

His Excellency Mr. Joko Widodo, President of the  
Republic of Indonesia

Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to congratulate the first Summit Meeting of  
IORA on the occasion of its 20th anniversary.

I highly appreciate Indonesia's strong initiative to host this  
Meeting.

First of all, I would like to stress our common task: This is  
how to realise a Free and open Indo-Pacific region.

A free and open maritime order, extending from the Pacific,  
through the Indian Ocean to the Middle East and Africa, is  
an essential basis not only for trade, but also for peace and  
prosperity of the entire region.

For this reason, Japan is promoting the "Free and Open  
Indo-Pacific Strategy."

.

In this strategy, Japan will advance the following three

policies:

First, we will take every opportunity to promote and consolidate basic values such as the rule of law, democracy and freedom of navigation.

Second, we will advance economic prosperity by strengthening regional connectivity.

We will do so by building ports and railways and other infrastructures, by promoting economic partnerships, and by improving business environment.

Third, we will advance cooperation in maritime security.

We will strengthen our efforts in maritime law-enforcement capabilities, combating piracy, counter terrorism and disaster risk reduction.

Japan will closely coordinate with the IORA members in advancing such efforts.

In realising a free and open Indo-Pacific region, simply

connecting cities and ports, as we do dots with lines, is not enough.

We will enhance regional connectivity in such a way that entire relevant areas can benefit.

Such an approach will vitalize regional trade and investment as well as their full economic potential.

ASEAN is now the center of growing productivity in East Asia, which is the factory of the world.

India is a leader of market expansion with its 1.2 billion population and robust economic growth.

Infrastructure development in Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, is important because it will connect these growing regions.

Among the IORA members, Africa has particularly huge potential for the future.

Japan contributes to the growth of Africa through the initiative of “Expanded Partnership for Quality Infrastructure.”

We will do so by developing important gateway ports in such countries as Kenya, Mozambique and Madagascar”

In South Africa, IORA’s next Presidency, numerous Japanese companies have already opened their offices.

In Mauritius, where IORA’s secretariat is located, we opened a new Embassy this year.

We made great progress not only in hard infrastructure, but also in soft infrastructure --- in disaster risk reduction, for example.

Japan and Indonesia hosted awareness raising events on the “World Tsunami Awareness Day” in Aceh and Jakarta last year.

Japan is conducting human resource development and conveying its views to the world by hosting the “High School Students Summit on World Tsunami Awareness Day.”

We invited new generations of leaders of the international community, including many from the IORA members.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We have no doubt that the role of IORA as a forum of states in the Indo-Pacific region, cannot but grow.

IORA and its member’s responsibility for achieving a free and open Indo-Pacific region is tremendous.

Today is the first day of the next 20 years of IORA.

Please be assured that Japan will further closely collaborate and actively support IORA and its members. Thank you.