

October 5, 2020  
International Affairs Department,  
KANKEIREN

# **Executive Summary**

## **Asia Business Creation (ABC) Platform Top Meeting**



# Asia Business Creation (ABC) Platform

- The 2<sup>nd</sup> General Meeting, originally to be held in Singapore in September, has been pushed back to 2021 due to COVID-19.
- As a precursor to the next meeting, leaders from the 8 organizations met online to compare notes (to be detailed later).

**Objectives:** "Expanding economic growth in Asia and Japan by providing opportunities for business creation"

Economic organizations in Asian countries and Kansai work together to provide opportunities for business creation to companies and affiliated organizations in each country by accelerating collaboration in various fields (human resources, technologies, services, etc.)

**Participating organizations:**



Indonesia



Malaysia



Myanmar



The Philippines



Singapore



Thailand



Vietnam



Japan

National Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Malaysia (NCCIM)

Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI)

Federation of Thai Industries (FTI)

Kansai Economic Federation (Kankeiren)

Indonesian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KADIN)

Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI)

Singapore Manufacturing Federation (SMF)

Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI)

**Activities:**

## 1. General Meeting

Determine action plan, share achievements/challenges

- ◎ Held annually with attendance by leadership from each affiliated organization
- ◎ The 1st mtg. held on April 5, 2019. The 2<sup>nd</sup> mtg. scheduled for 2021 in Singapore

## 2. Thematic Working Groups (TWGs)

Conduct specific efforts for business creation

- ◎ Started with 5 TWGs. Environment TWG added in December 2019 and Start-up TWG to be added soon
- ◎ Each TWG has a Project Manager (PM), who leads the activities of their TWG.

HR Development/ Utilization	Medical / Nursing Care	SMEs	Agriculture	Tourism	Environment	Start-ups
[PM: Ehle Institute] Develops / empowers core HRs of Asia by providing them with job opportunities in Japan, etc.	[PM: SOMPO Holdings, J.S.B.] Introduces advanced medical technologies, promotes medical tourism, builds a sustainable business model for nursing care, etc.	[PM: ResonaBank] Organizes seminars and tours designed to help SMEs to expand/start overseas business, etc.	[PM: Kubota] Introduces smart agriculture and other technologies overseas, promotes import / export of farm products and processed foods, etc.	[PM: JATA] Increases tourist traffic between Japan and other Asian countries by stimulating outbound / inbound businesses, etc.	[PM: Hitachi Zosen] Facilitates environmental improvement in Asia through business alliances between Japan and other Asian countries, etc.	[PM: Hankyu Hanshin Properties] Accelerates innovations by facilitating growth of and exchange between start-ups in Japan and other Asian countries, etc.



Alliance, cooperation



Kansai Bureau of Economy, Trade and Industry  
Pacific Resource Exchange Center, etc.

## 3. Business creation among concerned companies/parties

# Executive Summary - ABC Platform Top Meeting

- Time:** Friday, September 4, 2020, 15:00~17:30
- Place:** Virtual (Zoom)
- Purpose:** To further activate the platform by sharing and comparing notes on activity updates, responses to COVID-19, and expectations for the ABC Platform among economic organizations of the member countries
- Attendees:** Leaders of member economic organizations, those involved in the platform, Kankeiren member companies (via webinars), and others concerned
- Program:**
- 1. Opening remarks: Chairman Masayoshi Matsumoto, Kankeiren
  - 2. Updates on activities: Chairman Keiji Tanaka of the Business-in-Asia Committee, Secretariat
  - 3. Free discussions among leaders of economic organizations (responses to COVID-19 in their countries, expectations for the ABC Platform, etc.)
  - 4. Closing remarks: Senior Council Member Neo Eng Chong, Singapore Manufacturing Federation (SMF)
- On the occasion, an eye of *daruma* was painted to wish for a swift end to COVID-19 and a quick economic recovery.**



# Top Meeting – Leaders of Member Economic Organizations Comparing Notes

## Executive Summary of the Meeting (Expectations for the ABC Platform) (See the following slides for details)

1. Strengthening cooperation among the member countries to overcome COVID-19 and stimulate economic growth
2. Business matching via webinars, virtual trade shows, ABC Platform website, etc.
3. Initiatives by TWGs (Shown below are the concerns of each member country)

Malaysia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Promotion of the Halal business</li></ul>
Myanmar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Utilization of Japan's agricultural technologies</li><li>• Stimulation of the nursing care system</li><li>• Development of water supply and sewerage systems</li></ul>
The Philippines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Support for start-ups</li><li>• Improvement of healthcare services, license agreement with Japan's home centers, strengthening of farm product sales</li><li>• Development/supply of human resources</li></ul>
Singapore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Organization of webinars associated with the SMS TWG and Medical / Nursing Care TWG</li></ul>
Thailand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cooperation in agricultural technologies</li><li>• Development of human resources with advanced skills</li></ul>
Vietnam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Matching Kansai-based companies with Vietnamese students seeking jobs</li></ul>

## Remarks by Chairman Matsumoto



Kankeiren Chairman  
Masayoshi Matsumoto

- As you shared key info on COVID-19 and the economy with us, **we realized that the bond among the member organizations has strengthened and deepened despite the COVID-19 pandemic.**
- Your presentations have brought my attention to the following **four key imperatives:**
  1. **Mutual development through two-way communication**
  2. **Expansion and acceleration of the width and depth of activities by the ABC Platform**
  3. **Stimulation of the activities to promote bonding among member countries**
  4. **Producing results by building on each program, albeit small ones, and joining hands (Let's deliver results!)**

# Top Meeting – Leaders of Member Economic Organizations Comparing Notes

Speaker	Selected comments
 <p>Ms. Leila Djawas Executive Director Indonesian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KADIN)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In Indonesia, the number of COVID-19 cases has topped 180,000 with 7,616 deaths, which is the highest in SEA. Things are particularly serious in the capital city Jakarta and East Java. It will take time before COVID-19 is brought under control.</li> <li>• IMF predicts that Indonesia's economic numbers will be <u>the lowest since the Asian currency crisis in 1988</u>. On the other hand, <u>some industries registered positive growth, including telecommunication, water supply, health services, real estate, and agriculture</u>. <u>Now that the government has eased regulations to adapt to the new normal, the digital economy will hold the key going forward</u>.</li> <li>• According to a survey by JETRO, <u>80% of Japanese companies are experiencing a drop in sales in Indonesia but some 70% of them plan to continue investing in the nation</u>, while 15% of them are reviewing their investment plans. This shows us that <u>many Japanese companies still see significant potential in the Indonesian market and assume that consumption will recover over the long term</u>. DBS Bank of Singapore sees Indonesia as an attractive investment location, with robust consumption/demand and a young working population.</li> <li>• <u>To overcome COVID-19 and seek economic growth, it is necessary that many countries/regions join hands, and we expect that the ABC Platform will play a significant role in this regard</u>.</li> </ul>
 <p>Mr. Datuk Zayad Md Ismail Hon. Treasurer and General Council Member National Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Malaysia (NCCIM)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In Malaysia, the national lockdown was issued in March, closing the border and banning inter-state movement. In June, we moved to the Recovery Movement Control Order (RMCO) to lift the ban on inter-state movement. This policy should continue until the end of December 2020.</li> <li>• <u>The tourism industry has suffered immensely since the beginning of the year due to the closure of the border with China and doesn't seem set to recover any time soon</u>. Tightened cash flows of businesses and the decline in workers' income during the lockdown are feeding concerns over the future throughout the country, and <u>some SMEs are laying off their workers or giving up their business</u>.</li> <li>• <u>The business circle believes what we need is a paradigm shift to a new business environment, rather than merely resuming past economic activities</u>. We are <u>expecting our government to develop a new business infrastructure that applies the latest digital technologies</u>.</li> <li>• I agree with the ABC Platform's policy, which Mr. Tanaka explained earlier. <u>It reaffirmed the need to strengthen activities through the ABC Platform and produce results by organizing virtual meetings, etc</u>. I believe that it is time to take one step further to boost initiatives to create business by inviting diverse stakeholders to come abroad.</li> <li>• NCCIM aims to strengthen ties with TWGs and the Bangkok Desk. <u>Last year saw the Muslim Friendly campaign by the Tourism TWG</u>, which was a positive attempt to <u>acknowledge the needs of Muslim tourists</u>. We also believe that, <u>in the fields of Halal food and smartphone apps, the SME TWG and Start-up TWG are in an advantageous position to create business, too</u>. We will work proactively to produce results.</li> </ul>



# Top Meeting – Leaders of Member Economic Organizations Comparing Notes

## Speaker

## Selected comments



Mr. Zaw Min Win  
President

Union of Myanmar Federation  
of Chambers of Commerce  
and Industry (UMFCCI)



- Myanmar's Ministry of Health and Sports says that there were 787 COVID-19 cases as of August 31.
- To create business in key sectors such as agriculture, innovative technology, tourism, HR development, dissemination of technology and skill development, medicine, and start-ups, the ABC Platform should pursue interactive activities.
- **Over 70% of the working population is in the agriculture sector in Myanmar and accounts for 22.5% of GDP. Most agriculture businesses are small-sized and yearn to utilize Japan's agricultural technology to achieve growth. We extend a welcoming hand to Japanese companies,** including Kubota, Kaneko Agricultural Machinery, Mebiol, The Norinchukin Bank, and Maruyama Mtg. (who are the members of the Agriculture TWG) to our country.
- **SMEs in Myanmar would like to take advantage of webinars and other opportunities to look for matches in Japan. We endorse the idea of developing a website** where economic organizations from different countries can communicate with each other and update information. This website should allow companies from Japan and other Asian countries to find matches and exchange useful information on going to ASEAN countries and vice versa. **We would like to have technical support from Japan to promote digitalization of business in Myanmar.**
- **In order to build a sustainable system for nursing care in Myanmar we hope to revitalize our nursing care system with support from the ABC Platform. We would also like to accelerate the development of sewerage systems and waste treatment facilities in Myanmar in collaboration with the Environment TWG.** We also embrace the idea of **organizing virtual trade shows of Japanese and ASEAN brands on the ABC Platform's website.** We can organize webinars on **economy and trade, investment regulations, financial institutions, entry strategies, etc.**




Mr. Renato G. Simbulan  
Chairman  
International Affairs  
Committee  
Philippine Chamber of  
Commerce and Industry  
(PCCI)

- After the first COVID-19 case in the country was confirmed, the Philippines acted promptly to prevent its spread and expanded the quarantine and isolation systems. In addition to allocating a budget to developing a contact tracing system to monitor the behaviors of the infected, we are increasing the number of hospital beds. We also launched a working group to study the safety and efficacy of vaccines.
- **In the Philippines, manufacturing, construction, and transportation businesses were hit hard, while agriculture, forestry, and fishery businesses grew.** A survey jointly conducted with local chambers of commerce and industry found that approx. 50% of SMEs were forced to suspend their operations.
- The PCCI President is working closely with embassies and their counterparts in foreign countries to facilitate innovations within two years from now, by, for example, **building an innovation center ecosystem to expand networks among young entrepreneurs, accelerators, incubators, and investors to foster start-ups. In the fields of the environment and start-ups, we are hoping to leverage the ABC Platform to promote business.**
- **We look forward to working with the ABC Platform to co-promote concrete projects** going forward. Possible areas for collaboration include the **application of cyclotron technology to cancer treatment, licensing agreements with Japanese home centers, and sales promotion of farm products such as mangos and okras.** In HR development, **we believe there are many areas in which we could collaborate, such as training and supply of HRs.**
- I believe that not a few companies currently operating in China are considering leaving China due to the disturbances caused by COVID-19, and we encourage them to relocate their operations to the Philippines. We at the PCCI will offer all-out support to facilitate such moves.

# Top Meeting – Leaders of Member Economic Organizations Comparing Notes

Speaker	Selected comments
<p>Championing Manufacturing – A Partner in Nation Building</p>  <p>Mr. Douglas Foo President Singapore Manufacturing Federation (SMF)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>We believe that we can always find a silver lining in a crisis.</u></b> Although we cannot meet in person now, <b><u>we are moving ahead with the objectives laid out by the ABC Platform as we connect with each other via Zoom and many other tools.</u></b> Changes brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic are essential in achieving prosperity in the new normal, which emphasizes <b><u>the importance of creating new opportunities by tapping into the latest technologies.</u></b></li> <li>• <b><u>Fortunately, Japan and ASEAN countries have managed to contain the spread relatively well, and this experience will be instrumental to our economic development going forward. It will be increasingly important for us to share knowledge through the ABC Platform.</u></b></li> <li>• ASEAN is expected to be the world's 4<sup>th</sup> largest economic bloc in terms of GDP, and <b><u>ASEAN's development will bring new opportunities to Japan.</u></b> We should seek cooperation to create businesses in each field of the ABC Platform. <b><u>We at SMF are hoping to co-organize a webinar with Kankeiren on topics related to the SME TWG and Medical / Nursing Care TWG.</u></b> We would like to hear your comments and ask you to share your experiences in these two fields.</li> <li>• I trust that the ABC Platform will firmly cement the ties among our organizations. Let us all join together to build sustainable partnerships and fruitful business relationships!</li> </ul>
 <p>Mr. Chirapan Oulapathorn Chairman Thai-Japanese Industrial Cooperation Institute Federation of Thai Industries (FTI)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TFI has recently established the Thai-Japanese Industrial Cooperation Institute to reinforce cooperation with Japan and I was appointed the first Chairman of the Institute.</li> <li>• <b><u>Thailand has been successful in preventing the spread of COVID-19, but suffered a serious economic impact nonetheless.</u></b> There is nowhere that this is truer than in the tourism sector, which accounts for nearly 20% of our GDP and is expected to shrink at least 7~8% in 2020. Although the government has begun to ease the restrictions on movement within the country, domestic consumption remains stagnant and exports are forecasted to decrease by 10-12%. We may expect the economy to start recovering in 2021, but, due to the weak demand for manufacturing and tourism across the globe, the recovery may be slow and uncertain at best. Our government has taken numerous pump-priming measures and established a joint committee with the private sector to draw up effective economic measures. <b><u>We at FTI have made recommendations to the government, which include acceleration of government-led investment projects designed to stimulate the domestic economy and support for trade promotion via an e-commerce platform.</u></b></li> <li>• We believe that the ABC Platform will reinforce the cooperative ties between Kankeiren and countries in Asia. <b><u>As agriculture and food are two key industries that drive the Thai economy, we are hoping that Thailand's agriculture sector will boost its capacity and start to expand further through the transfer of agricultural technology via the ABC Platform.</u></b> Meanwhile, <b><u>the Thai industrial structure is shifting away from the conventional manufacturing business to more innovative and advanced technology-oriented businesses</u></b> such as automation, IoT, robotics, and healthcare. <b><u>To develop HRs capable of meeting fast-changing industrial demands, we need to work closely with Japan.</u></b></li> <li>• The ABC Platform <b><u>established its Bangkok Desk</u></b> within FTI. We have no doubts whatsoever that <b><u>the Bangkok Desk will help to strengthen activities not only in Thailand but in other member countries as well, paving the way to fruitful relationships that will last for years to come.</u></b></li> </ul>

# Top Meeting – Leaders of Member Economic Organizations Comparing Notes

Speaker	Selected comments
 <p>Mr. Hoang Van Anh Deputy Director General Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vietnam succeeded in controlling the spread of COVID-19 through timely disclosure, but we are on high alert again after the second wave brought a surge in positive cases.</li> <li>• Vietnam is <b><u>one of the few countries that achieved positive GDP growth</u></b> during the COVID-19 pandemic, as it acted proactively to implement a request for its people to stay home in January when the first case was reported. This success is also attributable to the Vietnamese government's pump-priming measures. Having said this, the lost six months were too large to ignore, and <b><u>the rapid economic growth up to then has slowed down with the manufacturing business incurring huge damage.</u></b></li> <li>• We would thus like <b><u>to deepen exchanges with Kansai in the field of manufacturing. We are more than happy to get involved in various initiatives, including matching for Vietnamese students seeking positions in Kansai-based companies.</u></b></li> <li>• VCCI expects <b><u>exchange programs to resume sometime in 2021</u></b>, and is willing to <b><u>contribute to the creation of business opportunities via the ABC Platform</u></b>. Although we cannot meet in person now, <b><u>we can share information and do matching online, and we hope to maintain digital channels for effectively comparing notes.</u></b></li> </ul>
 <p>Mr. Masayuki Matsushita Vice Chairman, Kankeiren</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First of all, I am pleased to see you all – despite it being virtually - after a long interval.</li> <li>• It's unfortunate that our activities were considerably restricted by the COVID-19 pandemic just as we were about to move ahead powerfully in the second year of the ABC Platform. Despite this difficulty, <b><u>it is reassuring to see small but concrete results burgeoning in various fields.</u></b> I would like to thank our counterparts in each region and TWGs for their relentless efforts in this regard.</li> <li>• Though this difficult situation should linger, I am expecting everyone to stay active <b><u>so that we can reunite at the General Meeting in Singapore next year and paint the other eye of daruma to celebrate what we will have achieved. A Buddhist teaching says that if you keep making efforts and never allow your devotion to lapse, the "third eye" will develop in the middle of the forehead. Through joint efforts, we are hoping to cooperate with you all to achieve yet another success that allows us to paint the third eye to our daruma.</u></b></li> </ul>
 <p>Mr. Neo Eng Chong Senior Council Member, SMF</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amid the ongoing disturbances, we have been able to discuss ways to assist enterprises in finding their economic foundations and achieving early recovery. I realize yet again that economic organizations from different countries are more than willing to join hands to get over this hardship.</li> <li>• If economic organizations of the member countries work together as one, I'm sure that businesses in each country will gain access to greater opportunities. <b><u>While the new normal is here to stay, the roles of our economic organizations will remain unchanged, that is, to offer continuous support for their member enterprises.</u></b> We thus need to <b><u>encourage our member enterprises to participate in the programs organized by the ABC Platform to find opportunities to expand their business network and reap the rewards of doing so.</u></b></li> <li>• <b><u>We are tremendously excited for the General Meeting to be held in Singapore next year.</u></b> We look forward to seeing you all again then. Good health and happiness to you all. Stay healthy, and in the meantime, let us stay connected virtually!</li> </ul>



## 1. Showcasing more technologies/products and matching businesses on the website

Posting more technologies/products of companies and organizations from the eight participating countries on the ABC Platform website to expedite business matching and put a focus on the expansion of business opportunities for start-ups in each member country.



27 technologies / products posted as of September 14, 2020 (including ones to be posted soon)

We invite you to send information on technologies/products that will be posted on this space.

Contact: (FIRST NAME) Nagatsu / (FIRST NAME) Hosokawa, ABC Platform, International Committee, Kankeiren

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# Future Course of Action

## 2. Initiatives for the “with/after COVID-19” world

In anticipation of resumption of international exchanges, planning and preparations by each TWG will be accelerated pursuant to suggestions at the top meeting, and each TWG will consider organizing webinars, etc. with economic organizations of the member countries.

TWGs	Key future initiatives
HR Development / Utilization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Continuing with the project to promote utilization of highly skilled foreign workers, including university students from Vietnam, with the developments of COVID-19 in mind</li><li>Commencing initiatives to utilize highly skilled workers, including science students from Myanmar</li><li>Continuing to organize webinars with domestic/foreign partners</li></ul>
Medical / Nursing Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Members of each TWG will pool their know-how to discuss measures to enhance / provide a multitrack formula for the international HR training scheme and to improve trainees’ living environments, in anticipation of the resumption of the inflow of nursing care providers from abroad.</li></ul>
SMEs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Organizing a series of webinars on “business in ASEAN countries during the COVID-19 pandemic” to identify issues facing individual companies, thus increasing the number of successful examples by individual companies</li></ul>
Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Conducting follow-ups on the ongoing projects with Mebiol, Espec Mic, Abridge, etc. to give a concrete shape to them and sign a deal</li><li>Matching technologies of TWG member companies with the needs of their counterparts (asking economic organizations of the member countries to invite their businesses to join the ABC Platform)</li></ul>
Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Planning/implementing a business tour to Myanmar jointly with MTF</li><li>Planning/implementing business conventions to create Halal-related businesses for Muslim tourists</li></ul>
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Conducting follow-ups to bring to a conclusion the ongoing project on the removal of melamine by membrane treatment technology, etc. for Thailand (Sumitomo Electric Industries, Hitachi Zosen, etc.)</li><li>Taking an approach successfully implemented in Thailand (selection of companies, sharing information gained from surveys on the market needs among TWGs) in other countries (Indonesia, Vietnam, etc.) as well</li></ul>
Start-ups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Organizing seminars that promote cooperation between start-ups in ASEAN countries and companies in Japan and vice versa</li><li>Utilizing the Bangkok Desk to create business by matching start-ups in Japan and ASEAN countries with existing companies</li></ul>

## 3. Accelerating alliances with overseas organizations and local economic organizations in Japan Preparing for the 2<sup>nd</sup> General Meeting

Accelerating alliances with not only overseas organizations but also economic federations in Hokuriku, Hokkaido, etc., with a view toward promoting collaboration with Japanese companies/organizations outside of Kansai

To prepare for the 2<sup>nd</sup> General Meeting next year, work closely with SMF in the host country of Singapore  
(Dates for the 2<sup>nd</sup> General Meeting to be decided by the end of this year through consultation with SMD)