

July 17, 2018

**Statement by Yoshimitsu Kobayashi, Chairman of Keizai Doyukai
On Signing of EU-Japan EPA and SPA**

1. The EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) and the Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) were signed today. We welcome this important event and our deep respect goes to the parties involved for their efforts of many years.
2. Escalation of national interest first policy and populism is now threatening multilateral free trade system and democracy. Against this backdrop, the EU and Japan—two likeminded partners that share fundamental values—reached both agreements and presented themselves to the world as unwavering champions of free trade with their will of demonstrating leadership in addressing global challenges. We believe this has sent a strong signal.
3. A role of Japanese companies is to contribute to the sustainable economic growth through making the most of the EU-Japan EPA/SPA and the TPP-11 as model agreements under the 21st century international order. Meanwhile, we hope for an early settlement of the pending EU-Japan investment negotiations.

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