



Joint Statement

在日米国商工会議所

ACCJ-Nippon Keidanren Joint Statement calling for a U.S.-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement

英語正文

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In light of the need for initiatives to overcome the recent global financial turmoil and economic downturn, the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan (ACCJ) and the Japan Business Federation (Nippon Keidanren) Committee on U.S. Affairs call for the redoubling of efforts to deepen and strengthen the cooperation between and joint leadership by two of the world's largest economies as a way to improve the business environment, increase the competitiveness of our respective economies and stimulate long-term growth. Our two nations share many values and our economies are at similar stages of economic development, which gives us greater potential to cooperate than ever before.

Towards this end, the Nippon Keidanren and the ACCJ call for the establishment of a bilateral "Japan-U.S. Strategic Economic Forum" between the two governments as a means to discuss long-term, strategic issues vital to our economic relationship. Within such a framework, it is essential to have sustained, high-level support from both governments to set strategic economic priorities and provide political impetus. Regular meetings between Cabinet-level officials can add depth and direction, sustain momentum, and guide work at lower levels.

The two governments should work with a near-term focus on a number of key initiatives aimed at solving business environment problems that impede trade and investment between both countries and restrict their competitiveness relative to the rest of the world.

These initiatives may include, but would not be limited to, harmonization of intellectual property rights and patent systems, further liberalization of government procurement, facilitating distribution and customs procedures, harmonization and/or mutual recognition of the U.S. Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT) and the Japanese customs' Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) program, simplification of visa and consular affairs, enhancement of Japan-U.S. cooperation on environmental technology, commencement of a government dialogue on the joint promotion of the internet economy, and harmonization of local/state and national/federal regulations in both countries.

Both organizations believe that cooperative efforts will be essential in this pursuit and, if successful, could lead the two countries to more actively pursue a comprehensive, high-level

Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), as an effective and enduring way to deepen bilateral economic relations and strengthen the overall competitiveness of the U.S. and Japanese economies. Working toward this ambitious goal would build further momentum in the U.S.-Japan economic relationship and lay the foundation for an active, forward-looking bilateral economic agenda.

We envision an EPA as an "FTA-Plus" agreement that would encompass "substantially all the trade" in goods as well as "substantial sectoral coverage" in services, as required under WTO rules, and address tariff and non-tariff measures in areas including, but not limited to, regulations and regulatory transparency, distribution, harmonization of standards, commercial laws, investment rules, capital and currency markets, agriculture, trade remedies such as antidumping, competition policy, human resources and movement of natural persons, intellectual property, and secure trade. We believe that negotiation of a U.S.-Japan EPA could also serve as a model for a broader regional agreement among like-minded countries and provide impetus for further progress in multilateral negotiations.

The upcoming Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) conferences in 2010 and 2011 will provide excellent opportunities for Japan and the U.S. to fully utilize their respective leadership roles to promote sustainable growth in the region. We endorse the U.S. and the Japanese governments' support for APEC's efforts to accelerate trans-Pacific economic integration. Indeed, such an agreement could boost both countries' competitiveness in Asia and globally by enabling the U.S. and Japan to take the lead in establishing the regulatory framework that will serve as a key element of the emerging trade and economic architecture in a dynamic Asia-Pacific region. We also remain supportive of multilateral negotiations at the WTO, as we believe the aforementioned initiatives could help bring about an early conclusion of the Doha Round.

We acknowledge the challenges inherent in promoting trade in the midst of a global economic slowdown and rising unemployment levels, which have led to increased nationalistic and protectionist sentiment around the world. Increased trade, while bringing tremendous benefits to companies and consumers alike,

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can result in dislocation in certain areas due to greater competition. We recognize the need to establish robust systems in both countries to help workers, companies and communities better adjust to rapid changes in the marketplace and succeed in the increasingly global economy. Such efforts are required to build a strong consensus among key stakeholders and broad public support for promoting free trade on both a bilateral and more global basis.