

Newsletter from the Ambassador of Japan to ASEAN
No. 34: Towards the 20th Anniversary of the East Asia Summit (EAS)

30 September 2025



Morning Tea Network Session with the Participants of Model EAS
(19 September 2025, at the residence of the Ambassador of Australia to ASEAN)

As we enter September, preparations for the ASEAN-related Summit meetings in late October—particularly the East Asia Summit (EAS), which celebrates its 20th anniversary this year—have begun in earnest. On 10 September, I traveled to Port Dickson, Malaysia, to attend preparatory meetings. Later in the month, I participated in the 2nd Conference of the High Contracting Parties (HCPs) to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC), as well as the ASEAN Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) +3 meeting—an Ambassador-level meeting of ASEAN+3—in Jakarta. Working group meetings to negotiate the EAS outcome document are also being held daily, both in person and online. During the week of 15 September, the first-ever Model EAS, hosted by the ASEAN Foundation, was held in Jakarta, bringing together participants from 19 countries.

In parallel with these activities, various events and meetings aimed at promoting ASEAN-Japan cooperation were held across multiple sectors. I also participated online and gave a presentation at the ASEAN-Japan Business and Human Rights Network session, held in Bangkok on 16 September. Throughout September, ASEAN-Japan Ministerial-level meetings on environment, organised crime, and the economy were held in various locations in Malaysia, with representatives from the Mission of Japan to ASEAN in attendance.

In this ambassador's newsletter, I would like to take this opportunity to reflect on a series of events that took place in September, and in particular on the importance of the EAS's 20th anniversary.



Track 1 Workshop on Conflict Prevention, Crisis Management, and the ASEAN-led Regional Architecture
(10 September 2025, in Port Dickson)

● APT, EAS Preparatory SOM and related Meetings

From 8 to 11 September, I traveled to Port Dickson, near Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, to attend the ASEAN+3 (APT) and East Asia Summit (EAS) Preparatory Senior Officials' Meetings (Prep-SOM) and related meetings. Mr. NAMAZU Hiroyuki, Senior Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, represented the Japanese government as the lead delegate at the Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM).

As is customary, preparatory Senior Officials' Meetings (Prep-SOMs) are held in the host country one to two months prior to the ASEAN-related Summit meetings in the third quarter of the year. Mr. Namazu, Senior Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, arrived on the 9th and attended the preparatory SOMs for the [APT](#) and [EAS](#) on the following day, 10th, to discuss policy directions and also held bilateral consultations with the SOMs of various countries, focusing on ASEAN. Like the Summit meetings and Foreign Ministers' meetings, these multilateral meetings provide a valuable opportunity to conduct efficient bilateral consultations.

I attended several meetings where the Senior Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Namazu, was unable to attend, and conveyed Japan's position. In particular, I found the ["Track 1 Workshop on Conflict Prevention, Crisis Management, and ASEAN-led Regional Architecture,"](#) co-chaired by Malaysia, Indonesia, and Australia on the afternoon of the 10th, to be very meaningful. Building on the Track 2 and Track 1.5 workshops held in Jakarta in February and December of last year, we were able to discuss concrete measures to make the most of the ASEAN-led regional architecture and establish a general direction for future actions. Furthermore, during this trip, it was also very valuable to coordinate the basic positions on priority issues between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Mission to ASEAN in preparation for the upcoming Summit.



Model EAS Gala Dinner
(14 September 2025, at a hotel in Jakarta)

● Model EAS

From 15 to 19 September, the [Model East Asia Summit \(Model EAS\)](#) was held in Jakarta. This event was organised by the ASEAN Foundation, with the cooperation of Japan, Australia, and China.

Following the establishment of the ASEAN Community in 2015, the ASEAN Foundation launched the ["Model ASEAN"](#), which provides students with an opportunity to role-play ASEAN meetings. In 2023, to commemorate the 50th year of ASEAN-Japan friendship and cooperation, a ["Model ASEAN+Japan"](#) conference was held with the cooperation of the ASEAN-Japan Centre, and similar conferences have also been held with Republic of Korea, China, and Australia.

To commemorate the 20th anniversary of the EAS in 2025, the ASEAN Foundation organised this event, in collaboration with Japan, Australia, and China, and after consulting with the ASEAN Chair (Malaysia) and the Chair of the ASEAN Foundation Governing Board (Laos), and with the cooperation of other EAS member countries. In addition to the main conference, we also included opportunities for [cultural presentations at a gala dinner](#), and facilitated dialogue with ASEAN Ambassadors through [an opening ceremony/roundtable](#) and [a morning tea network session at the residence of the Ambassador of Australia to ASEAN](#). We hope that this 20th anniversary event will pave the way for continued organisation of similar model EAS meetings in the years to come.



ASEAN-Japan Business and Human Rights Network Session
(16 September 2025, in Bangkok, credit: UNDP)

● ASEAN-Japan Business and Human Rights Networking Session

On 16 September, as part of the ["Responsible Business and Human Rights Forum \(Asia Pacific Region\) 2025"](#) held in Bangkok, an "ASEAN-Japan Business and Human Rights Network Session" was jointly organized by UNDP, Institute of Developing Economies (IDE-JETRO), Global Compact Network Japan, and the Mission of Japan to ASEAN, with the support of the Government of Japan.

The event included a presentation by the Chairperson of [the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights \(AICHR\)](#), representing Malaysia, as well as panel discussions with representatives from ASEAN and Japan. The discussions focused on promoting understanding among stakeholders regarding the implementation of [the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights \(UNGPs\)](#) and related laws, and fostering informal networking among Japanese and ASEAN business stakeholders.

I participated online, delivering [the opening remarks](#) and [a presentation](#) on Japan's policies and cooperation with ASEAN in this area. I hope that this networking session will lead to further development of practical initiatives in the fields of business and human rights by stakeholders from both ASEAN and Japan.



ASEAN-Japan Ministerial Dialogue on Environment and Climate Change
(4 September 2025, in Langkawi, credit: ASEAN Secretariat)

● ASEAN-Japan Ministerial Dialogue on Environment and Climate Change and the ASEAN-Japan Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime

In parallel with these events, several Ministerial-level meetings between ASEAN and Japan were held throughout Malaysia this month.

From 2 to 5 September, Mr ASAO Keiichiro, Minister of Environment of Japan visited to Langkawi, Malaysia to attend the [3rd ASEAN-Japan Ministerial Dialogue on Environment and Climate Change](#). During this dialogue, the parties agreed to revise the "Strategic Program for ASEAN Climate and Environment (SPACE)," which was launched in 2023, in order to further deepen cooperation between ASEAN and Japan in the field of environment and climate change. At the ASEAN+3 Environment Ministers' Meeting, an exchange of views took place regarding the progress of initiatives such as the ASEAN+3 Marine Plastic Debris Cooperation Action Initiative, undertaken by ASEAN member states, Japan, China, and the Republic of Korea. Minister Asao also held the meetings with ASEAN Secretary-General Kao Kim Hourn and other Ministers from various countries.

On 11 September, [Mr. SAKAI Manabu, Chairperson of the National Public Safety Commission, traveled to Melaka, Malaysia](#) to attend the ASEAN+3 Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC+3) and the ASEAN-Japan Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC+Japan). At the AMMTC+3 meeting, discussions were held on countermeasures against transnational crimes, including human trafficking, terrorism, and cybercrimes such as online fraud, and a joint statement was adopted. At the AMMTC+Japan meeting, the Government of Japan explained that it was coordinating with ASEAN to support ASEANAPOL's efforts to combat online fraud, which was welcomed by the ASEAN representatives.



ASEAN Economic Ministers – Minister of Economy, Trade, and Industry (AEM-METI) Consultation
(24 September 2025, in Kuala Lumpur, credit: ASEAN Secretariat)

● ASEAN-related Economic Ministers' Meetings

From 23 to 25 September, [Economy, Trade, and Industry Minister MUTO Yoji traveled to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia](#), to attend the ASEAN+3 Economic Ministers' Consultation, the ASEAN-Japan Economic Ministers' Consultation, and the RCEP Ministers' Meeting, as well as hold bilateral meetings with ministers from participating countries.

In particular, at the ASEAN-Japan Economic Ministers' Consultation (AEM-METI), the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) announced the development of the ASEAN-Japan AI Innovation Roadmap and the ASEAN-Japan Next-Generation Automotive Industry Master Plan. Minister Muto stated that, as future policy directions, Japan would (1) cooperate to enhance the resilience of supply chains, (2) leverage the two ERIA deliverables to promote cooperation in the digital and decarbonization sectors, and (3) maintain and strengthen a rules-based free trade system—expressing Japan's commitment to contributing to the strengthening of ASEAN's supply chain resilience. The ASEAN member countries expressed their appreciation for Japan's cooperation, particularly in the automotive and AI sectors, and stated their desire to continue collaborating with Japan.

At the RCEP Ministerial Meeting, Minister Muto, who serves as the co-chair of the meeting this year, emphasized the importance of transparent implementation of the agreement and the need to address new trade and investment challenges through RCEP, in order to build a free, fair, and rules-based economic order in the region. This statement was well received and shared by the other ministers.



CPR+3 (25 September 2025, at ASEAN Headquarters/Secretariat)

● Conference of the High Contracting Parties (HCPs) to TAC, CPR+3, and EAS Outcome Document Negotiations

In Jakarta, [the 2nd Conference of the High Contracting Parties \(HCPs\) to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia \(TAC\)](#) was held on 18 September, and [the Committee of the Permanent Representatives \(CPR\) +3 meeting](#) took place on 25 September at the ASEAN Headquarters/Secretariat. Representing the Mission of Japan to ASEAN, I attended both meetings. At the former, we discussed preparations for the 50th anniversary of the TAC next year and the positions of the signatories, while at the latter, we covered arrangements for the ASEAN+3 Summit in late October and the status of preparations for outcome documents.

This month, in parallel with such Ambassador-level meetings, Working Group Meetings have been held mainly online to advance negotiations on the outcome documents for the EAS. Respective Missions are working closely with their home governments to achieve consensus on every paragraph and phrase of the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on the 20th anniversary of the EAS, as well as on thematic Joint Statements proposed by the EAS Participating States.

For the success of the ASEAN-related Summit meetings in Kuala Lumpur in late October—particularly the EAS (East Asia Summit) marking its 20th anniversary—such preparatory work is crucial. We will continue to strive for positive outcomes, including the further development of Model EAS in the future. We would greatly appreciate your continued support and cooperation.

Ambassador of Japan to ASEAN
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