

**Remarks by H.E. Mr. YONETANI Koji, Ambassador to ASEAN,
at the Closing Ceremony of the Attachment Programme
(24 Feb. 2026)**

- Excellency, Secretary General Dr. Kao Kim Hourn
- Dear Colleagues,
- Distinguished participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to meet you all again, the attachment officers, since the networking event earlier this month. First and foremost, I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to all of you who have successfully completed the Attachment Programme. Also, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to all those who have worked hard to enable the effective implementation of the attachment program.

I firmly believe that human capital is the greatest asset in advancing regional integration and sustainable development within ASEAN. In this sense, the Attachment Officer Programme, which has been running for over 20 years, plays an essential role in nurturing young government officials who will shape ASEAN's future.

The Attachment Programme is not merely training; it provides Attachment Officers with opportunities to engage directly with ASEAN's diverse policies and coordination processes through on-the-job learning. It is deeply encouraging to see Attachment Officers from Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Vietnam and, starting this year, Timor-Leste, gaining practical experience as members of the ASEAN Secretariat and deepening their sense of unity within the ASEAN community.

I am confident that the knowledge, skills, and above all, the strong sense of belonging to ASEAN fostered through this Programme will serve as a powerful “bridge” for promoting understanding and strengthening cooperation within ASEAN upon return to your home countries and throughout your future careers.

Today is the anniversary day of the signing of the TAC. The Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia is first signed today 50 years ago, in 1976, at the first ASEAN Summit. The first Japan-ASEAN Summit was held the following year, in 1977, and Japan acceded to the TAC in 2004, followed by the establishment of Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund in 2006.

When we look into this flow of events through the process of deepening Japan-ASEAN partnership, and also recalling that the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF) marks its 20th anniversary this year since its establishment, I am proud to recognize the contribution made by ASEAN-Japan long-standing collaboration through the Attachment Program. I hope that we can continue working together with a view to realizing a more inclusive and resilient ASEAN, building upon our friendship.

Finally, I sincerely wish you all continued success in your endeavors and further progress for ASEAN. Thank you for your kind attention.

[END]