

The Florida | Japan Report

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**Florida Delegation
SEUS/JAPAN
Association, Inc.**

"Florida Delegation"

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Early Bird Registration To Open Soon for 40th Annual Joint Meeting

Florida Delegation, Southeast U.S./Japan Association, Inc. (SEUS/Japan) is pleased to announce that this year's Annual Joint Meeting of the Southeast U.S./Japan and Japan U.S./Southeast Associations will be held in Greenville, South Carolina on October 22-24, 2017. This year marks the 40th Annual Joint Meeting of the Associations, which will be held at the Hyatt Regency in Greenville. The theme of this year's joint meeting is "Success Through Harmony, Tradition & Innovation."

Florida Governor Rick Scott has been invited to officially lead the Florida Delegation to the 40th Annual Joint Meeting. In addition to the SEUS member state governors/head of delegations, senior officials of the U.S. and Japan are expected to attend, with total attendance projected at 600 participants. Ms. Minor Mickel Shaw, President, Micco LLC will serve as the Conference Chairman. Mr. Teruo Asada, Chairman, Marubeni Corporation, will serve as the meeting's Japan-U.S. Southeast Delegation Leader and co-Chairman, and the Japanese Ambassador to the U.S., Kenichiro Sasae, is expected to once again serve as a keynote speaker this year.

The SEUS/Japan Joint Meeting program offers Florida delegates an opportunity to meet with top government and business leaders from Japan and the other six Southeast U.S. member states.

The Florida Delegation will hold its annual meeting of members in conjunction with the joint meeting on the afternoon of October 22, immediately prior to a welcome reception for all participating SEUS and Japan delegates.

This important annual joint meeting between Japan, Florida and the six other Southeast U.S. member states is a unique opportunity for delegates to renew, expand as develop business and friendship ties with Japan's top business and economic development leaders, and for SEUS/JAPAN to further its mission, as stated below.

The mission of SEUS/Japan is to promote ties of trade, investment, education, tourism and friendly relations between Florida and Japan, respectively, and the six other southeastern member states (AL, GA, MS, NC, SC, and TN). SEUS/JAPAN has individual, NPO and corporate membership programs open to all individuals, businesses and organizations interested in supporting its mission and participating in this prestigious annual event. SEUS/Japan works in close partnership with the Governor's office, Enterprise Florida, and other economic development organizations and partners throughout Florida to carry out its mission.

Anyone interested in registering as a Florida delegate, should contact SEUS/JAPAN's execu-



Florida Delegation Leader, Ken Detzner, the Florida Secretary of State, speaking during the opening ceremony of the 39th Annual SEUS/Japan Joint Meeting on September 21, 2016 in Tokyo.

tive director, Dave Woodward, at the number or e-mail address herein to pre-register. Registration forms will be sent to those who have pre-registered once "early bird" registration opens next month. Space is limited, so anyone interested is encouraged to pre-register now. More information will be available on the Association's website: www.fl-seusjapan.org or via e-mail: info@fl-seusjapan.org or by phone: 786-235-8289.

SEUS-Japan Holds 2017 Florida-Japan Summit at UCF

Florida Delegation, SEUS/Japan successfully planned and conducted its 2017 Florida-Japan Summit on Wednesday, January 18, 2017 from

2:00-5:15 pm This year's program agenda included two sequential panels on Florida-Japan business and educational/cultural ties. Special guest speakers included Dr. Barry Morris, Ph.D., Senior International Officer & Chief Global Strategist, University of Central Florida; Mr. Dave Walsh, Member, UCF Board of Trustees; Mr. Manny Menicia, Sr. Vice President-Int'l Trade and Business Development, Enterprise Florida, Inc.; Mr. Sam K. Tabuchi, Director-Japan Office, Enterprise Florida, Inc.; Mr. Norikazu Mori, Chief Executive Director, Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO); Mr. David Johnson, Director-Strategic Investment, Jabil; Prof. Yasuo Uotate, Master Lecturer of Japanese, University of Florida and Dr. Douglas Trelfa, Ph.D., Director, UWF Japan Center/Japan House and Florida/Japan Linkage Institute, University of West Florida. Mr. Keith Norden, Chairman of SEUS/Japan provided closing remarks and Mr. Dave Woodward, Executive Director, SEUS/Japan, emceed the program, provided

introductions and moderated the Q&A session.

In addition to the summit program presented this afternoon, a networking reception was held immediately following from 5:30-6:45 PM at UCF Global, which included special remarks by Mr. Hiroyuki Tsui, Executive Director-International Affairs, Wakayama Prefectural Government on the Florida-Wakayama Sister-State Relationship. This year's Summit was presented in partnership with the University of Central Florida's UCF Global. Enterprise Florida, Inc., the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) and Florida Department of Economic Opportunity co-sponsored this year's Summit.

SEUS/Japan holds the Annual Summit meeting programs in Florida in between the 7-state and Japan joint meeting program. This was the second time UCF has hosted this event, as it hosted the 4th Summit in 2007.

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Asahi to Pay \$7.8 Billion for AB InBev Beer Brands in Eastern Europe

Asahi Group Holdings Ltd. has agreed to buy brewing assets in five Eastern European nations from Anheuser-Busch InBev NV for €7.3 billion (\$7.8 billion), establishing a European beer platform, in the latest big overseas deal by a Japanese food-and-drink industry that is struggling at home.

AB InBev had put the assets on the block as part of its successful plan to win regulatory approval for its merger with SABMiller, a deal that was completed in October.

The sale includes Czech brewer Plzensky Prazdroy, the maker of Pilsner Urquell, and Polish beer brands such as Tyskie and Lech. The brands will give more international heft to Asahi, the top beer maker by sales in its home market of Japan but only a small competitor globally. The deal complements the Japanese brewer's €2.55 billion April pact to acquire some of SABMiller's other European brands, including Peroni and Grolsch, in another divestiture made by AB InBev to obtain regulatory clearance.

The European platform provides Asahi with the opportunity to use its financial muscle to bolster sales of these brands, as well as reach a broader customer base for its Asahi beer brand, making it potentially more competitive in Europe.

The deal left some investors with a bad taste because of the unexpectedly high price tag. Asahi earlier said it had budgeted about \$3 billion to \$4 billion for overseas acquisitions, but it was forced to spend double that sum to defeat bidders including private-equity firm Bain Capital, Switzerland-based Jacobs Holding AG and PPF Group, an investment firm

controlled by Czech businessman Petr Kellner.

The two highest bids after Asahi's offer ranged between €6.5 billion and €7 billion, according to people familiar with the matter.

Asahi shares fell 4.6% in Tokyo after the Nikkei newspaper reported the price tag an hour before the market closed. AB InBev shares were up 1.9% in Brussels Tuesday afternoon. "Asahi is heading in the right direction by expanding overseas, but the price seems too expensive," said Masayuki Kubota, chief strategist at Rakuten Securities. "Investors will be watching whether Asahi can offer a reasonable explanation about the high price."

A spokesman for Asahi said the valuation was similar to other recent beverage deals. The company said Pilsner Urquell holds the top spot as far as market share in the Czech Republic, which it said was the world's biggest beer-drinking country on a per capita basis. The company said the brands would establish Asahi as a "global player that leverages its strengths originating in Japan."

The deal is the second-largest on record in the food-and-beverage industry by a Japanese company after Suntory Holdings Ltd.'s \$16 billion deal for the U.S. liquor maker Beam Inc. in 2014. Japanese beer makers have been looking overseas for growth because the domestic market is shrinking, owing to a population that is declining in number and growing older. Sales of Asahi's flagship Super Dry brand fell nearly 4% in the first 11 months of this year.

For now, the Japanese companies rank far

behind global giants such as AB InBev. Asahi had a 1.2% share of the global beer market in 2015, according to Euromonitor International. Dealogic said that with Tuesday's beer deal, 2016 is now the second-biggest year on record for overseas acquisitions by Japanese companies, after 2012. Another Japanese beer maker, Kirin Holdings Co., bought a 55% stake in Myanmar Brewery for \$560 million last year.

Despite the high price tag for its Europe purchases, Asahi might continue to hunt for deals. The company has expressed interest in bidding for Vietnamese state-owned brewer Saigon Beer Alcohol Beverage Corp., known as Sabeco, said people familiar with the matter. An Asahi spokesman declined to comment. Vietnam's government has invited investment banks to pitch for a mandate to sell a stake in Sabeco worth at least \$1.8 billion, according to people familiar with the situation, starting what could be the largest sale of a Vietnamese state-run company.



Source: Wall Street Journal 12-13-16

Disney & Uniqlo Collaborate On Latest Fashion Line-Up



Last year saw more Disney Fashion collaborations than ever before, and we're happy to report that the magic is already finding its way into 2017. On Wednesday,

Uniqlo, our go-to destination for layering pieces and all things Heattech, announced its partnership with the Walt Disney Company for its spring/summer 2017 MAGIC FOR ALL collection which, according to the press release, aims to "bring the dreams and excitement of Disney to people around the world through clothes." The pieces are set to be sold in mid-April at select Uniqlo stores and on uniqlo.com.

While we're obviously anticipating the offering its entirety, we're particularly excited about one of its sub-collections, "Minnie Mouse Loves Dots," designed by Olympia Le-Tan, a bonafide Disney pro. In the past, Le-Tan has produced an entire collection for her namesake line featuring Alice in Wonderland and other classic characters; she also designed a selection of T-shirts for Uniqlo last spring. And if her upcoming collaboration with the two companies is anything like her other endeavors, we can be sure to expect an array of funky screen-printed tees that are perfect

to wear both in and out of the parks.

"I was really excited to work with UNIQLO again," Le-Tan said of the initiative. "It was fun doing the first collaboration and I was really happy with the result, so doing it again, but this time with Minnie Mouse was such a dream for me! For this collection, we created new artwork and a new story but with one of the most popular icons ever. For me that's really special. We also tried to make it playful and quirky, yet classic enough to be wearable by all."

Though April still feels a ways away, there's nothing like the announcement of designer collaboration that really gets us in the mood to shop (and plan a vacation to Orlando). Stay tuned for more, and be sure to check this space for any updates on the collection as they become available.

Source: Refinery29.com 1-19-17

\$50 Billion Pledge From SoftBank to Trump

Masayoshi Son, the brash billionaire who controls Sprint Corp., said Tuesday he would invest \$50 billion in the U.S. and create 50,000 new jobs, following a 45-minute private meeting with President-elect Donald Trump.

The telecom mogul, who made his fortune in Japan with SoftBank Group Corp., announced his investment plans in the lobby of Trump Tower, though he didn't provide details. Mr. Trump took credit for the investment, saying his November victory spurred SoftBank's decision.

Mr. Son told reporters he planned to "invest into the new startup companies in the United States." It would be difficult to create 50,000 jobs entirely by investing in startups, which generally employ few workers. Sprint employs about 30,000 people and has cut jobs to combat losses.

In an interview, Mr. Son said the money will be coming from a \$100 billion investment fund that he began setting up earlier this year with Saudi Arabia's sovereign-wealth fund and other potential partners.

Mr. Son's plan to pour \$50 billion is massive compared with the total amount of capital in venture circles. Venture-capital firms had \$163 billion available

to invest in new deals as of June 2016, according to research firm Preqin.

The 59-year-old is known as an ambitious investor who bets on tech and telecom ventures. His company has a large stake in China's Alibaba Group and most recently bought U.K. chip designer ARM Holdings PLC for \$32 billion.

Mr. Son has a history of going straight to national leaders to talk business. In September he met South Korean President Park Geun-hye, and said he intends to invest about five trillion won (about \$4.5 billion) in the country's technology sector. He also has met Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and pledged to spend billions on the nation's tech startups and renewable energy projects.

With the new \$100 billion fund—dubbed the SoftBank Vision Fund—Mr. Son plans to spend heavily in fields including the so-called Internet of Things, artificial intelligence, deep learning and robotics. He has said he wants to become the Warren Buffett of the tech industry.

SoftBank plans to invest at least \$25 billion during the next five years in the fund, while Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund may contribute an additional \$45 billion over the same period as the fund's lead partner. Other investors are

still being finalized. Investments are expected to be made over the next five years.

AT&T Inc. Chief Executive Randall Stephenson also spoke positively of the economic benefits of a Trump presidency Tuesday, largely because of lower taxes and less government oversight. He expressed hope that "a more moderate approach to some of these regulations is in the making under a Trump administration."

At a UBS AG conference in New York, he said, "If we achieve any kind of meaningful corporate tax reform I am quite convinced that it is going to change this trajectory in terms of capital investment." He added that the company's business plans for 2017 are incorporating scenarios for economic growth to be higher than expected, compared with recent years where the focus was on underperformance.

"I can't remember the last time I did an upside sensitivity in a business plan, but we are doing an upside sensitivity right now," he said.

See editor's note below for related article on specific investment in Florida

Source: Wall Street Journal 12-07-16

SoftBank's First U.S. Investment After Trump Talk Generates 3,000 Jobs



President-Elect Donald Trump (left) with SoftBank Group Corp. Chief Executive Officer Masayoshi Son

SoftBank Group Corp. Chief Executive Officer Masayoshi Son told President-elect Donald Trump this month he would create 50,000 jobs in the U.S. Money for the first 3,000 positions was announced on Monday.

Satellite startup OneWeb Ltd. said it raised \$1.2 billion from SoftBank and existing investors, with the Japanese technology company providing \$1 billion. The round will fund the development of

small, low Earth orbiting satellites and pay for the construction of a facility in Florida that will churn out 15 of these devices a week, said OneWeb, based at Exploration Park, Florida, an area near Kennedy Space Center. The investment is expected to create almost 3,000 new engineering, manufacturing and support jobs in the U.S. over the next four years, the startup added in a statement.

"Earlier this month I met with President-elect Trump and shared my commitment to investing and creating jobs in the U.S.," SoftBank's Son said in the statement. "This is the first step in that commitment."

When they met on Dec. 6, Trump and Son exhibited their usual flair for the dramatic. The Japanese billionaire promised to invest, through SoftBank's technology fund, \$50 billion in the U.S. and create jobs. That helped to burnish Trump's job-creating credentials, and may also smooth the way for a merger between

SoftBank-controlled U.S. wireless carrier Sprint Corp. and T-Mobile US Inc. SoftBank shares fell less than 1 percent on Tuesday in early trading in Tokyo.

OneWeb is the latest creation of Greg Wyler, who has spent more than a decade trying to connect poorer, less-developed parts of the world to the internet. He hopes to launch a constellation of satellites that will extend the networks of mobile operators and internet service providers to serve new coverage areas at a lower cost.

SoftBank's investment "accelerates our strategic growth plan," Wyler said in the statement. "We look forward to working together as we execute on our mission to build a global knowledge infrastructure that provides affordable broadband to the over four billion people across the globe without internet access."

Source: Wall Street Journal 12-9-16

Trump's Winning Asia Diplomacy



President Donald Trump shakes hands with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe

President Trump has had a busy few days of Asia diplomacy, including his first post-inauguration phone call with China's Xi Jinping on Thursday, a White House summit with Japan's Shinzo Abe on Friday and 27 holes of golf with Mr. Abe on Saturday, followed by a joint press conference on North Korea's latest missile launch. Unlike some of his earlier encounters with foreign leaders, this round demonstrated sobriety, careful planning and respect for allies.

The news out of the Xi call is that Mr. Trump affirmed the longstanding U.S. "One China policy" concerning Taiwan, which he previously said would be "under negotiation" with Beijing along with trade and other issues. Some of our friends in the media have portrayed this as evidence that the U.S. President is a "paper tiger," citing Chinese officials who say Mr. Xi refused to speak with Mr. Trump until he

softened his stance. But the substance of Mr. Trump's shift isn't surprising or dramatic.

Rather than embrace Beijing's "One China principle," which insists that Taiwan is part of China, Mr. Trump only endorsed the U.S. policy of acknowledging a Beijing-Taipei disagreement over Taiwan's status, reserving U.S. judgment on the issue and calling for the peaceful settlement of disputes with the consent of Taiwan's people. As has been true for decades, this amounts to little more than agreeing to disagree. It certainly doesn't stop the U.S. from supporting Taiwan with means other than official recognition as an independent state.

Nor does it stop Mr. Trump from building on his December phone call with Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen by boosting economic, diplomatic and military ties with the island. On the contrary, by signaling that he won't risk a destabilizing clash with Beijing over a matter as sensitive as Taiwan's independence, Mr. Trump will now be able to secure more support for a cautious but still expanded Taiwan agenda from leaders in Taipei, Tokyo and other friendly capitals.

Which brings us to Mr. Trump's strikingly friendly summit with Mr. Abe, a display surely not lost on Chinese leaders who rightly identify the Japanese Prime Minister as a devoted opponent of their ambitions to dominate Asia. "We have a very, very

good bond—very, very good chemistry," Mr. Trump gushed at a joint press conference. "When I greeted him at the car, I shook hands, but I grabbed him and hugged him because that's the way we feel." This is a turnaround from Mr. Trump's campaign-trail criticisms of Japan as a free-loading ally.

"We're committed to the security of Japan," Mr. Trump declared. He also echoed his defense secretary, Jim Mattis, in reaffirming that the U.S.-Japan security treaty covers the Japan-administered Senkaku Islands that China has swarmed with civilian and paramilitary ships in recent years. On trade, a potential sore point with Mr. Trump even in the best of circumstances, the two leaders punted to a bilateral working group to be led by U.S. Vice President Mike Pence and Japanese Finance Minister Tarō Aso.

North Korea helped underscore the stakes of U.S.-Japan cooperation Saturday by shooting a Musudan intermediate-range ballistic missile into the Sea of Japan, its first test on Mr. Trump's watch. Though not the intercontinental missile launch Pyongyang has promised, this was a reminder that its nuclear program is advancing on many fronts. Mr. Trump, fresh off the golf course and a candlelight dinner with Mr. Abe and their wives, offered a brief statement: "The United States of America stands behind Japan, its great ally, 100%." Hear, hear.

Source: Wall Street Journal 2-12-17

First Lady gives Japanese Counterpart Tour of Morikami Museum & Japanese Gardens



First Lady Melania Trump (right) with her Japanese counterpart Mrs. Akie Abe

Melania Trump stepped out Saturday in her first solo event as First Lady, taking the wife of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of Japan on a

visit to a Japanese garden in Delray Beach, Fla. — far from the glare of Washington. Trump, 46, who has not yet taken up full-time residence in the White House, did not perform the usual tour-guide role Friday for Akie Abe, 54, who made several stops in the nation's capital alone.

"She seems to be taking a step away from the traditional expectations," First Lady historian Katherine Sibley said of Trump. "Maybe she is rather liberated and does not want to carry out this unpaid role."

But she met her husband and the Abes at Andrews Air Force Base later that day and traveled with them on Air Force One for their weekend trip to Mar-a-Lago.

Abe, a veteran of state visits hosted by Michelle Obama and Laura Bush, and the First Lady seemed to visibly relax as their trip to the Morikami Museum and Japanese Gardens went on.

The two paused for photos on a footbridge, then proceeded to an island bonsai garden, where they exclaimed delightedly as they

dropped food into the water to attract swarming koi fish.

Trump hosted a private lunch for Abe at Mar-a-Lago, then held a formal delegation dinner at the resort Saturday night.

Recent First Ladies have taken prominent White House roles, from Nancy Reagan's and Hillary Clinton's influence on policy to Obama's and Bush's agendas on social issues.

"Clearly [Trump] is carving out a different role," said Sibley, a professor at St. Joseph's University.

"But her background would lend itself to a lot of interesting diplomatic connections," Sibley said, noting that the multilingual former model could cut a Jackie Kennedy-like figure on presidential trips abroad.

"She could be a great asset in the social diplomacy that's so important to foreign affairs," Sibley said.

Source: New York Post 2-11-17

Calendar/Upcoming Events

Japan at the Forefront of Emerging Issues:
A Conversation with Japanese Fulbright Scholars

Date: Friday, March 24, 2017

When: 10:00 AM–12:00 PM

Where: Florida International University
Graham Center, Ballrooms (East)
11200 SW 8th St, Miami, FL 33199
For more information, please click [here](#).

Cool Japan 2017

Date: Saturday, March 25, 2017

When: 12:00 PM–9:00 PM

Where: Florida International University
Graham Center
11200 SW 8th St, Miami, FL 33199
For more information, please click [here](#).

Ikebana: Ikenobo School

Date: Tuesday, April 4, 2017

When: 1:00 PM–3:00 PM

Where: Morikami Museum and Japanese Gardens, 4000 Morikami
Park Rd, Delray Beach, Florida 33446
For more information, please click [here](#).

The Origin of “Setsubun”



Setsubun is the day before the beginning of spring in Japan. The name literally means “seasonal division”, but usually the term refers to the spring Setsubun, properly called Risshun celebrated yearly on February 3 as part of the Spring Festival.

In its association with the **Lunar New Year**, spring Setsubun can be and was previously thought of as a sort of New Year’s Eve, and so was accompanied by a special ritual to cleanse away all the evil of the former year and drive away disease-bringing evil spirits for the year to come.

This special ritual is called **Mamemaki**. Setsubun has its origins in **Tsuina**, a Chinese custom introduced to Japan in the eighth century.



Save the Dates!!!

October 22-24, 2017

40th Annual Joint Meeting
of the

Southeast U.S./Japan &
Japan-U.S. Southeast Associations

Greenville, South Carolina
Hyatt Regency



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