



Joint Minutes of the 5th Meeting of the Committee on Trade in Goods under the Agreement between the European Union and Japan for an Economic Partnership

Brussels and Tokyo (by videoconference), 15 February 2024

The fifth meeting of the Committee on Trade in Goods under the Agreement between the European Union (“EU”) and Japan for an Economic Partnership (“EPA”) took place on 15 February 2024, by video conference.

The meeting was held in a positive and constructive atmosphere, allowing a fruitful exchange of views on Chapter 2 (Trade in Goods) of the EPA. On the Japanese side, there were participants from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), Ministry of Finance (MOF), Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) and the Mission of Japan to the EU; on the EU side, the Directorates-General TRADE and AGRI, as well as the EU Delegation to Japan, were represented.

The enclosed meeting agenda was adopted (cf. attachment).

The Committee acknowledged the positive trend in bilateral trade in goods since the entry into force of the EPA and exchanged information and views on the evolution of bilateral trade in goods in 2022 and over 2023. Both sides referred to the increase of chemical products imported by Japan from the EU in 2022, compared to the previous year. The EU noted, in contrast that, according to EU estimations, EU exports to Japan for chemicals (in particular, pharma) had decreased in 2023, as well as for pork and cheese (in volume). Both sides will continue monitoring the situation. Both sides ascertained with satisfaction the increased Preference Utilisation Rate (PUR) for Japanese exports to the EU in 2022 (EU imports). As regards Japanese imports from the EU (EU exports), Japan pointed to an increase in PUR while, according to EU estimations, there was a slight decrease (relatively low PUR for chemicals). Japan and the EU will continue monitoring the situation. Joint efforts were confirmed to take advantage of the EPA for an increase in trade flows.

The Committee confirmed the timeframe for the fifth annual exchange of the trade statistics under Article 2.32 of the EPA (around end of June 2024). The EU stressed that it would appreciate the use of a single file, including a breakdown by

Member State (no need for EU total), as well as information on imports under special tariff regime, if available.

Both sides discussed the mixed results for the utilisation of tariff rate quotas (TRQs) in fiscal year 2022, reporting an increase, when compared to the previous year, for instance, in TRQs n° 17 (starch) and 22 (whey), while a decrease was pointed for several TRQs, among which, a small decrease for the important TRQ n° 25 (cheese). Upon the EU side's request, Japanese side concurred in sharing intermediate TRQ figures for fiscal year 2023, when available. Both sides concurred to continue monitoring the situation.

The Committee welcomed the good cooperation for the completion of phase 3 for the mutual authorisation of oenological practices at the Working Group on Wine held on 28 November 2023. The Working Group on Wine will continue to address any issues or stringent needs related to oenological practices that arise from either side in the future.

The EU encouraged Japan to finalise the transposition of the two remaining UN Regulations (No 73 and 126) set out in Appendix 2-C-2 to Annex 2-C of the EPA ideally by the next Motor Vehicle Working Group in 2024. Both sides shared the view that this matter includes technical issues and should be discussed with experts from both sides.
