

Brussels, 24 April 2009

EU – Japan Economic Integration Agreement within the framework of the EU – Japan 2009 Summit

Dear President Barroso,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Japan Business Council in Europe (JBCE) to express our appreciation and support for the European Commission's continued efforts to further develop and strengthen cooperation between the EU and Japan.

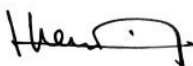
The forthcoming EU-Japan Summit, to be held in Prague on 4 May 2009, will again permit both parties to exchange best practices and develop joint initiatives in a number of key areas, including sharing global responsibility, promoting peace and security, and enhancing greater cooperation for the well-being of society.

With regard to strengthening economic cooperation, the JBCE strongly believes that, in light of the recent economic crises, both the EU and Japan need to show global leadership by promoting trade policies that avoid protectionism. Furthermore, it is necessary, now more than ever, to advocate and promote market integration to an extent not previously explored. The similarities in internal and external challenges faced by both parties open the way to shared and coordinated responses.

The JBCE supports the World Trade Organisation and agrees that a successful Doha Development Agenda is the best way to achieve greater economic integration. At the same time, the JBCE strongly supports a bilateral Economic Integration Agreement (EIA) between the EU and Japan, which share the same high level of social and environmental concerns. Such an EIA should not be viewed as a means to bypass the multilateral framework, but rather as a complementary and parallel means to strengthen cooperation between the two parties, especially – but not exclusively – in areas outside the WTO framework.

In light of the joint recommendations developed by the European Union and the Japan Business Round Table (BRT) in July 2008 in advance of the G8 Summit at Lake Toya, the JBCE hopes that the European Commission and the Japanese Government will be strongly committed to do their utmost to make the EIA a reality. The JBCE wishes for an open and fruitful dialogue and a successful outcome at the forthcoming Summit in Prague.

Yours faithfully,



Laurent Abadie

President

Japan Business Council in Europe

The Japan Business Council in Europe was established in 1999 as the representative organisation of Japanese companies operating in the European Union. Our membership consists of more than 60 leading multinational corporations that are active across a wide range of sectors, including electronics, automotive, and chemical manufacturing.

The key goal of the JBCE is to contribute to EU public policy in a positive and constructive way. In doing this, we can draw upon the expertise and experience of our member companies.