



August 17, 2020

On behalf of the foreign business communities, the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan (ACCJ), the Australian and New Zealand Chamber of Commerce in Japan (ANZCCJ), the British Chamber of Commerce in Japan (BCCJ) and the European Business Council (EBC) express our continuing concerns regarding Japan's immigration authorities' limitations on the entry of non-Japanese nationals residing in Japan during the COVID-19 crisis.

We recognize and appreciate the recent changes that helped to enable an eventual return to Japan for foreigners who left Japan prior to any ban being imposed on a particular country, as well as the creation of a system for the issuance of an authorization letter by the Japanese Embassy, Consulate or other authorities providing for that entry. These are positive steps forward.

However, we remain disappointed and confused by the limitations on the return of long-term residents of Japan, including their spouses and children, from countries on the banned list if they left after the date the ban came into effect, notwithstanding their willingness to comply with quarantine and testing requirements. This policy is contrary to the treatment Japan receives from other G7 and other leading countries who treat long-term foreign residents equally to citizens on health matters. We know of no evidence that suggests that foreign long-term residents of Japan entering from abroad pose any greater health risk locally than Japanese nationals who do the same. We are pleased to see that Japan is considering allowing the entry of business travelers who are nationals from a few designated countries, but are dismayed to see that long-term residents and working visa holders will not be treated as well.

We believe that such long-term foreign residents, who have shown a supportive long-term relationship, and represent investment in Japan, are essential to rebuilding and growing Japan's economy moving forward. This is not only through the payment of taxes and consumption of goods, but also by providing the economic and international infrastructure necessary to help fuel the Japanese economy to greater heights. To prevent these same people from being able to leave and return to Japan, can only discourage foreign nationals, and the companies they work for, from investing in Japan. It can only negatively reflect on Japan's efforts to encourage investment by businesses from the US, the EU, the UK, Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong, Singapore and other nations whose citizens can be instrumental in helping Japan's economy grow as it deserves.

We believe it is out of step with the Japan that has always prided itself on fair and equal treatment for all under the law.

Our member companies are heavily invested in Japan, many with a long and storied history; most of our non-Japanese members are long-term residents in Japan representing companies that have operated in Japan for decades. For the benefit of all, we respectfully request that

Japan provides foreign residents with fair and equal treatment by allowing re-entry to Japan based on the same public health protocols as Japanese nationals.

-----

The American Chamber of Commerce in Japan (ACCJ) [www.accj.or.jp](http://www.accj.or.jp)

The Australian and New Zealand Chamber of Commerce in Japan (ANZCCJ)

<https://www.anzccj.jp>

The British Chamber of Commerce in Japan (BCCJ) <https://bccjapan.com>

European Business Council in Japan (EBC) [www.ebc-jp.com](http://www.ebc-jp.com)