

Opening Remarks
by Mr. KIYA Masahiko, Ambassador of Japan to ASEAN,
at AHA Centre Workshop
“Lessons Learned from Humanitarian Operations in Turkey and Syria”

Mr. Krishna Putra Tanaja, Deputy Executive Director of AHA Centre,
Distinguished participants from ASEAN and Dialogue Partners,
Ladies and gentlemen,

(Introduction)

First and foremost, I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to the AHA Centre for organising this important workshop and to all the speakers and participants from across the region for their attendance.

It is my pleasure that this workshop is supported by the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund, JAIF, and is held in the momentous 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation.

Our support for this workshop is in line with ASEAN's efforts on the mainstreaming and implementation of the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific, AOIP, which includes “Disaster Risk Reduction and Management” as one of items under “Economic and Other Possible Areas of Cooperation”.

(ASEAN's Response to the Turkey-Syria Earthquake)

On 6 February this year, a big earthquake struck Turkey and Syria and caused numerous casualties and severe damages. Emergency humanitarian assistance was extended from all over the world.

A number of ASEAN Member States have also provided assistance in response to the earthquake, which occurred beyond the region.

(ASEAN's Goal in the field of Disaster Management)

We are aware that ASEAN, in its ASEAN Vision 2025 on Disaster Management, has set the goal of becoming a global leader in disaster management and emergency response.

To achieve this goal, ASEAN is working to accumulate knowledge resources of best practices in disaster management at the international arena, and to establish international networks and partnerships to share expertise.

ASEAN has also set forth the theme of "One ASEAN, One Response," under which ASEAN responds to disasters both within and outside the region as "one," to achieve faster response with greater impact.

(Sharing lessons with knowledge partners)

In order to support such efforts, we believe it is timely and important to have a workshop by the AHA Centre to share experiences on humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) in response to the recent earthquake in Turkey and Syria.

Experts from a number of countries, including Japan, who actually conducted the Turkey-Syria earthquake response, are joining this workshop. I believe that these experts will share their precious experiences and lessons-learned with their counterparts in ASEAN. It is my hope that such a network of experts from ASEAN and partner countries in this field will develop in the future and support ASEAN's efforts in this field.

(Conclusion)

Recently, another major earthquake occurred in Morocco and flood disaster occurred in Libya. We pray for the victims of the disasters and hope for swift relief and recovery. These news reminded me of the timeliness of this workshop. We need to be proactively prepared to respond to disasters, rather than waiting for disasters to strike us any moment.

Let me conclude by expressing Japan's commitment to supporting the AHA Centre in this important field of disaster management, for the benefit of not only ASEAN but also the Indo-Pacific region and the world.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.

(End)