

For Immediate Release

ACCJ Welcomes the Cabinet Office's Plan to Enhance Japan's Role as an International Financial Center

April 11, 2008 – The American Chamber of Commerce in Japan (ACCJ) welcomes the Cabinet Office's leadership in compiling and releasing earlier today its "Plan to Enhance Japan's Role as an International Financial Center."

"Together with the efforts of the Financial Services Agency (FSA), the Cabinet Office has demonstrated its commitment to strengthening Japan's international financial competitiveness," said Chamber Chairman and ACCJ Financial Services Forum Chair Charles D. Lake II. "As Japan confronts its many challenges, including globalization and an aging and shrinking workforce, measures to realize Japan's full potential as an international financial center will be essential to achieving sustained economic growth and improving the well-being of Japanese citizens overall."

"The ACCJ appreciates that many of the major recommendations in its Financial Center White Paper, which were based on global best practices, are substantially reflected in the Cabinet Office's plan. We look forward to continuing to work with the Cabinet Office to further examine and refine the issues highlighted in this important initiative," said ACCJ President Allan D. Smith.

The ACCJ believes that effective implementation of financial and capital market reform requires a government-wide effort involving key areas such as labor, tax policy, healthcare, education, and transportation. Accordingly, the ACCJ urges the Government of Japan to proceed as soon as possible with implementation of measures contained in the FSA's "Plan for Strengthening the International Competitiveness of Japan's Financial and Capital Markets" – including by passing the initial implementation legislation now before the Diet – and the Cabinet Office's "Plan to Enhance Japan's Role as an International Financial Center." In addition, the ACCJ urges relevant ministries to cooperate closely with the FSA and the Cabinet Office to achieve the common goal of strengthening Japan's international financial competitiveness.

(Fact sheet attached)

0803E

About the ACCJ

The American Chamber of Commerce in Japan (ACCJ) was established in 1948 by representatives of 40 American companies. Marking its 60th anniversary in 2008, the ACCJ has grown into one of the most influential business organizations in Japan. Consisting mainly of executives from American companies, currently the ACCJ has members representing 1,300 companies with offices in Tokyo, Nagoya, and Osaka. Working closely with the governments of the United States and Japan, business organizations, and others, the ACCJ promotes activities that help achieve its mission of further developing commerce between the United States and Japan, promoting the interests of U.S. companies and members, and improving the international business environment in Japan. Over 50 committees representing various industries play the ACCJ's central role in making policy recommendations through advocacy tools such as the Business White Paper and holding over 500 events and seminars annually on public policy and economic trends. The ACCJ is also committed to promoting charitable events and other CSR activities.

ACCJ PRESS CONTACT: Media Relations Officer Mina Takahashi (phone: 3433 6542; email: mtakahashi@accj.or.jp).



Fact Sheet

Background

- Competitive financial and capital markets are vital to sustained economic growth, ensuring efficient capital allocation, creating jobs, fostering innovation by facilitating new ventures and foreign direct investment, and increasing the amount of funds available for investment.
- As Japan confronts the dual challenges of globalization and an aging and shrinking workforce, enhancing the competitiveness of its financial and capital markets will be an essential component to achieving sustained economic growth in Japan and improving the well-being of Japanese citizens overall. Given the importance of Japan's economy to the overall global economy, such enhanced competitiveness in Japan's financial and capital markets will also support more robust global economic growth.
- With this background, the Government of Japan adopted in its 2007 Basic Policies a Cabinet decision to develop a plan for enhancing Japan's international financial competitiveness, and the FSA compiled and issued its "Plan for Strengthening the Competitiveness of Japan's Financial and Capital Markets" on December 21, 2007. The ACCJ commended the FSA's strong leadership, stating at the time, "the FSA has taken a historic step and demonstrated its commitment to enhance Japan's financial and capital markets."
- In September 2007, the Cabinet Office's Urban Renewal Headquarters established a Conference on Promoting Urban Renewal to Strengthen Tokyo as an International Financial Center. The ACCJ has applauded the Cabinet Office for its active outreach to the private sector in the establishment and management of this Conference.
- As a key support measure for these important initiatives, in November 2007, the ACCJ released the "Financial Center White Paper: a Strategic Roadmap for Enhancing the International Competitiveness of Japan's Financial and Capital Markets." The recommendations in the White Paper were discussed at length with key policymakers in the Government of Japan, an opportunity which the ACCJ welcomed.
- The Financial Center White Paper outlines the competitive challenges that Japan currently confronts, explains how globally competitive financial and capital markets can be important in overcoming these challenges, and proposes a full range of measures, based on global best practices, to improve Japan's financial competitiveness.

- Japan's goal of enhancing the competitiveness of its financial and capital markets will require measures not only in the financial services sector, but also in areas such as tax, labor, healthcare, education, and transportation infrastructure.
- With its strong membership in the financial services industry (and related sectors such as legal, accounting, and information and communication technology) as well as its robust representation in sectors relating to labor, healthcare, education, and transportation, the ACCJ is uniquely qualified to serve as a resource offering expert insight on global best practices for policymakers in Japan and looks forward to continuing to work closely with the Government of Japan in this capacity.

ACCJ Financial Center White Paper: Table of Contents

- ACCJ President's Message
- Section I. Comprehensive Framework to Enhance Japan's International Competitiveness as a Financial Center
- Section II. Macroeconomic Context and Japan's Competitive Challenges
- Section III. Regulatory Environment
- Section IV. Capital Markets and the Role of the Tokyo Stock Exchange
- Section V. Corporate Governance and Shareholder Rights
- Section VI. Promoting Innovation in Financial Products and Distribution
- Section VII. Tax Policy Reform
- Section VIII. Human Resources
- Section IX. Tokyo Infrastructure & International Accessibility
- Section X. International Marketing of Financial Center Tokyo

For a copy of "The ACCJ Financial Center White Paper", please contact ACCJ Media Relations Officer Mina Takahashi (Tel: 03-3433-6542, Email: mtakahashi@accj.or.jp).

###