

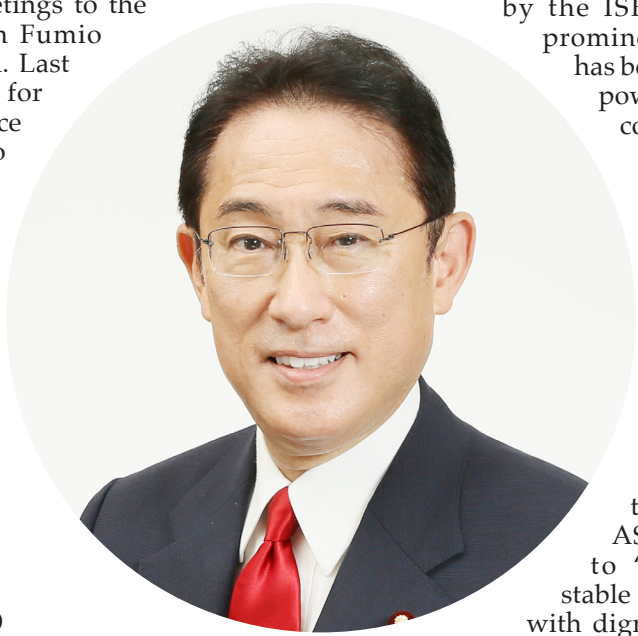
# Co-creating the future of the Indo-Pacific based on trust”

(Prime Minister Kishida’s Contribution to Philippine Media On the Occasion of the Special Summit Meeting to Commemorate the 50th Anniversary of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation)

I would like to extend warm greetings to the people of the Philippines. I am Fumio Kishida, Prime Minister of Japan. Last month, I visited the Philippines for the first time since assuming office as Prime Minister. I would like to thank the people of the Philippines for their hospitality.

This weekend, I will be hosting the ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit marking the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation. It is my great pleasure to welcome President Marcos to Tokyo from the Philippines on this historic occasion.

**Prime Minister Fumio Kishida**  
Photo Credits: Prime Minister’s Office of Japan, 2023



by the ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute, a prominent ASEAN think tank, Japan has been voted the most trusted major power for ASEAN countries for five consecutive years.

The international community is now at a turning point in history, and the free and open international order based on the rule of law is under serious challenge. We also face complex and compounding challenges such as climate change, inequality, public health crises, digitalization, and AI governance. I look forward to working more closely than ever with the people of ASEAN based on strong “trust” to “co-create” a peaceful and stable world where everyone can live with dignity and also a sustainable and prosperous future.

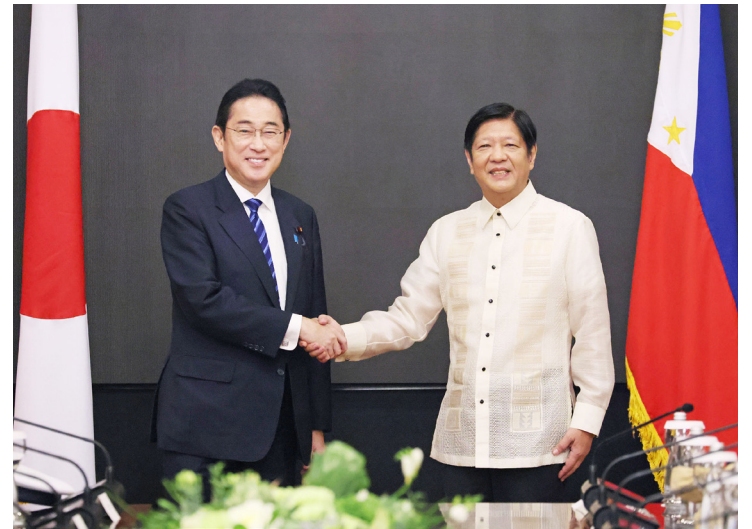
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In particular, Japan would like to propose a comprehensive exchange program to connect and strengthen “heart to heart” partnerships for the next generation, new initiatives to co-create solutions to the challenges shared by our economies and societies, efforts to address climate change such as further promotion of the Asian Zero Emission Community initiative, and industrial cooperation.

I would like to make this historic Commemorative Summit a “Golden Opportunity” to carry our “Golden Friendship” into the next generation.

### (Japan-Philippines relations)

The relationship between Japan and the Philippines, strategic partners who share common values and principles, has grown by leaps and bounds this year. We have had various levels of mutual visits, including President Marcos’ visit to Japan in February and my visit to the Philippines in November. In particular, during my visit in November, I had the honor of delivering a speech at the Joint Session of the Philippine Senate and House of Representatives for the first time as Japanese Prime Minister. I look forward to working with President Marcos, who will visit Japan again this time, to further deepen our bilateral cooperation in a wide range of areas, including security, economy, and people-to-people exchanges, as well as on addressing regional and international challenges. I wish you all a happy Christmas.



**Japan-Philippine Summit Meeting**  
Photo Credits: Prime Minister’s Office of Japan, 2023



**PM Kishida to address the Special Joint Session of the Philippine Congress**  
Photo Credits: Prime Minister’s Office of Japan, 2023



**JENESYS 2023: Filipino High Schools Students take part in JENESYS Program in Japan**  
Photo Credits: Japan International Cooperation Center (JICE), 2023

### (ASEAN-Japan relations)

In the half century Japan initiated dialogue with ASEAN in 1973, ahead of the rest of the world, Japan has walked alongside ASEAN, including the Philippines, on its path of development and integration. Japan has supported the development of the ASEAN region through development cooperation in various fields. Japan and ASEAN are each other’s major trading partners, and Japan is the second largest direct investor in ASEAN after the United States. In recent years, Japanese direct investment in ASEAN has averaged about 2.8 trillion yen annually. Japanese companies have approximately 15,000 business establishments in ASEAN, bringing the vitality of the fast-growing ASEAN region into the Japanese economy and also creating products, services and employment in ASEAN countries, thus contributing to their economic development.

Japan-ASEAN relationships go beyond business. The foundation of Japan-ASEAN relations as true friends is a relationship of mutual trust with “heart-to-heart” connections. It has been nurtured over the years through “people-to-people” exchanges in a wide range of fields. Both the public and private sectors have continued to make concrete efforts in various youth and international student exchanges.

For example, the Government of Japan has sponsored some 40,000 international students from ASEAN countries. The Sakura Science Program, which is a youth exchange program in the field of science and technology, has hosted about 15,000 students. The ASIA KAKEHASHI Project has hosted about 1,000 students. The total number of members of the ASEAN Council of Japan Alumni (ASCOJA), a council of alumni associations in ASEAN countries for former international students in Japan, now exceeds 50,000, making it a valuable network of friendship. Moreover, some 13,000 people have participated in the Ship for Southeast Asian and Japanese Youth Program (SSEAYP), and 47,000 people have participated in the JENESYS youth exchange program, fostering friendship. In addition, JICA has sent more than 8,000 Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers to ASEAN countries, and the Japan Foundation has dispatched about 3,000 NIHONGO (Japanese-language) partners to educational institutions in Asia under its “WA project.” Many other exchange programs have been implemented by the private sector over the years.

In addition, Japan and ASEAN have reached out to each other and have been “trusted partners” through many challenges such as the 1997 Asian currency crisis, the 2004 Sumatra earthquake and Indian Ocean tsunami, the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake, and the COVID-19 pandemic from 2019. In a survey of public opinion in ASEAN countries



**Nihongo Partners in Actions: In a special Hello!Japan session, Nihongo Partner Mr. NAKAMA Hidetoshi, demonstrates the proper way of wearing a Yukata to Junior High School students of Pitogo High School**



**PM Kishida aboard Philippine Coast Guard Flagship vessel provided by Japan** Photo Credit: Philippine Coast Guard, 2023



**A 50-year Filipino Dream: PM Kishida explored the site of the Metro Manila Subway Project during his first official visit to the Philippines**





Japan-Philippine Summit Meeting Photo Credits: Prime Minister's Office of Japan, 2023



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Prime Minister Fumio Kishida Photo Credits: Prime Minister's Office of Japan, 2023



A SYMBOL OF JAPAN-PHILIPPINE COOPERATION: PM Kishida aboard Philippine Coast Guard flagship vessel provided by Japan Photo Credit: Philippine Coast Guard, 2023



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A 50-YEAR FILIPINO DREAM: PM Kishida explored the site of the Metro Manila Subway Project during his first official visit to the Philippines



JENESYS 2023: Filipino High Schools Students take part in JENESYS Program in Japan Photo Credits: Japan International Cooperation Center (JICC), 2023



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# ‘Co-creating the future of the Indo-Pacific based on trust’

PRIME MINISTER KISHIDA’S CONTRIBUTION TO PHILIPPINE MEDIA ON THE OCCASION OF THE SPECIAL SUMMIT MEETING TO COMMEMORATE THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF ASEAN-JAPAN FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION.

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PHOTO CREDIT: PHILIPPINE COAST GUARD, 2023