

Newsletter from the Ambassador of Japan to ASEAN
No. 20: Outcome of the ASEAN-related Foreign Ministers' Meetings

30 July 2024



ASEAN-Japan Foreign Ministers' Meeting
(26 July 2024, credit: ASEAN Secretariat)

Entering the second half of 2024 with one of ASEAN's main events: the 57th ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting and related meetings, held in Vientiane, Laos, in late July. I travelled to Vientiane and was reminded of the significance of a regional framework that brings together Foreign Ministers of ASEAN and Dialogue Partners to promote dialogue and cooperation on a wide range of issues, from security to economic and social issues.

Prior to this, the East Asia Summit (EAS) Group Meeting and Retreat took place in Cianjur, near Jakarta, in early July. In these meetings, Ambassadors had social and frank discussion, as only an ASEAN-led meetings can be. The first joint coordination meeting of the ASEAN-JICA Food Value Chain Development Support Project (AJFVC) and the annual dialogue of the Federation of Japanese Chambers of Commerce and Industry in ASEAN (FJCCIA) with the Secretary-General of ASEAN were held respectively this month. Individual discussions were also held with senior ASEAN Secretariat officials to further concretise ASEAN-Japan cooperation.

In this edition of the Ambassador's Newsletter, I would like to report a series of meetings and events, including the ASEAN-related Foreign Ministers' Meetings, and reflect on their outcomes and significance with you.



Welcome Dinner at EAS Group Meeting and Retreat

(3 July 2024, credit: MOFA RI)

● EAS Group Meeting and Retreat

[The East Asia Summit \(EAS\) Group Meeting and Retreat \(an in-person informal meeting\)](#) was held on 3 July at a resort in Cianjur, near Jakarta. The EAS was initiated in 2005 by ASEAN Member States, China, Japan, Republic of Korea, Australia, India and New Zealand as a Leaders-led forum for dialogue and cooperation, which was later joined by the US and Russia in 2011. The system has been improved so that it now has Group Meetings three times a year attended by Permanent Representatives and Ambassadors in Jakarta besides the mid-year Foreign Ministers' Meeting and the Summit in the autumn. It is customary for one of three Group Meetings to be held in conjunction with a retreat outside Jakarta. This is my second time attending the retreat after last year's in [Bandung](#).

The evening before the meeting, attending Permanent Representatives and Ambassadors of the EAS had dinner. Since many complex and difficult regional and international issues were addressed in the EAS Group Meeting and the positions of countries vary. ASEAN has taken the lead in creating an atmosphere where common interests and solutions can be sought through open discussions.

The next morning has the Group Meeting followed by the retreat session, in which the chairperson presented critical issues opened for discussion. It was a great opportunity to deliberate on specific future initiatives and roles Japan should play in order to contribute to the ASEAN-led framework to bring peace, stability, prosperity.



The First ASEAN-JICA Food Value Chain Joint Coordination Committee (JCC)

(9 July 2024)

● ASEAN-JICA Food Value Chain Development Project (AJFVC)

In July, the ASEAN-JICA Food Value Chain Development Project (AJFVC) officially started. On 1 July, the former JICA to ASEAN Chief Representative YASUI Takehiro had [a farewell call](#) to Secretary-General of ASEAN Dr. Kim Hourn, and newly appointed Chief Representative TAKEDA Sachiko introduced herself at [the opening ceremony of the project office held at the ASEAN Secretariat/Headquarters](#).

The following week on 9 July, I attended [the first Joint Coordination Committee \(JCC\)](#) held in a hybrid format with the participation of Dr. Pham Quang Minh, Assistant Director of Food, Agriculture and Forestry Division from ASEAN Secretariat, about 30 experts in the agricultural sector from ASEAN Member States and project officers from JICA Headquarters. The JCC is designed to share strategic direction and policy guidance on project implementation among the officers and is scheduled to be held once a year.

In my [opening remarks](#), I confirmed that the AJFVC has been identified as an important pillar under [the ASEAN-Japan Midori Cooperation Plan](#), and that under the AJFVC, we intend to strengthen food value chains by promoting good agricultural practice (GAP) and public private partnerships (PPP).

Last month, the AJFVC organised [the first international seminar](#) in Jakarta to promote and publicise ASEAN GAP, inviting GAP experts from ASEAN countries. Japan is committed to continue supporting this project.



Dialogue between Secretary-General of ASEAN Dr. Kao Kim Hourn and the Federation of Japanese Chambers of Commerce and Industry in ASEAN (FJCCIA)
(17 July 2024, credit: ASEAN Secretariat)

● Federation of Japanese Chambers of Commerce and Industry in ASEAN (FJCCIA)

[The 16th Dialogue](#) between the Secretary-General of ASEAN and the Federation of Japanese Chambers of Commerce and Industry in ASEAN (FJCCIA) was held at the ASEAN Secretariat/Headquarters in Jakarta on 16 July. FJCCIA is a federation comprising members of Japanese Chambers of Commerce and Industry in the ASEAN region. It has a tradition of holding an annual dialogue with the participation of the Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry (METI), and JETRO, with the aim of strengthening ASEAN-Japan business relations, and I participated in the dialogue as I did [last year](#).

The FJCCIA summarised the [“FJCCIA’s Requests and Proposals from Japanese Businesses within ASEAN \(2024\)”](#) for this dialogue. It separates the requests into six pillars, to identify the challenges of the ASEAN business environment and the importance of regional integration to maximise ASEAN's competitiveness and attractiveness.

Secretary-General of ASEAN Dr. Kao Kim Hourn expressed his expectations to strengthen cooperation between ASEAN-Japan companies to further investment, promote cooperation in the digital sector, achieve carbon neutrality and strengthen supply chains.

I also attended the meeting, delivered [remarks](#), emphasising the key cooperation between the private sector of ASEAN and Japan for the urgent necessity of promoting GX/DX for both ASEAN and Japan, and promised to provide maximum support to the FJCCIA and Japanese companies in their efforts to expand ASEAN-Japan business.



Exchange of Views with Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN for Community and Corporate Affairs
H.E. Nararya Soeprapto (18 July 2024)

● Exchange of views with the ASEAN Secretariat

The Mission of Japan to ASEAN plays an important role in preparing for and following up on ASEAN-Japan high-level exchanges and various meetings and events, together with the ASEAN Secretariat.

At the end of June, Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN for Community and Corporate Affairs H.E. Nararya Soeprapto, visited Japan for the first time since taking his post, attending the International Participants Meeting/ IPM 2024 Summer in Nara for the Osaka-Kansai Expo. He also delivered remarks at [the opening ceremony](#) of [the 1st ASEAN-G7 Next Leaders Forum](#) and met with Justice Minister H.E. KOIZUMI Ryuji. Following this, on 18 July, I [paid a visit](#) to Deputy Secretary-General H.E. Nararya to discuss future arrangements for the opening and operation of the ASEAN Pavilion at the Osaka-Kansai Expo from April to October 2025, preparations for the ASEAN Day event in August, and the promotion of ASEAN-Japan law and justice cooperation.

On 19 July, Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN for Economic Community H.E. Satvinder Singh, and other relevant department directors were invited to [a breakfast meeting](#) at the Ambassador's residence to exchange views on the priorities for future cooperation, together with the Mission of Japan to ASEAN's new staffs. As the timing of the meeting was immediately after the ASEAN Senior Economic Officials Meeting (SEOM), it was a good opportunity to share views on the direction of ASEAN-Japan cooperation in a wide range of areas, including energy, digital, transport linkage, tourism, maritime, aviation, food, science, technology and innovation, and intellectual property, in preparation for the upcoming series of Ministerial-level meetings and the Summit.



East Asia Summit (EAS) Participating Countries Foreign Ministers' Meeting

(27 July 2024)

● ASEAN-related Foreign Ministers' Meetings

In late July, [the ASEAN-related Foreign Ministers' Meetings](#) were held in Vientiane, Laos, attended by Japanese Foreign Minister KAMIKAWA Yoko. I arrived a day before the Minister's visit for preliminary discussions with stakeholders and confirmation of arrangements at the venue. The ASEAN Member States' meetings had already begun, and I witnessed the orderly operation of the meetings in progress at the magnificent conference hall and was impressed by the experience and competence of the Lao PDR Chairmanship.

The ASEAN-related Foreign Ministers' Meetings constitute a colorful venue for diplomacy, bringing together Foreign Ministers of ASEAN Member States and Dialogue Partners. Under the ASEAN-led multilayered regional framework, various multilateral meetings, such as ASEAN+1, ASEAN+3 (APT), East Asia Summit (EAS), and ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) take place in addition to the ASEAN Member States meetings. Various bilateral meetings are also held to take advantage of the occasion. While countries outside ASEAN arrived and departed at different times depending on the multilateral meetings they attended, the schedule was crafted to allow all countries to conveniently attend the gala dinner on the day before the last day of the event.

Foreign Minister KAMIKAWA Yoko attended many meetings. On 26 July, [the ASEAN-Japan Foreign Ministers' Meeting](#) and [the Mekong-Japan Foreign Ministers' Meeting](#). The next day 27 July, [the ASEAN+3 \(APT\) Foreign Ministers' Meeting](#), [the EAS Foreign Ministers' Meeting](#) and [the ARF Ministerial Meeting](#), as well as bilateral meetings with Lao PDR, China, ROK, Indonesia, Norway, the UK, Singapore and Timor-Leste.



The Delegation Lounge at the ASEAN-related Foreign Ministers' Meetings
(26 July 2024)

● Outcomes of the Foreign Ministers' Meetings and Preparation for the Summit

Building on last year's Commemorative Summit on the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation, the meetings stressed the importance of Japan and ASEAN, as heart-to-heart partners, co-creating regional and global peace, stability and prosperity and further deepened the relationship based on trust at this year's Foreign Ministers' Meetings.

As concrete outcomes, all ASEAN Member States welcomed support and initiatives from Japan as a trusted partner and expressed their expectations for DX and GX, regional financial cooperation and strengthening food security. On regional affairs, Japan's position on pressing issues such as the East and South China Seas, North Korea, Myanmar, Russian aggression against Ukraine and the Middle East was communicated, and Japan's efforts regarding the offshore discharge of ALPS treated water were elaborated accordingly.

In October this year, the ASEAN-related Summit will be held in Vientiane, Lao PDR. Learning from the experience and outcomes of the meetings in this month, I will steadily prepare to make further progress. I look forward to cooperating with you in many ways in the future.

Ambassador of Japan to ASEAN
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