

Joint Statement of the 11th Mekong-Japan Summit

4 November, 2019

Bangkok, Thailand

1. The Heads of State/Government of Japan, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Kingdom of Thailand and the Social Republic of Viet Nam, met in Bangkok, the Kingdom of Thailand on 4 November, 2019, for the 11th Mekong-Japan Summit.

2. The Leaders of the Mekong countries and Japan appreciated the outcomes of the 12th Mekong-Japan Foreign Ministers' Meeting on 3 August 2019 and the 11th Mekong-Japan Economic Ministers' Meeting on 9 September 2019 in Bangkok, Thailand, and reaffirmed their commitment to further promoting cooperation for the sustainable development of the Mekong region under "Tokyo Strategy 2018".

Progress under the Three Pillars of Tokyo Strategy 2018

Vibrant and Effective Connectivity

3. The Leaders reaffirmed the importance of further enhancing "Hard Connectivity", "Soft Connectivity" and "Industry Connectivity" in the Mekong region in line with the Tokyo Strategy 2018. In this regard, the Leaders welcomed the adoption of a Joint Statement on Connectivity at the 22nd ASEAN-Japan Summit to further strengthen ASEAN-Japan and Mekong-Japan cooperation as well as to enhance synergies between the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025 (MPAC 2025) and various regional and sub-regional connectivity strategies, including the ASEAN-Japan Transport Partnership, the Expanded Partnership for Quality Infrastructure and the Tokyo Strategy 2018. The Leaders took note of the necessity to identify Flagship/ Early Harvest Projects under the Three Pillars. The Leaders of the Mekong countries appreciated Japan's continued support and contributions towards ASEAN's development through the additional contribution of 1 billion JPY to the component of JAIF2.0 under the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF) in March 2019 and expressed their expectation for its reinforcement.

4. The Leaders shared the intention to further strengthen efforts by Mekong countries and Japan to realize smart city in the Mekong region. In this regard, the Leaders welcomed the ASEAN-Japan Smart Cities Network High Level Meeting in October 2019 in Yokohama. The Mekong countries and Japan will closely collaborate to realize smart cities in order to promote sustainable

economic, social development and environment protection, based on the framework of ASEAN Smart Cities Network.

Hard Connectivity

5. The Leaders welcomed the progress in infrastructure development which contributes to enhancing “hard connectivity” both within Mekong countries and greater region in terms of “land connectivity”, “maritime connectivity” and “air connectivity”. In this regard, the Leaders recognized the importance of international standards of quality infrastructure investment such as openness, transparency, economic efficiency, and debt sustainability of borrower countries mentioned in such documents as the “G20 Principles for Quality Infrastructure Investment” endorsed at the G20 Osaka summit in June 2019”, which will apply to all cooperation wherever applicable.

6. The Leaders welcomed and look forward to the Japan-United States Mekong Power Partnership (JUMPP), a joint program of Japan and the United States partnering with the Mekong countries, to maintain and promote sustainable energy and quality energy infrastructure development that provides complementary impetus to the economic growth of the Mekong region.

Soft Connectivity

7. The Leaders welcomed various projects related to enhancement of “soft connectivity”. In this regard, the Leaders shared the recognition that Information and communications technology (ICT) has become one of the most important elements in enhancing the connectivity of Mekong countries. The Leaders of the Mekong countries appreciated various Japan-funded projects in the field of ICT, such as, cooperation in cybersecurity and broadcasting, and Japan’s contribution to various activities of the Asia Pacific Telecommunity (APT). The Leaders of the Mekong countries acknowledged Japan’s contribution to technical cooperation for capacity building programs especially in security and trade facilitation fields for customs officers. The Leaders also welcomed the promotion of cooperation in the field of e-government, smart city and postal service, such as modernization of postal network and services.

Industry Connectivity

8. The Leaders welcomed the endorsement of the Mekong Industrial Development Vision 2.0 (MIDV2.0) at the 11th Mekong-Japan Economic Ministers’ Meeting as a strong drive for “Industry Connectivity”. Also, the Leaders underscored that their efforts in response to the emerging challenges, such as rise of digital economy and need for sustainable growth, are indispensable elements for realization of MIDV2.0 and enhancement of “Quality of Life

Thorough Innovation”, emphasizing that the challenge toward digitalization, human resource development for enhancement of productivity and strengthening the competitiveness of MSMEs including emerging Start-ups should be tackled.

People-Centered Society

9. The Leaders expressed their appreciation for “Mekong-Japan Exchange Year 2019” initiative, which has helped to accelerate people-to-people exchange as well as deepen mutual understanding among Japan and the Mekong countries. In this regard, the Leaders took note that more than 120 events have already been endorsed as the Mekong-Japan Exchange Year events. The Leaders also welcomed efforts by the Japan Foundation Asia Center to promote cultural and intellectual exchanges between Japan and Mekong countries and expressed strong hope for its further contribution.

Human Resource Development

10. The Leaders underlined that a people-centered approach will make economic development in the Mekong region more balanced and sustainable. In this regard, the Leaders stressed the importance of the initiative launched by Japan to support the development of industrial human resource development of approximately 80,000 people in Asia under “the Industrial Human Resource Development Cooperation Initiative 2.0.,” further boosting Mekong countries’ efforts to be a growth center in the world. In particular, the Leaders expressed their high expectation for training programs under the newly signed Agreement on Technical Cooperation between ASEAN and the Government of Japan. The Leaders of the Mekong countries also welcomed the continuous efforts of Japan for technical cooperation to financial regulators and central bankers in the Mekong countries through tailored trainings and fellowship programs such as the GLOPAC (Global Financial Partnership Center). The Leaders of the Mekong countries appreciated “Project for Strengthening Capacity Building in Agriculture Sector in ASEAN” that enhances capacity building of agriculture related practitioners and officials through training courses. The Leaders of the Mekong countries also appreciated Japan’s long-term efforts for promoting human resource development in the area of the protection of cultural heritage. As the Mekong-Japan Exchange Year events, Mekong countries and Japan have organized various events which contribute to developing human resource.

Healthcare

11. The Leaders reaffirmed their commitment to accelerate progress towards Universal Health Coverage (UHC). In this regard, the Leaders shared the intention to strengthen the efforts in collaboration with the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) for

promoting all healthcare related industries including medical care, elderly care, prevention and society development which enable healthy living under the Asia Health and Wellbeing Initiative (AHWIN). In this context, Vietnam and Japan signed a memorandum of cooperation on the AHWIN in July 2019.

Education

12. The Leaders welcomed the Japan-Asia Youth Exchange Program in Science, which provide opportunities for young generation of Asian countries to experience Japan's cutting-edge science and technology.

Legal and Judicial Cooperation

13. The Leaders of the Mekong countries appreciated technical assistance of Japan to the Mekong countries in the field of law and justice towards legal and judicial reform and capacity building of criminal justice practitioners and legal professionals. The Leaders took note that Japan will be the host of the 14th UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in Kyoto in 2020.

Realization of a Green Mekong

14. The Leaders reaffirmed the importance of the realization of a Green Mekong, which is an essential factor in realizing the SDGs in the Mekong region. The Leaders of the Mekong countries appreciated ASEAN-Japan Environmental Cooperation Initiative, through which Japan supports Mekong countries' efforts to develop a quality environmental infrastructure, to protect biodiversity, and to address marine pollution and river water pollution. The Leaders shared "Osaka Blue Ocean Vision" that aims to reduce additional pollution by marine plastic litter to zero by 2050 and recognized the opportunity to participate in the "G20 Implementation Framework for Actions on Marine Plastic Litter". The Leaders welcomed the inputs of the Sixth Green Mekong Forum, co-hosted by Thailand and Japan on 8 July 2019 in Bangkok, where inter-sectored participants across generations joined discussions and exchanged views on issues to promote SDGs in Mekong region. The Leaders also welcomed the holding of the 12th High-Level Seminar on Sustainable Cities in Lao PDR in 2021. The Leaders welcomed the Asia EST Regional Forum, co-organized by Japan, Viet Nam and the United Nations Centre for Regional Development on 28-31 October 2019 in Hanoi, which aims to realize environmentally sustainable transportation (EST) in the Asian region.

Disaster Risks Reduction and Climate Change

15. The Leaders shared common understanding of the serious consequences of both natural and man-made disasters to sustainable development. In this regard, they committed to work closely

together for the prevention and reduction of disasters in the Mekong region, taking into account the “Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030,” The Leaders welcomed the work being well on the track toward launching this year the catastrophe risk insurance pool for Lao PDR and Myanmar, the first product of the Southeast Asia Disaster Risk Insurance Facility (SEADRIF). The Leaders reaffirmed their efforts to strengthen the response capability and to work together to tackle climate change in the region, and reiterated strong commitment to fully implement the Paris Agreement including through their respective Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC). In this context, the Leaders will continue their cooperation on advancing the Joint Crediting Mechanism (JCM) including Hydrofluorocarbon (HFC) lifecycle management.

Water resource management

16. The Leaders stressed their commitments to strengthening collaboration between Mekong-Japan cooperation and Mekong River Commission (MRC) and other regional organizations in order to address water-related issues, including sustainable water resource management and development, in the Mekong basin. The Leaders reaffirmed their efforts to strengthen capacity and application of advanced technology in water resources management in the Mekong countries. The Leaders shared the common recognition that Japan’s expertise in this area will be highly useful and timely for all Mekong countries that are experiencing the common issues of severe floods and drought.

Circular Economy

17. The Leaders noted the adaptation of “Bangkok 3R declaration towards Prevention of Plastic Waste Pollution through 3R and circular Economy” at the 9th Regional 3R Forum in Asia and the Pacific.

Direction of the cooperation under the Tokyo Strategy 2018

18. The Leaders reaffirmed that the Mekong-Japan cooperation under Tokyo Strategy 2018 are realized in synergy with realization of SDGs, Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) and the ACMECS Master Plan (2019-2023).

Realization of SDGs

19. The Leaders expressed their satisfaction with the progress made in various projects of the Action Plan for “A Decade toward the Green Mekong” by 2020 and upgraded the Action plan to the “Mekong-Japan Initiative for SDGs toward 2030”. The Leaders adopted the “Mekong-Japan Initiative for SDGs towards 2030” with a view to achieving the SDGs in the Mekong region. The

Leaders affirmed that realizing SDGs is of vital importance for the future generations both in the Mekong countries and Japan. SDGs are also a key means to reinforce the bonds “between people and society” and “between people and people” as well as the connection “between human and nature” and “toward the future generations”.

Mekong-Japan Cooperation and Free and Open Indo-Pacific

20. The Leaders reaffirmed the importance of continued efforts to maintain a free, open, transparent, inclusive and rule-based regional architecture. In this context, the leaders welcomed the adoption of the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific at the 34th ASEAN Summit which reaffirmed ASEAN’s principles to the cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region. In this regard, the Mekong countries welcome Japan’s commitment to support the efforts made by the Mekong countries in line with the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific.

21. The Leaders shared the common recognition that economic linkage across Mekong countries based on the principles of equality, shared benefit and respect for the United Nation Charter and international law is indispensable for promoting closer economic cooperation.

22. The Leaders underscored that the Mekong region, linking the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean, has the geographical advantage of receiving considerable benefits from the realization of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific. In this regard, the Leaders of the Mekong countries appreciated Japan’s vision to promote a Free and Open Indo-Pacific to contribute to the peace, stability and prosperity in the region and the world. The Leaders expressed their determination to steadily implement the Mekong-Japan Cooperation projects which contribute to and complement the promotion of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific.

Cooperation with Ayeyawady-Chao Phraya-Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy (ACMECS)

23. The Leaders of the Mekong countries welcomed that Japan officially became an ACMECS development partner to contribute to the realization of the ACMECS Master Plan (2019-2023) and reaffirmed their commitment to enhance the synergy between ACMECS and Mekong-Japan Cooperation and other sub-regional and regional cooperation frameworks. The Leaders further welcome the successful conclusion of the ACMECS Inaugural Senior Officials’ Meeting with Japan on 29 July 2019.

Regional and Global Issues

24. The Leaders reiterated their commitment to the full implementation of all relevant United

Nations Security Council Resolutions by all UN member states. In this context, the Leaders are committed to the international efforts to bring about complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization. The Leaders continued to call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) to fulfil its stated commitment to complete denuclearization and its pledge to refrain from further nuclear and missile tests, including recent missile tests for which there are some concerns. Some Leaders emphasized the importance of addressing issues of humanitarian concerns of the international community, including the resolution of the abductions issue.

25. The Leaders stressed the importance of continued peaceful dialogue amongst all concerned parties in order to realize lasting peace and stability in a denuclearized Korean Peninsula. The Leaders urged all concerned parties to resume peaceful dialogue and continue working towards the realization of lasting peace and stability in a denuclearized Korean Peninsula, including through the full and expeditious implementation of the Joint Statement by the U.S. and DPRK leaders, the Panmunjom Declaration and the Pyongyang Joint Declaration. The Leaders also underscored the importance of ASEAN-led platforms such as the ARF in promoting a conducive atmosphere to peaceful dialogue amongst the concerned parties. The Leaders welcomed the recent meeting between the leaders of the U.S. and the DPRK at the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), as well as the resumption of the working level negotiation between both sides in Stockholm.

26. The Leaders discussed the importance of promoting a rules-based order in the region, including through upholding international law such as the 1982 United Nation Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). The Leaders reaffirmed the importance of maintaining and promoting peace, security, stability, safety and freedom of navigation in and overflight above the South China Sea and recognized the benefits of having the South China Sea as a sea of peace, stability and prosperity. The Leaders discussed the matters relating to the South China Sea and took note of some concerns on the land reclamations and activities in the area, which have eroded trust and confidence, increased tensions and may undermine peace, security and stability in the region. The Leaders underscored the importance of the full and effective implementation of the 2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) in its entirety and noted negotiations towards the early conclusion of an effective and substantive Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC) consistent with international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS. The Leaders reaffirmed the need to enhance mutual trust and confidence, exercise self-restraint in the conduct of activities and avoid actions that may further complicate the situation, and pursue peaceful resolution of disputes in accordance with international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS. The Leaders also emphasized the importance of non-militarization and self-restraint in the conduct of all activities by claimants and all other states.

27. The Leaders confirmed their intention to hold the 12th Mekong-Japan Summit in 2020 in Viet Nam. The Leaders welcomed the holding of 13th Mekong-Japan Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Japan in 2020.