

**Commemorative Remarks by KIYA Masahiko, Ambassador of Japan
to ASEAN
Special IGA (Industry-Government-Academic) Dialogue for Actions:
Acceleration of AOIP Mainstreaming for Peace, Stability and
Prosperity for the People in the Indo-Pacific
19 December 2022, ASEAN Japan Hall x Zoom**

Excellencies,
Distinguished panelists,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Good afternoon. I am Kiya Masahiko, a new Ambassador of Japan to ASEAN. It is an immense honour to be given an opportunity to make commemorative remarks for this important and timely forum.

First of all, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the ASEAN-Japan Centre for hosting this forum, as well as to all panelists and participants for joining this event.

The Centre is making great contributions, particularly for today, to invite panelists from various fields, namely the civil society, academia, industries, and governments, to exchange their diverse views and ideas. Together, we can further strengthen ASEAN-Japan cooperation towards acceleration of ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) Mainstreaming.

This forum is timely and relevant for three reasons:

First, next year is the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation. Today's forum is the very first event to commemorate this long-standing ASEAN-Japan partnership. This is once in 10 years, or once in 50 years, indeed!

Prime Minister Kishida stated at the International Conference on The Future of Asia in May this year that we will take next year's opportunity to enhance ASEAN-Japan relationship to a new stage.

There will be a Commemorative Summit in Tokyo in December next year as agreed at the ASEAN-Japan Summit just last month. We should never miss this miraculous opportunity.

Second, AOIP is gaining greater importance in this region today. Against the background of growing attention to the Indo-Pacific, AOIP was adopted by ASEAN leaders in 2019, and then Japan expressed its support for AOIP in 2020 ahead of other Dialogue Partners by adopting a Joint Statement with ASEAN leaders on Cooperation on AOIP.

In addition, it was just last month that the ASEAN leaders adopted the Declaration on Mainstreaming Four Priority Areas of the AOIP within ASEAN-Led Mechanisms, which clearly demonstrated ASEAN's enthusiasm for keeping the momentum for further steps.

So, what happens next? As you may know, Prime Minister Kishida announced at the Shangri-La Dialogue in June this year to lay out a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Plan for Peace" by next Spring. I would like to see constructive inputs to develop our new policy.

Third, in today's dialogue, we have multi-stakeholders with various backgrounds. AOIP covers a wide range of issues under four pillars, i.e., Maritime Cooperation, Connectivity, SDGs, and Economic and other possible areas of cooperation.

The Government of Japan is just one of many actors to work on AOIP. To facilitate concrete actions to accelerate AOIP Mainstreaming, we need to engage people from diverse fields and countries.

In particular, Indonesia, the Chair of ASEAN next year, is making greatest efforts in mainstreaming AOIP. We will support Indonesia's Chairmanship next year under the theme "ASEAN Matters: Epicentrum of Growth". I look forward to Mr. Sidharto's remarks today.

These are the reasons why AOIP Mainstreaming is our key agenda and that this forum is timely and relevant for both ASEAN and Japan.

We must note that today's discussion is taking place as we face complex challenges of the COVID 19 pandemic, frequent natural disasters, and various conflicts including Russia's aggression against Ukraine that violates international law.

This forum is precisely what we need now. We welcome your new ideas to make our Golden Jubilee an ever-growing Golden Friendship with Golden Opportunities.

The relationship between ASEAN and Japan is a two-way street; we act and proceed together. Let today's dialogue be a good opportunity to learn mutually our experiences to work for the future.

Thank you very much for your attention.

(End)