

KAREL DE GUCHT
MEMBER OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Brussels, 30. 04. 2013
MH/it Ares(2013)S 814709

Dear Mr. Beyrer,

Thank you for your letter dated 20 March 2013 and your support for the negotiations of a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with Japan.

These negotiations were launched on 25 March 2013. This is a very positive development and I am convinced that a deep and comprehensive Free Trade Agreement with Japan could generate considerable economic benefits for Europe by fostering growth and jobs.

I fully share your view that this EU-Japan FTA will only be successful if it brings effective market access to European companies in Japan. In these negotiations, the European Commission will aim to the elimination of non-tariff measures, the removal of obstacles in the areas of services, investment, competition and IPR, and the elimination of measures hindering the effective access of European firms to the Japanese public procurement market, especially in the railway and urban transport sectors.

Both during the preparatory exercise and in our latest contacts with our Japanese counterparts we have made very clear that meeting these objectives would be essential for the EU in order to reach a satisfactory outcome of these negotiations. One year after the beginning of the negotiations the Commission will take stock of the implementation of Japan's commitments on the elimination of non-tariff barriers and in the field of public procurement. If the progress in this respect is not satisfactory, I will suspend the negotiations.

In addition, it is our intention to include in the agreement a clause setting out a strict and clear parallelism between the elimination of our tariffs and the non-tariff barriers in Japan.

I believe that an EU-Japan FTA could prove greatly beneficial to all actors in the EU and in Japan. The business community has a key role to play and your support to the negotiation process remains essential at all stages.

Yours sincerely,

A large rectangular grey box redacting the signature of Karel De Gucht.

Karel De Gucht

Mr. Markus J. Beyrer

Director General

Business Europe