EU/Japan Strategic Partnership Agreement

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PURPOSE: to conclude the Strategic Partnership Agreement between the European Union and its Member States and Japan.

PROPOSED ACT: Council Decision.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: Council may adopt the act only if Parliament has given its consent to the act.

BACKGROUND: the EU and Japan have a history of extensive political, economic and sectoral cooperation, which has evolved with time. Building on shared fundamental values, the EU established a Strategic Partnership with Japan in 2001.

On 29 November 2012, the Council adopted a Decision authorising the European Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to negotiate a framework agreement between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and Japan, of the other part. These negotiations began in April 2013 and were concluded in April 2018.

Following the adoption of the Council Decision on the signing and provisional application of the Strategic Partnership Agreement, the Agreement was signed.

The High Representative and the Commission considered that the objectives set by the Council in its directives on the negotiation of the Agreement have been met and that the Agreement can be submitted for conclusion.

The present joint proposal concerns the legal instrument concluding the Agreement.

CONTENT: this draft Council Decision seeks to approve, on behalf of the Union, the Strategic Partnership Agreement between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and Japan, of the other part.

This Agreement is the first-ever bilateral framework agreement between the EU and Japan. It will provide a **legal foundation** for improving bilateral cooperation and cooperation in international and regional organisations and fora.

The Strategic Partnership Agreement and the Economic Partnership Agreement are part of one negotiating context and have a clear legal link. Together, they are expected to provide tangible benefits and opportunities to the people of the EU and Japan.

The Strategic Partnership Agreement aims to strengthen political, economic and sectoral cooperation across a wide spectrum of policy fields, such as climate change, research and innovation, maritime affairs, education, culture, migration, counter-terrorism and the fight against organised crime and cybercrime.

A Joint Committee shall be established with the objective of coordinating the overall partnership which is built upon this Agreement.