



Press statement by President Jean-Claude Juncker at the EU-Japan Leaders' Meeting

Brussels, 3 May 2016

Mister Prime Minister, President,

I am as happy as President Tusk to welcome Prime Minister Abe to Brussels today. We have, the two of us, an excellent relationship, and have met three times over the last year. Now I look forward to the next G7 Summit which Japan will host at the end of this month.

I also extend my condolences to the victims and their families, following the recent earthquakes on Kyushu. We offer you our full support at this difficult time.

During the first months of 2016, the G7 countries were facing tremendous challenges. Today, we need to show unity and leadership as we respond to a series of challenges that demand our coordination.

This is especially true of migration, one of the defining global challenges of our century. The international community must do its fair share, by helping to resettle refugees and by providing assistance. The Trust Funds that the European Union has created – for Africa and for Syria – are open to other donors.

Turning to the global economy, the recovery across leading economies is still too modest. We face a number of risks – including slower growth in emerging economies – and therefore we need to combine our forces to promote growth and investment.

This is why our Free Trade Agreement with Japan is so important. Our negotiations have progressed but now we must finish the job. I am confident we can do this before the end of this year. Our agreement will not only boost growth and jobs in Europe and Japan but also send a positive signal to the rest of the world.

Investment is also vital, and I welcome the Prime Minister's decision to put this on the G7 agenda. Greater investment goes together with structural reforms and responsible public finances. The EU's Investment Plan for Europe has now mobilised more than 82 billion euro in the first ten months. I invite Japanese investors to take part in the European Fund for Strategic Investment.

We must also work together to make our economies more transparent and fair, mainly as far as the fight against tax evasion is concerned.

Finally, let me welcome Japan's recent legislation on security. At a time when we need to share intelligence and work together against terrorist finance, closer cooperation between the European Union and Japan would be a major step forward.

I know that the Prime Minister is fully committed to all parts of our common agenda, and we look forward to working together, both bilaterally and in the G7.

Thank you.

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