

Declaration issued by the 56th Kansai Economic and Management Summit

At the 56th Kansai Economic and Management Summit, we discussed a range of issues under the main theme of “Let’s Create the Main Stage in Kansai: The Design of Future Society Originating from Kansai” Based on the discussion, we adopted the declaration below.

1. We collaborate with the Japanese government and local municipalities to win the bid for hosting the International Exposition 2025 in Osaka, Kansai. In addition, we will establish a system for playing sports, watching sporting events, and supporting sports activities in preparation for the Golden Sports Years, a three-year period between 2019 and 2021, when three mega sporting events are scheduled to be held in Japan. We will direct our efforts to further attract foreign tourists to less-visited areas in this region in cooperation with the KANSAI Tourism Bureau. Capitalizing on these international sporting events, namely, the Rugby World Cup in 2019, Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics in 2020, and Kansai World Masters Games in 2021, we will create a platform for young people, women, and even foreign nationals to play major roles and will showcase a model for future society, where challenges that the world faces today will have been overcome, to the world. Through these initiatives, we will contribute to achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set by the United Nations.
2. We will develop human resources with greater sensitivity and imagination by maximizing the power of the culture that the Kansai region has fostered through its unique history and traditions, believing in the potential of culture, the source of creativity. To attract global diverse talent, the whole region will be united in getting its message across to the world. Thus, we will promote knowledge exchange, enable innovations, and create new industries. Also, taking opportunities arising from the relocation of the Agency for Cultural Affairs to Kyoto, we will foster the attractiveness of the cultural resources in the Kansai region. We will strive to win competitions between metropolitan areas in the world, working together with local businesses, the Kansai academic community, and regional government authorities.
3. To achieve our own economic growth, we will promote business development in the fast-growing emerging markets in Asia. We encourage Asian investment into the Kansai region by adopting a ‘Look West’ strategy in which we focus more on reciprocal relationships with Asian countries. We intend to expand our businesses by learning from successful overseas companies and adopt their advanced technologies, services, management strategies, and highly skilled human resources for our corporate management. Building on our previous interactions and exchanges, the Kansai region and other Asian countries will grow further together through close interaction between economic organizations.
4. In cooperation with world-class universities, research institutes, and companies based in the Kansai region, we will attract companies with advanced technologies or cutting-edge business models as well as diverse human resources from home and abroad to build an attractive innovation ecosystem. We will work on developing industries, in particular, in the fields where companies in the Kansai region have expertise and the next generation of growth can be expected to solve various social issues. We will play a leading role in driving Japan’s economic growth as one of the world’s leading innovation centers.
5. We will take the initiative in transforming the way we work, positioning the so-called Work Style Reform as a management strategy to innovate and increase added value, not just as a measure for reducing working hours and increasing efficiency. As part of our efforts to develop self-driven human resources, we will value the diversity and personalities of employees and foster an environment where they can demonstrate their capabilities to the fullest.

We will improve productivity and enhance the competitiveness of companies by employing new work methods that are free from past employment practices.

6. We will seek a system that is appropriate for the society we aim for, identifying the advantages and disadvantages of today's global capitalism. Meanwhile, to seek innovation-driven economic growth and to win against increasingly fierce global competitiveness, we need to move on from past success stories, cross the “not-invented-here” syndrome, and further improve the ability to generate revenues. To this end, we will implement balanced short-term and long-term strategies in a prompt manner. We aim for a growth that can contribute to enhancing social value through dialogs with stakeholders.

Furthermore, the Kansai region aims to make Yumeshima, an artificial island being developed in Osaka, a preferred destination for meetings, incentive travel, conventions/conferences and exhibitions (MICE) tourism and develop the island as an integrated resort (IR) as part of Japan's efforts to promote economic development through tourism. To further strengthen the economic infrastructure, we will urge the central government for early implementation of a host of national infrastructure projects, including the early opening of the Chuo Shinkansen maglev line between Nagoya and Osaka and the Hokuriku Shinkansen conventional railway line between Tsuruga and Osaka, timely improvement of the railway networks in the region, early completion of expressway projects currently under construction in various parts of Japan, and optimization of the use of three airports in the Kansai region with improved access to the airports. We will also appeal for early resumption of safe nuclear power plants, believing that nuclear power is an economic and stable energy source for Japan's industrial activities. In addition, we ask the government to promote devolution and revitalization of rural areas, accelerate implementation and execution of growth strategies, and steadily promote expenditure and revenue reforms in order to achieve two conflicting goals—fiscal consolidation and economic growth—for early achievement of a surplus in the primary balance.