

[CONTENTS]

(NOTIFICATION) MOTTO
OSAKA FORUM WILL BE HELD
ON AUGUST 1.

1. A MISSION FROM THE
ISRAELI GOVERNMENT VISITS
OSAKA TO HOLD THE IOT
FORUM

2. RESULTS OF A BREXIT
QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY
CONDUCTED TO ASSESS THE
POTENTIAL IMPACT OF

THE UK'S DECISION TO
LEAVE THE EU ON OSAKA
BUSINESSES

3. HOVIONE, A MAJOR
PORTUGUESE
PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANY,
ESTABLISHES A NEW OFFICE
IN OSAKA

4. OCCI INTERNATIONAL
DIVISION REPORT ON VIP
VISITORS

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**(NOTIFICATION) MOTTO OSAKA FORUM WILL
BE HELD ON AUGUST 1 UNDER OSAKA GAS' OPEN
INNOVATION PROJECT.**

Osaka Gas Co., Ltd., which promotes “open innovation” in various areas of technology, such as environment and energy, publicizes technical needs and seeks proposals from SMEs, Middle scale-firms and other businesses wishing to form a technical partnership with Osaka Gas.

<http://www.osaka.cci.or.jp/event/seminar/201604/D22160801013.html> (in Japanese only)

1. A MISSION FROM THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT VISITS OSAKA TO HOLD THE IOT FORUM

The “Israel-Japan IoT Forum in Osaka” was held on July 6 in collaboration with OCCI, the Israeli Ministry of Economy and Industry, Israel Innovation Authority (MATIMOP), the Economic Department of the Embassy of Israel in Japan, Kansai Bureau of Economy, Trade and Industry, Japan External



Trade Organization (JETRO) Osaka, Next Energy and Industrial Technology Development Organization (NEDO), and Israeli Trade Office, Western Japan. The event attracted approximately 160 people from Osaka-based businesses in manufacturing and various other industries.



In the morning, a keynote speech was delivered by Mr. Avi Hasson, Chief Scientist of the Israeli Ministry of Economy and Industry, and Chairman of the Israel Innovation Authority. In his speech, he lectured about technological innovations and eco-system (mutually beneficial system) developed in Israel and said, “In Israel, the state government and the private sector are willing to support start-ups, and that means we also share the risks involved in starting businesses.”

The lecture was followed by NEDO's introduction to the government funds available for joint R&D projects between the two countries, presentations by 11 Israeli IoT companies about their technologies, and a luncheon meeting. In the afternoon, a total of about 86 one-on-one business meetings were held between the 11 Israeli companies and 24 Osaka-based companies.

On July 1, the Israeli Trade Office, Western Japan (headed by Ken Harada, senior commercial officer at the Israeli Embassy in Tokyo) was officially opened to help Israeli companies start their businesses in Osaka and other areas in the Kansai region. The trade office will also follow up on the business meetings held during the event.

2. RESULTS OF A BREXIT QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY CONDUCTED TO ASSESS THE POTENTIAL IMPACT OF THE UK'S DECISION TO LEAVE THE EU ON OSAKA BUSINESSES

Following the results of the UK's EU referendum, OCCI conducted an urgent questionnaire survey targeting 181 companies, including OCCI councilors. The survey took place from June 24 to 30 and 62 companies (34.3 percent of all targeted companies) responded.

This survey found that 37 companies (59.6 percent of all respondents) were concerned that the Brexit decision would have a potential negative impact on their businesses. Of the companies operating in the UK, some responded that they must review their European strategy and others cited specific examples of the potential negative impact resulting directly from the UK's “Leave” decision, such as declining sales due to the weakening of sterling.

However, of the companies that responded that the UK's "Leave" decision would have a negative impact on their business, only six companies (16.2 percent) mentioned that they would consider certain measures to take, while 31 companies (80 percent) responded that they were not considering any particular measures, or that they were still undecided about what to do. Overall, the results of the survey have highlighted that many companies wish to find out how the political and economic tides will shift, which is clearly illustrated by the following comment: "Things are so uncertain that it is difficult to foresee where the UK is going and how the relations between the UK and EU will change."

3. HOVIONE, A MAJOR PORTUGUESE PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANY, ESTABLISHES A NEW OFFICE IN OSAKA

On June 1, Hovione FarmaCiencia SA (hereinafter referred to as "Hovione") from Portugal established a new sales and customer support office in Osaka in a bid to increase its market share in Japan. The investment by Hovione landed in Osaka after six years of wooing by the Osaka Business & Investment Center (O-BIC) jointly established and operated by the Osaka Prefectural Government, the Osaka City Government, and the Osaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry as the O-BIC Secretariat.

Since its founding in 1959, the Lisbon-based pharmaceutical company has over 50 years of history in the development and manufacturing of compounds for making active pharmaceutical ingredients and drug products. Hovione has grown to a global company with roughly 1,200 employees through sales of their original products underpinned by R&D efforts, as well as contract manufacturing services by mobilizing their technological capability. In addition to the manufacturing plants in Portugal, United States, Macau, and Ireland, Hovione's global reach continues to expand through other hubs in, for example, Switzerland, Hong Kong, and India.

Hovione began doing business in Japan in the 1960s. Based in the new office in Osaka, the company aims to expand its market share in Japan by acquiring new customers and building a closer business relationship with manufacturers of new and generic drugs, and trading companies and manufacturers dealing with chemicals in Greater Osaka area.

Toward this end, Hovione intends to make the most of the local Kansai branch of the Pharmaceutical and Medical Devices Agency* (PMDA), whose function will be expanded on June 16. With joint research with universities in Greater Osaka in mind, the company will pursue a new business strategy revolving around this key Asian hub.

* PMDA provides guidance on necessary testing and clinical trials for commercial application

of innovative drugs and medical devices from the initial stage of their development, followed up by counseling, reviews (for approval), and safety measures once commercial sales of these products begin.

O-BIC has been actively attracting foreign investments with particular emphasis on the life sciences industry through activities both in Japan and abroad. Since 2010, O-BIC has been encouraging Hovione to expand its business to Osaka through joint efforts with the Osaka Prefectural Government and Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO). O-BIC provided consultation services regarding incorporation, as well as support in recruitment and public relations. JETRO, led by its Invest Japan Business Support Center (IBSC) in Osaka, individually invited the company to Osaka and provided consultation services regarding establishing a Japanese business hub, human resources management, accounting and tax affairs. The strong support encouraged Hovione to set up its Osaka Office.

4. OCCI INTERNATIONAL DIVISION REPORT ON VIP VISITORS

June 30 (Thu.) Mr. LIU Yiren, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Consulate-General of the People's Republic of China in Osaka

July 4 (Mon.) Mr. Yoichi SUZUKI, Ambassador for Kansai Region, Representative of the Government of Japan

July 6 (Wed.) H.E. Ruth Kahanoff, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Embassy of Israel in Japan

Mr. Avi Hasson, Chairman, Israel Innovation Authority, Ministry of Economy and Industry, State of Israel

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Back Numbers of OCCI e-Magazine:

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