

Joint statement on the EU-Japan FTA/EPA negotiations

4 March 2016

On 2 March BUSINESSEUROPE and the Japan Business Council in Europe (JBCE) jointly hosted a breakfast discussion with the chief negotiators of the EU and Japan. This meeting took place during the 15th round of negotiations in Brussels. BUSINESSEUROPE and JBCE follow the negotiations of the EU-Japan Free Trade Agreement (FTA) / Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) very closely, and both organisations acknowledge the broad benefits that an ambitious and comprehensive agreement would deliver.

BUSINESSEUROPE and JBCE promote parallelism between tariff reductions and elimination of non-tariff measures in order to make full use of the opportunities an ambitious agreement has to offer. Furthermore, the agreement should grant comparable and effective market access and the removal of all restrictive measures. All stakeholders are interested in a strong partnership which will contribute to boosting economic growth, creating job opportunities and strengthening business competitiveness in the EU and Japan.

Considering the need to ensure meaningful cooperation between representatives of the regulatory authorities, such as relevant ministries, agencies and industrial authorities, BUSINESSEUROPE and JBCE ask that a strong mechanism for regulatory cooperation with an early notification system for new policies with a significant impact on trade and investment and a cooperative framework which enable both authorities to work together on those new policies to be included within the FTA/EPA. Those provisions prevent the risk of future non-tariff measures and enhance global competitiveness by establishing an on-going dialogue between public authorities and business on both sides.

While there is no doubt that an ambitious and comprehensive agreement will be a key factor for a strong partnership and that substance should thus prevail over speed, both BUSINESSEUROPE and JBCE urge the negotiators to speed up the negotiations for an earliest possible conclusion in 2016 in order to keep up with a rapidly changing global business environment.

Background:

BUSINESSEUROPE is the leading advocate for growth and competitiveness at European level, standing up for companies across the continent and actively campaigning on the issues that most influence their performance. We speak for all-sized enterprises in 34 European countries whose national business federations are our direct members.

JBCE (The Japan Business Council in Europe)

Created in 1999, the Japan Business Council in Europe (JBCE) is a leading European organisation representing the interests of almost 70 multinational companies of Japanese parentage active in Europe. Our members operate across a wide range of sectors, including information and communication technology, electronics, chemicals, automotive, machinery, wholesale trade, precision instruments, pharmaceutical, railway, textiles and glass products. Together, our member companies represented in 2013 global sales of 1.4 trillion euros. Building a new era of cooperation between the European Union (EU) and Japan is the core of our activities.

Contact:

Maurice Fermont
Adviser
International Relations Department
BUSINESSEUROPE
168 Avenue de Cortenbergh
1000 Brussels - Belgium
Tel: +32 (0) 2 237 65 04

Ryota Tsunemi
Policy Manager
Japan Business Council in Europe a.i.s.b.l.
Rue de la Loi 82
B-1040 Brussels - Belgium
Tel: +32 (0) 2 286 53 30