

**Newsletter from the Ambassador of Japan to ASEAN**  
**No. 6 How to make the most of the ASEAN-led mechanisms**

31 May 2023



The Second East Asia Summit Ambassadors' Meeting in Jakarta (EAMJ) and Retreat (23 May 2023)

How did you spend the month of May? Here, in ASEAN, the 42<sup>nd</sup> ASEAN Summit took place on 10-11 May in the tourist city of Labuan Bajo. While only ASEAN Member States participated in this meeting, it was announced on this occasion that the ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit for the 50<sup>th</sup> Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation will be held in Tokyo on 16-18 December ([Chairman's Statement](#)).

Toward the year-end ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit, we hosted a dignitary visit, attended a symposium, and held meetings with the ASEAN Secretariat to develop cooperation projects. In addition, the Second East Asia Summit (EAS) Ambassadors' Meeting in Jakarta (EAMJ) and Retreat were held in Bandung. I realized that the ASEAN-led partnership framework is playing a major role for peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region.

In this edition of the Ambassador's Newsletter, we would like to introduce a series of events and consider, together with you, on how we should make the most of the ASEAN-led mechanisms.



ASEAN Secretary-General H.E. Dr. Kao, Chairperson Mr. HAGIUDA and Acting Chairperson Mr. AKAZAWA of Policy Research Council of the LDP  
(2 May 2023, provided by the ASEAN Secretariat)

### ●Policy Research Council (LDP) Mr. HAGIUDA Visit to Jakarta

[On 1-2 May, Chairperson Mr. HAGIUDA Koichi and Acting Chairperson Mr. AKAZAWA Ryosei of Policy Research Council of the Liberal Democratic Party \(LDP\) visited Jakarta](#) and met with key people in Indonesia and ASEAN. This visit was made to strengthen the strategic partnership with Southeast Asia on the 50<sup>th</sup> Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation.

During the meeting with ASEAN Secretary-General H.E. Dr Kao Kim Hourn, Mr. HAGIUDA explained the announcement by Prime Minister KISHIDA in March of an additional USD 100 million contribution to the Japan ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF) to mainstream the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP). They exchanged views to further strengthen ASEAN-Japan relations, including the promotion of economic ties and people-to-people exchanges.

In a meeting with President of the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA), Prof. NISHIMURA Hidetoshi, they discussed the initiative of the Centre for Digital Innovation and Sustainable Economy to be launched in ERIA this summer and visited the planned area.

Mr. HAGIUDA has worked hard over the years to strengthen relations with ASEAN, including when he was the Minister of Economy Trade and Industry as the previous post. I felt his strong enthusiasm to make the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation a great success.



Joint Seminar with CSIS and ERIA (15 May 2023)

#### ●Joint Seminar with CSIS and ERIA

On 15 May, in Jakarta in a hybrid format. The main theme was Building on the ASEAN-Japan Golden Jubilee for a Shared Economic Future, which covered a wide range of issues from geopolitical challenges to energy transition and digitalization.

On the opening session, CSIS Executive Director Yose Riza Damuri and I gave welcoming and [opening remarks](#), and then the Minister of Energy and Mineral



Resources for the Republic of Indonesia, H.E. Arifin Tasrif, gave a keynote speech. In the panel discussion session, panelists of public and private sector from CSIS and ERIA, as well as Japan, Singapore, Vietnam, Malaysia and other parts of the region discussed on various issues that Japan and ASEAN should address in the future and setting the direction of our cooperation.

I attended the whole day and was strongly impressed by strong interest in ASEAN-Japan cooperation, seeing more than 50 people in the audience actively asking questions in all sessions. Archived videos of the day ([Opening ceremony / Session1 \(Geopolitical Challenges\)](#), [Session 2 \(Energy Transition\)](#), and [Session 3 \(Digitalization\)](#)) can viewed and presentation materials can be downloaded from [the website](#).



The ASEAN-Japan Risk Management Plan Symposium 2023  
(24 May 2023)

## ● ASEAN-Japan Cooperation Implementation and Project Development

On 24 May, [the ASEAN-Japan Risk Management Plan \(RMP\) Symposium 2023](#) was held at a hotel in Jakarta. This is a project co-organised by the Indonesian

FDA (BPOM), the Faculty of Pharmacy University of Indonesia (FPUI) and the Pharmaceutical and Medical Devices Agency (PMDA) to promote pharmaceutical regulatory as part of ASEAN Connectivity, through the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF).

While [last year's event](#) was held online, this year's event was held for the first time in a hybrid format, with approximately 300 participants at the venue and 250 online. The following day, 25-26 May, approximately 40 regulators from all ASEAN Member States attended the workshop.

I recognize the immense benefit of this initiative to both Japan and ASEAN, as it utilises Japanese knowledge to accelerate the approval and use of medicines within ASEAN.

To further develop such beneficial cooperation projects to announce at the ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit, I had intensive discussions with four Deputies Secretary-General of ASEAN and their respective Directorate from this month.



The Second East Asia Summit Ambassadors' Meeting in Jakarta (EAMJ)  
and Retreat (23 May 2023)

## ●East Asia Summit Ambassadors' Meeting in Jakarta and Retreat

While I observed the developments of ASEAN-Japan cooperation as above, I also strongly felt ASEAN's important role in the Indo-Pacific region as I took part in the East Asia Summit (EAS) Ambassadors' Meeting in Jakarta (EAMJ) and Retreat in Bandung.

ASEAN not only aims to realise community through deeper coordination and cooperation among its member states, but also promote partnerships with a wide range of countries and regions, including Dialogue Partners. In this context, it has established and institutionalized a multi-layered "ASEAN-led mechanisms", including ASEAN+1, ASEAN+3 (APT), East Asia Summit (EAS), the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting (ADMM-Plus) and ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF)

The EAMJ and Retreat, which I attended this time, brought together Ambassadors and officials from ASEAN Member States and eight countries – China, Japan, South Korean, Australia, NZ, India, US and Russia – taking part in EAS to Bandung. We frankly exchanged views on various issues, including the regional situation, in preparation for the EAS Summit in September.

I recognised how the representatives of major countries in the Indo-Pacific region, whose complex relationships range from severe confrontation to intimate collaboration, are able to advance dialogue and cooperation together to realise peace and stability under a permanent framework. This was made possible thanks to ASEAN playing a central role in creating such a space and building momentum.





“Future of Asia”, a speech by Prime Minister KISHIDA  
(25 May 2023, provide by Prime Minister’s Office of Japan)

### ●How to make the most of the ASEAN-led mechanisms

On 25 May, Prime Minister KISHIDA delivered [a policy speech](#) at the Nikkei Forum on the “Future of Asia” meeting in Tokyo. In his speech, he summarized the outcomes of the recent G7 Hiroshima Summit and reiterated the “Indo-Pacific Way” as an important element of a “New Plan for a Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) in March this year, as follows:

The Indo-Pacific approach is to accept diverse values, cultures, and histories; to respect and be close to others; to promote cooperation through dialogues; and to deal with various challenges in a realistic and practical manner.

Japan has long valued this way of thinking. Japan's ASEAN diplomacy has been built on "heart to heart" relationships and cooperation as "equal partners." This is the very practice of the "Indo-Pacific approach."

This year marks the 50th anniversary of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation. The effectiveness and significance of this approach has

been proven by looking at today's ASEAN-Japan relations, which are firmly bound by mutual "trust" and "respect." (...)

Through this Indo-Pacific approach, Japan will contribute to peace, stability, and prosperity in Asia in its own way.

This year's ASEAN Chair, Indonesia, is trying to enforce collaboration rather than rivalry in the region through the mainstreaming of the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP). Such an approach resonates with the Indo-Pacific Way. AOIP and FOIP also share essential principles.

Indonesia intends to use the existing ASEAN-led mechanisms in monitoring and following up on AOIP mainstreaming. For Japan, this would include ASEAN+3 and EAS as well as ASEAN-Japan.

On the occasion of the 50<sup>th</sup> Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation when the relation has advanced, I feel that it is important to go beyond mere ASEAN-Japan cooperation and use the ASEAN-led mechanisms to expand the cooperation step by step. In other words, ASEAN-Japan will work together to form the core of Indo-Pacific cooperation and promote the realization of a free and open international order based on the rule of law. With this in mind, I would like to formulate cooperation projects in consultation with a wide range of stakeholders in this region.

Ambassador of Japan to ASEAN  
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