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EU-Japan trade relations

Greens/EFA motion for a resolution

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Communication from the Commission entitled 'Trade, Growth and World Affairs - Trade Policy as a core component of the EU's 2020 strategy' [COM\(2010\)0612/3](#),
- having regard to its resolution of 17 February 2011 on Europe 2020([1](#)),
- having regard to Paragraph 30 of the Conclusions of the spring meeting of the European Council of 25 March, regarding the potential launch of negotiations with Japan for a free trade agreement,
- having regard to its resolution of 25 November 2010 on trade policy in the context of climate change imperatives([2](#)),
- having regard its resolution of 25 November 2010 on human rights and social and environmental standards in international trade agreements([3](#)),
- having regard its resolution of 25 November 2010 on corporate social responsibility in international trade agreements([4](#)),
- having regard to the Mutual Recognition Agreement between the EU and Japan([5](#)),
- having regard to Agreement on Cooperation on Anti-competitive Activities between the EU and Japan([6](#)),
- having regard the Agreement on Co-operation and Mutual Administrative Assistance in Customs Matters between the European Community and Japan([7](#)),
- having regard to the 10-year Action Plan adopted at 10th EU-Japan Summit, held in Brussels in 8 December 2001,
- having regard to the joint statements of the last two EU-Japan Summits - Tokyo, 28 April 2010, Prague, 4 May 2009,

- having regard to the report 'Copenhagen Economics: assessment of barriers to trade and investment between the EU and Japan', of 30 November 2009,
- having regard to the results of the Commission's public consultation on EU-Japan Trade relations,
- having regard to Rules 115(5) and 110(2) of its Rules of Procedure,

A. whereas the multilateral trading system, established through the World Trade Organisation (WTO), is the most suitable framework for regulating and promoting fair and equitable trade by developing appropriate rules and ensuring compliance with those rules,

B. whereas, independently of the outcome of the Doha Development Agenda (DDA), a reform of the WTO to make the rule-based multilateral trading system more adapt to changing global requirements of climate change and economic stability should be a priority for the European Union,

C. whereas both the Union and Japan have generally low tariffs on goods; and already more than two thirds of the Union's export value to Japan is duty-free, and more than one third of Japan's export to the EU is duty-free,

D. whereas questions of investment and trade in services need to be raised in trade discussions with Japan, ensuring that any further market opening does not compromise either European nor Japanese rules on the protection of public services and cultural diversity,

E. whereas studies indicate that the impact on economic operators of non-tariff measures in trade with Japan is much higher than the impact of tariffs, partly explaining the relatively low volume of trade between the Union and Japan,

F. whereas the regulatory environment, standards and conformity assessment in Japan are seen as the biggest obstacles for accessing the Japanese market, increasing the complexity and uncertainty of economic operators,

G. whereas, in the wake of the catastrophes that have hit Japan last March, interest within the EU and Japan is mounting to embark on bilateral negotiations for an ambitious Free Trade Agreement,

1. Expresses its utmost sympathy for the courage and determination with which the Japanese people are confronting the catastrophes of 11 March and their terrible aftermath and calls on the Commission and Member States to help Japan with all means to rebuild its social and economic life;
2. Believes that the continuation and deepening of current trade relations between the EU and Japan can play an important role in this regard and calls on the Commission to concentrate all efforts on assuring this;
3. Regards the multilateral trading system, embodied in the WTO, as by far the most effective framework for achieving fair and equitable trade rules on a global basis;
4. Recognises that the ailing Doha Development Agenda (DDA) has contributed to a loss of confidence in the multilateral trading system; regards the consensual ending of the DDA, concentrating on achievable goals, all the more important in order to open the way for a forward looking reform of the WTO institutional structure and decision-making process; calls on the Commission to actively engage with Japan to contribute to a global reflection on this subject and to come up with constructive proposals;
5. Is aware that the EU-Korea FTA has increased pressure on Japan to demand the start of negotiations for an own FTA with the Union; takes note of the positive response by the European Council in its spring

meeting; stresses, however, that bilateral or regional free trade initiatives between major economic powers, such as the EU and Japan, must not risk undermining the functioning of the rule-based multilateral trade system even further;

6. Is aware of the increased potential of procurement, investment and services in trade between the EU and Japan and that increased trade in these sectors is hampered by a range of non-tariff barriers; believes that some of these identified barriers could be easily removed; however, reiterates the need to protect legitimate national regulations which need a mutual understanding in approaches to regulatory frameworks that should be addressed in bilateral trade talks;

7. Believes that the Commission's level of ambition in all trade discussions with Japan with regard to increasing market access should be balanced by an equally ambitious approach to sustainable development;

8. Asks the Commission to present a comprehensive sustainability impact assessment containing a detailed evaluation of any possible enhancement of EU-Japan bilateral trade relations, before making any commitments;

9. Calls on the Member States and the Commission, in any future trade discussions with Japan and other third countries, to integrate as a core value initiatives aiming to contribute to tackling climate change, promoting human rights and social and environmental standards, and promoting corporate social responsibility;

10. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States and the government and parliament of Japan.

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