

Brussels, 16 01 12
MH/amw/Ares(12)S-0032863 - 49570

Dear Mr Hayashi,

Subject: EU-Japan Economic Integration Agreement

Thank you for your letter of 20 October 2011 regarding EU-Japan trade relations which was sent to President Barroso and me.

The EU attaches great importance to the conclusion of the multilateral negotiations in the WTO and to its bilateral trade and economic relationship with Japan.

As you are aware, there is a feeling on both sides that we are not making the most of our bilateral relationship. In response to this, the May 2011 EU-Japan Summit decided that the two sides would start discussions with a view to defining the scope and level of ambition for the negotiation of a deep and comprehensive Free Trade Agreement as well as a parallel binding Framework Agreement covering political, global and other sectoral cooperation, which would upgrade all aspects of the relationship in a balanced, comprehensive and substantial manner.

We are currently involved in this "scoping exercise" to try to agree on the parameters for a possible negotiation. I very much hope that we can make progress in this exercise and be able to agree on a high level of ambition that would be needed for the successful launch of the negotiations.

I trust we will continue to benefit from the continuous support of the JBCE in that process.

Yours sincerely,



Karel De Gucht

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