

Joint Press Statement on the conclusion of the first review of the Japan-EU mutual adequacy arrangement

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Tokyo, Japan

In their meeting today, Ms. Mieko Tanno, Chairperson of the Personal Information Protection Commission of Japan (PPC), and Mr. Didier Reynders, European Commissioner for Justice, welcomed the successful conclusion of the first review of the Japan-EU mutual adequacy arrangement.

In 2019, Japan and the EU recognised each other's data protection systems as 'equivalent', thereby allowing personal data to flow freely between them. This arrangement created the world's largest area of free and safe data flows. In this way, it also complements and amplifies the benefits of the Japan-EU Economic Partnership Agreement.

The mutual adequacy arrangement was subject to a first review, which has now been concluded with the adoption of reports by the PPC and the European Commission on the functioning of their respective adequacy decisions. The review has demonstrated that the convergence between Japan's and the EU's data protection frameworks has further increased in the past years and that the mutual adequacy arrangement is functioning well, enabling data to flow with trust which delivers significant benefits to citizens and businesses.

Mieko Tanno said: "For Japan, the European Union is an important partner with which we share fundamental values and principles, such as freedom, democracy, the rule of law, and human rights. Based on such shared values, we continue to deepen our bilateral cooperation on the protection of personal information, as demonstrated by the conclusion of the first review of our mutual adequacy arrangement. We also continue our joint efforts at global level, including by promoting the concept of Data Free Flow with Trust and working on its operationalisation in different fora".

Didier Reynders said: "With the successful conclusion of the first review of our mutual adequacy arrangement, Japan and the EU reaffirm that, in the digital era, maintaining high data protection standards and facilitating international trade should and can go

hand in hand. In the past years, our respective data protection systems have come even closer, creating further opportunities for cooperation at bilateral and multilateral level. By working together, we can shape the global standards for data protection and show common leadership in this strategic area”.

Both sides recognise that the cooperation on the mutual adequacy arrangement offers a unique opportunity to continue strengthening the partnership between Japan and the EU in this area, including by promoting a human-centric approach to the digital economy at the global level.

Building on the recent reforms of the Japanese data protection framework that extended its safeguards to new areas such as the academia and the public sector, the two sides agreed to explore the possibility of expanding the scope of the EU adequacy decision for Japan. This could further boost research and regulatory cooperation, to the advantage of both sides.