

EU-Japan Business Round Table (BRT)

Palais d'Egmont, 4 November 2021

Chairman Wahl, Chairman Sakuyama and distinguished guests, good afternoon and good evening. I am extremely pleased to be able to attend the BRT for the second time as Ambassador of Japan to the European Union.

This year's annual meeting is being held by a hybrid format that connects the venues of Brussels and Tokyo. I would like to honor the efforts by all concerned persons to promote industrial cooperation between Japan and Europe in spite of the difficult situation brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. In their response to the pandemic and its challenges, Japan and the EU have closely cooperated on all the fronts. Some examples. We have been working to provide vaccines to developing countries including through the COVAX mechanism. In the EU, a Japanese pharmaceutical company has supported the production of vaccines for EU citizens by providing manufacturing facilities. And of course, we will never forget EU's continuous support in exporting vaccines to Japan.

In addition to this, the green, digital, trade and regulatory cooperation that have been actively discussed today are all very important topics for the cooperation between Japan and the EU.

First of all, with regards to working towards green, COP26 is currently being held in Glasgow. Prime Minister Kishida attended the COP26 World Leaders Summit and confirmed to the international community that Japan aims to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 46 percent in the fiscal year 2030 from its fiscal year 2013 levels, and that Japan will continue strenuous efforts in its challenge to meet the lofty goal of cutting its emissions by 50 percent. PM Kishida also announced Japan's contribution which is up to 10 billion USD in the coming five years to support efforts toward net-zero emissions in Asia, in addition to 60 billion USD over the same period which was already announced last June. From now on, the cooperation between Japan and the EU will become even more important to achieve this goal of carbon neutrality. In particular, the joint document of the Japan-EU Green Alliance, which was launched at the Japan-EU Leaders' Meeting in May, will serve as guideline for future efforts to promote concrete cooperation between Japan and the EU. The EU's "Fit for 55" package, announced in July, sets out Europe's wide variety of responses to climate change. Japan will support EU effort and observes at the same time the implications of EU's new measures such as the CBAM to the third country's companies. In this respect, I would like to remind of you that, in addressing climate change, there might be various effective approaches that can take into consideration the energy situation and past measures of each region and country.

Next, regarding digital issues. Commissioner Breton, who has attended today's annual meeting, visited Japan last September to kick off the discussion on building cooperation on semiconductors between Japan and the EU. It is expected that a Japan-EU Digital Partnership covering several fields such as data, 5G, data centers and AI in addition to semiconductors will be launched, as emphasized in the "EU strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific" released in September. In this regard, I would like to reiterate the importance of the discussions in the international rule-making to facilitate Data Free Flow with Trust (that is DFFT), which is Japan's initiative in G20 of 2019, for the development of the digital field between the EU and Japan.

Turning our attention to trade, Japan and the EU will shortly be marking the third anniversary of the entry into force of the EPA. During this period until now, the market access of both parties has been steadily improving through the firm implementation of the EPA and the progress of coordination on every area including SPS, which EU emphasized its importance for their agricultural products export. In addition to this, it is expected that a data flow consultation that embodies the above mentioned DFFT will be officially launched. Cooperation between Japan and the EU, as like-minded partners and also global economic player, holds the potential to further deepen and expand international cooperation and contribute to the world's prosperity. In particular, business in

the Asia-Pacific region, which is important for both Japan and the EU, stands to benefit from our collaboration. I hope that the cooperation between Japan and the EU in this region will be further deepened.

As already mentioned, I hope that the exchange between Japan and European business and industries will become more active, and I would like to firmly support this on behalf of the Japanese government. Thank you for your attention.