University of Stirling)  
Jack McEwan, Katrin Loose, Femke Luijten (University of Stirling students)

**Attendees**

Mr Nozomu Takoaka (Consul General of Japan)  
Ms Masami Fujimoto (Deputy Consul General of Japan)  
Liz Cameron (Scottish Chambers of Commerce)  
Alan Johnston (University of Edinburgh)  
Gavin Donoghue (University of Edinburgh)  
Peter Mowforth (Institute of E-Commerce)  
Michael Graham (Individual)  
Stuart Hamilton (Scottish Chambers of Commerce)  
Scott Johnstone (Scottish Life Sciences Association)  
Anthony McCallum (House of Macallan)  
Professor Neville Wylie (University of Stirling)  
Misako Udo (Individual)  
Miki Inamura (Individual)  
Reiko Inder (Individual)  
Atsuko Clement (Individual)  
Jo Graham (Whisky Ambassador)  
Takashi Taji (Walter Scott and Partners)  
Ruta Noreika (Orkney Japan Society)  
Airin Wu (Office of Stewart Stevenson MSP)  
Kaori MacGregor (Individual)  
Brady Moore (University of Stirling)  
Jamie Wood (University of Stirling)  
David Johnston (Scottish Government)  
David Birrell (Asia Scotland Institute)  
Thomas Heald (Office of Dean Lockhart MSP)  
Lesley-Anne Campbell (Office of Dean Lockhart MSP)  
Julia McIntyre (Office of Dean Lockhart MSP)

## **Welcome and Apologies**

Dean Lockhart MSP (DL) welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Cross Party Group of Japan.

DL welcomed the Consul General of Japan, Mr Nozomu Takoaka (CG) to the meeting.

DL noted that there were nine apologies for absence: Liam McArthur MSP, Colin Smyth MSP, Tracy Black, Kerry Bryson, Professor Malcolm MacLeod, Alan Johnstone, Roy Leckie, Lord Charles Bruce, and Graeme Jones.

DL highlighted the upcoming COP26 UN Climate Change Conference which is due to be held in Glasgow in November 2020 and asked how the CPG could best harness the huge amount of international interest in the conference and the opportunities it will provide to meet with many delegates from Japan.

David Birrell (DB) introduced the speakers and the theme for the meeting which was *Reflections on 2019 and a look towards opportunities in 2020*.

## **Minute of previous meeting**

Minute of previous meeting on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2019 was agreed. Proposed by DL, seconded by DB.

## **Update: Consul General of Japan, Mr Nozomu Takoaka**

The Consul General of Japan (CG) apologised for having to leave the meeting shortly to attend the highlighted that 2019 had been a fruitful year for Japan-Scotland relations with the Rugby World Cup offering people the chance to experience Japanese culture first hand.

In terms of trade, CG explained that salmon exports to Japan increased by 71.8% between October 2018 and October 2019 citing the reduction in the tariff rate from 3.5% to 2.9% in the case of raw salmon, and the reduction to 0% tariffs in the case of frozen salmon as major contributory factors. Whisky exports to Japan also increased by 20.9%.

Mr Takoaka also highlighted the visits of both the Secretary of State for International Trade, Rt. Hon. Liz Truss MP and the Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Tourism and External Affairs Fiona Hyslop MSP to Japan in 2019.

Looking forward CG stressed that 2020 will be a crucial year for the United Kingdom and Scotland in forging of relationships with international partners and stated that further close co-ordination between the UK, Scotland and Japan will bring further benefits to all parties concerned.

CG handed over to his Deputy, Ms Masami Fujimoto.

## **Deputy Consul General of Japan, Ms Masami Fujimoto**

The Deputy Consul General (DCG) informed the group on a number of key events in Japan-Scotland relations throughout 2019, including the opening of the V&A in Dundee which was designed by a Japanese architect, the establishment of the Orkney Japan Association chaired by Liam McArthur MSP, and the news in August that Heart of Midlothian Football Club had signed Japanese footballer Ryo Meshino on a loan from Manchester City.

DCG then highlighted a number of important Japanese investments in Scotland including the acquisition by Mitsubishi of 20% of the energy company Ovo making the company the UK's second largest domestic energy supplier, Mitsubishi's involvement in the Neart na Gaoithe project in the Firth of Forth, Kawasaki Heavy Industries plans to build a factory in Aberdeen to construct subsea vehicles for the oil and gas sector and Japanese communication company NTT data opening an office in Glasgow.

## **Guest Speakers**

### **Beatrice Morrice, Scotch Whisky Association**

Beatrice Morrice (BM) highlighted to the group of the importance of Japan as a key market for Scotch whisky. Japan is the 11<sup>th</sup> largest by value and 6<sup>th</sup> largest by volume in terms of exports. These exports have increased by 20.9% in the last year alone. Macallan is the top Scottish single malt in Japan in terms of sales.

BM explained that there is a history of over 100 years of collaboration between the Scotch whisky industry and Japan.

BM welcomed the coming implementation of a transition period as the United Kingdom leaves the European Union and the statement that the 0% import duty will remain whilst trade agreement discussions are ongoing.

### **James Withers (Scotland Food & Drink)**

James Withers (JW) spoke to the cross party group of the success of salmon exports to Japan which has seen a phenomenal rise. The success is due to salmon being a kite mark product and that Japan and Scotland are both seafood nations.

JW said that COP 26 was a great opportunity to push Scottish products as Japan is one of the markets that has always cared about water quality and climate friendly food production.

### **Neil Francis (Scottish Enterprise)**

Neil Francis (NF) briefed the group on the work of SDI and future trade missions as set out in the letter from Fiona Hyslop MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Tourism and External Affairs.

The focus for Scottish Enterprise will be that set out in Trading Nation – focusing on science and technology, medical technologies, the gaming sector, the energy agenda especially offshore renewables, the data agenda, health and Fintech.

### **Sarah Zipp (University of Stirling)**

Sarah Zipp (SZ) gave a presentation on the collaboration of Stirling University with Universities in Japan.

### **Jack McEwan, Katrin Loose, Femke Luijten (University of Stirling Students)**

Jack, Katrin and Femke gave a presentation on a Nanairo Ekiden event they are holding at the University of Stirling Campus on Sunday 8th March 2020, 12:00-17:30.

The group congratulated the team on their work and would promote and contribute to the event.

### **Open discussion**

Liz Cameron told the group that the SCC are members of the UK Government Strategic Trade Advisory Group and are working to bring Scottish businesses together to influence future trade deals.

There was a discussion on Japanese investment into the life sciences industry, collaborations between Japanese and Scottish Universities and the opportunities from the Tokyo Olympics 2020.

It was agreed that DB would brief the group on promotional events around Tokyo 2020.

### **Action points**

1. DB to investigate COP26 and Olympics opportunities with BEIS and Scottish Government and report back to the CPG.
2. DCG to circulate details of the events surrounding the Olympics.
3. DB to invite representations from Japanese companies.
4. All CPG members to provide ideas in relation to COP26 engagement.

**Date of next meeting**

The next meeting will be on 6th May 2020 and subjects suggested for discussion include Tokyo Olympics 2020, Fintech, COPF 26, and renewables.