

23 February, 2013

**Statement by Yasuchika Hasegawa, Chairman of Keizai Doyukai  
On the Outcome of the US-Japan Summit Meeting**

I appreciate the US-Japan Summit Meeting held today (on 22<sup>nd</sup> in the EST) as it offered an unique occasion for the both heads of states to reconfirm the importance of the US-Japan alliance for the peace and prosperity in the Asia Pacific region, as well as a basis to realign the trust between the US and Japan, which once was seen as undermined during the DPJ (the Democratic Party of Japan) administrations.

Especially, regarding the Trans Pacific Partnership Agreement, it was clearly stated in the joint statement that *“the two Governments confirm that ...it is not required to make a prior commitment to unilaterally eliminate all tariffs upon joining the TPP negotiations”*; I believe this helps Japan to make substantial progress and would highly appreciate the leadership of Prime Minister Abe.

I would like the Prime Minister to swiftly obtain mandate to the government and make a timely announcement of Japan’s participation to the negotiation; the government should aim at joining the negotiation from the 18<sup>th</sup> negotiation talk in September at the latest, taking the 90 days rule of the US into account. I hope the government will speed up the consultation process to gain approval of Japan’s participation from all the member countries as early as possible.

Participating in the EPAs is the inevitable premise for Japan to create a seamless, open market and to grow our economy hand in hand with the world. However, on the contrary, we have to admit that Japan has been way behind in participation in TPP negotiations. What we need from now on is, to strengthen the international competitiveness of certain industries – which used to be under protection by tariffs and other measures and to take a leading role in formulating the world standard in trade and investment rules.

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