

Introduction

KOJI ARIMA: Chairman, Japan Auto Parts Industries Association
(President & CEO, DENSO CORPORATION)

At the Ordinary General Meeting held on May 26, I was elected as the 19th Chairman of Japan Auto Parts Industries Association (JAPIA), succeeding Mr. Odo, the former Chairman. I am humbled by this major role in leading JAPIA, which has a history of more than 80 years.

The automotive industry is in the midst of a period of great change, and the role of JAPIA is becoming larger than ever before, in areas such as carbon neutrality and the strengthening of the supply chain. I would like to steer the association boldly and agilely, adapting to the changing times, while cherishing the foundation laid by former Chairman Odo and other predecessors.

The 431 members of JAPIA (as of July 2022) are leaders in their respective fields and regions, and are all strong companies that have supported the Japanese auto industry for a long time. JAPIA is strongly aware of its mission to serve the Japanese auto industry, and as an industry organization, we will act with a "strong will" to fulfill it.

On a slightly different topic, I recently had the opportunity to meet with Prime Minister Kishida along with the Chairman of the Japan Automobile Manufacturers Association (JAMA).

From JAMA, they presented the contribution of the automobile industry to the Japanese economy to date, as well as proposals regarding the automobile taxation system, while from JAPIA, we conveyed the actual situation and challenges faced by small and medium-sized enterprises toward the realization of carbon neutrality. What I felt again was the high expectations for the automotive industry and the great responsibility of JAPIA to the 5.5 million people in the automotive industry.

As already reported, after the meeting, Prime Minister Kishida stated clearly that "the automotive industry is a growth industry for our country and a major pillar of our clean energy strategy," and based on this view, he also said that he would like to have a dialogue with JAMA and JAPIA to discuss a new vision of mobility.

Recognizing that the government is firmly aware of the desire of JAMA Chairman to "keep automobiles in the center of the carbon neutral policy" and "count on the underlying power of 5.5 million people," which he has been

advocating, I strongly feel that, finally, the five automotive industry organizations including JAMA and JAPIA must take the lead and the automotive industry must quickly fulfill its role as the pacemaker.

Particularly, JAPIA has 431 members, mainly Tier 1, as members, but behind them are 670,000 colleagues who are active in more than 6,000 establishments. And most of them are small and medium-sized enterprises, many of which are facing a difficult situation in the midst of the great wave of carbon neutrality and electrification. While there are many issues that cannot be easily resolved by individual companies, the activities of JAPIA, which leads the cross-business efforts, can serve as a guideline for the parts industry and should give hope to small and medium-sized enterprises. That is why I am committed to direct dialogue with small and medium-sized enterprises involved in the automotive industry and to understanding the actual situation on the ground. I will continue to promote the activities of JAPIA in cooperation with small and medium-sized enterprises. For issues that cannot be solved by the auto parts industry alone, we will actively communicate with the electronic parts and battery industries, as well as with governments and educational institutions, in order to seek the help of other industries.

As the Chairman of JAMA has said, "Automotive industry is an industry where we do it together". As I mentioned at my inaugural press conference as Chairman, we will further strengthen our cooperation with the five automobile organizations, with Tier 2 and below, and with other industries, and by working together, we will find a variety of solutions. By doing so, we would like to work hard so that members will feel "glad to be a member of JAPIA", and non-members and industries will say "glad to have worked with JAPIA".

The strength of JAPIA is that it is a group with diversity, with a variety of histories, personalities, and unique networks. I will do my utmost to make the parts industry more indispensable than ever before through its contribution to the automotive industry, and to make Japanese manufacturing shine brighter, stronger, and more resilient by taking this period of great change as an opportunity to use our strengths to solve diversified social issues. Your continued warm support will be greatly appreciated.