



## EBC Briefing

### “Where is Europe’s place in the “New Era?”

#### Talk with BDI and BusinessEurope

21 April 2023

The EBC had the pleasure of welcoming Wolfgang Niedermark, Member of the Executive Board of the **Bundesverband der Deutschen Industrie** (BDI, the Federation of German Industries) & former CEO of AHK Hong Kong, and **Markus Beyer**, Director General of **BusinessEurope**. They gave us their views on Europe in the world. Both speakers came to Japan for the B7, a meeting that mirrors the ‘nationalities’ of the G7 but with Industry representation.

Mr Niedermark started by saying that there were strong statements by the hosting Japanese side (Keidanren) regarding the Ukraine war, but also on China. The current situation is unfortunately based on conflict and confrontation which is in stark contrast to the situation when previous B7 meetings were held. In this world, a strong Europe is a necessity.

Mr Beyer continued with that Japan talked about a re-globalisation, and agreed with Mr Niedermark that the current situation is different in terms of geo-politics, growth, supply chain and climate change. Europe’s competitiveness is important, and it needs to be more open to trade. At the same time, there is a need to speed up processes and improve the regulatory framework, and to further increase the strength of Europe.

Both speakers emphasised that Europe and Japan have very similar ideas. Hence, it is important that the EU and Japan take the lead to come up with common rules - something that is better than what China and Russia are offering. Diversification, both with old and new partners.

As for what is needed for Europe to enhance its competition, the speakers mentioned four areas:

- Green technology
- Education
- Strong protection of IPR
- Innovation

Marcus Beyer ended the session by reiterating that Europe must believe in itself and get others to join it using a better offer.