



EU-Japan Business Round Table

Press Release

Tokyo, 19 January 2011

EU-Japan Business Round Table co-Chairmen Jean-Yves LE GALL and Hiromasa YONEKURA met today with Japan's Prime Minister Naoto KAN to push for the strengthening of EU-Japan trade and economic relations.

During their meeting with Japan's Prime Minister KAN, the EU-Japan Business Round Table (BRT) co-Chairmen Messrs. LE GALL (Chairman & CEO of Arianespace) and YONEKURA (Chairman of Sumitomo Chemical Co., Ltd.) stressed the importance and the growth potential of the trade and economic relations between the EU and Japan, two major world economies. They pointed out that the EU and Japanese businesses face increasingly similar challenges and also emphasised the need to significantly promote R&D and business cooperation between the EU and Japanese enterprises.

The EU-Japan BRT recommends that both authorities start negotiations on a balanced and mutually beneficial bilateral trade agreement, as soon as the EU and Japanese authorities agree that the right conditions are met, in order to promote an ambitious expansion of trade and investment between the EU and Japan.

With the current 10-year EU-Japan Action Plan to elapse in 2011, Messrs. LE GALL and YONEKURA urged Prime Minister KAN to take action to make the Japanese side prepared for starting the negotiation of a new framework to replace the EU-Japan Action Plan.

On the occasion of their next meeting in Rome on 28-29 April 2011, European and Japanese members of the EU-Japan BRT will set out their recommendations to the EU and Japanese authorities to further strengthen EU-Japan trade and economic relations. Mr. LE GALL said: "Prime Minister Kan's personal involvement in Japanese efforts to enable the development of EU-Japan trade and investment relations is welcome, since the Prime Minister's leadership is crucial to secure the removal of Non Tariff Barriers falling in the fields of competence of various Ministries." Mr. YONEKURA said: "The Japanese business community welcomes Prime Minister Kan's commitment to 'opening the country' and 'creating a new future' and will continue to support the government in implementing new policies to achieve the vision."

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Background:

The EU-Japan Business Round Table (BRT) was created in 1995 to foster communications between Japanese and European industries. Its Members are senior executives from around 50 leading European and Japanese companies. Its main objective is to submit recommendations to Japanese and European Authorities in order to develop trade and investment between the EU and Japan, and to encourage industrial cooperation on issues of common interest, such as innovation, climate change, or industrial standards.

EU-Japan Business Round Table – website: www.eu-japan-brt.eu