

EU Special

Fostering shared globalization goals

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TO JAPAN



Once again, I am honored to be able to address the distinguished readers of The Japan Times on the occasion of Europe Day. May 9, 1950, was a historic day for Europe, when then-French

Foreign Minister Robert Schuman set out a vision that has for more than six decades released the continent from the constant fear of war and ushered in a period of prosperity that would have been unimaginable just a few generations ago.

This year, I am particularly happy and proud to be able to report a significant development in the ever-deepening relations between the European Union and

Japan. Just last month, the European Commission signed off on the EU-Japan economic partnership agreement (EPA) and proposed to the EU Council that it be approved. Negotiations between the two sides were concluded in December. We are aiming for its enactment before the end of the current mandate of the European Commission next year.

Japan is the EU's second-largest trading partner in Asia after China, and this EPA is the biggest bilateral trade deal the EU has ever negotiated, opening huge market opportunities for both sides. Together, we will create a free trade zone covering 600 million people and one-third of global gross domestic product. Furthermore, it is also the EU's first trade deal to explicitly commit to the Paris agreement on climate change.

When negotiations began in the spring of 2013, the EU had called the envisioned result a free trade agreement. In fact, the end product has grown in scope and depth to an extent that is more accurately reflected in



European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini meets with Foreign Minister Taro Kono on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly in New York on Sept. 19. EUROPEAN UNION

the designation, long used by our Japanese partners, of "economic partnership agreement." With the agreement, the EU and Japan have committed not to relax domestic labor and environmental laws to attract trade and investment, to conserve and sustainably manage natural resources and address biodiversity, forestry and fisheries issues.

We should also recall that along with the EPA, negotiations with Japan continue on investment protection standards and investment protection dispute resolution. Both sides are firmly committed to move toward an agreement in the investment protection negotiations as soon as possible, in light of the shared commitment to a stable and secure investment environment in Europe and Japan.

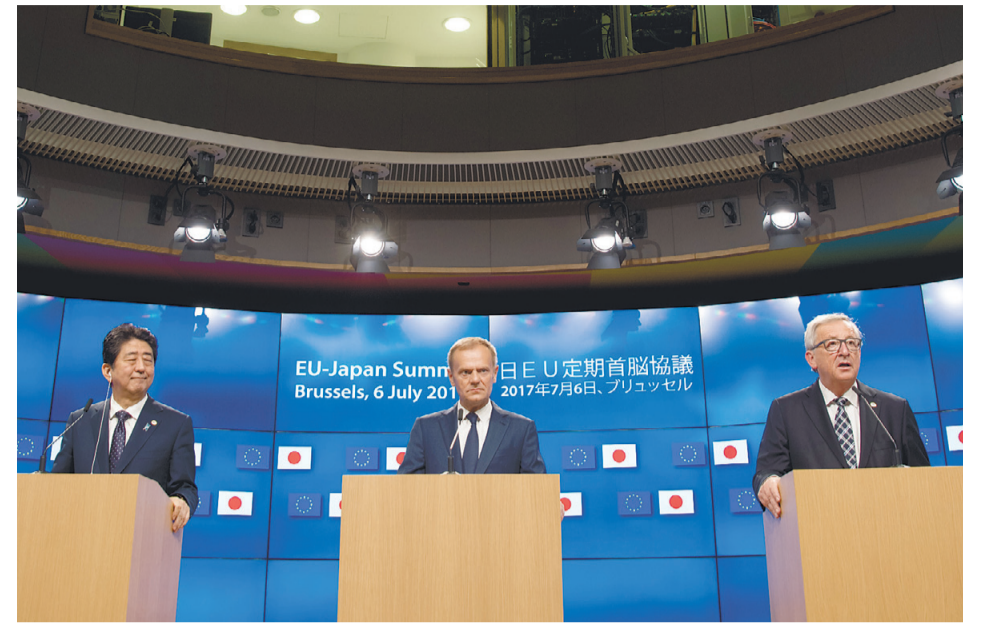
But this is not just a great achievement for the EU and Japan, and it is not just about our economies — it sends a clear and unambiguous message that we stand together against protectionism and in defense of multilateralism. The EU has always been a champion of an open global trading system, and the conclusion of negotiations with Japan sends a strong message to the rest of the world that we stand together with Japan to shape globalization, stand up for open

trade and agree on a rulebook that is fair and works for everyone.

I am also hopeful for the bilateral strategic partnership agreement (SPA), for which negotiations have concluded and legal steps have been taken in preparing for the future signing. This pact will upgrade bilateral political relations by reinforcing political dialogue, affirming shared values and common principles and enabling closer cooperation to tackle common challenges, both bilaterally and in multilateral fora.

While many in Japan may still view the EU as a major economic player, the truth is that over the decades, and in past years especially, our union has evolved into so much more. The EU now plays a key role on the international stage in such areas as diplomacy, the promotion of human rights, development and humanitarian aid and working with multilateral organizations such as the United Nations. The EU and its 28 member states are together the world's largest aid donor, and we continue to be at the forefront of international efforts to fight climate change.

The EU also contributes to global security. Under our Common Security and Defence Policy, the EU operates civilian and military missions worldwide that carry out a wide



Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (left), European Council President Donald Tusk (center) and President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker address the media on the occasion of the European Union-Japan Summit in Brussels on July 6. EUROPEAN UNION

range of tasks, ranging from managing borders to training local police. As just one example, through the EU Naval Force Operation Atalanta, we have been tackling piracy off the coast of Somalia, an ongoing, multilateral effort in which Japan has also been active.

As strategic partners that share values such as democracy, open markets, respect for human rights and the rule of law, I am confident that the EPA and SPA — together with the various bilateral dialogues that are already in place — will prove to be springboards that will take EU-Japan relations to a new level.

Our delegation to Japan also strives to present the human face of Europe through a wide range of events that showcase the EU's diversity and the breadth of its interaction with the world, not least with youth. At the end of the day, it is often the experiences gained at a grass-roots level that enable both sides to appreciate the relationship we have.

This year, we have particular causes to push these softer aspects of Europe to the fore, as 2018 has been designated the European Year of Cultural Heritage, and we are celebrating the intricate tapestry that has been woven from our literature, art, crafts, oral traditions, food, films, architecture, landscapes and more — all which we feel is

imperative to pass on to future generations, so that they build on what we have and take the concept of Europe even further forward.

Later this month, with the cooperation of relevant interlocutors in our member states, we will be organizing two of our flagship public diplomacy events: the European Higher Education Fair and the EU Film Days. The former, which encourages Japanese students to consider the wide range of higher education opportunities that Europe has to offer, will this year be held in Tokyo and Osaka. Meanwhile, the latter will be organized in Tokyo, Kyoto and Hiroshima with yet another interesting mix of films that will hopefully attract cinema fans far and wide. In November, we hope to build on the success of our inaugural European Literature Festival of last year, where we were able to bring literary works from several EU member states to the Japanese public.

All that has happened to galvanize the relationship between the EU and Japan since I addressed The Japan Times on Europe Day last year has proved how we can successfully stand together to maintain our values and remain committed partners, working tirelessly for the betterment of the entire world.



Then-Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida (left) and European Commissioner for Trade Cecilia Malmstrom pose with daruma dolls after reaching a consensus on a bilateral economic partnership agreement in Brussels on July 5. EUROPEAN UNION



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Public diplomacy through events

The Delegation of the European Union to Japan has been increasingly active on the public diplomacy front, organizing various events to reach out to a wider audience.

In May alone, there will be the European Higher Education Fair (EHEF), now in its seventh year, and the 16th annual EU Film Days. The former will be held on May 19 in Tokyo and May 20 in Osaka. EU Film Days will take place in Tokyo from May 26 through June 21, in Kyoto from June 2 to 24 and Hiroshima from July 1 to 13.

The EHEF, an effort by the EU Delegation and several co-organizers, including Campus France and the German Academic Exchange Service, Meiji University and Osaka International House, strives to project Europe as an interesting and affordable destination for higher education. The EU is a top destination for the millions of students studying outside their home country, and we feel there is further potential in getting this message across to Japanese students eager to study abroad.

This year's fair will be the largest ever, with 82 exhibitors coming from 21 of the 28 EU member states. It will be held in the city of Osaka for the first time, and at both venues we will also be organizing individual country presentations — also a first.

EU Film Days is an excellent example of how we showcase Europe's cultural diversity. This year, 25 of the EU's 28 members will be represented at this cinematic smorgasbord, which is co-organized by the EU Delegation, EU member states' embassies and cultural institutes in Japan, the National Film Archive of Japan, the Museum of Kyoto and the Hiroshima City Cinematographic and Audio-Visual Gallery. The lineup includes 13 films that will be shown in Japan for the first time, and while the festival mainly targets a Japanese audience, some works will have English dialogue or subtitles.

While the above are outreach events that have already become regulars on our calendar, last year the EU Delegation trialed a new project that we hope will

映画で旅するヨーロッパ

【東京】 5月26日(土) - 6月21日(日) 国立映画アーカイブ National Film Archive of Japan
【京都】 6月2日(土) - 6月24日(日) 京都府京都文化博物館 The Museum of Kyoto
【広島】 7月1日(日) - 7月13日(日) 広島市映像文化ライブラリー Hiroshima City Cinematographic and Audio-Visual Library

www.eufilmdays.jp

This year's EU Film Days, which will take place in Tokyo, Kyoto and Hiroshima, offers an interesting line-up to cinema lovers. EUROPEAN UNION

become another public diplomacy success story: the European Literature Festival.

In November, the EU, EU member state embassies in Japan and EUNIC-Japan (the

Japan chapter of the EU National Institutes of Culture network) jointly organized a four-day event in Tokyo combining readings and lectures to see whether there would be an appetite for a large-scale festival for European literature here. The reaction was very positive, and discussions are underway for a second edition in the autumn.

The EU Delegation will continue to plan projects that will help the general public better understand what Europe has to offer, why we feel it significant and how the EU and Japan might forge closer ties at all levels.

This text was provided by the Delegation of the European Union to Japan.



Ambassadors and EU member state embassy representatives mark the opening of last year's European Higher Education Fair at Meiji University in Tokyo. Y. SHIMAZU

'Milestone year' yields firm progress

DANNY RISBERG
CHAIRMAN, EUROPEAN BUSINESS COUNCIL IN JAPAN (EBC)



On behalf of the European Business Council in Japan (EBC), I would like to express my gratitude to The Japan Times for this opportunity to address its readers on Europe Day,

which marks the 68th anniversary of the signing of the Schuman Declaration on May 9, 1950, a date regarded as the starting point of European integration.

2017 was a milestone year for further integration of EU-Japan relations. After more than four years of intensive discussions, the leaders of Japan and the European Union were able to announce in December that they had reached the conclusion of negotiations on an economic partnership agreement (EPA). The two sides confirmed that the EPA would boost mutual trade by improving market access for goods, services and investment; open up opportunities in public procurement markets; remove non-tariff barriers; and protect geographical indications and intellectual property rights.

2018 should prove to be even more exciting with the prospect of the leaders of Japan and the EU signing the agreement in July, paving the way for its entry into force in early 2019.

The importance of the EPA to both EU and Japanese businesses is enormous. From an EU perspective, it promises to boost exports in sectors such as food products, clothing and shoes, pharmaceuticals and medical devices. The result should be more growth and more jobs, not only in

companies that already have a presence in Japan, but also in those entering this market for the first time. The benefits will be felt across the EU and Japanese economies and significantly, among consumers, who will enjoy a wider choice of competitively priced, high-quality products.

The EBC greatly appreciates the hard work on both sides to reach this landmark. We are proud of the contribution that we as an organization have been able to make to the process in offering insights and technical information from our own experience, and we are keen to continue our support, as preparations are made for its implementation. In fact, for the EBC, this is the most important phase because, in the end, an agreement is only as good as its results. For EU businesses, this means that tariff reduction and removal must be completed on time; current non-tariff barriers must be lifted and not replaced by others; public procurement markets must become open and accessible; and geographical indications and intellectual property must be respected. What is more, the spirit of the EPA must be translated into action within the machinery of government, with the authorities promoting closer cooperation between the EU and Japanese companies and ensuring both sides are represented in policy discussions.

Much has still to be done before the EPA comes into effect and its benefits can be fully enjoyed by the economy, industry and consumers. The EBC will closely follow developments and actively monitor how the agreement is ultimately implemented on the ground. No doubt this will be a major focus of the EBC's activities in the years ahead.

Yet the work of the EBC does not end with the EPA. A significant number of issues affecting the EU business in Japan lie outside the scope of the agreement. Some

of these issues are specific to the EU, but very many affect all companies, domestic and foreign, and serve only to delay new products, inflate costs and restrict consumer choice. EBC expert committees will therefore continue to highlight them and make practical recommendations for how they should be resolved.

The EBC is positive about the Japanese economy. As the successful conclusion of the EPA shows, there has been a very definite shift in attitude toward the role of foreign trade, both exports and imports, as well as toward investment in Japan. Japanese customers are seeking out innovative European products and services. Additionally, Japan's regions are actively promoting European investment and Japanese companies are adopting new attitudes toward doing business. The EBC very much welcomes these developments and will continue to promote further European involvement in the Japanese economy. For their part, European firms continue working to build trust in the Japanese market and are pursuing business opportunities that have appeared as a result of the many changes that have taken place in Japan over the past few years, to which the EBC lends its wholehearted support.

We in the EBC are committed to helping the EU and Japan reach new levels of mutual trade and economic growth. We entered 2018 with new optimism that the authorities on both sides are working for these same goals. Finalizing the EPA is the first milestone achieved: We look forward to many more.

The EU Special contents were compiled in collaboration with the Delegation of the European Union to Japan and the European Business Council in Japan. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of the newspaper.