

(Provisional Translation)

Resolution on Japan's participation in the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) negotiations

The House Standing Committee on Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries resolves as follows:

On 15 March 2013 Prime Minister Shinzo Abe announced that Japan would participate in the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) negotiations and on 12 April 2013 reached an agreement on Japan-U.S. consultations toward participating in the TPP negotiations.

Insofar as a principle aim of the TPP is the elimination of all tariffs, we feel this poses a serious risk to Japan's agriculture, forestry and fisheries and the communities that rely on these industries. It could also reduce Japan's food self-sufficiency rate, collapse the economies of local communities as well as impact the diverse functionalities needed to sustain the current landscape and maintain state land. We are also concerned that the TPP could adversely affect food safety and thus directly impact the daily life of the Japanese people.

This Committee has strongly recommended that the Government of Japan exert due diligence in dealing with bilateral and multilateral economic partnership agreements with other countries and ensure that Japanese agriculture, forestry and fisheries as well as the daily life of the Japanese people are properly protected. To this end, we have passed two resolutions: Resolution on the launching of the Japan-Australia Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) negotiations in December, 2006, and Resolution on consultations with the relevant countries toward participating in the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) negotiations in December, 2011.

Given this background, the Joint Statement issued by Japan and the United States after the bilateral summit talk in February 2013 stated that the two Governments "recognized both countries have bilateral trade sensitivities, such as certain agricultural products for Japan and certain manufactured products for the United States." The Japanese Government, having confirmed that "elimination of all tariffs without any sanctuary is not a precondition" at the summit talk, decided to participate in the TPP negotiations.

Japan does have, however, national interests other than the protection of specific agricultural products, although the specifics of how these interests can be secured have yet to be clarified. For this reason, the concerns of many Japanese people are not completely dispelled, and, in particular, a consensus has not been reached on participation in the TPP negotiations among those involved in agriculture, forestry and fisheries.

Accordingly, the Committee reiterates its strong demands that the Government of Japan

should bear these things in mind when participating in the TPP negotiations and take steps to ensure the following:

1. Sensitive agriculture, forestry and fisheries products—including rice, wheat and barley, beef and pork, dairy products, sugar and starch crops—are either to be excluded from the negotiations or to be subject to renegotiation in order to maintain sustainable domestic production. Even the gradual elimination of tariffs over a period of more than ten years is unacceptable.
2. Food safety and stable food production are not to be jeopardized in terms of standards for food additives and residual pesticide, mandatory labeling of genetically modified foods, regulation of genetically modified seeds, disclosure of country of origin on imported materials, and measures regarding bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) for imported beef.
3. Maximum consideration is to be given to tariffs on plywood and lumber, which are essential to forest management as well as necessary to domestic measures for mitigating global warming and improving Japan's wood self-sufficiency rate.
4. Government discretion with regard to fisheries subsidies and other matters should be maintained. Even if introduced, restrictions should be limited to those subsidies which lead to overfishing. Subsidies for fishing ports and income support, which are necessary to ensure the development of sustainable fisheries and its multifunctionality as well as to promote recovery from the North Eastern Great Earthquake, should be maintained.
5. No stipulation of investor-state dispute settlement with prejudice to national sovereignty should be made unless measures to prevent rampant litigation are provided.
6. During negotiations and with bilateral or other negotiations in mind, the Government should give top priority to the protection of sanctuary, especially for the five sensitive agriculture, forestry and fisheries products, which are restricted by natural and geographical conditions. The government should not hesitate to withdraw from negotiations if it judges that sanctuary could not be protected.
7. The Government is to report promptly to the Diet any information acquired in the course of negotiations and to publicize this information in order to assure adequate and wide-ranging public debate.
8. Even during the negotiations, the Government is to continue its efforts to accelerate structural reform in domestic agriculture, forestry and fisheries; to give full consideration to the potentially massive effects of these negotiations upon agriculture, forestry and fisheries as well as upon other related industries and regional economies; and to combine its resources in addressing these issues.