

**The 3<sup>rd</sup> EU-Japan Business Dialogue Round Table  
Brussels, 9/10 July 2001**

**World Trade Organisation – Policy Statement**

On the occasion of the annual meeting of the EU-Japan Business Dialogue Round Table, business leaders from the EU and Japan – having a common interest in the early launch of an ambitious and broad new WTO Round – have adopted the following message: Their objective is to promote further trade in goods and services and to improve, strengthen and extend WTO rules and disciplines in order to meet the changing circumstances of the globalised economy of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

1. We believe that more than ever, trade in goods and services and foreign investments are the essential stimuli for steady economic growth and sustainable development of the world, including developing countries.

2. The challenges related to globalisation and sustainable development, the Information Society and new technological innovations, which emerged in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century and are shaping the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, require appropriate responses that can be delivered only at world level. Economic and societal preoccupations need also to be tackled within a stable legal international environment. Market forces alone can neither achieve these objectives nor create the necessary legal environment conducive to more investment.

3. The WTO is the appropriate framework to address trade-related aspects of these new challenges, by improving present rules or creating new ones, where appropriate. We reaffirm our strong attachment to the multilateral trade system managed by the WTO and complemented by regional agreements concluded in accordance with WTO rules.

4. We therefore consider that launching, at Doha, an ambitious and broad New Round of negotiations within the framework of the WTO is of outstanding importance. In this context, we welcome the decision of OECD's joint statement and the Chairman's Statement of APEC's Trade Minister Meeting which called for the launch of the New Round with a balanced and sufficiently broad-based agenda, and we noted with great satisfaction the recent EU/US as well as Japan/US declarations vowing to work closely together and with their partners in the coming weeks to secure consensus to launch the New Round.

This New Round must in our view cover a large number of issues – including the built-in agenda (agriculture and services), market access, investment, trade facilitation, government procurement (broader coverage of the agreement and improved transparency), trade and competition, trade and environment, as well as the improvement, clarification and strengthening of rules such as on anti-dumping.

Regarding investment and competition rules, we believe that the best approach is a multilateral one. At the same time, we think that those rules should be

negotiated with a flexible approach, in order to involve the largest number of WTO members. Such a flexible approach could allow in particular the developing countries to subscribe or not to the results of the negotiation in these areas at the end of the Round.

We encourage effective implementation as well as the broadening of commitments in e-commerce related services, including electronic communication services as an essential means to facilitate global electronic commerce, and we welcome further work on rule-making in WTO on e-commerce with the aim to improve legal certainty as a basis for its further development.

5. We welcome the successful joint initiatives by the European Commission and the Government of Japan to discuss New Round issues. As a consequence, a large number of developing countries are now in support of the launch of a New Round.

6. We encourage the Government of Japan and the European Commission to continue such confidence and consensus-building actions, since we consider them to be the best-possible brokers between all interested parties for a balanced and sufficiently broad-based agenda at the 4<sup>th</sup> WTO Ministerial Conference in Doha, in view of launching a successful New Round. This leadership role of Japan and the European Commission, along with the US, must demonstrate flexibility, pro-activity and commitment to the WTO process.

7. This New Round must be carefully prepared and take into account, where appropriate, views expressed by Non-Governmental Organisations. It must clearly benefit all WTO Members to secure the support of its members: it is especially important to take into account the priorities and needs of developing countries. We welcome the "capacity-building" actions under way to help developing countries participate more effectively in the WTO decision-making process.

8. We call for greater transparency, internal and external in the WTO, and for flexibility in the preparation of the agenda for the New Round.

9. We welcome the recent breakthrough made in the process for accession of China to the WTO and encourage WTO Members to finalise the negotiations, as we stress the importance of the full implementation of the agreement.

10. We have decided to pursue our work on specific issues in detail, and to develop joint business policy recommendations as the process develops.