

Mr Jean-Claude Juncker
President of the European Commission

Mr Donald Tusk
President of the European Council

Mr Shinzo Abe
Prime Minister of Japan

16 September 2016

Dear Presidents and Prime Minister,

The European Union and Japan have now been negotiating an EPA/FTA for over three years. While 16 rounds of negotiation have taken place and the negotiations have entered a mature stage, a conclusion is not yet in sight. As leading representatives of both European and Japanese businesses, we are writing to ask you to put all your efforts into accelerating the EPA/FTA negotiations so that they can be concluded within this year. We believe the EU and Japan are familiar with each other's views, and both sides now need to be decisive on the unresolved issues.

While there is no doubt that an ambitious and comprehensive agreement will be a decisive factor for a strong partnership and that substance should thus prevail over timing, we would urge you to speed up the negotiations and work towards a timely conclusion in order to keep up with a rapidly changing global business environment. We therefore welcome the joint statement made in the margins of the G7 Ise-Shima Summit, reaffirming their strong commitment to reach agreement in principle as early as possible in 2016. During times of uncertainty, our partnership based on the shared values is more important than ever. In this regard, we would also ask you to take note of joint industry positions as a way to support the negotiations.

In terms of substance, we call on you to do your utmost to ensure that the EPA/FTA leads to commercially meaningful market access, the removal of tariff and non-tariff measures and the inclusion of an ambitious chapter on procurement. We also ask that you pay particular attention to including a strong mechanism on regulatory cooperation that is intended to avoid unnecessary regulatory divergence, thereby serving as a basis for globally relevant rules. This should include an early notification system for new domestic regulations and standards with a significant impact on trade and investment and a robust institutional framework which ensures meaningful cooperation between relevant ministries, agencies and regulators. BusinessEurope and Keidanren will also soon release a joint statement on regulatory cooperation which addresses both horizontal and sectoral issues.

Since the EU and Japan are two of the largest economies in the world, the potential gains from this agreement go beyond us. At a time when we see a worrying slowdown in world trade coupled with populist anti-trade rhetoric, this agreement is a unique opportunity

to send a clear signal to the world that we believe in free, open and fair trade as a way of promoting sustainable economic growth and improving the living conditions of our citizens. An ambitious and comprehensive EPA/FTA is the only agreement that makes sense for partners of our size.

We thank you for taking our views into consideration and remain fully supportive of your efforts to reach an ambitious agreement at the earliest opportunity.

Yours sincerely,



Emma Marcegaglia
President of BusinessEurope



Sadayuki Sakakibara
Chairman of Keidanren



山本靖則

Yasunori Yamamoto
President
Japan Business Council in Europe



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