

Tokyo, 25 March 2013
Joint Press Release

1. Mr. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan, Mr. Herman Van Rompuy, President of the European Council, and Mr. José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission, spoke by telephone today following the postponement of the 21st Summit between Japan and the European Union (EU).
2. Recalling the deepening of Japan-EU relations since the 1991 Joint Declaration and the profound transformation taking place worldwide in recent years, the leaders shared the view that Japan and the EU, global partners sharing common values, should lift their relations onto a higher, more strategic plane, and make them more enduring. They committed themselves to step up their common endeavours towards that goal.
3. The leaders decided to launch negotiations for an agreement covering political, global and sectoral cooperation and an Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) / Free Trade Agreement (FTA) based on the shared views on the scope and level of ambition arrived at in the scoping exercises. The leaders welcomed the start of the negotiations in April and expressed their commitment to the earliest possible conclusion of these two agreements. The EPA / FTA should be deep and comprehensive, addressing all issues of shared interest in order to stimulate economic growth both in Japan and in the EU and to contribute thereby to the development of the world economy. The agreement covering political, global and sectoral cooperation would provide a legal foundation for promoting a stronger partnership in addressing a wide range of bilateral and global issues as part of a shared contribution to global stability, security and sustainable growth.
4. The leaders affirmed their continued global engagement in enhancing strong, sustainable and balanced growth and securing the financial stability of the world economy. In this context, the leaders exchanged views on the situation in Cyprus as well as on the broader measures to strengthen the architecture of the Economic and Monetary Union. Prime Minister Abe emphasised his understanding of the importance of the EU's continued efforts towards stability of the European economy, and confirmed that Japan would maintain its support for these efforts. He also outlined the policy measures which his government had taken to revitalize the economy of Japan. Recognising the importance of policy actions on both sides as efforts towards the global recovery, the leaders reaffirmed the need to fulfil all G20 commitments, and looked forward to working together in the G20 to this aim.
5. The leaders also exchanged views on bilateral cooperation and regional issues, including the security environment of East Asia, the Middle East and the Sahel.
6. The leaders decided to reschedule the Summit as soon as possible and expressed their expectation that the Summit would give a further political impulse to their cooperation.