

JBCE statement on the 26th EU-Japan Summit

On 25th April, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, President of the European Council Donald Tusk, and President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker met to discuss a range of issues, including the implementation of the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), the modernisation of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), areas for strategic cooperation such as sustainable connectivity, data protection, and climate change, and preparations for the G20 Summit, taking place in Osaka in June 2019.

JBCE welcomes the leaders' ambition to further deepen economic and strategic cooperation between the EU and Japan covering the aforementioned areas, as well as in the fields of research & innovation, energy, and transport.

2019 represents unique opportunities for EU-Japan cooperation at the global level, with Japan holding the Presidency of the G20, while France's G7 Presidency will culminate in a Summit in August. The multiple ministerial meetings being hosted under both Japanese and French leadership provide possibilities to advance EU-Japan cooperation across a multitude of issue areas.

JBCE calls upon the EU and Japan to lead these global-level discussions towards the promotion of sustainable and inclusive development by "like-minded" partners, and to collaborate on the issues below with a view to solving global societal challenges, fostering the innovation which contributes to the enhancement of citizens' quality of life.

<Global Trade System>

The EU and Japan should use the opportunity of the G20 and G7 to build support for and defend the multilateral, rules-based system of world trade, with a particular focus on WTO reform. Both parties should continue to provide leadership at the global level in this regard, including through the trilateral framework among the EU, Japan and the US.

<Data Protection and Data Flows>

International data flows should be promoted as a vital enabler of further and deeper economic ties and of innovation across industry and business sectors, in keeping with the Japanese government's concept of "data free flow with trust" (DFFT). The EU and Japan should continue to be active in international discussions and initiatives and contribute to multilateral fora based on common principles and objectives to fully exploit

the potential of economic and social transformation by digital technologies, such as AI and blockchain. With the same objective, JBCE encourages the promotion of international standards and an alignment of regulatory approaches to tackle cybersecurity challenges.

<Climate Change and Circular Economy>

With regard to plastics in particular, the partners should take into consideration the practicalities of waste management such as separation and collection to reduce marine litter. A holistic approach should include material recycling and chemical recycling, but also tackle the upstream production of single use plastics.

<Sustainable Development>

JBCE lends a supportive voice to the joint statement on strengthening bilateral cooperation in all fora related to sustainability, and appreciates the reaffirmation of the importance of implementing the provisions of the trade and sustainable development (TSD) chapter of the EU-Japan EPA. Moreover, in working together and leading by example, the EU and Japan can set standards that have global impact. JBCE believes that multi-stakeholder dialogue, combined with the right incentives, can drive smart, sustainable inclusive growth in both regions. We encourage the partners to facilitate broad-based bilateral engagement based on a multi-level and cross-sectoral approach, through which the solutions needed to achieve ambitious objectives – for example, under the Paris Agreement – can be developed. Involvement of all players is key, and it will be essential to encourage those who pioneer sustainability solutions, as well as assisting all stakeholders in capacity-building. Governmental leadership is crucial if this enabling environment is to become a reality.

About JBCE

Founded in 1999, the Japan Business Council in Europe (JBCE) is a leading European organisation representing the interests of more than 80 multinational companies of Japanese parentage active in Europe. Our members operate across a wide range of sectors, including electronics, information and communication technology, chemicals, automotive, machinery, precision instruments, wholesale trade, pharmaceutical, transportation, and finance. Building a new era of cooperation between the European Union (EU) and Japan is the core of our activities, which we pursue in the framework of several committees focused on: Trade Policy, Environment and Energy, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Standards and Conformity, Corporate Policy and Digital Innovation.