

**Newsletter from the Ambassador of Japan to ASEAN**  
**No. 5: How to explain the significance of ASEAN-Japan cooperation**

28 April 2023



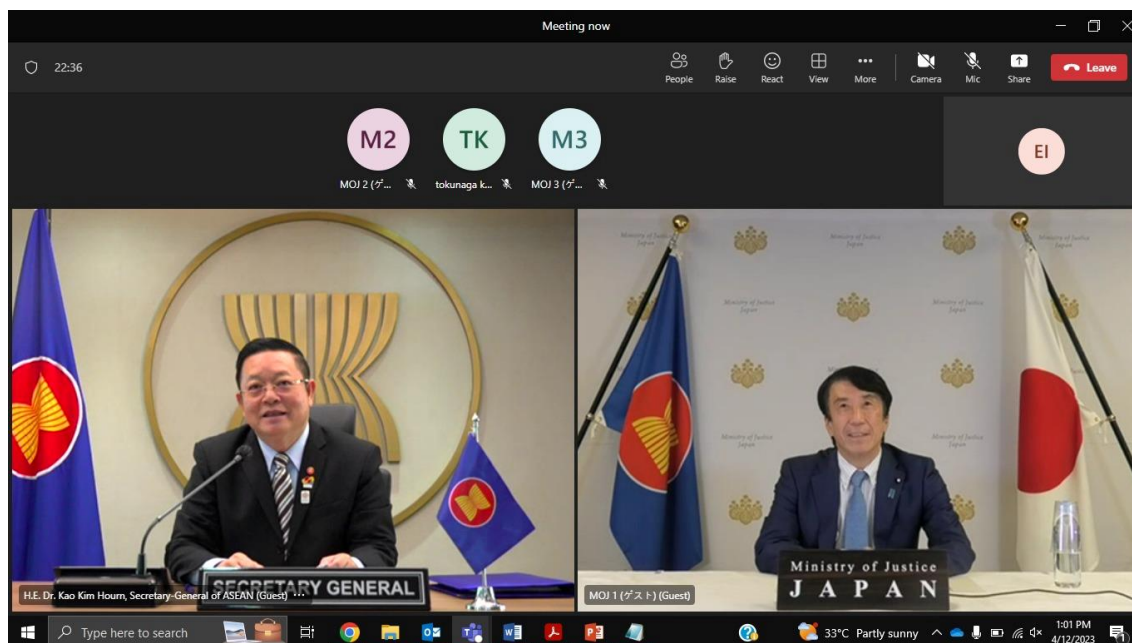
Lecture at the Jakarta Japanese School (14 April 2023)

How were your Eid holidays? I stayed in Jakarta for the holidays and had a relaxing weekend.

Since this April, after my last business trip to Japan in late March, I have been exchanging views with officials from both ASEAN and Japan and working daily to formulate concrete cooperation projects suitable for commemorating this great milestone of the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation. Parallel to this, I gave a lecture on the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation and was interviewed by a news agency.

Through this, I felt it is crucially important to convey the significance of the cooperation to the public (in both ASEAN and Japan) in an easy-to-understand manner.

In this edition of the Ambassador's Newsletter, I would like to think, together with you, about the significance of ASEAN-Japan cooperation, the effective ways to communicate it, and introducing a series of events held this month.



Virtual call between ASEAN Secretary-General H.E. Dr Kao Kim Hourn  
and Minister of Justice of Japan H.E. Mr. SAITO Ken  
(12 April 2023, provided by the ASEAN Secretariat)

### ● ASEAN-Japan Cooperation for Promoting the Rule of Law

A series of events are scheduled to take place in Japan to mark the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation. Firstly, from 5-9 June, the ASEAN-Japan Business Week in Tokyo to be held in a hybrid format, co-organised by the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, the ASEAN Secretariat and other organisations. Secondly, from 6-7 July, the [ASEAN-Japan Special Meeting of Justice Ministers](#) (AJSMJ) and the ASEAN-G7 Justice Ministers' Interface are to take place.

In preparations for these, on 6 April, I paid a courtesy call on Minister of Law and Human Rights of the Republic of Indonesia, H.E. Mr. Yasonna.H.Laoly, to discuss the upcoming AJSMJ and related meetings. Japan has been providing support for [the legal technical assistance in Indonesia](#) for many years, and JICA Expert, Ms. OIKAWA Hiromi, also attended at the courtesy call. She arrived in Indonesia last year, but was already very fluent in Bahasa Indonesia, and I felt that such as expert is the foundation of mutual trust.

On 12 April, Minister of Justice, H.E. Mr.SAITO Ken, held [a web conference with Secretary-General of ASEAN H.E. Dr. Kao Kim Hourn](#). Minister Saito and Secretary-General Kao confirmed the commitment to the success of the AJSMJ, and reaffirmed to further strengthen cooperation in the field of law and justice. In addition, Minister Saito requested Secretary-General Kao to attend the AJSMJ and related meetings in-person and received a positive response. I hope that, through this next meeting taking the occasion of the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation, [ASEAN-Japan cooperation to promoting the rule of law in progress](#).



Toyota electric vehicle handover ceremony (17 April 2023).

● **ASEAN Summit Management and Cooperation on Decarbonisation.**

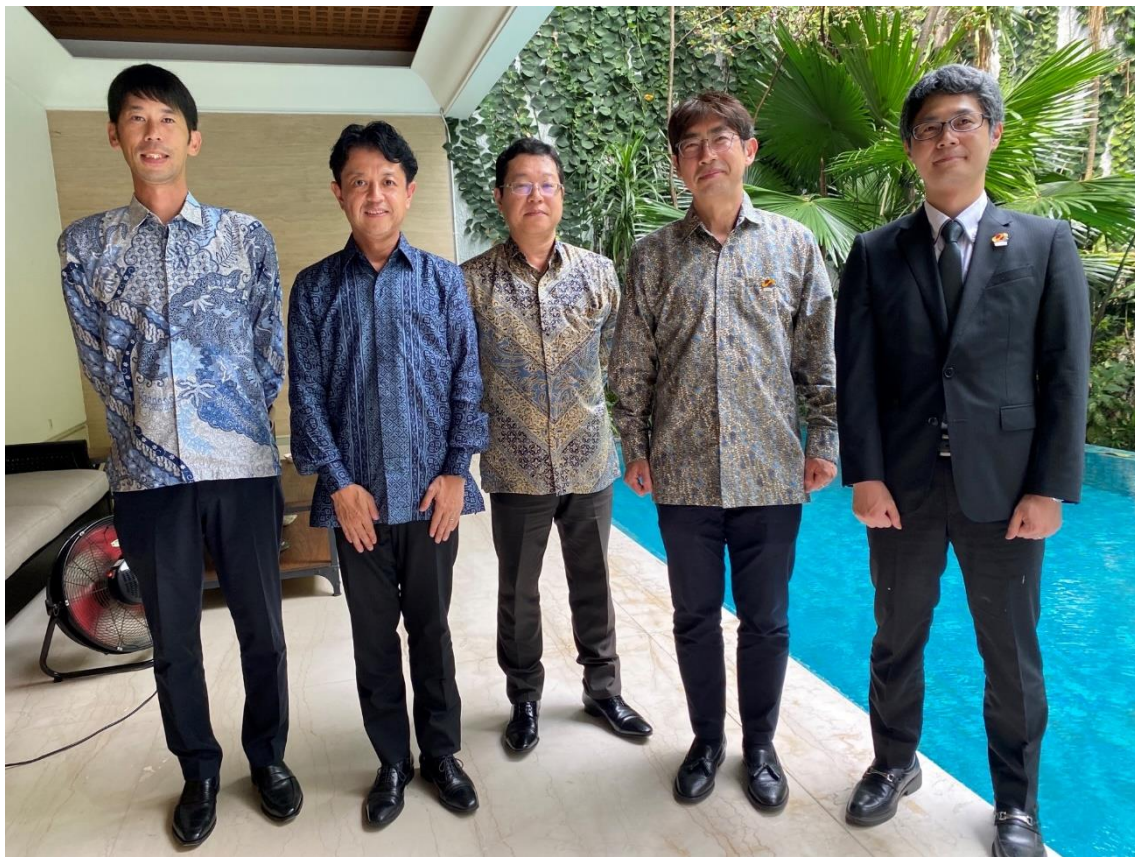
On 17 April, I attended [a ceremony for the handover of Toyota Astra Motor \(TAM\) battery electric vehicles \(BEVs\)](#) to the ASEAN Summit Heads of State and Government.

The 65 BEVs (Toyota bZ4X) provided will be used as official vehicles for members of the delegation to the ASEAN Summit scheduled to be held in Labuan Bajo, Indonesia in May.



Mr. UEDA Hiroyuki, President of TAM, and Mr. Setuja Utama, Under-secretary of the Ministry of State Secretariat of Indonesia, attended the ceremony and delivered speeches, followed by a group photo and interviews in front of the BEV. A number of Indonesian and Japanese media covered the ceremony, which was then widely reported.

Decarbonisation is also a major challenge in ASEAN. With this, Japanese companies are contributing to highlight decarbonisation and to allow the smooth running of the ASEAN Summit with the handover of BEVs. This shows the commitment of Japan to enhance its continuous impact and presence in the region.



Discussion with NEC (18 Apr 2023).

#### ● ASEAN-Japan Cooperation in the Digital Sector.

On 18 April, NEC Asia Pacific President and CEO Mr. KOIDE Koichiro took an opportunity during his visit to Jakarta to exchange views on promoting ASEAN-Japan cooperation in the digital sector.

I found though my discussion with many ASEAN stakeholders that the digital

section is one of the most important areas for cooperation with Japan in their expectations. Japan established ASEAN-Japan Cybersecurity Capacity Building Centre (AJCCBC) with ASEAN in Bangkok Thailand. More than 700 participants completed the trainings at AJCCBC. NEC is also cooperating in the operation of this trainings.

The possibilities of ASEAN-Japan cooperation are enormous. To name but a few, the use of digital technology to improve connectivity and to support start-ups within and beyond ASEAN. Taking the opportunity of 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation this year, I would like to listen closely to the needs from ASEAN member states, the ASEAN Secretariat and other stakeholders. We hope to realise high-impact initiatives that will lead to the co-creation of value between ASEAN and Japan.



Lecture at the Japanese School of Jakarta (14 April 2023)

#### ● Lecture at the Jakarta Japanese School

As part of the ASEAN-Japan cooperation, an ASEAN official advised, "Japan is doing good cooperation, but it is not well known. We should devise a way of communicating (branding) so that it can be widely understood." I keenly felt that

the first step to strengthen ASEAN-Japan cooperation is to be recognised and understood by the people of both Japan and ASEAN.

On 14 April, I was given an opportunity to give a [lecture on the 50<sup>th</sup> Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation and the 65th Anniversary of the establishment of the diplomatic relations between Japan and Indonesia](#) to about 150 junior high school students of the [Jakarta Japanese School \(JJS\)](#). This was part of the junior high school's integrated learning programme. To make the lecture easy to understand, I began by asking these questions: 'Why and what are we learning?', 'What is ASEAN?', 'What is Indonesia?', and 'How to build the future?', [including a video clip](#). As an outcome of the session, I gave the students the task of making a proposal directed to the Prime Minister and a statement of their own commitment.

In June, JJS will visit the ASEAN Secretariat to view and they also present the Proposal and Statement of Determination in late July. I will passionately expand the understanding and action of the next generation through meeting the children who will build the future of Japan and ASEAN.



Interview by Antara News Agency (13 April 2023)

## ● How to Communicate the Significance and Potential of ASEAN-Japan Cooperation



On 13 April, I was interviewed by Indonesia's Antara News Agency. I was asked about 'Indonesia's assessment as the current ASEAN Chairmanship', 'the significance of the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation', and 'responses to geopolitical tensions'. The interview was broadcasted immediately on [the Antara News Agency](#) and [the Indonesian Government website](#).

To explain more about the progress and challenges at this moment, after the kick-off event at the beginning of the year amid before the preparations of the upcoming Special Summit, I wrote a short article in Japanese [entitled "ASEAN and Japan - How to make the most of the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation"](#), which was posted on the Kasumigaseki Foreign Service Association (KaFSA) website. Please have a look if you have time.

ASEAN-Japan cooperation can only be appreciated and developed when it is widely known to the people both sides, including the next generation and opinion leaders. I will continue our work and efforts to further publicize the significance and potential of ASEAN-Japan cooperation towards the Commemorative Summit in December. We hope that you too will help us share information.

Ambassador of Japan to ASEAN  
KIYA Masahiko