

## **JEITA and DIGITALEUROPE ask for a rapid conclusion of the EU-Japan trade negotiations**

*Tokyo, Brussels - 12 December 2016*

JEITA and DIGITALEUROPE welcome greater momentum towards stronger trade relations between Japan and the EU and support the work of Japanese government and the European Commission (EC) over all rounds of negotiations of the European Union – Japan Free Trade agreement /Economic Partnership Agreement (FTA/EPA).

Building upon the success of the expansion of the Information Technology Agreement (ITA) last year in Nairobi, and on the ongoing discussions at WTO level on the Trade in Services Agreement (TiSA), the Environmental Goods Agreement (EGA), the e-commerce work programme, and a new work programme to address Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs) in the IT sector, DIGITALEUROPE and JEITA have high expectations that the successful conclusion of the FTA/EPA can be obtained during the upcoming talks.

The digital economy and digital trade become fundamental, horizontal elements of the global economy. Provisions to support the development, growth and trade in ICT goods and services, cloud computing, and e-commerce are critical elements of 21st century trade agreements.

As highlighted in the 2016 G7 ICT Declaration, Japan and the EU should continue to promote the global nature of the Internet and the flow of information across borders, and allow Internet users to access online information, knowledge and services of their choice.

We strongly believe that the EU-Japan FTA/EPA could become the new global standard around the world. If successfully concluded, the FTA/EPA will be the most ambitious bilateral agreement to date. We are convinced that the agreement will contribute to solution of social agenda and improve quality of people's lives both in the EU and Japan. Therefore, it is critical that apart from tariff and NTBs elimination it also recognises the free flow of data between both countries – critical to ensure the functioning of Smart Industries and Internet of Things, and the interoperability of respective ICT policies such as the EU 'Digital Single Market' and Japan 'Society 5.0'. This approach would not prevent both parties from pursuing legitimate public policy objectives such as national security, cybersecurity, consumer protection and privacy policies - as stated in the Article 14 of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS).

As we enter now in the final stage of the negotiations, we are grateful to the Japanese government and to the EC for their efforts in improving the business environment on both sides and we call upon them to exercise strong leadership and conclude an ambitious FTA/EPA by the end of 2016.

JEITA and DIGITALEUROPE are deeply committed to working closely with our respective governments to achieve the best outcome to stimulate growth and innovation. We will also continue to work hands in hands in 2017 together with our international partners to advance the global digital economy at the upcoming G20 ICT Ministerial in Düsseldorf (6-7 April).

**DIGITALEUROPE** 

**JEITA**