

Japan-Thailand Joint Statement
on the Strategic Partnership based on the Enduring Bonds of Friendship
～Fostering Confidence beyond the Disasters～

Her Excellency Ms. Yingluck Shinawatra, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand, at the invitation of the Government of Japan, paid an official working visit to Japan from March 6 to March 9, 2012. During her visit, Prime Minister Yingluck had an audience with His Imperial Highness the Crown Prince of Japan and visited Miyagi Prefecture, which was severely affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake, and where Thai employees of Japanese companies worked temporarily following the recent flood disaster in Thailand.

His Excellency Mr. Yoshihiko Noda, Prime Minister of Japan, and Her Excellency Prime Minister Yingluck issued the following Joint Statement.

1. Introduction

1.1 Noting that Prime Minister Yingluck's visit to Japan coincided with the 125th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Thailand, the two leaders shared the view that the close relationship between the Imperial and Royal Families symbolizes the current amicable relationship between the two countries. The two leaders recognized that Japan and Thailand have a strong foundation of mutual friendship and cooperation based on 600 years of historical ties of exchanges. The two leaders emphasized the importance of further strengthening the Strategic Partnership between the two countries in order to address bilateral, regional and international issues in the fields of economy, society, development, security and political cooperation. The two leaders renewed their determination to further develop the Japan-Thailand Strategic Partnership to serve and enhance regional peace and prosperity. The two leaders reconfirmed that the continued growth and dynamism of Thailand, located geographically in the center of the Mekong sub-region, is an important factor for the prosperity of the region. The two leaders also reaffirmed the importance that, Japan and Thailand, as countries sharing basic values such as democracy, human rights, rule of law, good governance, respect for diversity and market economy, should, in partnership with other regional countries, help contribute to establishing a more prosperous and stable regional architecture in the Asia-Pacific, based on such values.

1.2 The two leaders extended their deepest condolences to the victims of the recent disasters in

each other's country, namely the Great East Japan Earthquake and the great floods in Thailand.

2. Bilateral Issues

(Economic and Social Areas)

2.1 Prime Minister Noda expressed his profound gratitude for the assistance extended by the Government and people of Thailand including the free use of gas turbines from the Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand in the wake of the Great East Japan Earthquake on March 11, 2011. Prime Minister Yingluck expressed her confidence in Japan's robust recovery and reconstruction after the earthquake. Prime Minister Noda expressed his gratitude for Thailand's dispatch of pediatric medical teams to evacuation centers in the disaster-affected area after the Great East Japan Earthquake. Prime Minister Yingluck also expressed her appreciation that Japan sent a medical expert team to assist in the Royal Thai Government's assessment of flood impact on public health and hygiene after the flooding. The two leaders welcomed and encouraged the advancement of medical cooperation such as among medical institutions, hospitals and pharmaceutical factories.

2.2 Prime Minister Yingluck expressed her heartfelt gratitude for Japan's prompt assistance at the time of the floods in Thailand, including the dispatch of a drainage pump vehicle team during the emergency phase, as well as assistance for medium-term and long-term recovery and reconstruction. Prime Minister Noda appreciated that the Royal Thai Government had taken support measures for businesses, including facilitating procedures for Japanese business people to stay in Thailand to rehabilitate affected factories and stated that these measures had been of great assistance to the Japanese companies affected by the floods. Prime Minister Noda also appreciated the Royal Thai Government's efforts to devise a multi-billion US dollars flood prevention measures and other recovery measures that are contributing to renewed confidence from the international community, including the business sector. Prime Minister Noda was pleased to have been informed of the progress of rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts. The two leaders welcomed the success of the meetings between Prime Minister Yingluck and representatives of Japanese companies investing in Thailand.

2.3 Recognizing the importance of strengthening human resource development for the industrial sector, the two leaders affirmed their determination to cooperate with each other to revive and further develop a more resilient industrial base and supply chain in Thailand, including the Japanese companies based there without setting back the close, interdependent economic

relationship built up through the tireless efforts in the past. Prime Minister Yingluck was encouraged by announcements by many Japanese companies to expand their investment in Thailand. Prime Minister Noda explained that his government is ready to provide proactive support on flood control measures, such as the development of the new master plan for water management in the Chao Phraya River Basin and the funding for the study on the said plan, to prevent Thailand from suffering serious flood damage again. Prime Minister Yingluck expressed her appreciation for the bilateral cooperation on disaster management capacity building extended by Japan, ranging from the “Project on Capacity Development in Disaster Management in Thailand”, initiated after the tsunami disaster caused by Sumatra Earthquake in 2004, to the current technical cooperation including afore mentioned development of the new master plan, as well as other projects such as a project on flood countermeasures for Thailand’s agriculture sector to complement the master plan. The two leaders welcomed the plan to hold a ministerial-level bilateral meeting between the disaster management authorities of each country aimed at enhancing disaster management capacities through the sharing of experience and knowledge of natural disasters.

2.4 Prime Minister Yingluck welcomed the commitment of the Government of Japan and the Japanese private sector to the development of Thailand’s infrastructure, including post-flood recovery and reconstruction projects. The two leaders recognized that cooperation including that through Japan’s technologies would contribute to the development of the Thai economy and society in such areas as space technology, high-speed and urban rail, ICT infrastructure. The two leaders shared the importance to further promote bilateral cooperation in those fields. In this connection, the two leaders took note that Japan is conducting the preliminary feasibility study on high-speed rail links on Bangkok-Chiangmai and Bangkok-Rayong routes.

2.5 The two leaders reaffirmed the importance of the Japan-Thailand Economic Partnership Agreement (JTEPA) as an instrument for further strengthening the economic relationship between the two countries and reaffirmed the intention to facilitate the smooth implementation and operation of the Agreement.

(Political and Security Areas)

2.6 The two leaders recognized the importance of frequent visits and dialogues on political and security issues at every level, such as the Japan-Thailand Political Partnership Consultations, and Politico-Military (PM) and Military-Military (MM) Dialogues. The two leaders also shared the importance to strengthen these high-level dialogues for the close bilateral

cooperation to contribute to the stable regional security environment.

2.7 Noting the close cooperation between defense authorities implemented thus far over a broad range of areas such as reciprocal visits of high-ranking officials, participation by both countries in multilateral exercises including Cobra Gold, reciprocal port visits by the vessels and aircraft of the maritime and air defense authorities of each country, and the acceptance of Thai cadets and officers by the educational institutes of the Ministry of Defense of Japan, the two leaders emphasized the importance of this cooperation for the robust bilateral relationship. Recalling the search and rescue operation by the Japanese Maritime Self Defense Force (JMSDF) deployed as a Japan Disaster Relief Team in the wake of the tsunami caused by the Sumatra Earthquake in 2004, the two leaders recognized the importance of the multilateral exercises in the field of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief on various occasions, such as the arrangement under the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus).

(Exchange between the people of both countries)

2.8 The two leaders shared the view that the long-running exchange of youth, including studying abroad, has been the foundation of mutual understanding between the two countries. Prime Minister Yingluck expressed her appreciation for the role played by the Ship for South East Asia Youth Program (SSEAYP) and the Japan-East Asia Network of Exchange for Students and Youths (JENESYS) in achieving this goal. Prime Minister Yingluck communicated her hope that youth exchange would grow.

2.9 Prime Minister Noda stated his decision to launch the Kizuna (Bond) Project, a new youth exchange project aimed at enhancing global understanding of Japan's recovery efforts following the Great East Japan Earthquake.

2.10 The two leaders reaffirmed the importance of the role of tourism in the reconstruction of the disaster-affected areas and decided to make efforts to expedite tourism exchange between the two countries. The two leaders warmly welcomed the tourism promotion agreement between the Japanese side and the Thai side, namely Sendai City and the Tohoku Tourism Promotion Organization, and Tourism Authority of Thailand signed on January 27, 2012. Prime Minister Noda expressed his appreciation for Thailand's initiative to send a large delegation of observers from the Thai tourism industry shortly after the earthquake disaster, which resulted in the rapid recovery of the number of Thai tourists visiting Japan. Prime Minister Yingluck thanked Japan for dispatching a delegation of observers to promote Japanese

tourism in Thailand soon after the flood disaster to reciprocate the above mentioned courtesy shown by Thailand, and for sending an expert team to the historical site of Ayutthaya to work on protecting the historical ruins there.

3. Cooperation on Regional and International Issues

(Cooperation in East Asia)

3.1 The two leaders reaffirmed their intention to strengthen cooperation to build the ASEAN Community in 2015 based on the Bali Declaration and the Plan of Action adopted at the 14th ASEAN-Japan Summit in November 2011. Prime Minister Yingluck expressed her gratitude for Japan's contribution to the enhancement of ASEAN connectivity including support for development of East-West Economic Corridor (EWEC) and Southern Economic Corridor (SEC) and stressed the importance of the World Economic Forum on East Asia under the theme of connectivity to be held in Bangkok during 30 May-1 June, 2012. Prime Minister Noda reiterated Japan's desire to continue to support ASEAN integration. In this regard, Prime Minister Yingluck also explained Thailand's initiative on "ASEAN + 3 Partnership on Connectivity" through enhancing physical, institutional and people-to-people connectivity in the East Asia region, and Prime Minister Noda expressed his appreciation on Thailand's initiative towards enhancing connectivity beyond ASEAN. The two leaders shared the importance of strengthening cooperation in various regional fora such as the ASEAN-Japan Summit, ASEAN+3 Summit, the East Asia Summit (EAS), and ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) to build an open and multi-layered network in this region. In particular, regarding the EAS, the two leaders reaffirmed their support to promote cooperation on political and security issues, including maritime cooperation, and cooperation on economic and other global issues of common concern. The two leaders reaffirmed the importance of promoting and deepening cooperation on maritime issues, including maritime security and maritime safety, in the region, on the basis of mutual interests and in accordance with universally-agreed principles of international law such as freedom of navigation, safety of navigation, unimpeded commerce and peaceful settlement of disputes, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and other relevant international maritime law. The two leaders shared the view of developing an expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (AMF) meeting as a track 1.5 format, back-to-back with the AMF meeting, in order to promote further regional cooperation on maritime issues. The two leaders reaffirmed that ASEAN Plus Working Groups need to be established without delay to accelerate the discussion on a regional comprehensive economic partnership to commence the negotiation, mindful of the studies on the East Asia Free Trade Area (EAFTA) and Comprehensive Economic Partnership for East Asia

(CEPEA). The two leaders decided to enhance mutual support to ensure food safety and food security by promoting innovation, technological and investment cooperation to improve standards of food production. As co-lead countries in the establishment of ASEAN Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve (APTERR), Japan and Thailand look forward to the early implementation of the APTERR Agreement. Japan welcomes Thailand's offer to continue to host the APTERR Secretariat.

(Mekong-Japan Cooperation)

3.2 Prime Minister Yingluck stated that Japan is a long-standing, reliable and indispensable partner for the Mekong region countries and that the relationship between the Mekong countries and Japan had progressed substantially since the 1st Mekong-Japan Summit in 2009. Prime Minister Noda expressed his firm belief that Thailand, located geographically in the center of the Mekong sub-region and playing a constructive role in regional integration, will continue to contribute to the development of the region. The two leaders expressed their high regard for the series of positive measures taken by the Government of Myanmar towards democracy and national reconciliation, and expressed their intention to further support efforts of the Government of Myanmar. The two leaders also shared the importance of extending support for poverty reduction and economic development in Myanmar. The two leaders confirmed their cooperation towards the success of the 4th Mekong-Japan Summit, scheduled to be held in Tokyo on April 21, 2012.

(Korean Peninsula)

3.3 The two leaders reaffirmed that the two countries will continue their close contact towards the common goal of peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula. The two leaders welcomed the result of the recent dialogue between the US and the Democratic Peoples' Republic of Korea (DPRK) as an important step, and the two leaders also confirmed that they will continue to urge DPRK to take concrete actions to demonstrate its will to seriously implement its commitments, including its denuclearization, under the 2005 Six-Party Talks Joint Statement. The two leaders reiterated their commitment to fully implementing the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions. The two leaders re-emphasized the importance of addressing issues of humanitarian concerns of the international community. In this regard, Prime Minister Yingluck expressed her understanding of Japan's concern and position regarding the abduction issue.

(Environment and Climate Change)

3.4 The two leaders expressed their appreciation of the results of the 17th Conference of the

Parties to the United Nations Framework on Climate Change Convention (COP 17) towards the formulation of a future framework. Prime Minister Yingluck expressed her gratitude for Japan's bilateral cooperation on climate change and the environment to enhance the Thailand's capacity to deal with this issue. Prime Minister Noda put forward Japan's East-Asia Low Carbon Growth Partnership Initiative and expressed his desire to work with Thailand to advance various efforts, including the development of a bilateral offset credit mechanism, in order to achieve the goals of the initiative. Keeping in mind that action on climate change is also important from the view point of disaster prevention, the two leaders concurred in working together to realize low-carbon growth. The two leaders recognized the importance of the cooperation between the two countries on environment friendly and sustainable industrial production.

(Cooperation on Disaster Prevention)

3.5 The two leaders reaffirmed the importance to share with other countries the experiences and lessons learned from the Great East Japan Earthquake and the great floods in Thailand and contribute to building resilient societies. The two leaders stressed the importance of strengthening the capacity of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre) and coordination between the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center in Thailand and the Asian Disaster Reduction Center in Japan in order to strengthen regional measures for disaster risk reduction. Prime Minister Noda stated that Japan will hold a High-Level International Conference on Large-scale Natural Disasters in the disaster-stricken Tohoku region of Japan in 2012 and expressed his government's intention to host the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Reduction in 2015 in Japan. Prime Minister Yingluck welcomed Japan's initiatives in this field and expressed her intention to cooperate with Japan to make these conferences a success.

(United Nations Security Council Reform)

3.6 The two leaders confirmed the importance of joint efforts to achieve early reform of the United Nations Security Council. Prime Minister Yingluck expressed strong support for Japan's candidature for permanent membership in a reformed Security Council, and Prime Minister Noda appreciated Thailand's continued support for it.