EU/Japan Strategic Partnership Agreement

2018/0122(NLE) - 18/09/2018 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to conclude, on behalf of the European Union, the Strategic Partnership Agreement between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and Japan, of the other part.

PROPOSED ACT: Council Decision.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: the Council can adopt the act only if the European Parliament has approved it.

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. The negotiations began in April 2013 and were concluded in April 2018.

The Strategic Partnership Agreement signed between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and Japan, on the other hand subject to its conclusion at a later date, must now be approved.

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

The Agreement aims to:

- **strengthen the overall partnership** by promoting political and sectoral cooperation and joint actions on issues of common interest, including on regional and global challenges;
- provide a legal foundation for improving bilateral cooperation and cooperation in international and regional organisations and fora. It will help **promote shared values and principles,** in particular democracy, the rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms;
- serve as a platform for **closer cooperation and dialogue across a broad range of bilateral, regional and multilateral issues**. It strengthens 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.

In addition, the Agreement:

- restates the Parties' commitment to **safeguard international peace and security** by preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and by taking measures to deal with the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons;
- establishes a **Joint Committee** with the objective of coordinating the overall partnership which is built upon the Agreement. The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy shall co-chair the Joint Committee;
- provides for the possibility of **suspending** its application if there is a violation of essential elements of the Agreement, i.e. the human rights clause and the non-proliferation clause.