



Press Release

Tokyo, Wednesday 9 April 2014

EU-Japan Business Round Table met for its 16th Annual Meeting “EU-Japan Cooperation – New Opportunities for Global Growth”

The EU-Japan Business Round Table (BRT), a forum of around 50 European and Japanese business leaders, held its 16th Annual Meeting in Tokyo on 8 & 9 April 2014 under the theme of “EU-Japan Cooperation – New Opportunities for Global Growth.” The meeting was co-chaired by Mr. Hiromasa Yonekura, Chairman and CEO of Sumitomo Chemical Co., Ltd., and Mr. Fabrice Brégier, President and CEO of Airbus S.A.S. The BRT had the pleasure of welcoming high-level representatives of the EU and Japanese Authorities: Mr. Toshimitsu Motegi, Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan, Mr. Yoshihiko Isozaki, Parliamentary Vice Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan, Mr. Norio Mitsuya, Parliamentary Senior Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, Mr. Takao Makino, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, Mr. Yasumasa Nagamine, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, Mr. Masahiro Yoshizaki, Vice-Minister for Policy Coordination (International Affairs), Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications of Japan, Mr. Daniel Calleja Crespo, Director General for Enterprise and Industry of the European Commission, and Mr. Antonio Parenti, Deputy Chief Negotiator for the EU-Japan FTA, European Commission.

The meeting also addressed the following subjects: the ongoing negotiations of the EU-Japan Free Trade Agreement (FTA) / Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), new industrial revolution in relation to sustainability, and major business themes for the EU and Japan in the post FTA/EPA.

During the meeting, the BRT agreed on a set of recommendations to be submitted to European Council President Herman Van Rompuy, European Commission President José Manuel Barroso and Prime Minister of Japan Shinzo Abe.

EU-Japan Cooperation – New Opportunities for Global Growth

The BRT appreciates and welcomes the efforts that the EU and Japanese Authorities have made in the FTA/EPA negotiations. With a strong conviction that an EU-Japan FTA/EPA could boost trade and investment, promote job creation, and spur growth in both economies and that it will also help create new opportunities for global economic growth, the BRT reiterates its call that the EU and Japanese Authorities should step up their efforts to tackle and resolve the

substance of the outstanding issues and that a comprehensive, ambitious, high-level and mutually beneficial FTA/EPA should be concluded as soon as possible. The BRT reaffirms its commitment to make every effort to support the early realisation of an EU-Japan FTA/EPA. BRT Members are ready to make available industry expertise to achieve this objective.

As two of the world's largest and most advanced economies, the EU and Japan should work together and play a leadership role to promote global regulatory cooperation and standards harmonisation, which other so-called 'mega' agreements, such as TPP and TTIP, also try to achieve, with the aim of developing an open, seamless global business environment that will help create new growth opportunities not just for the EU and Japanese economies but also for the rest of the world.

At the same time, the BRT urges that the EU and Japan should extend and deepen their cooperation beyond the framework of an FTA/EPA to address a wide variety of global challenges and should particularly explore opportunities to cooperate in businesses in or with third countries as well as in areas relating to innovation, energy, natural resources, environment and climate change, demographic changes, global financial markets, small and medium enterprises and human resources development.

In addition, the BRT announced that Mr. Kazuo Tsukuda, Senior Executive Adviser, Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, Ltd., will become its new Japan-side co-chair.

Mr. Brégier said "I would like to thank Mr Hiromasa Yonekura for his leading role and dedication to the EU-Japan Business Round Table as the Japan-side co-chair for four years. Thanks to his contribution and leadership, we made great progress with on-going negotiations. It is now my duty, together with the new Japan-side co-chair, Mr Kazuo Tsukuda, to further accelerate the negotiations to reach fruitful agreement between Europe and Japan. I strongly believe that the EU-Japan FTA/EPA will enhance cooperation between Japanese and European authorities and create real value in both economies and beyond. The BRT will keep acting as a driving force urging both authorities to make it happen."

Mr. Yonekura said, "Looking back, I have been truly fortunate to be given the opportunity to lead this important joint effort at the BRT as co-chair during the years that have seen very positive developments in EU-Japan relations, and in particular, there has been significant progress towards the conclusion of the EU-Japan FTA/EPA. As stated in our Recommendations, enhancing EU-Japan cooperation via FTA/EPA can not just boost trade and investment, promote innovation, and create jobs in both economies, but can also open up new opportunities for global economic growth. I sincerely hope that the EU and Japan will achieve further progress towards the conclusion of an ambitious, high-level, mutually-beneficial FTA/EPA and demonstrate leadership in creating a truly open, seamless global business environment."

Mr. Tsukuda said, "The EU and Japan, two of the major developed economies in the world, are able to play significant roles in building the global business environment. Presently, cooperation between the two regions, including FTA/EPA, is becoming more indispensable. In such context, I do feel that the task of the Japan-side co-chair is challenging and rewarding. Based on BRT's achievements until today, I will do my best to deepen the economic relationship between the EU and Japan by enhancing the competitiveness of both regions and promoting better business solutions."

Inquiries and Contacts

EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation (EU-Japan Business Round Table Secretariat)

Phone: +81 3 6408 0281 / FAX +81 3 6408 0283

Email: Ms. Etsuko Honzawa: etsuko.honzawa@eu-japan.gr.jp;

Mr. Sam Claydon: sam.claydon@eu-japan.gr.jp

Background

The EU-Japan Business Round Table was created in 1999 to review factors affecting all aspects of EU-Japan business relations. Its members are senior executives from around 50 leading European and Japanese companies. Its main objective is to submit policy 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, energy or industrial standards.

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