

## *Mission Statement*

### *The EU-Japan Business Dialogue Round Table*

The EU and Japan, having strong bilateral economic relations, sharing important roles in a world undergoing massive changes, and taking globalisation into account, are now confronted with increasingly similar problems and issues calling for coordination and adjustments.

Therefore, the **EU-Japan Business Dialogue Round Table**, which consists of senior executives in business communities of the EU and Japan, agreed to commit themselves to take initiatives in improving and enhancing the economic relations between the EU and Japan, and to share this Joint Mission Statement.

### *Missions*

- The **EU-Japan Business Dialogue Round Table** is a forum, encompassing all industry, in which leaders of the EU and Japanese business communities exchange opinions with each other with the aim of making the most of all potential opportunities in all fields of bilateral cooperation and contributing to the sustainable development of the world economy.
- The **EU-Japan Business Dialogue Round Table** Members believe that a close relationship with the EU and Japanese Authorities is crucial for economic prosperity in the ever-changing global environment. Therefore, the **EU-Japan Business Dialogue Round Table** takes on a role to submit policy recommendations to the EU and Japanese Authorities, compiled by the Round Table Members through their issues-oriented discussions, and also monitors and follows up such recommendations for speedy implementation.

### *History*

The origins of the **EU-Japan Business Dialogue Round Table** date back to 1995 when the former “EU-Japan Industrialists Round Table” held its first meeting. When that group merged in 1999 with the “EU-Japan Business Forum”, which shared mutual common objectives, it was re-named as the **EU-Japan Business Dialogue Round Table**.

At the beginning, the forum allowed European and Japanese business leaders to understand each other and to inform each side's partners and public Authorities of the difficulties encountered. The initial phase indeed coincided with a period during which contentious issues dominated relations between Japan and the EU.

Over the years a completely different atmosphere of cooperation has come to prevail. The frank and open nature of the discussions which now characterises the Round Table's work is so special and even unique, that its importance in establishing truly active cooperation with the Authorities cannot be underestimated.

In 2001, by adopting the 10-year "Action Plan for EU-Japan Cooperation" (which refers on 3 occasions to the **EU-Japan Business Dialogue Round Table**), the Japanese and European Authorities agreed on their willingness "*to create an open environment for trade and investment, through working on a forward-looking agenda, taking into account the recommendations made by the EU-Japan Business Dialogue Round Table*".

### ***Members and Functions***

The **EU-Japan Business Dialogue Round Table** consists of about 50 leaders from EU and Japanese companies, in sectors including electric & electronic, automobile, steel, international trade, services, food, pharmaceutical, bio-chemistry and aerospace.

The Annual Conference takes place alternately in Japan and Europe. The annual statement and recommendations result from general discussions on a wide range of topics related to business and economy, not only of the EU and Japan but also the whole world.

Every year, several working parties meet to discuss detailed and concrete business-related issues and to draw up recommendations to be reviewed at the annual meeting. The recommendations point out suggested deregulations, alterations, modifications, etc. to policies by the EU and/or Japanese Authorities. Activities of those working parties are coordinated under "Sherpa" meetings. Working areas range from Trade and Investment, Accounting and Taxation, Information and Communication Technologies to WTO, Life Sciences and Biotechnology, Sustainable Development and Corporate Social Responsibility, subject to change depending on the needs of industry.

### ***Relationship with the Authorities***

The work of the EU-Japan Business Dialogue Round Table is converted into concrete proposals and presented as "Recommendations" to the highest Authorities of Japan (Prime Minister) and the EU (Presidents of the European Council and Commission). Whenever possible, the **EU-Japan Business Dialogue Round Table** co-chairmen (EU side and Japanese side) hand the "Recommendations" in person to the leaders just before the annual EU-Japan Summit meeting.

Since 2000, the relations between the Round Table and the respective Authorities have taken on a much more concrete character: the Authorities have agreed to respond, point by point in a written “Progress Report”, by informing about the ways in which these Recommendations have been implemented. This process represents an important stimulus for the work of the Round Table Members.

One should appreciate that significant parts of the recommendations have been followed up by an appropriate action, but still this positive evolution should be accelerated.

The close relationship with the EU and Japanese Authorities does not end with the “Recommendations” and the “Progress Report”. During the annual conference, a joint session with the EU and Japanese Authorities is held, to which the EU commissioners and Japanese ministers are invited, and in which the Round Table Members communicate directly with such high-level representatives of the Authorities so that business/economy-related issues from time to time are shared and well addressed.

### ***The Way Forward***

The introduction of the euro and EU Enlargement, on the one side, and the new Japanese economic programmes, notably the declared wish to encourage foreign investment, on the other side, create new business opportunities.

Problems linked to the development of the information society, sustainable development, corporate social responsibility, business ethics, environment, energy and international trade are all sectors of common interest.

They deserve efforts by the EU-Japan Business Dialogue Round Table to be reflected in coordinated actions by both Authorities.

This Mission Statement was adopted on 7 July 2005 at the BDRT annual meeting.

Representing EU-side Members,

Representing Japanese-side Members,

***Etienne Davignon***  
EU-side Co-Chairman

***Yotaro Kobayashi***  
Japan-side Co-Chairman