

Brussels, 16 May 2011

EU–Japan Economic Integration Agreement within the framework of the EU–Japan 2011 Summit

Dear President Van Rompuy,

On behalf of Japan Business Council in Europe (JBCE), I would like to express my sincere appreciation for the EU's expression of solidarity following the earthquake and the tsunami that occurred in Japan on March 11th. JBCE strongly believes in the enduring friendship between the EU and Japan.

The strengthening of relations could in this respect be conceived as a unique opportunity to progress on many issues. In addition, the current global financial and economic crisis demonstrated the high degree of mutual dependency of the world's economy. These factors remind us that tackling international and global issues is only possible by adopting a comprehensive approach. In this regard, JBCE would like to recall the need for an Economic Integration Agreement (EIA) between the EU and Japan, as both regions share common interests and values moreso than with other countries. JBCE believes that the time is right to launch EIA negotiations because we see a clear political will from both the EU and Japanese sides, and firmly believe that missing this opportunity could lead to negative effects on both sides.

In light of the upcoming EU–Japan summit in May, JBCE is pleased with the European Council's commitment as expressed in its Conclusions of March 25th to strengthen this relationship and bring forward a common agenda, including through the potential launch of negotiations for a free trade agreement.

The above mentioned European Council Conclusions have also caught the attention of JBCE concerning the role of the European single market in improving the EU's prosperity. Moreover, JBCE is convinced that the ambitious Single Market Act presented by the Commission last October is a key element for the realization of the EU's strategy for competitiveness, growth and jobs. Following EU matters closely, JBCE perceives that the will to move forward is strong. The adoption of enforced cooperation for an EU patent between like-minded EU Member States is a good example thereof.

Furthermore, JBCE would like to call your attention, Mister President, to the letter of March 18th you received from Prime Minister David Cameron together with eight EU Member States, setting out a new direction to secure EU growth. This letter clearly expresses the political will to improve new market opportunities by investing in innovation, research and development. In this respect, many member companies of JBCE have already invested a great deal in the EU in order to produce products for the EU market. JBCE believes that investments in the development of environmentally friendly products will

contribute to a truly sustainable society in which green growth is not limited to industrial policy but also expanded to other policies, including trade in ecological and energy saving products.

Finally, the moment of truth has arrived for the external dimension of the single market. Succeeding in finalising the Doha negotiations by the end of this year is one of the greatest challenges for the coming months. JBCE is convinced that the intense endeavours made on plurilateral levels will be fruitful. Despite the current pessimism on the feasibility of reaching an agreement by the end of 2011, JBCE remains strongly convinced that this does not mean that complementary endeavours on bilateral level should be neglected. Therefore, efforts to reach an EIA between the EU and Japan should continue to persist in parallel with ongoing multilateral negotiations.

JBCE is confident that the crucial role of the European Council in setting the political guidelines of the EU is in good hands. On behalf of JBCE, I would like to send you, Mister President, my best regards.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Yutaka Hiyoshi'.

President

Japanese Business Council in Europe

Japan Business Council in Europe was established in 1999 as the representative organization 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 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.