

Newsletter from the Ambassador of Japan to ASEAN
No. 25: Consistency and Transformation

24 December 2024

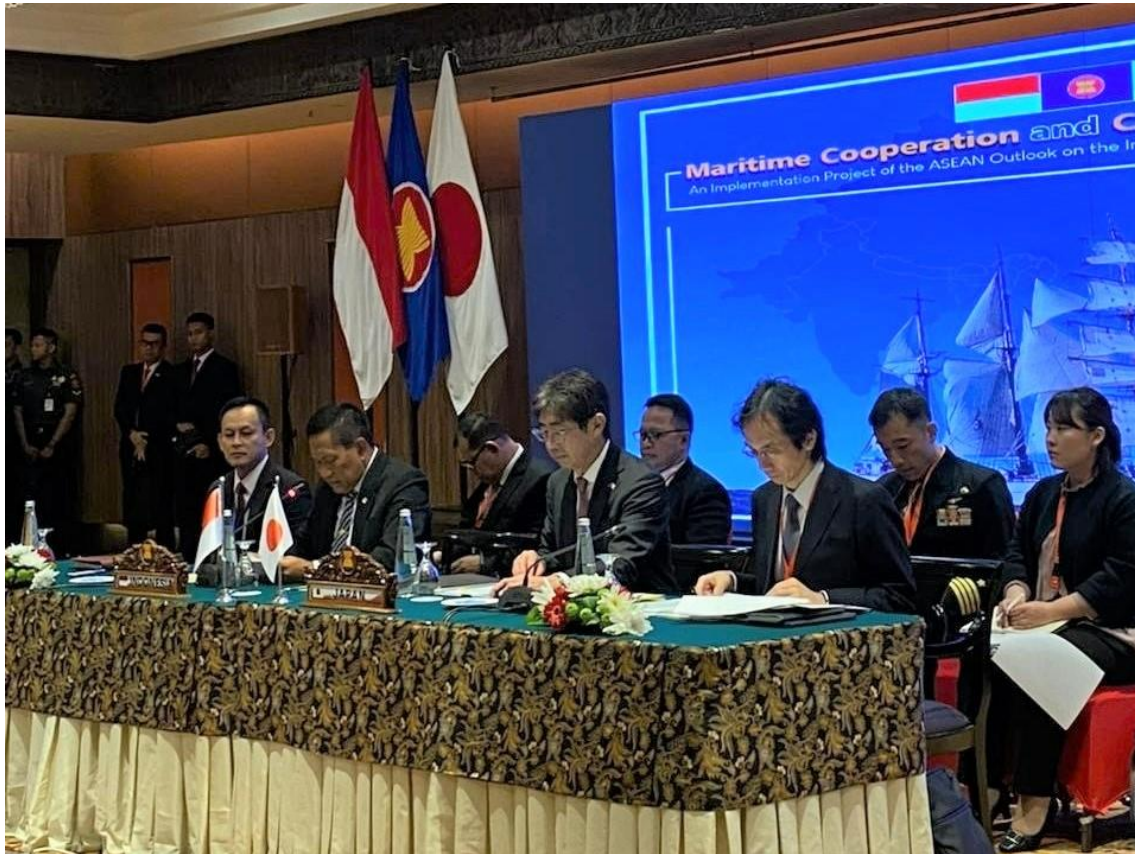


ASEAN-Japan Economic Co-Creation Forum 2024
(20 December 2024, in Tokyo, credit: ASEAN Secretariat)

How are you doing as the year draws to a close? It has already been a year since the ASEAN-Japan 50th Year Commemorative Summit was held in Tokyo in December last year with great fanfare!

Several events promoting ASEAN-Japan cooperation were also held this month. In early December, the Maritime Cooperation and Connectivity Conference, ASEAN-Japan Good Practice Seminar on Intellectual Property Rights and Fast Track Pitch were held. In the middle of December, the Southeast Asia-Quad (Japan, US, Australia and India) Dialogue was convened, and ASEAN Secretary-General H.E. Dr. Kao Kim Hourn's visit to Japan was the last event of the year.

Looking back on the progress made over the past year, I feel that what is essential for ASEAN and Japan is to make “consistent” efforts to strengthen mutual trust and to “transform” ourselves as both sides learn from and co-create with each other. As I introduce this month’s series of events, I would like to contemplate with you the future direction of ASEAN-Japan cooperation.



Indonesia-Japan Co-hosted the Maritime Cooperation and Connectivity Conference
(3 December 2024, in Jakarta)

● The Maritime Cooperation and Connectivity Conference

On 3-4 December, [the Maritime Cooperation and Connectivity Conference](#) was held in Jakarta, jointly organised by the Japanese Ministry of Defence and the Indonesian Ministry of Defence. The meeting was the first concrete project following the decision at the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting (ADMM) last November [to implement the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific \(AOIP\) from a defence perspective](#).

In addition to the countries participating in the expanded ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM-Plus), the meeting was attended by Timor-Leste, Pacific Island countries, as well as Western countries and organisations with a vision for the Indo-Pacific region. The meeting saw a lively exchange of views on common maritime security challenges and efforts to improve regional connectivity, including joint training and capacity building.

I am pleased that the Japanese Ministry of Defence, together with the Indonesian and other ASEAN Defence Ministries, is actively contributing to the realisation of a “free and open Indo-Pacific” by supporting the ASEAN-led framework and the AOIP, while further strengthening cooperation with other countries.



ASEAN-Japan Good Practice Seminar on Intellectual Property

(4 December 2024, in Jakarta, credit: ASEAN Secretariat)

● ASEAN-Japan Good Practice Seminar on Intellectual Property

On 4-5 December, the [ASEAN-Japan Good Practice Seminar on Intellectual Property](#) was held in Jakarta, jointly organised by the ASEAN Secretariat, the Asia Crime Prevention Foundation (ACPF), and JICA with the support of JAIF and with the cooperation of ERIA, WIPO, JETRO, the Japan Federation of Bar Associations, Intellectual Property Lawyers Network Japan, the Ministry of Justice of Japan and the Japan Patent Office.

Judges, lawyers and administrative officials specialising in intellectual property rights from ASEAN countries and Timor-Leste participated in the seminar and discussed issues of trademark infringement litigation and enforcement of trademark rights in the ASEAN region with Japanese intellectual property experts. [I also delivered opening remarks](#) at the seminar's opening ceremony together with Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN, H.E. Nararya S. Soeprapto,

The protection of intellectual property rights in the ASEAN region is an important issue for the further development of business between ASEAN and Japan in the future. [The ASEAN-Japan Joint Statement for Intellectual Property 2024](#), and The ASEAN-Japan Intellectual Property Action Plan 2024-2025 adopted at [The ASEAN-Japan Heads of Intellectual Property Offices Meeting](#) (in Brunei Darussalam) in September this year, and the [Joint Statement](#) and [The ASEAN-Japan Work Plan on Law and Justice](#) adopted at [the ASEAN-Japan Special Meeting of Justice Ministers](#) (in Tokyo) in July last year, also confirmed the promotion of cooperation in this field.



Indonesia-Japan Fast Track Pitch
(5 December 2024, in Jakarta, credit: JETRO)

● Fast Track Pitch

On 5 December, [the finalists](#) of the [Indonesia-Japan Fast Track Pitch](#) competition made their pitches and were presented with awards. In order to promote open innovation and co-creation through collaboration between Japanese and ASEAN companies, major Japanese and ASEAN companies present challenges and invite proposals from companies from ASEAN and Japan as well as from companies from all over the world. Following last year, this year's event is being held successively in Singapore, Vietnam, Indonesia and Thailand.

This year, 17 finalist start-ups gave pitches in response to challenges from 6 leading companies (Challenge Owners). The opening ceremony featured a video message from the Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan, H.E. Mr. MUTO Yoji, followed by remarks from Mr. Edi Prio Pambudi, Deputy Minister of the Indonesian Coordinating Ministry for Economic Affairs, Mr. Yohanes Lukiman, Chair of the Permanent Committee for Asia Pacific, Indonesian Chamber of Commerce (KADIN), Mr. ISHIKAWA Hiroshi, Industry Researcher of JETRO Singapore Office and myself.

The awards ceremony was followed by [a networking reception](#) at ERIA's E-DISC. I attended and greeted the guests and heard from representatives of several major companies and start-ups, including those from Japan and Indonesia. A number of specific collaborations were progressing also this time. I hope that these initiatives will contribute to solving social issues not only in ASEAN and Japan, but also in the Indo-Pacific region and the world.



Southeast Asia-Quad Dialogue (11 December 2024, in Jakarta)

● Southeast Asia-Quad Dialogue

On 10-11 December, the [“Southeast Asia-Quad Dialogue - ASEAN and Quad in the Indo-Pacific: exchanging views, affirming positions and exploring cooperation”](#) was held in Jakarta. The event was organised by the Indonesian think tank FPCI, with the cooperation of the Missions of Japan, US, Australia and India to ASEAN.

This dialogue is a 1.5-track meeting involving government officials and researchers from Southeast Asia and the Quad (Japan, US, Australia and India), with the aim of deepening mutual understanding and exploring cooperation opportunities.

In my [opening remarks](#) at the dinner on the first day, I stressed firstly that Quad and ASEAN share a vision, secondly that Quad offers solutions/public goods to realise that vision, and thirdly that the potential for cooperation between Quad and ASEAN is enormous.

This dialogue was also [published](#) in Malaysia, the ASEAN Chair for next year. I hope that this dialogue will be an opportunity to make steady progress on future cooperation.



Meeting between Foreign Minister H.E. Mr. IWAYA and ASEAN Secretary-General H.E. Dr. Kao Kim Hourn
(18 December 2024, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Japan)

● Visit to Japan by ASEAN Secretary-General H.E. Dr. Kao Kim Hourn

From 18-20 December, ASEAN Secretary-General H.E. Dr. Kao Kim Hourn visited Japan to attend [the ASEAN-Japan Young Business Leaders' Summit/Future Generation Business Leaders' Summit](#) in Kyoto and [the ASEAN-Japan Economic Co-Creation Forum](#) in Tokyo.

The occasion was filled with meetings with the [Foreign Minister of Japan](#), the [Minister of Defence of Japan](#), the [Minister of the Environment of Japan](#), the [Minister of Justice of Japan](#), the [Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries of Japan](#), the [Vice-Minister for International Affairs of the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan](#), the [President of the Japan Foundation](#), the [Chairman of Keidanren](#), a lecture at [Kyoto University](#), meetings with the [Ambassadors of ASEAN countries in Japan](#), the ASEAN-Japan Centre and the [International Civil and Commercial Law Centre](#). [Media coverage](#) was also arranged, resulting in an incredibly packed schedule.

Having been present at many of the series of events, I realised that ASEAN-Japan cooperation in a wide range of fields and its achievements and practical benefits are truly Japan's strengths. In particular, ASEAN has great expectation of Japan in cutting-edge technologies such as digital, AI and decarbonisation. In maintaining and strengthening the momentum of the 50th anniversary of ASEAN-Japan friendship and cooperation, I found it very meaningful to promote discussions on specific cooperation directions and ideas with various stakeholders on the occasion of the ASEAN Secretary-General's visit to Japan. Next year, the Expo 2025 Osaka-Kansai will be held in Osaka. I hope that the next Secretary-General's visit to Japan will be realised at the earliest opportunity and that cooperation will make further progress.



Lunch with the ASEAN-Japan Young Business Leaders/Future Generation Business Leaders' Summit
(19 December 2024, at Nijo Castle, Kyoto, credit: ASEAN Secretariat)

● Consistency and Transformation

Looking back on the past year since the ASEAN-Japan 50th Year Commemorative Summit was held, including the events introduced above this month, I feel that what is important for ASEAN and Japan is to consistently make efforts to strengthen mutual trust and to transform ourselves through mutual learning and co-creation.

Beyond the 50th anniversary, ASEAN and Japan have now evolved into "truly equal partners". While "consistency" is vital for our multifaceted exchange and cooperation that we have nurtured till today, Japan now needs to seriously learn from the vitality and diversity of ASEAN, which has become the epicentrum of growth in the world, and to make them Japan's competitive edge toward the future. Through such "transformation" by mutual learning, Japan and ASEAN can contribute to peace and prosperity not only in our region but also in the world.

I would like to work with a wide range of stakeholders to take concrete actions so that 2025 will be a year to further promote the vision of "trust and co-creation" through "consistency and transformation". I look forward to your continued support.

Ambassador of Japan to ASEAN
KIYA Masahiko