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PLANNING UNDERWAY FOR JAPAN NZ PARTNERSHIP FORUM

Senior government and business leaders from Japan and New Zealand will gather at the first ever Japan New Zealand Partnership Forum in Tokyo on 14-15 May.

“The Tokyo Forum is set to be the largest and most significant gathering of government and business leaders from the two countries ever held” said Stephen Jacobi, Executive Director of the NZ International Business Forum which is organising the event.

Around 80 senior participants from Japan and New Zealand are confirmed to attend the invitation-only Partnership Forum which will be addressed by Prime Minister Helen Clark and Trade Minister Phil Goff. A senior representative of the Japanese Government was also expected to participate.

“The Forum is a major non-governmental initiative. It will provide a focus for leaders from both countries to discuss key business issues and build relationships with an overall aim of strengthening the business and economic partnership between Japan and New Zealand”.

The Partnership Forum will be co-chaired for Japan by Mr Yoshihiko Miyauchi, Chairman of the Asia Pacific Committee of the Japanese business organisation Nippon Keidanren. Mr Miyauchi is also Chairman and CEO of ORIX Corporation. Former Trade Minister and current Chairman of the Asia NZ Foundation, Hon Philip Burdon, will co-chair on the New Zealand side.

Mr Jacobi said the Forum was supported by both governments and had been organised with the assistance of the Japan NZ Business Council, the New Zealand Embassy in Tokyo, Nippon Keidanren and the Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

New Zealand companies exporting both goods and services to Japan will be involved at senior level alongside major corporations from Japan, many with investment in New Zealand. Gold sponsors of the Forum are ANZCO Foods, Asia NZ Foundation, Fonterra, Sealord/Nissui, Meat and Wool New Zealand and Zespri. Silver sponsors are AUCNET, Air New Zealand and New Zealand Trade and Enterprise.

“The Forum’s overall aim is to demonstrate the relevance of the relationship to both countries’ future. The agenda will take in different aspects of the partnership including shared interests in the Asia Pacific region, innovation and business development and responses to the challenge of sustainability and climate change”.

Mr Jacobi said strengthening the relationship with Japan was the NZ International Business Forum’s top priority.

“Japan is the world’s second largest economy and now is a good time to advance New Zealand’s relationship with a major trading partner and leading source of investment and technology”, concluded Mr Jacobi.

For further information:

Stephen Jacobi, Executive Director 029 472 5502

About the NZ International Business Forum

The Forum is a business organisation which aims to generate wealth for New Zealanders by helping ensure that New Zealand enterprises are fully integrated and engaged in the global economy and New Zealand’s global competitive position is maximised. The Forum provides leadership, works with companies and other business organisations to implement key projects and articulates New Zealand’s international business priorities to both the New Zealand Government and stakeholders. Forum participants represent companies and sectors with a turnover of over \$20 billion.