

Opening Remarks by Chair Kazuyuki Furuya

The 15th East Asia Conference on Competition Law and Policy July 26, 2023

It is my great pleasure to open “15th East Asia Conference on Competition Policy and Law” in Bangkok from now.

Since 2004, the East Asian Conference on Competition Law and Policy has served as a forum of presentation and Q & A sessions among participants from academia, the legal field and competition authorities. Its main object is to build a common understanding of the importance of competition law and policy in the East Asian region.

This conference is held as an open event to the public, and it has made great contributions to the public’s understanding of the importance of competition law and policy, or advocacy activity.

Today’s conference is now being streamed live and can be viewed from around the world, which will have more advocacy effect than usual.

Today, we have two sessions. The topic of Session 1 is “Advancing Competition through Advocacy”.

In order to strengthen competition policy responding to rapid social and economic changes promptly and accurately, it is important for us to point out new issues under the competition law and policy in various fields in a simple way, and to present ways of thinking and ideal approaches to those issues in an easy-to-understand manner through advocacy.

The JFTC has been conducting various fact-finding surveys as part of advocacy activities. We published the fact-finding report on cloud services in June 2022, and the report on mobile OS in February this year, and the report on electric vehicle charging service on expressway in this July. Now there are multiple ongoing surveys including survey on the news content distribution and on connected TV as well as on recycling of used PET bottles.

Through advocacy, it is important to promote voluntary improvement of trading practices by related businesses, and to propose regulatory and institutional review by sector regulators, in order to improve the competitive environment.

The topic of session 2 is competition policy and SMEs.

New and small business ventures, in other word, start-ups, have the potential to make a significant contribution to increasing the productivity of the economy by promoting innovation. And in recent years, the importance of increasing productivity through business collaboration between start-ups and large companies has been emphasized.

In this context, it is extremely important to ensure an environment in which startups can compete fairly and freely for the future development of the economy.

In Japan, the government has made the promotion of startups an important policy issue, and is implementing various initiatives based on the “Startup Development Five-Year Plan”. The JFTC is also actively promoting initiatives that contribute to the development and growth of startups by conducting a fact-finding survey on open innovation through cooperation between startups and large companies and a survey on IPOs (initial public offerings) from the perspective of strengthening startup’s fund raising.

Finally, through this meeting, I am looking forward to hearing various suggestions from each perspective of academia, legal field and competition authorities on the role that competition authorities should play in improving the competitive environment.

Thank you for your kind attention.