

*Dnevni avaz, Sunday, March 12, 2017*

Interview: **Ambassador of Japan about possible business cooperation**

### **Japanese investors interested in what BiH has to offer**

*Up till now, numerous potential investors had a negative perception of BiH, but it is now changing. BiH has potentials, in particular in the metal and car parts industry*

Japanese investors are interested in business investments in BiH. About possibilities and concrete talks and cooperation, as well as obstacles for it we talked with Japanese Ambassador to BiH, Mr. Kazuya Ogawa.

Ambassador Ogawa reminded that in October last year first Japanese business mission visited BiH. Members of this mission were representatives of Japanese companies, including some famous one like „Mitsubishi“. Their two day stay in BiH was completed with a seminar on investments, organized by FIPA:

### ***Four factories***

Japanese business mission visited four factories and they were not hiding their impression that BiH has potentials, in particular in metal industry, car parts industry, but also in agriculture sector. Many potential investors had some negative perception of BiH up until now days. It is now changing slowly, Sarajevo is a nice city. Consequences of the war are still visible in the city, but it also has hotels, industrial potentials, which is for sure an advantage for attracting of potential investors. My intention is that Japanese investors would realize that there are potentials here, when it comes to investments, underlined Ambassador Ogawa.

### **Promotion needed**

Ambassador is convinced that Japanese business people are currently considering possibilities of concrete investments.

- We still need some time to summarize and make decisions. It is a good time for that now, as we also have a new Ambassador of BiH in Japan, Mr. Marić. My impression is that he is quite familiar with economic matters. I would recommend to him to visit Tokyo and some other cities in Japan, but also some companies, in order to make some promotion, advised Ambassador Ogawa.

Commenting on some allegations of numerous foreign investors that they are delaying their investments because their fears of possible conflicts in BiH, Ogawa stressed that he does not even think about possible conflicts and everyone is well aware of terrible history of this region, about two decades ago.

- Business people from Japan are not afraid of that, although it is true that something is happening every day. Japanese investors are interested in what BiH has to offer, locations, and there are good places here, nature is just wonderful. BiH is good place for investments, concluded Ambassador Ogawa. At the end, Ogawa underlined that it is not an easy decision for a potential investor to start business here. There are many problems. We could not ignore the fact that local population in general is oriented toward the past. People are quite conservative, but they are willing to change it, warned Ogawa at the end.

### **Politicians are wasting their energy on conflicts**

Japan also has its own problems, population is decreasing and that is causing economic crisis and problems with a health care system. There are problems here in BiH, but only comparing with the developed countries. Local politicians are losing energy on internal conflicts, instead of taking care of the population.

More and more young people are leaving this country, stated Ambassador Ogawa