



Ladies and Gentleman,

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the EU-Japan Cooperation Forum on ICT Research, especially after last year EU-Japan Summit of June in Berlin which stressed the importance of EU-Japan cooperation in research and innovation.

Relative to just a decade ago, research and technological innovation has become extensively and deeply embedded in our economies. For two partners like the EU and Japan, research and innovation is the key to the future. Europe and Japan's prosperity depends on knowledge.

We cannot base our prosperity on primary resources and we do not want to base our prosperity on cheap labour. Knowledge – research + innovation + education – is the only factor enabling Japan and Europe to be competitive in a global world.

The scale of global challenges that the EU and Japan are confronted with makes it unlikely that any one of us – in isolation – will be sufficient. The EU and Japan need to work together more effectively and more intensively than in the past, and build a strategy for global prosperity based on knowledge cooperation.

Such a cooperative “knowledge renaissance” is the key to preserving our fundamental values and standard of living for the future. Only that way will we realise our mutual ambition of a peaceful, environmentally sustainable and prosperous world.



Japan and Europe have in common to give particular focus on the internationalisation of their research programmes through the "3rd S&T Basic Plan" and "Innovation 25" in Japan, and the "7th Research Framework Programme" and the "European Research Area" in Europe. The EU and Japan are certainly not "bad" Science & Technology partners but they do not look at each other enough and do not act together enough. There is an underexploited reservoir of cooperation between Europe and Japan.

Time has come to move a gear in our cooperation in Science & Technology. In June last year, EU and Japanese leaders *decided to quickly intensify EU-Japan Science & Technology cooperation* to ensure mutual sustainable prosperity and further deepen their global relationships by establishing specific, regular and fruitful dialogues for collaboration in research. Although the negotiation of the EU-Japan S&T Agreement has encountered recent unexpected difficulties, I do hope that this Agreement could be signed this summer.

Today's Cooperation Forum on ICT research is an excellent illustration of our common willingness to work together and built win-win cooperation in science & technology.

I wish you a fruitful dialogue towards launching future EU-Japan research projects in the field of information and Communication Technologies.

Thank you for your attention.

