EU/Japan Strategic Partnership Agreement

2018/0122M(NLE) - 12/12/2018 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 474 votes to 156, with 40 abstentions, a non-legislative resolution on the draft Council decision on the conclusion, on behalf of the European Union, of the Strategic Partnership Agreement between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and Japan, of the other part.

Recalling that the EU and Japan have been **strategic partners since 2003**, Members welcomed the conclusion of the draft Strategic Partnership Agreement, which provides a binding legal framework, strengthens EU-Japan bilateral relations and cooperation in more than 40 areas, as well as to address global issues requiring global cooperation such as climate change, migration, cyber threats, public health, transnational crime, peacebuilding operations, crisis and disaster management and the fight against terrorism.

Parliament welcomed the reference to a **parliamentary dimension** in the agreement, which aims to strengthen the partnership through dialogue and cooperation on political issues, foreign and security policy and other types of sectoral cooperation.

Human rights and fundamental freedoms

Members reaffirmed the shared commitment to respect for human rights, democracy, fundamental freedoms, good governance and the rule of law, and common values enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. They called on the Union to enter into a dialogue with the Japanese government with a view to a moratorium on capital punishment and its possible abolition. They also highlighted the need for increased cooperation on women's rights.

International and regional relations

While welcoming the EU’s new strategy to improve connectivity with Asia, Parliament called for, *inter alia*:

- the expansion of EU-Japan bilateral cooperation and multilateral cooperation with South Korea, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the United States and China with a view to achieving and maintaining peace and stability in the region, peaceful coexistence on the Korean peninsula and the full, irreversible and verifiable denuclearisation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea;

- the development of synergies between Japan’s Free and Open Indo-Pacific strategy and EU initiatives, including the EU Investment Plan and the extended EU Trans-European Transport Networks, in order to promote global cooperation in connectivity;

- the strengthening of educational and cultural dialogue, university mobility programmes under Erasmus+, and public diplomacy with a view to promoting mutual understanding and cultural diversity;

- intensifying cooperation in the field of sustainable energy, for example by developing low-emission forms of transport;

- the suspension of whaling for scientific purposes and the lifting of Japan's reservations to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES);

- further exchange of good practices regarding illegal logging;

- the exchange of information and cooperation to end cosmetics testing on animals in Japan.

Sectoral cooperation

Taking noted of the current low levels of people-to-people exchanges and of the linguistic barriers, Parliament suggested further investment to enhance citizen-to-citizen interaction, **educational and cultural dialogue**, academic mobility programmes under Erasmus+, and public diplomacy to promote mutual understanding and cultural diversity.

It also called for:

- Japan’s ratification of the Paris Climate Agreement in 2016, and intensified cooperation in the field of sustainable energy, e.g. in developing low-emission forms of transport;

- the suspension of whaling for scientific purposes and the lifting of Japan's reservations to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES);

- further exchange of good practices regarding illegal logging;

- the exchange of information and cooperation to end cosmetics testing on animals in Japan.

Members called for the swift ratification of the provisional agreement by the parliaments of the EU Member States and for its thorough implementation in all sectors.