

Prime Minister Ishiba's Opening Remarks at the 2<sup>nd</sup> AZEC Leaders Meeting (Oct 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024)  
(Provisional Translation)

(1) Introduction

We will be starting the 2<sup>nd</sup> AZEC Leaders Meeting now. It is my great honor to hold the Leaders Meeting at the ASEAN-related Summit Meetings. I would express my sincere appreciation for the cooperation of Mr. Sonexay, the Prime Minister of the host country Lao PDR, as well as for the participation of all the Leaders of AZEC partner countries.

(2) Recognizing the AZEC principles

It is important to secure economic growth in Asia, as the world's driver of growth. At the same time, we need to take urgent actions to address climate change that is an urgent challenge common to all humankind.

To this end, with a view to realizing decarbonization, economic growth and energy security simultaneously, we will achieve carbon neutrality/net-zero emissions under various pathways, taking into account each country's national circumstances such as the industrial or energy structure.

The AZEC principles are crucial towards achieving this common goal and also contribute to advancing global efforts. Moreover, the AZEC platform conforms with ASEAN's strategy.

(3) A way forward for new cooperation under AZEC

Today, we would like to confirm our shared understanding on our action plan that we will work together on in the next decade.

First, we will promote development of rules that accelerate the "AZEC solutions", or the activities that contribute to decarbonization in Asia, and eventually lead to growth in Asia through cross-sector initiatives.

Second, we shall commence decarbonization initiatives in the power, transport and industry sectors, and the operationalization of the Asia Zero Emission Center in the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA).

Lastly, we will facilitate public and private collaboration to further promote individual projects in sectors such as agriculture and waste management.

Since last year's Leaders Meeting, more than 120 MOU's and other cooperation initiatives have been signed between Japan and each AZEC partner country.

Here are some examples of the ongoing initiatives.

1. In Indonesia, a system to efficiently use geothermal energy is being developed.
2. In Vietnam, a financial support to the grid infrastructure development is underway, that is needed for a stable supply of renewable energy.
3. In the Philippines and Vietnam, projects are ongoing with a view to producing carbon credits from the methane emissions reduction in paddy fields, by utilizing the Joint Crediting Mechanism

(JCM).

In Lao PDR, Japan will provide support for the stabilization of energy supply in the country. Japan will also conduct studies to develop projects through the Co-Creation for Common Agenda Initiative, to support Lao PDR to be a regional clean energy hub in the future, with a view to contributing to decarbonization in the region.

I look forward to tangible cooperation initiatives being implemented throughout AZEC partner countries in the future, in a way that is aligned with the AZEC principles.