

# INTRODUCTION

## Czech–Japan Science and Technology Days

### **Introduction:**

Science and technology is the backbone and main driving force behind the economic development and strategic strength of all industrially highly developed nations such as Japan, EU member countries, the United States, etc.

The Czech Republic places very high importance on the development and enhancement of its industrial competitive advantages. Henceforth, the country is very much focused on further strengthening its scientific and technological capabilities.

The industrial cooperation between the Czech Republic and Japan in recent years and the volume and intensity of recent Japanese investment inflow into the Czech economy have no precedence in perhaps any country of Central Europe or possibly in other regions of the world as well. The Czech Republic has recently managed to attract a large number of Japanese companies that have successfully started operations in various kinds of businesses. Of the 195 Japanese companies registered in the country as of June 2007, 76 are directly involved in the manufacturing sector, three are engaged in research and development (R&D), and 116 are doing business in other sectors such as real estate, trading, commerce, forwarding, etc.

It is therefore quite natural that both Japan and the Czech Republic could and should involve themselves very seriously in seeking out synergies in scientific and technological development in both countries so as to achieve much stronger and much more efficient results of joint research and development projects and programmes.

Supporting bilateral contacts and cooperation in the field of science and technology is in full accordance with the “Joint Statement toward Strategic Partnership between the Czech Republic and Japan”, which was agreed upon by the prime ministers of Japan and the Czech Republic during the official visit of Junichiro Koizumi to the Czech Republic in August 2003.

To meet this aim both sides have engaged in organizing the Czech-Japan Science and Technology Days (CJSTD) alternatively in Prague and in Tokyo.

### **Objectives:**

The purpose of the Czech-Japan Science and Technology Days seminars is to facilitate direct and much broader contacts between the R&D communities of Japan and the Czech Republic. Such seminars contribute to the exchange of important information on recent and foreseeable development trends with regard to science and technology and the exchange of information. Seminars also provide a comprehensive explanation of national science and development plans and policy principles, strategic guidelines for government programmes and implementation policies for science and technology development, etc.

Events within CJSTD support the search for benefits ensuing from joint or coordinated (interrelated) R&D programmes and projects in order to achieve the maximum possible synergistic effects through joint research and development projects, human-resources development programmes and policies, support for the exchange of young scientists and engineers, etc.

Seminars create a platform for presentation of examples of some recent Czech-Japanese joint R&D projects and their results.

Finally, the aim of these seminars is also to facilitate direct contacts and networking between the R&D communities, top policy makers and business leaders of the Czech Republic and Japan.

## History of the CJSTD:

**The first Czech-Japan Science and Technology Day** seminar was organized by the Embassy of the Czech Republic in Tokyo and the Czech Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. It took place in Tokyo at Mita Kaigisho conference hall on May 24, 2005. The Czech delegation, comprised of 40 people from different fields (the public sector, national parliament, R&D, universities, high-tech companies, etc.) was headed by Deputy Prime Minister Martin Jahn. Petra Buzkova, Minister of Education, Youth and Sports, also attended the seminar. On the Japanese side some 80 representatives of government bodies, R&D institutes, universities and business attended the seminar.

**The second Czech-Japan Science and Technology Days (CJSTD 2006)** took place in Prague at the seat of Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Cernin Palace) on May 15-17, 2006 under the auspices of the Prime Minister of the Czech Republic, Jiri Paroubek, and Deputy Prime Minister for the Economy, Jiri Havel.

The main organizers of the event were the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and the Ministry of Industry and Trade (MIT).

CzechInvest and the Czech Technical University (CTU) were the event's leading coordinators.

Other participating bodies and institutions on the Czech side included the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MEYS), the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic (ASCR), and other universities and organizations.

Almost 140 participants attended the event; fifty-three of them were Japanese government officials, business representatives, hi-tech specialists and scholars.

The Japanese mission included the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Shotaro Yachi, while the business mission was headed by Hajime Sasaki, Co-Chairman of the Committee on Europe of Nippon Keidanren (Japan Business Federation).

The main topic of discussion on May 15, 2006 focused on the latest results of research and development and their applications, namely in the fields of:

- Precision engineering
- Robotics-cybernetics / information technology and communication
- Electronics and microelectronics

On the following day all participants were invited to a special ceremony held at Bethlehem Chapel in Prague during which Honorary Chairman of Toyota Motor Company Dr. Shoichiro Toyoda was awarded the *Doctor Honoris Causa* degree from the Czech Technical University. He is the first Japanese to receive such an award from CTU.

Dr. S. Toyoda and the Japanese business mission had earlier visited the Office of the Czech Government and met Prime Minister Jiri Paroubek.

During the rest of following two days the Japanese delegation split into two groups and visited several Czech R&D facilities, technical universities, the Japanese companies DENSO (Liberec) and Panasonic (Plzen), the famous Moser glassworks in Karlovy Vary and the oldest golf course in the Czech Republic (opened in 1905) in the spa town Mariánské Lázně.

**The 3<sup>rd</sup> Czech-Japan Science and Technology Days** were held in Tokyo on May 22-24, 2007 under the auspices of the Prime Minister of the Czech Republic and the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), Ministry of the Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), and Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT).

The event was also organized as a concrete follow-up of the official visit of Mr. Vaclav Klaus, President of the Czech Republic to Japan in February 2007.

CzechInvest and the Czech Technical University in Prague, in cooperation with the Czech Embassy in Tokyo, the Ministry of Industry and Trade, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Engineering Academy of the Czech Republic (EACR) and the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic were again the organizers of the event and extensively cooperated in this respect with their Japanese counterparts, namely JETRO Tokyo (including JETRO's Prague office), the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Embassy of Japan in Prague, METI, MEXT, and Nippon Keidanren.

Pavel Komarek, Deputy Minister of Education, Youth and Sports, headed the 31-member Czech delegation. Other members included representatives of the Ministry of Trade and Industry, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, CzechInvest, the Presidents of Charles University and the Czech Technical University and other associations and private companies. In total, 144 registered participants attended the main event, a seminar held on May 22 at the JETRO Hall in Tokyo.

During four sessions and a panel discussion within the one-day seminar, Czech and Japanese participants were able to present their policies and the scope and results of their current research programmes. In Session IV Czech scientists introduced the results of research and applications in four priority fields:

- biotechnology
- nanotechnology
- applied natural sciences
- technical sciences

Participants were able to continue in the informal exchange of views and experiences during an evening reception hosted by Takeshi Iwaya, Senior Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, who also delivered the keynote address.

During the two following days the Czech mission was able to visit and become familiar with important R&D facilities in Japan, namely Yokosuka Research Park, the Panasonic Communication Development Centre in Yokosuka and the National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology in Tsububa.

The Czech-Japan Science and Technology Days 2007 in Tokyo were officially closed during an evening reception at the Embassy of the Czech Republic hosted by Czech Ambassador Jaromir Novotny. Koji Omi, the Japanese Minister of Finance, was the special guest speaker at the event.

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Considering the positive results of the events held so far, it has been decided that the new tradition of Czech-Japan Science and Technology Days will continue in the future.

**The 4<sup>th</sup> CJSTD will be organized again in Prague in May 2008.**

Further details of preparations for this event will be posted on this page as they become available.