



Council of the
European Union

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'I/A' ITEM NOTE

From: Presidency
To: Permanent Representatives Committee/Council
Subject: Decision to make public the directives for the negotiation of a Free Trade Agreement with Japan

1. On 5 July 2017, Ministers of Austria, Belgium, Finland, Germany, Luxembourg and the Netherlands responsible for trade sent a letter to the Minister of Entrepreneurship and Information Technology of Estonia suggesting to make the EU-Japan FTA negotiating directives public.
2. The European Commissioner for Trade and Members of the European Parliament have also demanded the release of the EU-Japan FTA negotiating directives on a number of occasions.

3. The suggested release of the EU-Japan FTA negotiating directives was discussed by the Trade Policy Committee (Full Members). On 14 July 2017, the Committee agreed, following the general principles set out in a statement to the minutes of the Council of 10 March 2015¹ and having carefully considered the negotiating directives, that the decision to make the negotiating directives public would, in this instance, have no impact on the ability of the EU to negotiate effectively and would not undermine the EU's negotiating position in these specific negotiations. Consequently, the Committee endorsed the decision to make public the negotiating directives, as contained in document 15864/12 ADD 1 REV 2 RESTREINT UE / EU RESTRICTED, at the earliest convenience. All Member State delegations expressed their common accord for the subject matters of the EU-Japan FTA relating to their competences.
4. Against this background, the Permanent Representatives' Committee is invited to recommend that:
 - a) the Council decide to make the EU-Japan FTA negotiating directives public;
 - b) the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States decide to make the EU-Japan FTA negotiating directives public.
5. In accordance with Article 218(10) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the European Parliament will be duly informed of the decision taken.

¹ Doc. 7060/1/15 REV 1, p. 5.