

Newsletter from the Ambassador of Japan to ASEAN
No. 36: Leveraging ASEAN's Strength for the World

14 November 2025



ASEAN-Japan Symposium

(11 November 2025, at ERIA, credit: ASEAN Secretariat)

The ASEAN-related summit meetings have concluded, and I will leave Jakarta. Therefore, this 36th edition of newsletter from the Ambassador of Japan to ASEAN will be the last issue.

The ASEAN process this year has continued with various meetings, including ministerial gatherings, even after the summit concluded late last month. The ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus was held in Kuala Lumpur from 31 October to 2 November, with Japan represented by Defense Minister KOIZUMI Shinjiro.

As for myself, my days before leaving my post were hectic: delivering a lecture at a seminar hosted by the Jakarta Japan Club (JJC) (a group of Japanese trading companies), giving a remark at the ASEAN-Japan Symposium co-organised by FPCI, ERIA, JMT and our Mission, hosting a farewell reception, and attending the East Asia Summit (EAS) Ambassadors' Meeting.

In this edition of Ambassador's Newsletter, I would like to share with you my final work here and highlight the importance of “bringing ASEAN’s strengths to the world.”



ASEAN-Japan Defence Ministers' Informal Meeting

(1 November 2025, in Kuala Lumpur, credit: ASEAN Secretariat)

●ADMM-Plus/ASEAN-Japan Defense Ministers' Informal Meeting

On 1 November, Defense Minister KOIZUMI Shinjiro attended the 12th ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM Plus) and the ASEAN-Japan Defence Ministers' Informal Meeting in Kuala Lumpur. Furthermore, he also held bilateral defence ministerial discussion of Japan-US, Japan-Indonesia, Japan-Republic of Korea, Japan-Australia-Philippines-US (SQUAD), Japan-China, and Japan-Singapore, discussing regional security issues and other matters.

At the [ADMM-Plus](#), participating countries' defence ministers exchanged views on the 15th anniversary of ADMM Plus and future prospects. Defence Minister Koizumi reaffirmed three fundamental principles for the ADMM-Plus: (1) a rules-based international order, including the rule of law; (2) accountability; and (3) responsibility for global commons. Based on these principles, he strongly urged each country to (1) take a comprehensive view of the Indo-Pacific region and weave a "multi-layered web of interconnectivity" through multiple layers of operations, joint training, personnel exchanges, capacity building support, and equipment/technology cooperation, and (2) generate strong synergies to foster a flexible, resilient, and stable order throughout the region.

[At the ASEAN-Japan Defence Ministers' Meeting](#), Defence Minister Koizumi presented three specific directions for strengthening future ASEAN-Japan defence cooperation: cooperation in the field of humanitarian aid/disaster relief (HA/DR), cooperation in maritime affairs, and addressing challenges in non-traditional fields.



ASEAN-Japan Seminar hosted by JJC
(6 November 2025, at JJC Conference Room)

●ASEAN-Japan Seminar hosted by JJC Trading Company Group

On 6 November, I was invited to give a lecture at a seminar hosted by the Jakarta Japan Club (JJC) (a group of Japanese trading companies). I delivered a lecture titled “ASEAN's Response to Global Environmental Changes and Opportunities for Japan: Leveraging Geoeconomics Risks for Business” at the JJC conference room

In this lecture, I reported on the latest developments in ASEAN, including key outcomes and highlights from ASEAN-related summit meetings and ASEAN's response to global economic uncertainties. I then reviewed the history between ASEAN and Japan and looked ahead to the future, explaining that various business opportunities exist, such as the Digital Economy Framework Agreement (DEFA) and the ASEAN Power Grid (APG) ([presentation materials](#)). During the Q&A session, questions were raised regarding differences between cooperation with Japan and other dialogue partners like China and South Korea, business opportunities in Timor-Leste, and distinctions between the EU and ASEAN.

It was extremely valuable to have the opportunity to explain the overall picture and future direction of ASEAN-Japan relations to representatives of Japanese companies and exchange views with them, immediately after the ASEAN-related summit meetings held in late October and just before my departure. Further strengthening ASEAN-Japan business is essential for bringing mutual benefits to both sides and deepening our relationship of trust. I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to JJC for planning and hosting this seminar, and to the many participants who attended.



Farewell Call on ASEAN Secretary-General Dr. Kao Kim Hourn
(10 November 2025, at the ASEAN Secretariat, credit: ASEAN Secretariat)

● Farewell Call and Dinner with ASEAN Secretary-General, Dr. Kao Kim Hourn

On 10 November, I paid a farewell call on [ASEAN Secretary-General Dr. Kao Kim Hourn](#). I expressed my heartfelt gratitude for his dedicated efforts over the past three years since assuming the role in 2023 to strengthen ASEAN-Japan relations.

In particular, ASEAN Secretary-General Dr. Kao Kim Hourn has visited Japan on numerous occasions to attend important events and meetings. In 2023, the 50th anniversary of ASEAN-Japan friendship and cooperation, he visited four times: for [the ASEAN-Japan Business Week](#), [the ASEAN-Japan Special Meeting of Justice Ministers](#), the ASEAN-Japan Tourism Ministers Special Dialogue and [the ASEAN-Japan Smart Cities Network High-Level Meeting](#), and [the Commemorative Summit for the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation](#). In 2024, he visited for [the Nikkei Forum “Future of Asia”](#) and [the ASEAN-Japan Economic Co-Creation Forum](#). This year, ASEAN Secretary-General Dr. Kao Kim Hourn visited Japan for the opening ceremony of [the Expo 2025 Osaka-Kansai, Japan](#).

We also hosted ASEAN Secretary-General Dr. Kao Kim Hourn at the residence of the Ambassador of Japan to ASEAN on four occasions for visits by dignitaries and follow-up meetings after his visits to Japan.

That evening, I was invited to [a farewell dinner hosted by ASEAN Secretary-General Dr. Kao Kim Hourn](#). Reflecting on the past three years, I had the opportunity to hear the Sec-Gen's thoughts from various settings and his aspirations for his term, leading to a candid exchange of views. I am deeply honored that he took the time to arrange this meeting despite his busy schedule.



ASEAN-Japan Symposium
(12 November 2025, at ERIA)

● ASEAN-Japan Symposium

On 11 November, [the ASEAN-Japan Symposium](#) took place at the ERIA's E-DISC (ERIA Digital Innovation and Sustainable Economy Centre). The theme was “Co-creation in an era of Geoeconomics.” Building on the foundation of [the kick-off symposium](#) held in February 2023 and [the wrap-up symposium](#) in February 2024, both marking the 50th year of ASEAN-Japan friendship and cooperation, this new framework was established to hold annual symposium going forward, addressing timely themes each year.

During the opening session, following remarks by myself, Managing Director of ERIA Dr. Aladdin D. Rillo, and Permanent Representative of Singapore to ASEAN, Ambassador Gerard Ho Wei Hong, ASEAN Secretary-General Dr. Kao Kim Hourn delivered [a keynote address](#) on this year's theme.

Session 1 focused on how to upgrade ASEAN-Japan co-creation, building on the achievements of the 50th year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation in 2023 and taking into account the adoption of the ASEAN Community Vision 2045. Session 2 deepened discussions on how to leverage Japan-ASEAN cooperation to address geoeconomics challenges, including uncertainties in the global economy.

During the closing session, I was deeply moved when Dr. Dino Patti Djalal, President of FPCI, introduced [a video message from all the members of FPCI](#) on the occasion of my departure.



Farewell Reception
(12 November 2025, at a hotel in Jakarta)

●Farewell Reception

Upon my departure, I was invited to dinners and receptions by numerous ASEAN member states, dialogue partners, and Japanese-related organizations. Notably, on 7 November, [Permanent Representative of Singapore to ASEAN, the ASEAN Coordinating Country for Japan, Ambassador Gerard Ho Wei Hong, hosted a reception at the official residence](#) on behalf of the ASEAN's Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR).

I also hosted a [farewell reception](#) at a hotel in Jakarta on 12 November to express my gratitude to local ASEAN-Japan stakeholders. We were honored to have numerous ASEAN-Japan stakeholders in attendance, including representatives from the ASEAN Secretariat, permanent missions of ASEAN member states, dialogue partners and foreign missions, the Jakarta Japan Club (JJC), Japanese companies of Association of Japanese Companies related to ASEAN, international organizations, Japanese government- partners and foreign mission, agencies, think tanks, and media.

During the farewell address, we recorded [a video message](#) that had also been posted on our Mission's [website](#) and social media. At the venue, we also displayed photographs from various events over the past three years, allowing us to once again share wonderful memories with all attendees.



EAS Ambassador's Meeting

(13 November 2025, at the ASEAN Secretariat, credit: ASEAN Secretariat)

●The Last EAS Ambassador's Meeting

On 13 November, I attended the East Asia Summit (EAS) Ambassadors' Meeting, which marked my last ASEAN-related meeting. Following Timor-Leste's official accession to ASEAN at last month's ASEAN Summit, Permanent Representative of Timor-Leste to ASEAN, Ambassador Natércia Cipriana Coelho da Silva officially participated in this EAS Ambassador's Meeting. In addition to the follow-up to the Summit Meetings, we held a frank exchange of views on the current severe regional and international situation, and upon my departure, I also received warm words from the Permanent Representatives and Ambassadors of each country. I am pleased that I was able to properly fulfill Japan's role in the EAS at the end.

The most memorable exchange upon my departure was the discussion at the Japan-ASEAN Symposium on 11 November, where we discussed "leveraging ASEAN's strength for the world." ASEAN has achieved peace and prosperity in the region through dialogue and cooperation. I sincerely hope that ASEAN and Japan will continue to further develop under the spirit of "Learn together, grow together, lead together!" My successor, [Ambassador YONETANI Koji, the new Ambassador of Japan to ASEAN](#), is scheduled to arrive on 24 November 24. I would be grateful for your continued support and cooperation.

Ambassador of Japan to ASEAN
KIYA Masahiko