Letter of intent on an urban policy dialogue between the
Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy of the European Commission
and the City Bureau of the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure,
Transport and Tourism of Japan

The European Union and Japan face unprecedented economic and social challenges such as an ageing and declining population, budgetary constraints, intense international competition, global warming and the related need to address question of energy mix and energy supply.

In addressing the challenges, the Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy of the European Commission and the City Bureau of the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism of Japan hereby decide to establish a dialogue on the territorial implications, especially with regard to urban development and urban policy. The dialogue will promote greater knowledge and mutual understanding through exchanges of information and a sharing of experiences on urban policy. It will establish the communication channels necessary for a strong policy dialogue in this field.

The dialogue will address exchange of information and good practices, *inter alia*, on:

- Regional development and renovation: against a background of an ageing and declining population and intense international competition, both sides will discuss themes such as urban structures that are able to adapt to change in the socio-economic situation over the medium- to long-term period.
- Environmentally sensitive urban development and the challenge of global warming: concepts and practices for the development of low-carbon cities, such as alternative energy sources, transport modal shift and incentives to reduce CO2 emissions.

Both sides consider that activities on the above topics should not be carried out independently but in an integrated way to achieve a coordinated and more effective discussion on sustainable urban policy.

The dialogue will be open and flexible so that it can be adapted to new priorities; the topics and structure of the dialogue will be reviewed every 4 years. Both sides will ensure that suitable organisational arrangements are put in place for the pursuit of the dialogue including the nomination of senior officials as co-chairpersons of the dialogue and will establish contact points both in the Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy and the City Bureau. The working language will be English; it is acknowledged that Japanese side will need sufficient time to prepare communications in English.

Actions organised under the dialogue will be arranged jointly and on the basis of mutual consent. Both sides will organize a meeting every year. The venue of the meeting will alternate between Japan and the European Union, unless otherwise jointly decided. Other partners, including those from academia, businesses and cities from each side can be invited to participate in the dialogue as appropriate. Both sides will bear the cost of the participation of their own delegation in the meetings and the costs of organizing meetings held in their respective venues.

This Letter of Intent does not entail any legally binding effects in respect of either side.

Walter Deffaa
Director-General for Regional and Urban Policy of the European Commission

Kisaburo ISHII
Director-General City Bureau
Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism of Japan