

Opening Remarks for the Press Conference

Good morning. I am Kiya Masahiko, a new Ambassador of the Mission of Japan to ASEAN. Thank you very much for attending this press conference.

This morning, I had the honour to present a letter of the Foreign Minister of Japan Hayashi Yoshimasa to ASEAN Secretary-General Lim Jock Hoi on my appointment. We discussed the ASEAN-Japan relationship, in particular the upcoming 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation. It is a great honour to serve as Ambassador of the Mission of Japan to ASEAN at this significant juncture for the benefit of Japan, ASEAN, the region, and the world.

Taking this opportunity, I would like to express my aspiration for the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation.

Simply put: To raise the ASEAN – JAPAN relationship to a new stage across various fields from peace and security and economy to global issues culture and exchange from the benefit of ASEAN, JAPAN, the region, and the world.

Japan has been a staunch supporter of ASEAN Centrality and unity. After the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific was adopted in 2019, Japan expressed its support for AOIP ahead of other dialogue partners and has been continuously doing

so. As many as 89 AOIP cooperation projects in line with its four priority areas demonstrate that we keep our words.

And we listen closely to ASEAN's voice, we promise to continue our cooperation within ASEAN, through the Japan ASEAN Integration Fund, JAIF.

To conclude, I would like to reiterate that I look forward to working with the ASEAN Secretariat, and Cambodia and Indonesia, the Chairs of this year and next year, and other ASEAN members as well as dialogue partners.

As the official catchphrase of the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation shows, we would like to make the Golden Jubilee of ASEAN-Japan relations a year to highlight and enhance our ever-growing Golden Friendship with Golden Opportunities.

Thank you very much for your attention.