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**EU-JAPAN: SIXTH SECTOR-TO-SECTOR MEETING HELD IN BRUSSELS**

On 13 June, BusinessEurope and Keidanren hosted the sixth sector-to-sector meeting at the premises of BusinessEurope in Brussels.

At the meeting, both sides echoed the utmost importance of reaching an ambitious and comprehensive outcome on the fundamental elements of the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA)/Free Trade Agreement (FTA) as early as possible, hopefully in coming weeks. BusinessEurope and Keidanren reaffirmed their priorities for this agreement in their [joint letter](#) sent to the political leaders in September 2016.

The EPA/FTA would not only give a new impetus to growth and jobs in both the EU and Japan, but also contribute significantly to building a rule-based, free and open international economic order in which healthy competition and close cooperation between Japanese and European businesses are enhanced even in third countries including the emerging economies.

In recent years, anti-globalisation sentiments are on the rise especially in certain advanced countries that have championed globalisation. In this context, the EPA/FTA between the EU and Japan, which together account for almost 30 percent of the world economy and over 30 percent of the world trade, would be of great significance and could send a strong and positive message to the rest of the world.

Both parties recognised anew that the EPA/FTA would also provide an institutional base for enhancing regulatory cooperation that had been promoted through the sector-to-sector dialogue. Regulatory cooperation is key in promoting trade and investment while ensuring a high level of protection of social and environmental standards.

A retreat to domestic markets is not the answer to anti-globalisation movements. If done in a smart way regulatory cooperation, coupled with some necessary domestic structural reforms could harness globalisation, making it more inclusive.

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Background:

Held for the sixth time in a row since 2012, the BusinessEurope-Keidanren Sector-to-Sector meeting gathered important European and Japanese sector associations for an exchange of views on NTMs and regulatory cooperation in the context of the ongoing bilateral EU-Japan EPA/FTA negotiations. At the meeting, each sector reported on what their sector's dialogue between the EU and Japan has achieved so far and the challenges ahead they have to tackle.

In December last year, BusinessEurope and Keidanren put together [joint recommendations](#) for Japan-EU regulatory cooperation based on the progress achieved to that point, effectively turning the page to a new chapter in our ongoing dialogue.

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*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 impact their performance. We speak for enterprise in 34 European countries whose national business federations are our direct members.*

*Keidanren (Japan Business Federation) is a comprehensive economic organization with a membership comprised of 1356 representative companies of Japan, 109 nationwide industrial associations and 47 regional economic organizations (as of 1<sup>st</sup> June, 2017).*