



**EU Domestic Advisory Group  
under the EU-Japan Economic  
Partnership Agreement**

**Statement by the EU Domestic Advisory Group  
at the Joint Dialogue with Civil Society on 8 April 2024 in Tokyo**

1. The EU Domestic Advisory Group, the so-called EU DAG, established under the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), is very pleased to join this 5<sup>th</sup> Joint Dialogue with civil society in Tokyo today. The EU DAG is here represented by a delegation of nine members.
  2. This year marks the successful 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement, and the cooperation between the EU and Japan is now more important than ever. In today's challenging global context, we are convinced that cooperation between like-minded partners is essential at all levels, including that of civil society. Therefore, we are happy to be here today, as representatives of civil society, and we thank the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan for hosting this meeting.
  3. We are pleased to note that the EPA is beneficial to both sides, and we also underline the positive step forward regarding the new agreement on cross-border data flows.
  4. Today, we look forward to focusing on the important elements that form part of the trade and sustainable development (TSD) chapter with discussions topics such as green washing, circular economy, labour standards, Corporate Social Responsibility and Responsible Business Conduct, as well as new EU legislation on forced labour. These are all topics that concern important issues affecting the daily lives of citizens in both the EU and Japan.
  5. The EU DAG wants to highlight the role of Domestic Advisory Groups in the fulfilment of the trade and sustainability commitments made by the Parties of the agreement, as interaction between all stakeholders, including civil society, is key for good monitoring.
  6. We appreciate that with today's Joint Dialogue, civil society is given space to meet *before* the Committee on Trade and Sustainable Development (CTSD). This was indeed one of the proposals from last year's Joint Dialogue, and we hope that today's discussions will give input to the CTSD meeting in June. We would also like to have the possibility of a debriefing following that meeting.
  7. In addition to that, we would like to have a meeting between the EU and the Japanese DAGs before both the meeting of the CTSD and the Joint Dialogue. This however, would require a stronger coordination between the DAGs on both sides, but we believe it would be fruitful to promoting such cooperation between organised civil society. This is also common praxis under other EU free trade agreements.
  8. Tomorrow, 9 April, we will organise a workshop on Human rights and Environmental Due Diligence, which is a topic of importance to the implementation of the TSD chapter. Our objective is to foster better understanding and a deepened dialogue between EU and Japan civil society representatives, this time in the context of the upcoming EU Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive.
  9. But first of all, we look forward to today's presentations and discussions, and again thank you for your invitation and hospitality.
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