

EU – Japan

Global Partnership for the
XXI Century



Message from
H.E. Mr Masahiko Koumura
Minister for Foreign Affairs, Japan

Japan and the European Union have been developing a fruitful partnership underpinned by common values of freedom, democracy, the rule of law and market principles.

Japan and the EU, together with the United States of America, constitute three pillars of the international community and are playing an essential role in the world as global partners. In this context, Japan and the EU have been forging close, cooperative relationships in a wide range of fields based on the spirit of 'dialogue and cooperation' stipulated in the EC-Japan joint declaration of 1991.

As we stand on the threshold of the 21st century, Japan and the EU need to have even closer cooperation in as many fields as possible, not only on economic issues but also on political, social and global issues. I believe that Japan-EU cooperation will certainly contribute to the prosperity and stability of the international community, and hope that this publication will provide a good overview of the various dimensions of EU-Japan partnership.



Message from
Sir Leon Brittan
Vice President of the European Commission

Cooperation between nations is a means by which sovereign States can exercise their global responsibilities and build ties. In today's interdependent world we cannot act alone. Since the 1991 joint

political declaration, which established a framework for the development of relations between the European Union (EU) and Japan, we have been pursuing a coherent policy of cooperation and dialogue with Japan in many fields. I welcome what has been achieved so far, but Japan and the EU can do more. The challenges confronting us now are even more formidable than those at the beginning of the decade. To address these challenges we need to concentrate now on turning dialogue into joint initiatives and actions, to increase mutual knowledge and to improve understanding between our peoples, creating a 'culture of cooperation' between our societies and governments. EU-Japan cooperation has already had very beneficial effects on our overall relationship. It can become an even stronger pillar of our partnership in the 21st century.

Introduction

The EU and Japan are building up a remarkably wide and diversified portfolio of cooperative activities. This leaflet illustrates such wide-ranging cooperation, focusing on major topics in today's interdependent world, and underscoring the significance of strengthening EU-Japan partnership towards the 21st century.

Overall dialogue

The annual EU-Japan Summit meeting, which is held alternately in Europe and Japan, is the key event in the political calendar for reviewing EU-Japan relations and for giving orientations for the future. Attended at the highest political level by both sides, it also offers an occasion to review global issues and other matters affecting bilateral relations. The European Commission-Japan ministerial meeting offers an occasion for European commissioners and Japanese ministers to review trade and economic relations and cooperation between Europe and Japan.

The EU troika (three Member States of the previous, current and next Presidency plus the European Commission)-Japan foreign ministerial meeting and political directors' meeting are both held on a regular basis to exchange views on political and foreign policy issues. The high-level meeting is chaired by the Directorate-General for External Relations of the Commission and its counterpart in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan and brings together officials representing a range of Commission directorates-general and Japanese ministries and agencies to review bilateral relations.

Political relations

At a time of growing interdependence in the world and when events in Asia increasingly affect the European interests and vice versa, the EU and Japan have intensified their dialogue and strengthened their cooperation and partnership at all levels in order to contribute jointly to promoting a just and stable international order and to dealing with global challenges confronting the international community.

One important political area of collaboration has been in North Korea where the EU and Japan have been working together in the Korean peninsula Energy Development Organisation (KEDO) to enhance security and stability in Northeast Asia and prevent nuclear proliferation. In Europe, Japan has contributed substantial assistance in a variety of fields to facilitate the reconstruction of Bosnia and Herzegovina.



Trade, financial and economic relations

Japan is a key market for Europe and Europe is a key market for Japan.

Both parties cooperate closely on multilateral and bilateral trade issues with a view to promoting trade and providing a favourable environment for foreign investment.

Especially with regard to deregulation, the EU and Japan have established a two-way dialogue with positive effects to the deregulation process in the EU and in Japan.

Europe and Japan hold regular consultations which enhance mutual information on macroeconomic policies as well as on monetary and financial issues such as economic and monetary union (EMU), progress in the reform of Japan's financial sectors and legislative developments in EU internal market regulation.

In addition, programmes such as the Executive Training Programme for young European managers and 'EU Gateway to Japan' campaign have been contributing to expand the trade and business contacts between the EU and Japan.

Industrial cooperation

In the industrial area, a range of cooperation activities has been developed over the past 10 years.

The EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation, which was established in Tokyo in 1987 and in Brussels in 1996, organises training courses and topical missions for EU managers in Japan. It also manages the new Vulcanus programme which offers courses combining language and in-company training for Japanese engineering students in Europe and for European engineering students in Japan.

In addition to the activities of the centre, industrial cooperation has evolved in certain industrial sectors, including the car parts and consumer electronic sectors.

The European Commission and the Japanese Government have set up technical working groups so as to encourage dialogue on industrial policy issues and to promote convergence between their industrial policies.



Environment

Dialogue and cooperation in environmental matters were initiated officially in 1977 and annual high-level consultations have been held regularly since 1992. As the environment has gained in importance on the political agenda, so contacts between the EU and Japan have increased. Recently, the Climate Change Convention process, especially the negotiation of the Kyoto protocol in December 1997, made it clear that closer EU-Japan cooperation is necessary.

The need to develop even closer partnership to deal with climate change and other global environmental challenges, such as ozone layer depletion, biological diversity and sustainable forest management, has never been more evident.

Science and technology

Cooperation in the field of science and technology has been developed on the basis of bilateral activities and through the participation of both the European Union and Japan in multilateral forums.

In 1993 it was decided at ministerial level to establish a high-level forum on science and technology in order to exchange views and information to promote cooperation. The third meeting of the forum was held in September 1998. Cooperation has been strengthened in many research areas such as thermonuclear fusion, global climate change, seismic risk and new energy technologies.

Nuclear energy

An exchange of diplomatic notes took place in February 1997 with respect to the fabrication in Belgium of nuclear fuels to be used in Japan. Both sides recognise the importance of long-term and stable cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy between the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom) and Japan. In this context, negotiations for an agreement to provide the basis for such cooperation will be started.



Fisheries

The EU and Japan cooperate closely in a number of regional fisheries organisations to manage/conservate their fish resources in a sustainable way. Bilateral consultation between the EU and Japan on fisheries trade issues was initiated in July 1997.

To further advance their cooperation in various international forums — and to discuss bilateral fisheries matters — the two parties have agreed to hold annual high-level meetings. The first meeting took place in Brussels in July 1998.

Education

The 1991 EC-Japan joint declaration calls for the development of cooperation in the field of higher education and training. In June 1996 an EU-Japan round table on education was held in Louvain (Belgium).

The fields of science and technology and education were the subject of an EU-Japan conference on cooperation held in Tokyo in September 1997. The conference highlighted the need to upgrade the EU-Japan partnership by reinforcing joint activity in these areas and to give operational follow-up to the declared will of cooperation.

As a result of these contacts and ongoing exchanges of experiences and information, the groundwork is being laid for a deeper understanding of both partners' structures and traditions and for possible closer cooperation in the future.



Telecommunications

A wide diversity of actions and initiatives characterises relations in this area. Regular exchanges of information cover regulatory aspects, market access issues, review of the evolution of the information society, specifically electronic commerce, future advanced mobile communication systems, and cooperation in research and development.

The EU-Japan Forum on Communications gathers a broad range of representatives of the 'communication' private sector to exchange information and to discuss relevant topics.



Culture and information

Every year during the EU-Japan Journalists' Conference, journalists from all EU Member States and Japan meet in the presence of eminent personalities from the political and economic spheres to exchange views on issues of common interest. These meetings contribute to increasing mutual knowledge and to establishing useful networks.

The Japanese government runs an 'Invitation programme for journalists' whereby 20-30 journalists from the EU are given the opportunity to better know Japan.

On an annual basis, the European Commission is running a programme whereby 11 to 15 young Japanese journalists are invited to the 'European Journalism Centre' in Maastricht and are offered introductory lectures on European Union policies and institutions as well as on EU-Japan relations.

A European visitors' programme contributes to broadening contacts and networking between young Europeans and Japanese leaders belonging to other sectors of society. A Japanese visitors' programme is run by the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and is addressed to a wide range of officials, political figures and opinion leaders in the EU.



Transport

Annual high-level meetings and experts' missions review issues of mutual interest or particular concern to either the EU or Japan. These help progress towards the enhancement of mutual understanding and the resolution of problems. One example is the possible creation of a worldwide seamless satellite navigation system with a view to improving the safety and efficiency of navigation. Regular contacts also occur on regulatory issues, and cooperation takes place on issues concerning maritime safety, transport and the environment.

Consumer policy

High-level consultations on developments in consumer policies in Japan and the EU take place every two years and focus, in particular, on topical questions related to the health, safety and economic interests of consumers.

Competition policy

The dialogue in the area of competition policy aims at reviewing exceptions and exemptions from competition rules, as well as exchanging information on the implementation and enforcement of competition policy. Consultations on competition policies between the European Commission and the Japanese Fair Trade Commission are held on an annual basis.

Social affairs

Cooperation in the social field began in 1992. Annual tripartite conferences and the exchange programme of experts have so far enabled partners to arrange for exchanges and discussions on industrial relations and employment as well as on social protection policies.

Cooperation has been intensified as a result of the shared view that the social systems of the EU and Japan are both affected by fundamental structural changes in society and in the economy. The need to adapt the labour markets, the challenges raised by ageing populations, and the adaptation of social protection systems are topics of common interest for bilateral cooperation.

ODA/humanitarian aid

The EU and Japan share the view that it is important for leading donors to cooperate for the efficient and effective implementation of assistance to developing countries, focusing

on those countries which are pursuing sound economic policies and political reform within integrated approaches which take into account the greatest development needs, economic as well as social.

In the field of humanitarian assistance, contacts between respective authorities have intensified in recent years. Both sides intend to make further efforts to promote exchange of information in order to maximise the effects of the delivery of humanitarian aid.

© Photo by Ms Keiko Kasuya





EU-Japan programmes

(people-to-people exchanges)

The executive training programme (ETP)

is a key and comprehensive management development programme for young business executives from Europe, which enables them to acquire the necessary knowledge and

language skills to conduct business relations in Japan and increase trade. Included in the intensive 18-month programme are language training, business seminars, industrial visits and two 3-month secondments in Japanese companies.

Gateway to Japan 'GTJ)

is a 4-year programme (1997-2000) that provides opportunities for European businessmen from small and medium sized enterprises to make business contacts through introducing their companies and products to the Japanese market during trade missions and joint participation in trade fairs in Japan under the EU banner.



For further information, please contact:

Unit for Japan — European Commission
DG I — External Relations
Fax (32-2) 29-91033
E-mail: japan@dg1.cec.be

The Directorate-General for Industry (DG III) of the European Commission has teamed up with the Japanese Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) to establish the **EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation** which runs training programmes in Japan on their behalf:

Market and product strategy

The purpose of this 2-week training programme is to search for the multiple interrelated answers to the following basic question: "How do Japanese firms develop an innovative idea into a marketable product?".

Meet Asia in Japan

This programme is designed to serve the needs of EU companies wishing to develop industrial cooperation in Asia, understand the characteristics of the Asian business environment and benefit from the experience of Japan as leader and first investor in the region.

Challenge towards world class manufacturing

This 2-week training programme assists European firms to acquire a better understanding of Kaizen (incremental improvement), TPM (total productive maintenance) and TQM (total quality management) practices.

H RTP, Japan industry insight

This 4 or 11-week training course is targeted at managers who have a major role in defining and implementing their companies' policies vis-à-vis Japan. It provides an integrated in depth view of Japanese business and industry.

Distribution and business practices in Japan

Distribution in Japan is changing a lot nowadays. Not only due to increased import volumes but also as the result of a recent trend in shortening and diversifying the wholesale channels. All these changes provide European industry with new opportunities in terms of penetrating the Japanese market.

Vulcanus

The 'Vulcanus in EU' programme consists of a 4-months European language tuition followed by an 8-months traineeship in a European company for Japanese engineering students. The 'Vulcanus in Japan' programme consists of a 4-months Japanese language tuition followed by an 8-months traineeship in a Japanese company for European engineering students.



For further information, please contact:

EU-Japan Centre —
Fax (32-2) 282 00 45
E-mail: office@eujapan.com

Exchanges of scientists on the basis of fellowship programmes

The Science and Technology Agency fellowship programme

enables European researchers to conduct research in Japanese national laboratories or public research corporations (duration: 6 months to 2 years).

The EU/JSPS joint postdoctoral fellowship programme

provides the opportunity for young European researchers to spend time in laboratories belonging to universities, inter-university research institutes or corporations under the jurisdiction of the Japanese Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (Monbusho) (duration: 4 months' full-time Japanese language course and 12 to 18 months' full-time work).

EU grants for senior visiting scientists

aims at providing established European researchers and engineers with the opportunity to create new links with Japanese national research laboratories, universities and private sector research centres (duration: 3 to 6 months).



For further information, please contact

European Commission, DG XII —
Fax (32-2) 29-69824;
e-mail: robert.burmanjer@dg12.cec.be



The Japanese Mission to the European Union

Square de Meeûs 5-6
1000 Bruxelles
Tel.: (32-2) 500 77 11
Fax: (32-2) 513 32 41
<http://www.jmission-eu.be>



European Commission

Directorate General for External Relations: Commercial policy and relations
with North America, the Far East, Australia and New Zealand

Japan Desk
170 Rue de la Loi
<http://europa.eu.int>



OFFICE FOR OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS
OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

L-2985 Luxembourg
