

Newsletter from the Ambassador of Japan to ASEAN
No. 12: 'Institutionalisation' and 'Visualisation'.

30 November 2023



ASEAN Foundation Model ASEAN Meeting Plus Japan 2023
(9 November 2023, Credit: ASEAN Foundation)

Today marks precisely one year since assuming my new post here in Jakarta, and this monthly newsletter has now reached the 12th edition. In November, I felt by myself the breadth and depth of ASEAN-Japan relations, as I took part in many events leading to the ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit at the end of the year. I began the month by attending the Japan-ASEAN Business Meeting (AJBM) in Singapore, followed by taking part in the Golden Friendship Walk and Run 2023 over the weekend. In the following week, I gave a media presentation on the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation, attended the ASEAN-Japan human rights dialogue, and interacted with students participating in the ASEAN Foundation Model ASEAN Meeting Plus Japan (AFMAM+J) 2023. In the next week, I attended the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM), and over the weekend, I participated in the Jak-Japan Matsuri and visited the ASEAN-Japan 50th Anniversary booth, Golden Mission. Later in the month, was the graduation ceremony of the Graduation Ceremony of the AHA Centre Executive Leadership in Emergency and Disaster Management for ASEAN Programme

(ACE LEDMP), an AOIP maritime cooperation seminar, a JETRO-organised ASEAN lecture, and a visit from the KEIDANREN. So many things took place just this month.

As preparations for the ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit draw close, I felt it was particularly important to 'institutionalise' and 'visualise' a wide range of exchange and cooperation between ASEAN and Japan so that they will take root and develop beyond the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation. In this edition of the Ambassador's Newsletter, I would like to introduce to you the events and achievements of this month and to consider with you the importance of 'institutionalising' and 'visualising' ASEAN-Japan exchange and cooperation.



49th Japan-ASEAN Business Meeting (3 Nov 2023).

ASEAN-Japan Business Meeting

On 3 November, the [ASEAN-Japan Business Meeting \(AJBM\)](#) was held in Singapore. The 49th AJBM was co-hosted by Keizai Doyukai and its counterparts from ASEAN countries since 1974. I gave a [speech](#) on the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation during the luncheon reception.

To pave the way for the 50th meeting and beyond, the modality of the meeting was reviewed and greatly transformed from this time, with support from a management consulting firm. Participants from Japan and ASEAN deliberated under the theme of “ASEAN-Japan Common Agenda in the Value Co-Creation Era: Addressing Green, Digital and Human Resources Challenges”. In particular, during the session on development, use and circulation of human resources to support value co-creation, lively brainstorming took place to prepare for the launch of a platform to place the next generation and youth as the main actors in problem solving and value creation. The next AJBM is planned to take place in Thailand next year.

On 28 November, the KEIDANREN (Japan Business Federation) visited Jakarta to exchange views with the Indonesian Government and the ASEAN Secretariat, and I briefed them on the latest developments. On 16 December, the [ASEAN-Japan Economic Co-Creation Forum](#) will be held in Tokyo. To make the most of this opportunity, the Japanese and ASEAN business organisations are accelerating their preparations.



Golden Friendship Walk and Run event (5 Nov 2023).

Organisation of exchange events

[The Golden Friendship Walk and Run](#) was held Sunday morning on 5 November,

around the GBK Stadium in Jakarta as an exchange event to celebrate the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation ([video](#)). The theme of the event is promoting decarbonisation and health through sport. Blessed with good weather, the event was attended by about 100 participants from the ASEAN Secretariat, ASEAN Member States and Dialogue Partners. It was a fun time for everyone to work up a sweat. The event also took place virtually from 1 to 29 November to include participation from all ASEAN Member States and Japan, with more than 5,000 participants.

[The Jak-Japan Matsuri](#) (Jakarta Japan Festival) was held over the weekend on 18-19 November. After attending the opening ceremony, I toured the booths at the event and felt the power of the public-private partnership. The [Golden Mission](#) booth, a game project for the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation, was very popular among children and attracted around 1,000 visitors ([video](#)), and is continuing virtually until 19 December. Hope you try answering the ASEAN-Japan quiz to win prizes.

On the evening of the 17th, a day before Jak-Japan Matsuri, we had the opportunity to have a [friendly futsal match](#) between the ASEAN Secretariat team and the Japanese Embassy and Mission team. It was a great opportunity for our colleagues from our respective workplaces to show their new faces and it was a lot of fun!



ERIA and The Jakarta Post co-hosted Editors' Roundtable (7 Nov 2023)

- **Dissemination of the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation**

[The 12th ERIA Editors' Roundtable](#), co-organised by ERIA and The Jakarta Post, was held on 7 November at the recently opened Digital Innovation and Sustainability Centre (DISC) in the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) and invited key media and experts from ASEAN and East Asian nations. The event is to deepen discussions on the theme “Challenges of Digital and Geopolitical Transformation in ASEAN”. I was given the opportunity to deliver a [keynote speech](#) on ASEAN-Japan relations on the occasion of the 50th anniversary.

On 24 November, I gave a lecture regarding the upcoming ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit during the [ASEAN Seminar](#) hosted by JETRO Jakarta Office. With approximately 40 participants at the venue in Jakarta and approximately 110 participants online, I was able to inform many stakeholders involved in ASEAN-Japan business about the latest situation and future direction of ASEAN-Japan cooperation. On the occasion of this lecture, we have compiled [a presentation](#) of about 80 pages focusing on the initiatives of the relevant ministries and agencies in a wide range of fields, which I hope you will find useful.

The latest edition (November/December) of the bimonthly diplomatic journal, [Diplomacy](#), released on 30 November, features an article on 'ASEAN and Japan in Motion' (available on Kindle on 8 December). My interview is published on the article titled, '[Japan and ASEAN - A History of Trust, A Future Together](#),' will also be available on the website.

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2nd AICHR-Japan Interface Meeting (8 November 2023).

The expansion of ASEAN-Japan cooperation.

Various events to further deepen ASEAN-Japan cooperation were held throughout this month: on 8 November, the [2nd AICHR-Japan Interface Meeting](#) was held at the ASEAN Secretariat on the sideline of the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission On Human Rights (AICHR) Special Meeting. I briefed the achievements of previous cooperation between AICHR and Japan in the areas of the rights of persons with disabilities, women's empowerment and human trafficking. We also deepen our discussions on the future direction of our cooperation.

On 20 November, I hosted [a reception](#) at my residence for the Attachment Programme Officers from Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Viet Nam (CLMV) and their supporters. The Attachment Programme, under the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF), is a training programme where three trainees from each country are dispatched to the ASEAN Secretariat for one year, and an additional four trainees from Laos, to assume the ASEAN chairmanship next year, for a period of four months. The cumulative total number of participants reached 120,

helping to strengthen administrative capacity and reduce disparities within ASEAN.

On 23 November, I attended the [Graduation Ceremony of the AHA Centre Executive Leadership in Emergency and Disaster Management for ASEAN Programme \(ACE LEDMP\)](#) organised by the ASEAN Humanitarian Assistance and Coordination for Disaster Management (AHA) Centre. Supported by JAIF a total 20 participants from ASEAN countries visited Japan for training, and I was pleased to hear that the experience made them with eye-opening. I would be grateful if you would take a look at a [short video](#) on the training and the participants' impressions.



ASEAN-Japan Ministerial Meeting on Defence
(15 Nov 2023, Credit: Indonesian Defence Ministry)

- **Ministerial meetings between Japan and ASEAN.**

On 16 November, the [ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting-Plus \(ADMM-Plus\)](#) was held in Jakarta and attended by Vice-Minister of Japan's Defence, Mr. MIYAZAWA Hiroyuki. The 18 participants are ASEAN, Japan, China, South Korea, Australia, NZ, India, the US, and Russia as same as the Ease Asia Summit (EAS).

Vice- Minister Mr. Miyazawa made remarks on the regional situation in Russia, the East and South China Seas, North Korea and Myanmar, as well as mentioning Japan's cooperation on the PKO Experts' Meeting. During the meeting Japan and the Philippines agreed on taking over the co-chairmanship of the 2024-27 Experts' Meeting from the current US and Thailand, as co-chairs of maritime security.

The day prior, the [ASEAN-Japan Defence Ministers' Informal Meeting](#) was held on 15 November, with Defence Minister H.E. Mr. KIHARA Minoru participated virtually from Tokyo. Minister Kihara presented four pillars to advance ASEAN-Japan defence cooperation to a higher level in the form of Japan-ASEAN Ministerial Initiative for Enhanced Defence Cooperation (JASMINE).

[The 21st ASEAN and Japan Transport Ministers Meeting](#) also took place in Lao PDR on 10 November, where a new action plan for the next 10 years, the Luang Prabang Action Plan, was adopted.



Japanese Food Event at the ASEAN Secretariat (21 Nov 2023).

- **ASEAN-Japan Agricultural Symposium and Japanese Food Event.**

On 21 November, the Symposium of the “Promoting Resilient and Sustainable Agriculture and Food System through Innovation: ASEAN’s Initiatives and Japan’s Contribution” was co-organized by the ASEAN Secretariat and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) with the support of ERIA was held at the ASEAN Secretariat.

In the opening session, Mr. OGAWA Ryosuke, Vice Minister of MAFF Japan, expressed his commitment to contributing to build a strong and sustainable agriculture and food system in the ASEAN region through innovation, based on the [ASEAN-Japan MIDORI Cooperation Plan](#), which was adopted at the ASEAN-Japan Ministers of Agriculture and Forestry Meeting last month. The afternoon session introduced initiatives by companies from ASEAN and Japan, including [Sagri](#), a Japanese start-up that uses satellite data and AI to analyse farmland to improve productivity and promote decarbonisation.

During the symposium's lunch, the Japanese Food Event took place at the ASEAN Secretariat, which has become an annual tradition ([video](#)). This year's theme was experience of sushi rolls and a yellowtail filleting show. Scallops from Hokkaido, yuzu juice from Kochi Prefecture and oden were also served in the booths. In addition to the symposium attendees, many people from the ASEAN Secretariat and the Missions of ASEAN Member States and Dialogue Partners participated in the event and were able to taste great Japanese food.



AOIP Marine Cooperation Seminar (24 November 2023).

● **Towards 'Institutionalisation' and 'Visibility'.**

On 24 November, the AOIP Maritime Cooperation Seminar organised by the Australia and the ASEAN Secretariat and co-organised by Indonesia, Japan and Korea. This seminar attracted enormous attention on AOIP cooperation with participants from EAS countries, following the EAS Workshop on Coastal Economy Development held in August at the initiative of Chair of ASEAN, Indonesia. We hope to make the most of the outcome of this event for the ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit next month.

I was particularly impressed by [the ASEAN Foundation Model ASEAN Meeting Plus Japan](#) (see photo, p. 1) this month. The ASEAN Foundation has been organising [Model ASEAN meetings](#) since 2015 and has been working with Dialogue Partners. This year, Japan was chosen to celebrate its 50th anniversary, and a total of 72 participants consisted of undergraduate and graduate students, 60 from ASEAN countries and 12 from Japan, held a simulation of ASEAN meetings at the ASEAN Secretariat and adopted a joint statement ([NHK report](#)).

What is most important in the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation is not to allow the new initiatives to end this year but to continue and develop with sustained outcomes by creating a mechanism to "institutionalise" and "visualise" them. We will strive to build on this year's momentum and ensure that a series of events, including this ASEAN Foundation Model ASEAN Meeting Plus Japan, to continue into next year and beyond. We hope you will continue to participate and cooperate with us.

Ambassador of Japan to ASEAN
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