

## Trilateral Strategic Dialogue Joint Ministerial Statement, August 1, 2019

1. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, HE Taro Kono, the Secretary of State for the United States of America, HE Michael R. Pompeo, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Women of Australia, Senator the Hon Marise Payne, met in Thailand on August 1, 2019, for the ninth ministerial meeting of the Trilateral Strategic Dialogue (TSD).

2. The Ministers reaffirmed the importance of the trilateral strategic partnership and of deepening coordination among Japan, the United States and Australia. They reiterated their commitment to working proactively together to maintain and promote a free, open, prosperous and inclusive Indo-Pacific region. They reaffirmed their commitment to working with other countries to uphold a rules-based order, including to ensure that: disputes are resolved peacefully in accordance with international law and without the threat or use of force; states are resilient to coercion; freedom of navigation and overflight and other internationally lawful uses of the sea are upheld; and markets remain open. In this context, the Ministers welcomed the adoption of the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific at the ASEAN Summit in June 2019. The Ministers recognized the broad convergence of ASEAN's Outlook with our shared visions for the region. The Ministers endorsed the values ASEAN has articulated – “ASEAN Centrality, openness, transparency, inclusivity, a rules-based framework, good governance, respect for sovereignty and international law.”

3. The Ministers noted the achievements of ASEAN in fostering regional peace and prosperity, including through its role as the convener of the regional security architecture. The Ministers reaffirmed their strong support for ASEAN centrality and unity, and underlined the value of the East Asia Summit (EAS) as the region's premier Leaders-led forum for addressing strategic, political, and security challenges. The Ministers recognised the important roles of other Indo-Pacific fora, including the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) and the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF), in facilitating dialogue on regional issues of importance. The Ministers shared their intention to further strengthen trilateral cooperation to promote the security, stability, resilience, and economic and governance development of countries throughout the Indo-Pacific region.

4. The Ministers shared their intention to enhance their engagement with the Pacific Island countries, including through high-level exchanges and greater economic collaboration. In this context, they welcomed Australia's Pacific Step Up, President Trump's historic summit meeting with the presidents of Marshall Islands, Micronesia, and Palau in May, and Japan's PALM process and Foreign Minister Kono's upcoming visit to Pacific Island countries. They emphasized their determination to further strengthen their collaboration to support the region's economic and social resilience, stability, and prosperity. The Ministers noted that at the last PIF Leaders' meeting, Pacific Leaders adopted the Boe Regional Security Declaration for the Pacific. They shared their intention to work together to support

and address the security challenges identified and prioritized by Pacific Island countries in close consultation with those countries.

5. The Ministers welcomed ongoing trilateral cooperation on capacity building for maritime security and safety throughout the Indo-Pacific region and were committed to enhancing cooperation in this area in close consultation with the countries in the region. In particular, the Ministers commended the recent progress in trilateral cooperation in capacity building for maritime security in a mutually complementary manner in Palau and Fiji. The Ministers also shared their intention to coordinate support for the Japan-led training program for maritime law enforcement at the University of the South Pacific. The Ministers reiterated the commitment of the three nations to continue coordinating their respective assistance programs, in consultation with partners, and to identifying ways they can collaborate more closely in the future.

6. The Ministers discussed their respective efforts to support the stability, prosperity and resilience of Southeast Asia, including through maritime and other security cooperation, and infrastructure development. They also discussed their respective initiatives to promote sustainable development in the Mekong sub-region and ways to complement each other's efforts in the sub-region. The Ministers affirmed their support for locally-led architecture, including the Ayeyawady-Chao Phraya-Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy (ACMECS) and the Mekong River Commission, as Mekong countries' own initiatives.

7. The Ministers emphasized the importance of enhancing connectivity through quality infrastructure investment that is consistent with internationally agreed principles, including social and environmental considerations, openness, transparency, economic efficiency and debt sustainability as affirmed in the G20 Principles for Quality Infrastructure Investment. The Ministers noted progress in enhancing each country's respective infrastructure financing capabilities, including the forthcoming U.S. International Development Finance Corporation, Export Finance Australia's expanded mandate and financing capacity and the new Australian Infrastructure Financing Facility for the Pacific, and Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC)'s establishment of its Trilateral Infrastructure Partnership taskforce. The Ministers welcomed growing cooperation among TSD partners to address the significant infrastructure investment needs in the Indo-Pacific, particularly through the Trilateral Infrastructure Partnership among JBIC, the United States Overseas Private Investment Corporation and the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Export Finance and Insurance Corporation<sup>1</sup>. The Ministers recalled the successful trilateral joint mission to PNG in April which discussed prospective projects for trilateral cooperation and looked forward to future plans for a trilateral joint mission to a country in Southeast Asia. The Ministers directed officials to discuss further opportunities

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<sup>1</sup> On 1 July 2019, the Export Finance and Insurance Corporation changed its name to Export Finance Australia.

to enhance economic cooperation under the TSD.

8. The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to the international community's goal of complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantlement of all weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles of all ranges of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), in accordance with United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions. In this regard, the Ministers expressed support for U.S. diplomatic efforts aimed at achieving the final, fully verified denuclearization of the DPRK and called on the DPRK to take immediate, significant and concrete steps towards denuclearization and resume negotiations with the United States toward that goal. The Ministers noted the DPRK's potential to be a prosperous and successful member of the region. The Ministers called on all members of the international community to fully implement UNSC resolutions and combat sanctions evasion. They affirmed their commitment to international efforts particularly in addressing illicit ship-to-ship transfers, and to strengthening and enhancing cooperation with other partner countries in this context.

9. The Ministers encouraged the DPRK to take further action toward fulfilling all of its commitments in the U.S.-DPRK Joint Statement, including complete denuclearization. The Ministers also called on the DPRK to end human rights violations and abuses and to resolve the Japanese abductions issue immediately.

10. The Ministers reiterated their commitment to international law and its importance in maintaining peace and stability in the maritime domain. The Ministers expressed serious concerns about negative developments in the South China Sea (SCS), including the deployment of advanced weapons systems on disputed features. The Ministers voiced strong opposition to coercive unilateral actions that could alter the status quo and increase tensions such as land reclamation, construction of outposts, militarization of disputed features and other actions that cause permanent physical change to the marine environment in areas pending delimitation. The Ministers expressed concern about credible reports of disruptive activities in relation to long-standing oil and gas projects in the SCS.

11. The Ministers underscored the importance of the July 2016 Philippines-China Arbitral Tribunal's award, and noted that the Tribunal's award is final and legally binding for the two parties. The Ministers emphasized the importance of demilitarization of disputed features, resolving disputes peacefully, without the threat or use of force and in accordance with international law, particularly the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), and full respect for freedom of navigation and overflight and other lawful uses of the seas in the SCS and around the world.

12. The Ministers acknowledged ASEAN and China's ongoing discussions on a Code of Conduct (COC) for the SCS. The Ministers called for the COC: to be consistent with existing international law, including international law of the sea as reflected in UNCLOS; not to prejudice the interests of third

parties or the rights of all states under international law; to reinforce existing inclusive regional architecture; and to strengthen parties' commitments to ceasing actions that would complicate or escalate disputes, including militarization of disputed features.

13. The Ministers shared their intention to remain in close communication about the situation in the East China Sea and expressed strong opposition to any coercive unilateral actions that seek to alter the status quo and increase tensions in the area.

14. The Ministers acknowledged the importance of security of ICT networks and services, which plays a critical role in the safety, security, and prosperity of their countries and are an attractive target for malicious cyber actors, including state-sponsored actors. The Ministers acknowledged the importance of national security as a key consideration in the evaluation of next generation telecommunications infrastructure and services. Recalling the G20 Antalya Summit Leaders' Communique, the Ministers also expressed concern that countries and their proxies are increasingly willing to pursue their objectives by undertaking malicious cyber activities including ICT-enabled theft of intellectual property. The Ministers decided to deepen practical cooperation to better deter, mitigate, attribute, and counter malicious cyber activity, and provide clear and consistent messages of the consequences of such activities.

15. The Ministers discussed ways to deepen cooperation to counter terrorism and violent extremism, including through Trilateral Strategic Dialogue Counterterrorism Consultations, information-sharing, and working together in regional fora such as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), and in international fora such as the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF). The Ministers resolved to coordinate and cooperate to support Southeast Asian countries' efforts to counter terrorism and violent extremism, including implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 2396. Consistent with the G20 Osaka leaders' statement on the issue, the Ministers noted their commitment to preventing and countering exploitation of the internet for terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism in a way that is consistent with national and international law, including human rights and fundamental freedoms such as freedom of expression and access to information.

16. The Ministers directed officials to explore possible new areas of practical and complementary efforts in the Indo-Pacific region, including supporting good governance, transparency, rule of law, and human rights. The Ministers committed to meeting regularly, and to deepening cooperation with each other, and with partners, to promote a peaceful, stable, and prosperous Indo-Pacific.