

Japan-Malaysia Joint Statement on Comprehensive Strategic Partnership
16 December 2023, Tokyo

1 His Excellency Mr. Fumio Kishida, Prime Minister of Japan, and His Excellency Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim, Prime Minister of Malaysia, held a constructive and productive bilateral summit meeting on 16 December 2023 in Tokyo, Japan.

2 Both leaders affirmed that robust bilateral relations between the two countries have been nurtured and strengthened over the years through the Look East Policy by the Government of Malaysia and based on shared fundamental principles and common values including the importance of the free and open international order based on the rule of law and upholding the United Nations Charter to advance cooperation, protect human rights and dignity and achieve peace, stability and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region and the world.

3 Both leaders resolved to pursue synergies between the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" and the "ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific," while respecting ASEAN centrality and unity.

4 Both leaders recognised the progress being made in bilateral cooperation in a wide range of areas, including security, economy, and cultural and people-to-people exchanges under the Strategic Partnership since 2015, and confirmed that the relationship between the two countries should be elevated to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

Peace and Security Cooperation

5 Both leaders reaffirmed their commitment to peace, stability and prosperity in the region and beyond, and to upholding international law, including the United Nations Charter.

6 Both leaders reiterated their commitment to further promoting security cooperation. In this regard, they confirmed the need to share strategic views between the two countries, and decided to hold a Strategic Dialogue with a view to addressing regional and international challenges more effectively.

7 Both leaders decided to continue dialogues between the defence authorities of the two countries as well as to further promote training and exchanges between the Self-Defense Forces and the Malaysian Armed Forces. They also concurred in promoting concrete cooperation under the Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defence Equipment and Technology and welcomed the cooperation being implemented on capacity building in the field of Humanitarian Assistance/Disaster Relief (HA/DR).

8 Both leaders welcomed the signing of the Exchange of Notes for the Official Security Assistance (OSA) grant aid for the benefit of the armed forces of Malaysia. They also confirmed their intention to strengthen further cooperation between the Japan Coast Guard and the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency.

Continued Engagement at All Levels for Economic Prosperity

9 Both leaders shared the view that while Japan is a major economic power and has achieved remarkable success in such areas as manufacturing, technology, and innovation, Malaysia has expertise in areas of Islamic finance, the halal industry and multiculturalism. Against this backdrop, both leaders acknowledged their countries' respective strengths, and confirmed their intention to share such expertise to drive mutual economic growth and development.

10 Noting that Japan is one of the largest investors in Malaysia, both leaders welcomed the success of the Public-Private Industrial Policy Dialogue between the two countries in April 2023, the Malaysian Trade and Investment Mission to Japan in May 2023, and the Malaysia-Japan Economic Dialogue in October 2023. In addition, both leaders welcomed the progress of cooperation in the aircraft sector based on the Memorandum of Cooperation between the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan and the Government of Malaysia on Aircraft Industry Cooperation.

11 Both sides have signed and renewed the Memorandum of Cooperation between the Government of Malaysia and the Ministry of Internal Affairs

and Communications of Japan in the field of information and telecommunications on 5 November 2023, in Putrajaya, Malaysia.

12 In line with the Memorandum of Cooperation between the Government of Malaysia and the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications of Japan, both leaders confirmed to promote cooperation in the sector of broadcasting and ICT, including ICT for disaster management, the development and adoption of open, secure and resilient 5G network and innovative network technology for future, cybersecurity, internet of things (IoT), smart city, cloud computing, digital economy, and smart manufacturing. Both leaders shared their intention to cooperate on economic security including strengthening supply chain resilience, while recognising the importance of transparent, diverse, secure, sustainable, and trustworthy and reliable supply chain in the region and beyond by ensuring productivity and connectivity, and minimising the risks to future supply chain disruptions.

13 Both leaders recognise that Malaysia's position as a key player in the global halal market has enabled companies from the two countries to capitalise the growing demand of halal products and services globally and concurred in promoting bilateral cooperation in this sphere.

14 Recognising the importance of mutually beneficial economic partnership between the two countries, both sides have signed the Malaysia-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (MJEPA), which was the first comprehensive trade agreement for Malaysia that came into force on 13 July 2006. Subsequently, the ASEAN-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership (AJCEP) Agreement came into force on 1 February 2009, to strengthen economic ties, to create a larger and more efficient market with greater opportunities and larger economies of scale, and to enhance attractiveness to capital and talent, for mutual benefit. These Agreements have been the impetus for increased competitiveness in the region, enhance investors' confidence and build supply chains that are more resilient, robust and well-integrated.

15 Both leaders lauded the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) as a high quality, high standard trade

agreement, which the two countries can leverage emerging issues such as digital and green economy, in addition to the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement and the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) initiative, which will enhance regional economic cooperation and promote progressive, sustainable and inclusive growth.

Science, Technology, Innovation and Environment

16 Both leaders highlighted the importance of science, technology and innovation which would lead to economic growth and job creation. They commended myriad programmes in this field and affirmed the further promotion of cooperation on science and technology based on experiences such as Strategic International Collaborative Research Program (SICORP) and Science and Technology Research Partnership for Sustainable Development (SATREPS). In addition, they confirmed their continued support, in particular for the Malaysia-Japan International Institute of Technology (MJIIT), a hub of Japanese style engineering education in ASEAN region. In this regard, they welcomed the establishment of the Malaysia-Japan Linkage Office at MJIIT to strengthen the collaboration's strategic synergy.

17 Furthermore, they also noted with satisfaction that ASEAN University Network/Southeast Asia Engineering Education Development Network (AUN/SEED-Net), Innovative Asia Scholarship Program and Look East Policy (LEP) 2.0 Training Programme have promoted knowledge exchanges between the two countries and throughout this region with the support of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

18 Both leaders renewed their commitment to promoting sustainable development and tackling climate change. They welcomed the National Energy Transition Roadmap of Malaysia, and confirmed to work together in the "Asia Zero Emission Community" platform to achieve decarbonisation while ensuring economic growth and energy security, including stable LNG supply and potential cross-border transportation of carbon dioxide (CO₂) for carbon dioxide capture and storage (CCS), in accordance with relevant international agreements. They also commended cooperation between

Japan Organization for Metals and Energy Security and PETRONAS in this regard.

Society, Cultural and People-to-People Exchange

19 Both leaders reaffirmed that promoting exchanges between the two countries would build stronger bonds between the peoples, enhance mutual understanding, and lead to more profound appreciation for each other's culture.

20 Both leaders commended various exchange programmes such as Japan-East Asia Network of Exchange for Students and Youths (JENESYS), the Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme (the JET Programme), Sakura Science Exchange Program, MEXT Scholarships, the Asia Kakehashi Project +(Plus), and the Ship for Southeast Asian and Japanese Youth Programme (SSEAYP) which have deepened the ties between Japanese youth and Malaysian youth, and affirmed their commitment to further promoting these programmes.

21 Both leaders welcomed the remarkable progress achieved under the Look East Policy, which celebrated its 40th anniversary in 2022, particularly in fostering stronger bilateral relations beyond trade, investment and socio-economic development. This robust partnership paves the way for higher-end technological collaboration in cognisance of ensuring the Policy to meet the demands of the times.

22 Both leaders welcomed the progress in the establishment of a branch campus of the University of Tsukuba in Malaysia, and expressed their hope that the branch campus would contribute to intensifying the collaboration between the two countries in the field of higher education. Both leaders celebrated the achievement and milestone of the establishment of the University of Tsukuba's branch campus in Malaysia as this can assist in promoting the long-term success of the partnership between the two countries.

23 Both leaders welcomed the Japan Foundation's contribution to cultural and grassroots exchanges, through the WA Project and its successor which

includes cultural and intellectual exchanges, and dispatching NIHONGO Partners as assistant Japanese language teachers mainly in secondary schools in Malaysia. They also welcomed activities to promote Malay language and Malaysian culture in Japan.

24 Both leaders welcomed the Japanese cultural event, Bon Odori being held in various parts of Malaysia with the participation of many Malaysians, and the Malaysia Fair being held in Tokyo.

25 Prime Minister KISHIDA welcomed the contribution of Malaysian companies in enhancing tourism exchange between the two countries which expedites the recovery of the tourism industry.

Regional and Global Cooperation

26 Both leaders exchanged views on current regional and global situations, and confirmed that they would continue to cooperate on issues such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the situation in Ukraine, North Korea's abductions issue and nuclear and ballistic missile programmes, the situation in Myanmar, nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and strengthening the functions of the United Nations (UN).

27 Both leaders exchanged views and recognised concerns on the situation in the East and South China Seas. Both leaders reconfirmed the importance of maintaining peace, stability, security and freedom of navigation in and over-flight over the South China Sea. Both leaders underscored the importance for all parties concerned to exercise self-restraint and to pursue peaceful resolutions of disputes in accordance with universally recognised principles of international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

28 Both leaders reaffirmed the urgent need to reform the UN, including the Security Council, in a way that reflects the geopolitical realities of the 21st Century. In particular, they emphasised the importance for the UN Security Council to strengthen its representativeness, effectiveness, transparency, and inclusiveness including through the expansion in both permanent and non-permanent categories of membership. Prime Minister Kishida

expressed his deep gratitude for Malaysia's continued support for Japan's candidature for its permanent membership in the UN Security Council. Prime Minister Anwar expressed his hope for Japan's favourable support for Malaysia's candidature as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council for the term 2036-2037.

29 Both leaders welcomed programmes and activities implemented by the public and private sectors to commemorate the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation. These engagements reflect the strong commitment by ASEAN and Japan in the dialogue relations. Both leaders looked forward to further advancing their long-standing partnership, as well as ensuring peace, stability and prosperity in the region.

30 Prime Minister Kishida welcomed Malaysia's plan to establish an independent international cooperation agency, and confirmed to support technical training to Malaysian officials for the establishment of the agency through JICA. Both leaders expressed their intention to further cooperation as global development partners for the mutual benefit of the two countries, the region and beyond.

Conclusion

31 Both leaders concurred in revitalising bilateral consultations at the vice-foreign ministerial level in order to discuss such a broad range of issues in a comprehensive manner.

32 Both leaders confirmed their commitment to further expanding and deepening cooperation between the two countries through a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

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