

## **Report of the Expert Panel for the 50<sup>th</sup> Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation**

February, 2023

Expert Panel for the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation

### **0. Objective**

Dialogue between ASEAN and Japan began in 1973, six years after ASEAN was established in August 1967. Additionally, in 1977, in his policy speech in Manila, FUKUDA Takeo, then Prime Minister of Japan, announced a policy toward Southeast Asia that was later called the "Fukuda Doctrine," in which he called for "equal partnership" and "heart-to-heart dialogue" between ASEAN and Japan as its pillars.

Since then, the cooperative relationship between ASEAN and Japan has deepened and expanded. As shown in the Tokyo Declaration issued in 2003, the 30th anniversary year of ASEAN-Japan, the Joint Declaration for Enhancing ASEAN-Japan Strategic Partnership for Prospering Together (Bali Declaration) in 2011, the Vision Statement on ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation in 2013. And the Joint Statement of the 23rd ASEAN-Japan Summit on Cooperation on ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific in 2020, Japan has always expressed its support for ASEAN centrality and reiterated the importance of partnership with ASEAN. Japan has also supported ASEAN integration and community building, while expanding and deepening concrete cooperation in a wide range of fields, including politics and security, economy, society, culture, science and technology. The ASEAN-Japan Partnership and their cooperation under it have contributed to the stability and prosperity of not only Japan and Southeast Asian countries, but also of the region as a whole.

However, the political, economic, and social conditions in Japan and the ASEAN countries are currently undergoing major changes, and the relationship between the two sides is transforming. At the same time, the regional and international order as a whole is also undergoing a period of great upheaval. Against this backdrop, Japan and the ASEAN countries are facing a variety of challenges that are difficult to address with the conventional approaches that they have pursued individually or in cooperation with the other.

The purpose of this proposal is to present a new direction for the future ASEAN-Japan partnership in 2023, on the occasion of the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation, looking ahead to the next decade (the 2030s) and the next 50 years (the 2070s), with the aim of forming a regional order that enables the realization of a vibrant, inclusive, sustainable, and fair society, enjoying peace, security, prosperity, and freedom, while inheriting the spirit of moving forward with ASEAN that has continued from the "Fukuda Doctrine."

## **I. Challenges facing ASEAN countries and Japan today**

1. Our primary and pressing challenge is to build a comprehensive regional order in maintaining peace and stability. Cooperation between ASEAN and Japan is critical in this urgent task.

- ① First, the contestation between the major powers is intensifying in Asia and the world. The strategic competition between the U.S. and China, which has a huge impact on the region, became apparent throughout the 2010s and has intensified further in the 2020s. In addition, since Russia's aggression against Ukraine in February 2022, there are growing concerns over the possibility of unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force in Asia. Under these circumstances, ASEAN and Japan must advance efforts in mitigating tensions for lasting stability and peace in the region, utilizing ASEAN-led architectures and coordinating the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) and a Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP).
- ② Second, the maintenance and strengthening of a free and open, rules-based maritime order is a concrete challenge with very high priority for ASEAN and Japan which relates to stability and peace in the whole region. Therefore, effective multilateral and bilateral efforts between ASEAN and Japan are required.
- ③ Third, regarding the military coup in Myanmar that occurred in February of 2021, while ASEAN's efforts to address this serious issue based on the "Five-Point Consensus" should be valued, a path to a solution has not yet been found. Improvement of the situation in Myanmar will have a significant impact on the future regional order, and Japan needs to approach this issue from the perspective of forming a regional order based on peaceful, stable, democratic, and fair societies with the guarantee of human rights.
- ④ Fourth, "democratic backsliding" have become a regional challenge not only in Myanmar but also in various parts of the ASEAN region. On the other hand, we should pay attention to the fact that civil society is growing, and generational change is taking place among political, economic, and social elites. In other words, politics and societies of each ASEAN country are becoming increasingly pluralistic. Moreover, it is also critical to improve the quality of both democracy and governance under the political and social dynamics in the ASEAN countries. This is the long-term goal which follows the principle of the ASEAN Charter that came into effect in 2008. in order to realize peace and prosperity through the formation of comprehensive order.

2. Our second major challenge is to balance economic growth with sustainability and equity.

- ① First, economic development of ASEAN have been strong before and after COVID and has become a strong force in changing its society. ASEAN is no longer a mere production hub, but also a strong growing consumer market with a population of 670 million people. ASEAN and Japan have the same challenge to overcome the economic fallout caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and reinvigorate the economy and maintain stable economic development. As intra-regional connectivity and interdependence in Asia is strengthening due to globalization and digitalization,

it is vital that each stakeholder of ASEAN and Japan work together to explore new policies in balancing economic growth, sustainability, and equity of its societies.

- ② Second, the economic development of ASEAN and Japan countries has been supported by a free and open multilateral trading system and globalization under this system. With the rise of protectionism around the world, we need to maintain and strengthen a free and fair economic order as well as maintain a free and open trading system by utilizing multilateral frameworks like the World Trade Organization (WTO), plurilateral frameworks such as the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF), the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) agreement, and the ASEAN-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (AJCEP), and bilateral Economic Partnership Agreements between Japan and individual ASEAN countries. In particular, seven ASEAN countries participate in IPEF, which is a regional rule-making framework for supply chains, decarbonization, and fair economic order, and ASEAN and Japan are expected to actively engage in it as an opportunity to participate proactively in regional rule-making.
- ③ Third, in order to create a free and fair economic order in the ASEAN region, improving social capital which enables free flow of people, goods, capital, service, and data is indispensable. It is our task to strengthen connectivity which contributes to the development of the whole ASEAN region, all the while coordinating with ASEAN-led initiatives such as ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2025, as well as their successors and action plans, and leveraging Japanese technologies and the experience and knowledge of the public and private sectors. In particular, cooperation on the development of advanced infrastructure, such as information infrastructure, can be the centerpiece of this effort.
- ④ Fourth, on the other hand, it should be recognized that there is a need to ensure fairness and resilience in cross-border economic activities including trade. From the perspective of ensuring resilience, while avoiding atrophy of trade and investment, we should advance efforts related to economic security, such as strengthening supply chain resilience, data security and export control systems aimed at preventing leakage of sensitive technologies. From the perspective of equitable development and fairness, multilateral efforts against the negative impacts of globalization are required.
- ⑤ Fifth, improving the working environment for personnel from ASEAN residing in Japan and expanding opportunities for them to play an active role contributes to the revitalization of the economies of ASEAN and Japan countries as well as strengthens the mutually beneficial economic relationships between the two. In this connection, the technical intern training program, which has been criticized in various ways, should be urgently put on a thorough review for improvement. This is an important issue from the perspective of balancing economic growth and fairness.
- ⑥ Sixth, reducing inequalities is one of the most prominent issues for ASEAN. In relation to this, it should be noted that the economic development of ASEAN countries has taken a form of

"compressed development". The compressed social changes (rapid urbanization, declining birthrates and aging populations starting in the middle of development, inequality, and environmental issues) are forcing ASEAN countries to simultaneously address challenges faced by developed countries as well as by developing countries, while their financial foundations are relatively unstable. Therefore, ASEAN's response to these domestic or intra-regional internal challenges is not sufficient in terms of finance, technology, and personnel, which increases the need for regional integration and strengthening of cooperation with countries outside the region. Furthermore, the economic and social impacts caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has been seriously affecting the economy and society of each country. Although the economy is in recovery, the medium- and long-term effects on vulnerable sectors of society remain. It is also a common challenge for ASEAN and Japan to raise the quality of life of vulnerable sectors or the poor in society, with the aim of enabling the whole society to enjoy affluence. As globalization advances, multilateral efforts must be made with social justice in mind in order to prevent disparities from becoming the norm and to avoid the exclusion of socially vulnerable groups in each country, including transnational workers.

- ⑦ Seventh, in relation to the above, it is necessary to create a society in ASEAN countries where the middle class, especially the lower middle class and low-income people, who determine the future of the unity and stability of each society, can have expectations for the future, or "middle class dreams." From now on, more ASEAN countries will enter the final phase of demographic dividend followed by a period of low growth and stagnation. In the long run, it will become difficult to meet the people's expectations for growth that have supported the booming economies and the improvement of governance capacity of ASEAN countries in the past. Under these circumstances, it is inevitable that political distrust among those who have lost hope gradually grows. When society is dominated by nepotism (connections) rather than meritocracy (skills), by fear of failure rather than expectations of growth, or by concerns about fixation of social classes, social bonds will become fragile, and the political rationale for upholding democratic values will decline. In order to prevent such a situation, it is necessary to realize a society in which economic opportunities are open to everyone regardless of origin or class affiliation, where social diversity is recognized, and direction and agreements within society are determined not by unilateral force but by constant and fair dialogue. Japan shares this challenge as a country that has been in a period of low growth and stagnation for a long time. ASEAN countries and Japan should tackle it together by sharing wisdom.
- ⑧ Eighth, both ASEAN and Japan countries share common challenges such as future economic revitalization, technological innovation and its implementation in society, digital transformation (DX), countermeasures against infectious diseases, climate change, decarbonization, and energy issues, and ASEAN and Japan need to cooperate in addressing these issues. In particular, it is becoming increasingly important to address environmental issues, including climate change. They should further strengthen cooperation in this area with consideration given to

decarbonization and energy security. Also, on a global scale, the 21st century has seen a clear rise in the number of natural disasters compared to the previous century, and ASEAN countries are facing an increase in disaster risks and damage as well. Japan faces a similar situation and has accumulated various technologies and knowledge on disaster response and prevention, which should be utilized to further enhance ASEAN-Japan joint efforts.

3. The third task is to build multilayered people-to-people networks by fostering mutual interaction and understanding between ASEAN countries and Japan in the new era.

- ① First, a new generation of political and economic elites and civil society leaders is emerging as a result of economic growth, social maturation and diversification, and growth of civil society in ASEAN countries. It is required to make efforts to build multilayered people-to-people networks that incorporate new generations and segments of society in ASEAN and Japan, given the changes in ASEAN-Japan relations. To this end, we should promote initiatives for mutual interaction based on equal footing, bidirectionality, respect for identity, and harmony and integration in diverse environments. ASEAN-Japan cooperation is also required to raise leaders of the next generation who will lead the ASEAN regional society.
- ② Second, it is necessary to update Japanese' knowledge and understanding of ASEAN countries to be mutually compassionate which will bring about deep mutual understanding. As mentioned before, ASEAN countries have achieved economic development despite many challenges. ASEAN countries and Japan are no longer in the relationship of a one way support and assist. Rather, they are partners with which Japan can conduct "co-creation" on various common issues. Now that ASEAN is more advanced than Japan in some areas, Japan should learn from them, and this should be emphasized in ASEAN-Japan projects both in public and private sectors (and business sectors). Yet, Japanese society's understanding on these new realities of ASEAN countries, or Southeast Asia, is not sufficient, and efforts and systems in educational and career development settings to promote this understanding are inadequate. Thus, it is vital to strengthen personnel training and public relations within Japan to renew people's recognition of ASEAN and promote mutual understanding.

## **II. Three pillars of a new ASEAN-Japan partnership for cooperation**

To address the above challenges, we recommend that efforts should be focused onto building a new ASEAN-Japan partnership. It consists of the following three pillars.

### **1. Shaping a regional order which is free, open, rules-based and fair**

ASEAN and Japan cooperate in establishing a fair regional order based on rules which can improve predictability and reduce uncertainty through the coordination between the "ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP)" and a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)," respecting the principles of ASEAN as presented in the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) and

the ASEAN Charter. ASEAN and Japan maintain and enhance the role of ASEAN architecture with respect for ASEAN centrality and unity. Jointly work to maintain maritime order, jointly work to enhance maritime security in compliance with international rules, in particular the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, by the improvement of maritime law enforcement capabilities and domestic legislation as well as efforts within multilateral frameworks. As ASEAN also emphasizes maritime cooperation, including maritime security, through AOIP, ASEAN and Japan can work hand in hand to promote cooperation, which is expected to bring about proper outcomes.

## **2. Building a society which fulfills economic prosperity, sustainability, and equity**

Our long-term strategy goal is to develop a society which fulfills prosperity, sustainability and equity simultaneously. Linking AOIP and FOIP would enhance synergy among different cooperation in multiple areas. Foster "co-creation" efforts by ASEAN and Japan with the participation of various stakeholders, including citizens, businesses, NGOs, and citizen groups. Aim to revitalize the economies and societies of ASEAN and Japan and realize the "middle class dreams" with the perspective of "leaving no one behind," as well as to create a generous society where everyone can have a decent job and life regardless of their social class and have dialogue between different classes. Seek to realize a safe and secure society based on the principle of human security. Jointly address global issues such as climate change, environment, food, energy, pandemics, and DX. Mutually share wisdom on the declining birthrate and aging population as a common challenge for ASEAN and Japan to find a path toward a solution. Realize a society that takes into account the possibility of equal opportunity and correction of disparities for socially vulnerable groups in each country, including transnational workers.

## **3. Mutual understanding and trust as the platform for a renewed ASEAN-Japan partnership**

Expand a multilayered people-to-people network that brings new generations across different segments of our society. Taking into account the dynamics in ASEAN countries, such new network is critical to design a new ASEAN-Japan relationship following the economic growth, social maturation/diversification, and the empowered civil society. While organizing and utilizing the existing frameworks for people-to-people exchange, promote initiatives for interaction based on equal footing, two-way, respect for identity, harmony, and integration in diverse environments, and develop next generation leaders who will lead the ASEAN community through ASEAN-Japan cooperation. These efforts also aims to renew the Japanese perception toward ASEAN countries. In addition, ensure trustworthiness in areas such as cyber security and personal information protection, as digital technology will be more widely used in future economic activities and people's lives, and free flow of data is increasingly required. In conjunction with the further deepening of cybersecurity efforts, ASEAN and Japan promote cooperation toward the realization of DFFT (Data Free Flow with Trust).

These three pillars interconnect with each other. The foundation of the new ASEAN-Japan partnership must start with the further promotion and deepening of mutual understanding and trust that have been cultivated between ASEAN and Japan countries, and the formation of multilayered mutual interaction and people-to-people networks that facilitate this process. Such mutual understanding and trust are indispensable elements for ASEAN and Japan to work hand in hand toward the realization of a cohesive society in which economic development, sustainability, and fairness are all fulfilled. The development of such cohesive societies across countries and borders will enable the establishment of a fair regional order based on free and open rules.

### **III. Action items for a new ASEAN-Japan partnership**

#### **1. Shaping a regional order which is free, open, rules-based and fair**

- ① Given the recent rising tensions in the regional security situation, jointly promote efforts to ease tensions in the region over the long term, respecting ASEAN centrality and utilizing knowledge and experience that ASEAN has contributed to regional stability through the principles and norms presented in the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) and the ASEAN Charter
- ② Strengthen the ASEAN architecture, including the East Asia Summit (EAS), ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and ASEAN+3, as a platform for security dialogue and cooperation and support the strengthening of the ASEAN Secretariat's organization and functions
- ③ Promote security cooperation for peace and stability in the whole region, considering the individual circumstances of each ASEAN country and in line with the direction set out in the Vientiane Vision 2.0
  - Steadily implement the Foreign and Defense Ministerial Meeting ("2+2") with Indonesia and the Philippines and further promote strategic dialogues, including the expansion to other countries
  - Promote defense equipment and technology cooperation and expansion of agreements concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology
  - Further promote bilateral and multilateral capacity-building, focusing on non-traditional challenges
  - Conduct bilateral/multilateral training and exercises between the Self-Defense Forces and the militaries of other countries
  - Contribute to improving interoperability and promoting information sharing, as well as improving governance of the security sector in each country, including ensuring transparency in procurement in ASEAN countries, through security cooperation and exchanges, including defense equipment and technology cooperation, capacity-building support, and bilateral/multilateral joint training and exercises
- ④ Cooperate towards the stability of maritime order and maritime security
  - Cooperate on and support maritime cooperation in AOIP; strengthen coordination in FOIP

cooperation to ensure rule of law, freedom of navigation, and peace and security

- Further cooperate on strengthening maritime law enforcement capacity, including human resource development; strengthen support for training and capacity-building of coast guard personnel in ASEAN countries, including through the Maritime Security Policy Program
  - Promote cooperation on maritime environmental protection
  - Provide support for the early conclusion of a Code of Conduct (COC) in the South China Sea that takes into account the legitimate rights and interests of all stakeholders; support cooperation among and between ASEAN countries in maritime security, including maritime security cooperation that is being promoted among some ASEAN countries
- ⑤ Support the development of legal systems for strengthening the rule of law
- Hold regular ASEAN-Japan judicial consultations to discuss international cooperation and technical assistance to jointly address emerging forms of crime and abuse of power
  - Collaborate on ASEAN-Japan policies regarding competition law
- ⑥ Promote cooperation to share democratic values and improve the quality of democracy
- Ensure transparency in the policy making process and data use in digital governance
  - Establish an ASEAN-Japan shared mechanism to strengthen resilience against cyber-attacks, disinformation, etc.
- ⑦ Respect the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty and strengthen cooperation on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation
- ⑧ Cooperate to restore the rule of law, fair order and democratic political system without making Myanmar an isolated and fragile state, especially through persistent efforts under the ASEAN-Japan partnership; continue and expand humanitarian assistance; strengthen cooperation with various stakeholders in Myanmar and pushing for dialogue between them and the military “regime”
- ⑨ Strengthen cooperation and coordinate positions in the United Nations and other international fora on issues related to security and peace in the international community

## **2. Building a society which fulfills economic prosperity, sustainability, and equity**

- ① Maintain and strengthen a free, open, and fair economic order
- While maintaining and strengthening the multilateral trade system with WTO at its core, cooperate in the formation of rules in a wide range of areas such as trade, intellectual property, and digital technologies, as well as in the formation of loose regional rules to ensure fair aid and investment for all stakeholders
    - (a) Utilize the RCEP Agreement as a platform to ensure transparent implementation of these rules
    - (b) Promote cooperation with ASEAN countries that have signed CPTPP to utilize it in the above rule-making process
    - (c) Actively engage in IPEF negotiations and jointly work on international rule-making on

decarbonization, digitalization, and fair trade

- Strengthen cooperation in economic security
  - (a) Support ASEAN countries to strengthen their economic security, improve political and economic autonomy (address new challenges such as economic coercion), strengthen the supply chains of ASEAN countries and Japan, strengthen relations with producing countries of important mineral resources, popularize the use of clean information and communication facilities, advance data protection, sensitive information management, research Integrity and research security, etc.
  - (b) Create a consultative framework similar to the economic version of "2+2" established between the U.S. and Japan for the above cooperation

② Achieve development through economic revitalization and advancement

- Launch and implement a new action plan with a longer-term perspective, succeeding the contents of the ASEAN-Japan Economic Resilience Action Plan, which facilitates cooperation for a comprehensive economic recovery after COVID-19
- Advance open innovation across borders to create new industries together to break out of the "middle-income trap"
- Develop new industrial sectors utilizing digital technology through "co-creation" between ASEAN and Japan
- Cooperate to contribute to strengthening ASEAN connectivity
  - (a) Support the ASEAN Connectivity Master Plan 2025 and the formulation of the new Master Plan
  - (b) Support the development of advanced infrastructure as a basis for strengthening connectivity that will contribute to the development of the whole ASEAN region
  - (c) Jointly promote the development of regional rules for fair infrastructure assistance
  - (d) Advance efforts to improve the quality of global value chains (GVCs) and supply chains with digital technology
- Promote Digital transformation (DX) and foster startups as keys to ASEAN and Japan's respective growth
- Cooperate on initiatives towards producing tourism-oriented countries
  - (a) Expand the number of tourists (revitalization of two-way tourism), and create attractions and strengthen advertisements in both ASEAN and Japan
  - (b) Support attracting visitors to the countryside, raise average tourism expenditure, and promote eco-tourism both in ASEAN and Japan
  - (c) Cooperate to foster sustainable management in tourist attractions
    - i. Support increasing profitability and added value through data utilization (tourism DX)
    - ii. Raise added value through facility renovation and tourism services, etc.
  - (d) Foster mutual understanding of each culture (food, historical heritage, traditional

performing arts) in ASEAN and Japan

- Promote businesses and “co-creation” values among small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in ASEAN and Japan
  - (a) Expand information and enhance awareness on backing for overseas businesses
  - (b) Support acquiring and training human resources for overseas businesses
  - (c) Improve environment to accelerate overseas businesses
- Support collaboration among large companies and small and midsize companies and startups
- Promote global open innovation in ASEAN and Japan
- Promote Mekong development cooperation
  - (a) Pursue joint efforts to realize sustainable development in the Mekong region while taking into account the need to ensure fairness, utilizing the framework of the Mekong-Japan Summit Meeting; in particular, jointly work on addressing environmental and food security issues that are becoming increasingly serious in the Mekong region, considering the different positions of participating countries

③ Cooperate for social development and fairness

- Reduce disparities among and within ASEAN countries
  - (a) Continue to support the ASEAN Integration Initiative (IAI)
  - (b) Ensure access to cyberspace and publicness in cyberspace in order to bridge the digital divide
  - (c) Share scientific resources to solve public health issues
  - (d) Establish common standards between ASEAN and Japan for AI operations to prevent structural discrimination and ensure transparency in digital governance
  - (e) Jointly develop social security programs for the younger generation
  - (f) Jointly formulate new "human rights" in the digital age between ASEAN and Japan
  - (g) Share knowledge on new social policies and the design of tax and social security systems to address social challenges (e.g., reducing inequality, aging society with fewer children) and encourage new initiatives
  - (h) Promote mutual assistance among NPOs and local communities apart from public assistance as well as information exchange and mutual interaction by the private sector including companies
- Cooperate to mutually open and deepen integration of labor markets of ASEAN and Japan and to promote labor mobility within ASEAN and between ASEAN and Japan
  - (a) Balance business and human rights protection in ASEAN and Japan, especially the protection of workers' human rights, including cross-border workers, and the reform of laws and regulations to realize fair working environments
  - (b) Improve the environment for people from ASEAN to play an active role in Japan, e.g., issuance of new work visas for highly skilled human resources to enable job changes as a special measure

- (c) Fundamentally review the technical intern training program for improvement
- (d) Consider career paths for foreign students and technical intern trainees after they return to their home countries and exit strategies that utilize their experiences gained in Japan
- (e) Support to improve the competitiveness of Japanese personnel actively working in Southeast Asia
- (f) Facilitate the transition of changes in employment due to digitalization by creating a transnational labor market
- Respond to declining birthrates and aging population as well as an aging society
  - (a) Jointly explore ways to create soft and hard systems to realize safety and security in an aging society and to revitalize society itself, while also exchanging information and experiences between Japan, as a developed country facing challenges, and some ASEAN countries that are rapidly transforming into aging societies with low birthrates
- ④ Building a sustainable and resilient society
  - Balancing climate change response and energy security (e.g., realization of the Asian Zero Emissions Community Concept)
    - (a) Accelerate the development of the Asia Energy Transition Initiative (AETI) (roadmap development, financial support, human resource development, etc.)
    - (b) Strengthen ASEAN-Japan collaboration in international frameworks for addressing climate change, such as the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP)
    - (c) Promote cooperation in line with the ASEAN-Japan Climate Change Action Agenda 2.0
    - (d) Promote ASEAN-Japan cooperation for the development of clean energy manufacturing and energy-saving industries
    - (e) Implement initiatives to strengthen finance, technology, and governance to realize a stable energy supply mechanism that can meet the growing energy demand associated with geopolitical risks and the digitalization of economy and society
    - (f) Promote cooperation in the development and social implementation of technologies that can contribute to decarbonization, including energy and environmental technologies and related digital technologies
  - Developing a circular society and a smart city
    - (a) Sharing knowledge and experiences and work together to build a circular economy and create cities where people can enjoy a comfortable and safe digital life, including mobility and healthcare
    - (b) Jointly work towards the implementation of ASEAN's Framework for Circular Economy and establish a Sound Material-Cycle Society by addressing issues such as municipal solid waste and e-waste by utilizing Japanese systems, technologies, and know-how related to waste collection, disposal, and recycling
  - Enhancing Response capabilities onto both natural and human disasters

- (a) Based on the humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR) efforts implemented under ADMM-Plus, strengthen support for emergency response to disasters in the ASEAN region, utilizing Japan's expertise
    - i. Support the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Center), especially in capacity-building for damage assessment and rapid humanitarian assistance
    - ii. Support capacity-building of member countries, training of relevant departments, and the development of guidelines, etc.
  - (b) Establish the ASEAN Supporters' Meeting (tentative name, a mechanism that allows discussion between participating countries, including ASEAN member countries, during peaceful times so that, in the event of a disaster, the provision of assistance to affected countries from within and outside the region will be provided without overlap)
  - Introducing new and advanced disaster prevention and mitigation mechanisms
    - (a) Support ASEAN's efforts for disaster prevention and mitigation, drawing on Japan's knowledge and expertise; cooperate on introduction of technologies and facilities related to earthquakes, tsunamis, floods, and storm surges, etc.
    - (b) Introduce a common ASEAN-Japan official monitoring mechanism for environmental risk assessment in urban space
  - Upgrading regional Food Security mechanisms
    - (a) Cooperate to build a resilient and sustainable food supply system through international efforts such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
    - (b) Facilitate the current ASEAN+3 Emergency Rice Reserve (APTERR) and the ASEAN Food Security Information System (AFSIS), and strengthen the ASEAN-Japan Midori Cooperation Plan
  - Promoting healthcare service to strengthen prevention, preparedness, and response to future public health crises
    - (a) Promote cooperation for full operationalization and capacity-building of the ASEAN Center for Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases
    - (b) Cooperate on healthcare and infectious disease control in the private sector
  - Enhancing comprehensive environmental cooperation to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
    - (a) Strengthen cooperation based on the ASEAN-Japan Environmental Cooperation Initiative, especially in addressing the issue of marine plastic waste
    - (b) Cooperate in sustainable forest management and wood use
  - Sharing best practices and governance methods among local governments between ASEAN and Japan toward the realization of a sustainable and resilient society
- ⑤ Strengthening Joint research on technological innovation
- Promote technology development to simultaneously realize various goals such as climate

change and energy security, and environmental conservation and a Sound Material-Cycle Society

- Promoting research and development among ASEAN and Japanese researchers in the fields where high spillover effects can be expected. This could be done through the e-ASIA Joint Research Program (e-ASIA JRP), the International Science and Technology Research Partnership for Sustainable Development (SATREPS), and other programs

⑥ Establishing a new study group in designing the shape of cooperation.

- Strengthen activities of the ASEAN-Japan Centre, an international organization
- Enhance the function of the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) as a center for public-private partnership, and utilize it to strengthen the dissemination of joint research and policy recommendations
- Make further use of the Southeast Asia Regional Programme (SEARP) in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) for the purpose of domestic reform of ASEAN countries and regional integration, and coordinate with the MOU signed in 2022 between ASEAN and OECD
- Build a more multilayered network, making use of the AEM-METI Economic and Industrial Cooperation Committee (AMEICC), the Federation of Japanese Chambers of Commerce and Industry in ASEAN (FJCCIA), Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO), and the Japan Section of the ASEAN-Japan Business Council Japan Committee (AJBC)
- Strengthen the network between the Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the local government and business community, and enhance its information gathering and analysis functions
- Establish the Indo-Pacific Business Advisory Committee, which includes industrial sectors of ASEAN, Japan, and other ASEAN dialogue partners, to promote regional economic integration and cooperation with ASEAN and other neighboring countries
- Establish an AOIP Vision Group to conduct policy studies to materialize cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region in maritime cooperation, SDGs, connectivity, and other economic and social areas related to the AOIP

**3. Mutual understanding and trust as the platform for a renewed ASEAN-Japan partnership**

① Promote multilayered personnel exchange and intellectual and cultural exchange between ASEAN and Japan

- Expand two-way exchanges through intellectual, personnel and youth exchange schemes under the Prime Minister's Office and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as the Japan Foundation
- Foster expansion of scholarship programs offered by private sectors such as corporations, for study abroad at undergraduate and graduate levels
- Promote inter-company exchanges with mutual transfer of employees between Japanese and

ASEAN companies and support the promotion of internships

- Facilitate interaction between civil societies of ASEAN and Japan on social issues such as gender issues
  - Establish a scheme to allow short and long term stays in Japan to journalists from ASEAN countries
  - Promote interaction between municipalities in Southeast Asian countries and local governments in Japan
- ② Strengthen the ASEAN-Japan Partnership to enhance intellectual exchange across the Indo-Pacific
- Expand and strengthen networks among think tanks and universities between ASEAN and Japan countries as a networking hub
    - (a) Implement joint research schemes with resources from the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF)
    - (b) Further strengthen the policy research network, including Japanese, ASEAN-ISIS and other think tanks, leveraging the existing network of research institutions between ASEAN and Japan countries
- ③ Build networks and bring young, highly skilled personnel together in ASEAN and Japan
- Establish an exchange mechanism among ASEAN and Japanese policy communities and strengthen long, medium and short-term programs for cooperation and exchanges
  - Promote and strengthen long and medium term programs to send Japanese students and young researchers to ASEAN countries
  - Train Japanese experts in Southeast Asia; promote and strengthen long-and medium-term programs that regularly invite ASEAN students and young researchers to Japan and vice versa
  - Invite and support post-doctoral and young professionals from Southeast Asia who graduated in Anglophone countries to work and to further their study in Japan
  - Actively send Japanese researchers to Asian research centers in Western universities to expand and strengthen networks with intellectual communities in Southeast Asia
  - Form networks through the exchange of researchers and international brain circulation in the field of advanced research to solve global social challenges
  - Promote interaction and networking between ASEAN and Japanese business persons including entrepreneurs for innovation creation and business “co-creation”
  - Foster business development and networking by young business leaders from ASEAN and Japan and conduct leadership trainings
  - Establish a common platform and unify operational standards between ASEAN and Japan for educational and professional qualification systems
- ④ Develop human capital and public relations in Japan to renew people’s perspective onto ASEAN and update our mutual understanding
- Promote programs for Japanese students to learn and master the language, history, and culture of ASEAN countries and develop human capital for future interaction between ASEAN

and Japan

- Support employment and entrepreneurial activities of Japanese nationals in Southeast Asia and expand opportunities for matching them with Southeast Asian personnel
  - Continue and expand the Japan-ASEAN Student Conference of JENESYS
  - Explore new long-, medium-, and short-term programs of mutual dispatch of young people between ASEAN and Japan in the public and private sectors (including consideration of a new system based on the experience and current needs of the NIHONGO (Japanese) Partners)
  - Foster short-term visits and grassroots exchanges between ASEAN and Japan at the primary and secondary education levels to promote mutual understanding and friendly relations
  - Promote awareness reform of Japanese companies (e.g., expand businesses to ASEAN, transfer delegation of authority from head offices to local offices and promote management in local offices, facilitate acceptance of foreign workers, etc.)
  - Use the Osaka-Kansai Expo to be held in 2025, which will attract a large number of people from overseas, as an opportunity to strengthen relations with ASEAN
- ⑤ Realize DFFT by ensuring cyber security and institutional trust as the foundation of trust in the digital society
- Promptly implement DFFT between ASEAN and Japan
  - Support the development of legal systems for the protection of intellectual property and personal information in ASEAN countries
  - Support the development of experts in data security in ASEAN
  - Strengthen support for efforts of private sectors in improving cybersecurity

#### **IV. Initiatives to realize the above**

Over the years, ASEAN and Japan have steadily implemented practical cooperation in a wide range of fields and achieved concrete results. This accumulation developed the recognition that ASEAN and Japan are true partners for regional development. On the occasion of the 40th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation in 2013, the ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit adopted the "Vision Statement on ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation" and its implementation plan, and have advanced concrete cooperation accordingly. For the 50th anniversary, in order to implement the action items as presented above in pillars 1 to 3, the existing cooperation tools for ASEAN, such as the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund, Youth Exchange Programs (Japan's Friendship Ties program: JENESYS, Ship for Southeast Asian and Japanese Youth Program and other programs), and cultural exchange programs of the Japan Foundation ("WA project"), should be utilized, and their successors or new mechanisms should be considered.

On the other hand, ASEAN-Japan relations can be no longer bolstered solely by public funds such as ODA. ASEAN and Japan must build a more equal and multilayered partnership that reflect the changing internal and external situations. Therefore, it is necessary to deepen cooperation by utilizing the public and private resources of ASEAN countries and Japan, while seeking the best combinations

(Provisional Translation)

of the use of these resources which are suitable for each cooperation scheme or project.