

**Remarks by H.E. Mr. KIYA Masahiko,  
Ambassador of Japan to ASEAN,  
at the ASEAN Blue Innovation EXPO and Business Matching**

- H.E. Satvinder Singh, Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN for ASEAN Economic Community,
- Ms. Joanne Tan, Chair, ASEAN Coordinating Committee on MSMEs,
- Mr. Norimasa Shimomura, Resident Representative, UNDP Indonesia,
- Excellencies, Distinguished participants, Ladies and gentlemen,

(1. Introduction)

Good morning! It is my great honour to have the opportunity to attend this business matching event of the ASEAN Blue Economy Innovation Project and to deliver my remarks.

Thank you all for taking time out of your busy schedules to join us today.

(2. Significance of the event)

Many of you may remember the launch event of this project in May last year. We embarked on an exciting journey of collaboration and innovation. It was our first step of triangular cooperation with ASEAN and UNDP on blue economy, following the adoption of ASEAN Blue Economy Framework in 2023.

The Blue Economy is at the forefront of global efforts to ensure sustainable development across the region from both economic and environmental perspectives. Moreover, maritime cooperation is one of the priority areas of the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP), which will contribute to peace and prosperity not only in ASEAN but also in the Indo-Pacific region as a whole.

This event marks a significant milestone in our shared commitment to environmental sustainability, social inclusivity, and economic resilience of ASEAN Member States and Timor-Leste.

Today, we are here to celebrate and support 60 extraordinary MSMEs, start-ups, academic institutions and NGOs from across the ASEAN region and Timor-Leste. These awardees represent the epitome of ingenuity and resilience, showcasing innovative solutions that address pressing economic, environmental and social challenges. Your creativity and determination serve as an inspiration to us all, and I am confident that the synergies created here will pave the way for a brighter and more sustainable future.

### (3. Acknowledgement of stakeholders)

This expo and business matching can be a testament to the power of collaboration. It brings the 60 winners and Japanese enterprises together to create a dynamic ecosystem where ideas can flourish, and impactful solutions can emerge.

This is not only a platform to showcase cutting-edge solutions but also an opportunity to forge new partnerships and drive forward the collective impact of innovation. We hope that our efforts will be scaled up through the cooperation with the Japanese private sector.

Furthermore, the key to success of this event is to create synergies between stakeholders from all sectors — from governments to businesses, from researchers to environmental advocates, from MSMEs to start-ups. Together, we are striving for solutions that will contribute to the prosperity of ASEAN, Japan and beyond.

I encourage all participants to engage actively in the event. Our collective efforts can unlock new potentials and create a ripple effect. This will benefit not only the ASEAN region but also the global community at large.

### (4. Japan's commitment to Blue Economy)

I am particularly proud to witness the strengthening of ties between Japan and the ASEAN community in innovation and sustainable development. Japan has long been a proponent of technological advancement and environmental stewardship, and we are committed to sharing our expertise and resources to support the growth of innovative solutions within the ASEAN region.

In 2023, it marked the 50th year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation, and we have formulated the ASEAN-Japan Economic Co-Creation Vision. One of the four pillars of this vision is "Promoting Open Innovation beyond Borders".

We were greatly encouraged by the fact that one of the three strategies of the Blue Economy Framework is also "Blue Science, Technology, and Innovation".

This year, Japan will continue addressing the critical challenge in the field of blue economy and finance in ASEAN countries and Timor-Leste. I would like to thank UNDP for making full use of its expertise in this area and for leading the institutional design of the project.

#### (5. Conclusion)

In closing, let us embrace this extraordinary opportunity to connect, learn, and innovate together. We would like to reaffirm our commitment to sustainable future and to realise the ASEAN region where innovation and sustainability go hand in hand.

Thank you once again to the UNDP, all the organizers, participants, and supporters of this event. I look forward to fruitful and inspiring collaboration and investment in this field and ASEAN arising from today's event!

Thank you very much for your attention.

(END)