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Press release

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To whom it may concern

**Strengthening our Firm's Competition Law Practice - Mr. Shuichi Sugahisa, and Attorneys Junya Ae, and Michio Suzuki join the Tokyo Office of Atsumi & Sakai**

Atsumi & Sakai<sup>1</sup> is pleased to announce that three competition law practitioners have joined our Tokyo office: **Mr. Shuichi Sugahisa**, former Secretary General of the Japan Fair Trade Commission (JFTC), as a Senior Consultant, and **Attorneys Junya Ae** and **Michio Suzuki** as Partners. As a law firm capable of delivering practical and precise legal advice grounded in the firm perspective of competition authorities, our firm's robust antitrust/competition law team has extensive experience and a global network of specialized attorneys, and with the addition of Mr. Sugahisa, Mr. Ae and Mr. Suzuki, we aim to provide even more comprehensive legal services to our domestic and international clients.

Mr. Sugahisa has been engaged in competition law practice and policy — with a focus on the Antimonopoly Act and other related laws — for over 40 years since joining JFTC in 1983. During his tenure at JFTC, he worked on important regulatory reforms, including the 2002 amendment of the Antimonopoly Act, the 2017 revision of the Guidelines for Distribution and Trade Practices and the 2019 amendment of the Antimonopoly Act (including the enactment of rules and regulations relating to newly established determination procedures (Japanese Attorney-Client Privilege)). Mr. Sugahisa was also involved in major legislative efforts at the Consumer Affairs Agency, including the enactment of the Food Labelling Law, the Act on Special Measures against Shifting of Consumption Tax in 2013 and two amendments to the Act against Unjustifiable Premiums and Misleading Representations in 2014. On the enforcement side, he oversaw multiple cases with significant socioeconomic impact, such as large-scale cartel cases and merger control cases involving transactions between large companies. During his JFTC tenure, he served as Director General of the Trade Practices Department, Director General of the Economic Affairs Bureau and finally Secretary General of the Commission. He was instrumental in strengthening enforcement of the Antimonopoly Act and worked vigorously on strengthening advocacy activities by JFTC. Before joining Atsumi & Sakai, Mr. Sugahisa was a member of the Antitrust / Competition practice group at Baker McKenzie's Tokyo office until November 2025. Taking advantage of his experience and knowledge that he gained during his tenure at the JFTC, he works on various competition law matters together with qualified attorneys.

Before joining Atsumi & Sakai, Mr. Ae was the co-leader of the Antitrust / Competition practice group at Baker McKenzie's Tokyo office until November 2025. He focuses on regulatory issues, especially in the areas of antitrust and competition law, and assists Japanese and international clients in international and domestic cartel investigations, multijurisdictional M&A transaction-related merger control matters including those involving remedies, foreign investment regulations/foreign subsidies matters, and compliance investigations. He also provides support during on-site investigations conducted by government bodies and advises clients on distribution-related contractual and compliance issues.

Before joining Atsumi & Sakai, Mr. Suzuki was a member of the Antitrust / Competition and Corporate / M&A practice groups at Baker McKenzie's Tokyo office until July 2025. He focuses on transaction-related regulatory matters including merger control, foreign direct investment, and foreign subsidies regulation, and regularly advises Japanese and multinational clients on various competition law issues.

Hiroo Atsumi, Managing Partner of Atsumi & Sakai, commented, “It is our great honor to welcome Junya Ae and his team, including former Secretary General of the Japan Fair Trade Commission, Shuichi Sugahisa, who have been the very core of Baker & McKenzie Tokyo's competition law practice, all of whom are noted practitioners in the market, to Atsumi & Sakai at this time. Our competition law practice is already highly regarded in domestic and international legal media, but we believe the team's participation will bring synergy to our competition law practices/services particularly in transaction related competition law areas and our competition law practice will enjoy increased trust from adding Mr. Sugahisa's insights as a regulator of many years' experience. In addition, we hope that the team's participation will bolster the Firm's entire transaction practice.”

Our firm's competition/antitrust practice, with a core team of around 30 attorneys including foreign lawyers, handles various domestic and international antitrust matters. In addition, our Brussels office strengthens our expertise in EU regulations and competition law, enabling us to stay ahead of developments in laws and policies that may affect our clients' businesses. In cross-border matters, we leverage our extensive international network to support clients from the very outset, including the formation of teams with experienced foreign attorneys. Working closely with overseas attorneys, we strive to ensure that our clients' global business operations proceed seamlessly.

Atsumi & Sakai's team of experienced Japanese attorneys and foreign lawyers, provides tailored legal solutions to meet our clients' needs in the rapidly changing domestic and international environment. The firm's multi-jurisdictional presence allows it to support clients with a seamless mix of locally informed and globally strategic legal guidance.

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<sup>1</sup> Tokyo-based Atsumi & Sakai is one of Japan's “Big 6” law firms; in addition to its Tokyo head office, the firm has offices in London, Brussels and Ho Ch Minh, and affiliate offices in New York, Frankfurt, Osaka (Japan) and Fukuoka (Japan) with a total of some 275 professionals (as of December 1, 2025).