

(Tentative translation)

Latvia Seeks Closer Ties with Aichi

Business-Friendly Nation with Flexible Tax System

— Foreign Minister Visits the Prefecture and Meets with Governor

On September 19, Latvia's Foreign Minister, Baiba Braže, met with Governor Hideaki Omura at the Aichi Prefectural Government Office. She expressed her desire to "deepen exchanges between Latvia and Aichi Prefecture."

The visit was partly in connection with the appointment of Mr. Motoyuki Amano, President of Amano Enzyme Co., Ltd. in Nagoya, as Latvia's Honorary Consul last December.

Minister Braže emphasized that Latvia is one of the most business-friendly countries in Europe and stated, "There is potential for business collaboration in areas such as innovative technologies."

Governor Omura introduced "Station A1" a startup support center that opened in October 2024 in Showa Ward, Nagoya, and expressed his hopes for collaboration: "We would like to cooperate with the people of Latvia in the fields of startups and IT." He also presented Minister Braže with a cloisonné enamel artwork featuring the prefectural flower, the iris (kakitsubata).

On the same day, Minister Braže also visited the Chunichi Shimbun headquarters and met with company president Uichiro Oshima. She highlighted the many successful business ventures already established between Japan and Latvia and noted that "Latvia has a flexible tax system within European Union (EU) and offers an excellent environment for investment," encouraging further economic exchange.

She also referenced a visit in May by the Latvian President and representatives from 38 Latvian companies- a delegation of around 100 people, and said, "We hope people from Japan will also visit Latvia. We look forward to doing business with Aichi."

Minister Braže added that, following the 2019 Japan-EU trade liberalization agreement, she also hopes to strengthen cooperation in the defense industry.

Mr. Amano and others also attended the meeting.

(By Keita Suzuki and Anna Takagi)